

Mr. BROWN: Yes, it is in the town, actually—for grade 1 and 2, and after that they go to the St. Eustache Protestant joint school for their higher education.

Mr. CHARLTON: Is there only French being taught in those schools?

Mr. BROWN: I cannot answer that.

Mr. ALEX MONTOUR: Both English and French.

The JOINT CHAIRMAN (*Mr. Grenier*): Now, we have heard the point of view of Mr. Colas on those matters—

Mr. CHARLTON: Just further to that, Mr. Chairman, is education available to all the children on the Oka reservation including the district?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, education is available to the Indians at Oka, the same as it is to Indians in any other reserve in Canada, on the same basis.

Mr. CHARLTON: I might say that in the case of our own Six Nations reservation I think no one would argue that the educational facilities there are not as good as or better than the district surrounding it.

Mr. COLAS: You are in Brantford and we are in a part of Quebec.

Mr. CHARLTON: I realize you are not speaking about Indians across Canada, but just for the Oka band.

Mr. COLAS: No, just the Oka band.

Mr. CHARLTON: That is all I wished, to see that no misunderstanding existed.

Mr. COLAS: No, I made it clear we are speaking only for the Oka Indians, and Mr. Gabriel just gave me a letter which was written from Ottawa, December 10, 1941, and signed by the Hon. T. A. Crerar. He wishes me to read a part of that letter, which is a very long one, dealing with the lands of the Okas. At page 3 he said this:

I am informed that the seigniority was originally divided into twelve parishes and that eleven of them were alienated by the seminary many years ago and that the twelfth, in which Oka is situated, is the only one where any property has been left. I am further informed that in recent years the seminary made further sales of the property, a good portion of which had, up to that time, been considered common lands of the Indians and which was used by them for pasturing their cattle and horses, and as wood lots. You are aware, that the Indians strenuously opposed the latter sale and it is needless to say that they will more strongly oppose any action that may be taken now or in the future to disturb their rights of residence to the remaining unsold lands; that is, to those areas which you now suggest should be purchased by the government for them.

Under all the circumstances, therefore, as minister of the department having control and management of the lands and property of the Indians, and being the guardian of their rights, I cannot, in view of the facts as outlined above, entertain any proposal to purchase for the Indians, lands the legal title to which is in the name of the seminary, but which are subject to the rights and obligations mentioned. On the other hand, it is my duty to notify you as trustees of the seminary that the government expects the obligations placed upon the seminary by the statute of 1841, and as generally defined by the Quebec courts, to be carried out.

It is to be hoped that in these difficult times it may be possible to reach an amicable settlement which would be satisfactory to the Indians. Failing this, I see no alternative but to commence proceedings in the exchequer court under the provisions of section 39 of the Indian Act