

Hon. FRANK OLIVER (Minister of the Interior). I am sure it would not be the wish of the House to deprive my hon. friend (Mr. Bradbury) of his privilege of an annual speech on the St. Peter's Indian reserve. Still, it must have been with some disappointment—

Mr. TAYLOR (Leeds). It ought to be made monthly.

Mr. OLIVER. The House has become very tired of it yearly, and it would be much more weary if it were made monthly. I say, it must have been with great disappointment that the House heard to-day that the expectation it had cherished for some time that the fact of my hon. friend having already had his speech published in the Winnipeg 'Telegram' was not going to relieve it of being burdened with that speech on this occasion.

Mr. BRADBURY. I did not want to deprive the hon. gentleman (Mr. Oliver) of the opportunity of hearing it.

Mr. NESBITT. He published your speech too.

Mr. OLIVER. He was good enough to read my speech, or part of it, along with his own. I wish he had read more of it; for, I must say the more frequently he gives the House the benefit of the few remarks I was able to preface my speech with on that occasion, the more convinced I am of their aptness and appropriateness.

I am very sorry, and I am sure many members of this House are very sorry, that my hon. friend sees fit to recur to this matter in the altogether unfair and uncalled for manner in which he does. The problem of dealing with Indians and Indian lands in Canada is a very important one touching closely a very large number of important communities in the country. The government has to meet many difficulties in handling these matters, and when we are met by such absolutely unwarranted misrepresentation of facts and circumstances and motives as my hon. friend produced in this discussion the tendency is to prevent, so far as my hon. friend can prevent, the proper dealing with those cases.

Mr. BRADBURY. I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman has no right to accuse me of misrepresentation; he has not demonstrated any misrepresentation.

An hon. MEMBER. Wilful misrepresentation.

Mr. OLIVER. I said unwarranted misrepresentation.

Mr. SPEAKER. I do not think the word misrepresentation is parliamentary. I suppose wilful misrepresentation would be unparliamentary.

Mr. OLIVER. I did not say wilful, I said unwarranted misrepresentation.

Mr. SPEAKER. I do not think that is unparliamentary.

Mr. OLIVER. I hope to keep within the rules of parliament, but I must admit that in making adequate reply to my hon. friend it is exceedingly difficult.

Mr. FOSTER. You must have meant more than that.

Mr. OLIVER. My hon. friend is at liberty to give his own interpretation. I was trying to say that there are many important communities in Canada whose progress is seriously interfered with by the contiguity of Indian reserves while at the same time the advantage of the Indians is just as seriously interfered with by the situation of their reserves. The government are anxious to meet the wishes of the progressive people of the country and at the same time to protect the rights and interests of the Indians, but when a responsible member of parliament will, year after year, use his position as a member of this House for the purpose of making difficult a proper and satisfactory readjustment of such conditions, may I be permitted to say that he is not acting in accordance with the duties of the position which he occupies or the responsibility which he is expected to discharge to the people of this country in his capacity as a representative. I would think, with all due deference, that a member of this House could find some other occupation than to make difficult the proper and satisfactory adjustment of such a delicate and vexed question. I expect within a very short time to have to bring before the House a Bill to sanction a transaction for the surrender of an Indian reserve that is absolutely and altogether outside of the terms of the Indian Act, but the circumstances are such as to make it desirable, both in the interests of the Indians and of the white people concerned, that such action should be taken. But my hon. friend if we were to pay the attention to his views that he seems to think he is warranted in expecting, would prevent us from dealing with that case or other like cases.

My hon. friend demands the sympathy of the House for this particular band of Indians on account of the action that was taken by the government. He may appeal to the people of his constituency, to the people of the town of Selkirk, to the clergymen who minister to those Indians, to the Chief Justice of Manitoba, who negotiated the terms of surrender, to all the parties interested and concerned in this matter, and I am safe in saying he will not find one who will not say that the best inter-