

party, if he has any objection he will make requisition of title and the solicitor for the other party will have to answer that if he has any objection.

Q. I merely want to understand this for my satisfaction: were the farmers obliged, as between themselves and the government, to pay any part of the cost of investigating the title or conveying the land?—A. No, they are not obliged to pay unless there is something wrong with the title.

Q. What they had to pay was the cost of advocating the claims?—A. This was not a case of expropriation of land with a surveyor and valuation, but this was a case where the people had tried political means for five or six years without success.

Q. They should have employed a solicitor?—A. If they had employed a solicitor to act for them they would have got from any government in six months a settlement of their claims.

Mr. COWAN.—Now, Mr. Hughes, you have denied this twice and at the top of page 4624 of *Hansard* I find this: "Now, I know for a fact that Mr. McLaughlin did extract 20 per cent from these farmers, and I know he received it. What I am anxious to know is: Was this government a party to the transaction? If so, we would be pleased to learn it. Mr. McLaughlin was the Liberal candidate in the recent general election. In addition to that this gentleman has been paid his legal fees for his connection with the settlement of these claims." Then you made the charge again at the top of page 5149, on June 14, 1899: "He was there to screw up the price as high as possible in order that he might get his 20 per cent. If the reports along these waters are true these farmers are not at all satisfied. They find that this man could not bulldoze and browbeat the valuator, that the valuation he made was an honest valuation. This gentleman either took 20 per cent from the people over and above what he was entitled to, or he took 20 per cent from the farmers off a fair valuation. He stands convicted of having extracted from the farmers this 20 per cent."

Mr. HUGHES.—"What they are entitled to," not "what he is entitled to."

Mr. McLAUGHLIN.—I may say—

Mr. COWAN.—My learned friend has contradicted that twice, but I will read the exact words: "This gentleman either took 20 per cent from the people over and above what he was entitled to—"

Mr. HUGHES.—"He was"?

Mr. COWAN.—I am reading from *Hansard*: "—what he was entitled to, or he took 20 per cent from the farmers off a fair valuation. He stands convicted of having extracted from the farmers this 20 per cent." How could you read "they" in there?

Mr. McLAUGHLIN.—I suppose Mr. Hughes will maintain it over and over and go up to the people and tell them there that "they" was true. In his heat in the House Mr. Hughes may have made a mistake, but his questions were worth considering. He asked: "Is the government aware that Mr. R. J. McLaughlin, of Lindsay, extracted from the farmers around Cameron Lake 20 per cent of the sums paid them for damages to their lands through flooding, such sums being out of the treasury of the Dominion of Canada, and being over and above all fees for legal work? What sums have been paid for damages to land through flooding on the shores of Cameron Lake since July 1, 1896? What sums have been paid to Mr. McLaughlin direct, over and above the 20 per cent extracted from the farmers in connection with the Trent Canal? Were the cheques in payment for the damages above referred to made payable to the farmers interested, or were the 20 per cent extractions deducted by the government and the cheques given to Mr. McLaughlin?"

Mr. HUGHES.—Are you aware that this 20 per cent was extracted from the farmers?

Mr. COWAN.—You do not have to answer that.

Mr. HUGHES.—\$750 is down in the Auditor General's Report.

Mr. SUTHERLAND.—Who paid that?

Mr. HUGHES.—The government.