

friend raised the question the other day. I look upon Mr. Caldwell as being one of our most efficient officers, and I look upon Mr. Graham as a man who has always tried to protect the interests of the Indians. These two gentlemen are the ones who handled this sale, and I am not seeking to escape any responsibility when I say that the sale had taken place without my knowledge; I did not know that a sale had been consummated until the other day. They had full authority to conduct that sale, but I am putting into effect a regulation that no sale of land shall take place hereafter until it has been publicly advertised and that it shall be sold at public auction. That will avoid these little charges being brought that more could have been obtained for the land. Upon looking into the file, I found that Mr. Graham decided, as he is in a position to decide, being the Indian commissioner for the three prairie provinces, that this land was not required and could be offered for sale. He put an upset price upon it and the land was sold at that price. If I talked all day I could not say any more than that, but I want my hon. friend to understand that in the future there will be no Indian lands sold unless they are publicly advertised. If my hon. friend has any suspicion as to political interference by these officers, I would say that Mr. Caldwell was secretary to the Hon. Arthur Meighen, and I think Mr. Graham's politics are well known. I have not inquired of either one of them as to their politics, and I am satisfied that these men used their best judgment. If they went wrong in this particular case, then they erred in their judgment, but I am inclined to think that when my hon. friend looks into the matter very carefully he will find that this was consummated in the interests of the Indian department. The fact that others were not notified—I am not offering any excuse because I did not know that that occurred and I cannot discover from the file that a promise was made to the individual mentioned by my hon. friend—is regrettable, but in the future the land will be advertised in the locality in which it is to be sold and the sale will be carried on by an auctioneer.

Mr. CAMPBELL: There is on my part more than a suspicion of political interference; I think it amounts almost to a certainty. The activities of the hon. member for Yorkton (Mr. McPhee) are so obvious that one can draw no other conclusion. I am not attaching any particular blame to these officials, and I do not think that Mr. Caldwell's politics enters into the matter at all.

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

These men are civil servants and have no particular politics, but I do think that political pressure was brought to bear upon them. I had a great deal of business to do with Mr. Caldwell and I have always found him ready to carry out his word, but in this case the fact that he did fail to carry out an obligation which he entered into with these settlers in the Pelly district seems to me to be evidence of political interference. I am very glad indeed to have the assurance of the minister as to the public advertising of these lands, and I am sorry that he had not put this policy into effect a year or two ago, because in that case it would not have been necessary for me to take up so much time of the committee during the dying hours of the session in debating this matter. It would not have caused the trouble and inconvenience to the settlers in the Pelly district, as well as arousing their suspicion of political interference.

Mr. McPHEE: I want to satisfy the mind of my hon. friend that there was no political interference in this case at all. The negotiations for the purchase of this land were carried on in a fair, square and aboveboard manner, and there was no personal intervention except by correspondence. I think the following quotation from Pope's *Essay on Man* expresses pretty well the attitude of mind of the hon. gentleman:

All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.

Mr. CAMPBELL: I have no desire to keep this argument going, but I would like to point out that the very fact that the hon. member for Yorkton was so anxious is evidence of political interference. There was nothing to prevent these other gentlemen from corresponding direct with the department. Mr. Telford is a lawyer and real estate man in the village of Pelly, and he carried on his correspondence direct with the department.

Mr. BRADETTE: Is an amount being included in this vote to assist the hospital at Cochrane?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): There is an amount provided for a wing for the hospital.

Mr. BRADETTE: Is that an addition to the present wing?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): An addition.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I would like to ask the minister for some information with regard to the \$15,000 to provide farm working outfits for graduates of Indian schools.