

He said: In moving for the papers in connection with this case, I do not intend to formulate any charge against my hon. friend the Minister of Militia and Defence. For the time being I simply move to get the necessary information which I think, in order to satisfy public opinion, should be later on followed up by drastic investigation. Before giving the House the facts of the case, however, perhaps it would be well to refer to some years previous.

It is well known that all Governments for some years back intended to erect barracks and a military school in the city of Montreal, the largest centre in the Dominion, or nearby. It was found that the military school at St. John, in the county of St. John and Iberville was a little too far out of the way, and the various militia corps of the city of Montreal were intent upon having a military school and barracks nearby. The Government, of course, was in a difficult position. It is well known that land values in the city of Montreal for some years past have been very materially enhanced. The Government, it is true, was proprietor of some valuable land at Lafontaine park for one, and St. Helen's island for the other. St. Helen's island has been used as ordnance land since British domination in Canada; and when one reads history, one finds that St. Helen's island has also been used as ordnance land under the French occupation. But as the city of Montreal developed, St. Helen's island was largely used by the Militia Department for military stores and for the annual drill. It was, however, chiefly used by the city of Montreal as a public park and as play-grounds, especially for the children during the summer months. The city of Montreal was very anxious that a settlement should take place between the Dominion Government and the city corporation in order to secure for the people of Montreal the exclusive use of St. Helen's island and Lafontaine park.

In the year 1908, if I am not mistaken, a settlement was arrived at. Sir Frederick Borden, the predecessor of my hon. friend, sold St. Helen's island to the city of Montreal for the sum of \$200,000. At the same time, by other Orders in Council which I need not recite, some ordnance property was sold to the city of Toronto for similar purposes and objects. In 1910, the Militia Department found that the Government of Canada was the proprietor of a large strip of land on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, facing the city of Montreal and situated in the town of Longueuil. In 1867 at the time

[Mr. Lemieux.]

of Confederation this land had been transferred to the Dominion Government as ordnance property. It was under the control of the Department of the Interior, and Sir Frederick Borden, my hon. friend's predecessor, obtained for the Militia Department the transfer of that block of land at Longueuil from the Interior Department.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES: It originally belonged to the Ordnance branch of the Department of Militia.

Mr. LEMIEUX: It belonged to the Government, but was transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Militia.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES: First from the Department of Militia to the Department of the Interior and then back again.

Mr. LEMIEUX: As it was Government property, it did not cost anything to do that. The idea of the then Minister of Militia was to utilize that strip of land for the building of barracks for the use of the Montreal militia. The \$200,000 obtained from the City of Montreal for the sale of St. Helen's island was to be spent for the buildings themselves and not for acquiring the land. The site at Longueuil has been accepted by the Minister himself, by General Sir Percy Lake and by the most prominent officers of the Montreal district. It was adopted and approved by all of them as being a proper site for the depot of the permanent force. I have just referred to an Order in Council confirming the sale of St. Helen's island. That Order in Council was passed on the 6th December, 1905. It is recited in a resolution introduced into this House on July 17, 1908:

Hon. Sir Frederick Borden, Minister of Militia and Defence, moved that the House go into committee to consider the following resolutions:

1. Resolved, that it is expedient to confirm the following Orders in Council, that is to say:

(b) An Order in Council, dated the 6th day of December, 1905, authorizing the sale to the city of Montreal of the ordnance property in the St. Lawrence river, opposite the said city, known as St. Helen's island: and

(c) An Order in Council dated the 27th day of July, 1907, authorizing the conveyance to the city of Montreal of a portion of the ordnance property in that city known as Lafontaine park, and to authorize the sale and disposal of the said ordnance property in the manner and subject to the conditions by the said Orders in Council, respectively, provided and subject to such further and other conditions as may be imposed by His Majesty and accepted by the corporation of the city of Toronto and by the city of Montreal, as the case may be.

I referred a moment ago to other ordnance properties that were sold to the city