

dence, which is sometimes the strongest evidence a man can adduce. You find that, according to the terms of surrender, the chief was entitled to receive 180 acres of land, and he actually did receive 199 acres. By the same surrender the councillors were entitled to receive 120 acres each, and they did receive an average of 140 acres each. As there were five of them, they just received sufficient to make up about 100 acres which, at the current price, settled among the dealers, gave the \$500 necessary to recoup this man for the money he had used to pay the chief and councillors for betraying the band that had elected them to office. I do not see how there can be the slightest doubt in the mind of any one who knows anything about the circumstances that this money was made up in this way to recoup this man for the sum he had spent. What other possible reason can there be? Why should these men have got this extra land? The treaty provided that the chief should get 180 acres, and the councillors 120 acres each. And instead they got this additional land. It is therefore a fair deduction from the facts that it was from this additional land the \$500 was provided to pay these men for the betrayal of their trust.

As I have pointed out, the hon. minister (Mr. Oliver) was very much shocked when I used the word 'bribery' in this connection. Let me say now that I can find no other word which can so adequately describe the conduct of the government in this matter, in which it secured the surrender, first, by giving the chief thirteen times and each councillor nine times more land than was given to an ordinary Indian, and then by giving the chief and council money and goods to secure their consent. If this be not bribery, and the most contemptible kind of bribery, of the representatives of the Indians to induce them to betray those who had elected them, then I do not know what the word means. What a spectacle of wisdom of the utter lack of honesty of purpose this whole transaction reveals! None but the new school of Liberals could have conceived and worked out such a contemptible scheme. It is a disgrace to the government, and will cause honest men to blush to think that the government would allow its wards, these poor unfortunate Indians, to be treated in the manner I have described.

After the consent of the chief and council had been secured, let me point out what took place. After several private meetings had been held in the town of Selkirk between the chief and council and Chief Justice Howell and an officer of the Indian Department—I think it was Mr. Laird—and lawyers appointed by this government—for what purpose I do not know, except to get a fee, for they certainly did nothing for the Indians—this surrender was ob-

tained. All the negotiations took place at these private meetings, and a surrender was agreed upon by the chief and council, who were purchased to betray the band. The Indians, as a band, were not consulted, they knew absolutely nothing about these meetings except from hearing that private meetings were going on, they had a pledge from their chief and councillors that no surrender would take place, and they had confidence in their chief and council, and thought everything was all right. But they were rudely awakened from that feeling of security by the publication of the following notice, which was posted up at four different places on the reserve, calling a meeting of the band to discuss this all important question of the surrender of their homes and the heritage they had enjoyed from childhood and which had been handed down to them by their fathers and grandfathers. Let me read this notice, and I am sure even the hon. minister will be astonished when he hears what I am going to tell him, for I give him the credit of believing that he does not know one-half of the scandalous conduct which has taken place in connection with this transaction. This notice called a meeting of the band at one day's notice, and remember that was a meeting of a band of Indians living on a reserve 80 miles square, and they were summoned to this meeting to decide whether they should surrender their homes. One can well imagine how inadequate a day's notice would be to hold a meeting of that kind to a band covering so large a territory. The notice reads as follows:

To the St. Peter's Band of Indians:

Take notice, that a meeting of the male members of this band of the full age of twenty-one (21) years, will be held at the Treaty grounds of this reserve, on Monday the 23rd day of September, A.D. 1907, at 11 o'clock a.m., for the purpose of considering, deciding and assenting to the release and surrender of the St. Peter's Indian reserve on the terms to be set forth at the meeting.

CHIEF WILLIAM PRINCE.

J. D. LEWIS,
Indian Agent

Dated at Selkirk, this 20th day of September, 1907.

As I have said, only one day's notice was given for these Indians to gather together. I am going to read to the House, in proof of the statement I have made, for I want to show that this whole transaction was not only disgraceful but illegal, and I do not believe that any properly constituted court in this country would uphold that surrender on the conditions under which it was secured—I am going now to read a letter from William Asham, ex-chief of the St. Peter's Indian band, one of the most intelligent Indians I have ever met. Mr. Asham is not an ordinary Indian. This man, if he