

main plea they made to Mr. MacDougall. Is that the full report that Mr. MacDougall made to the minister, verbal and written? Would Mr. MacDougall counsel for hours with these Indians, have all their grievances placed before him and then come here and not report a single word of these conferences and the complaints and grievances brought and laid before him? Is Mr. MacDougall the stripe of man who would do that? I do not believe it, and therefore I do not believe this is the full knowledge and information that Mr. MacDougall imparted to the minister and his department. If it is it is not a truthful report, and I would be very sorry to imply that Mr. MacDougall would make an untruthful report.

With all these things before us will the minister allow me to ask him who can be injured and what can be injured if we appoint a good, true, honest business man to examine this whole thing and report? The minister is not immaculate any more than I am; he may be wrong in his interpretation of the law just as I may be. Working through officers, he may have been misled as any minister may be, but this is a most important matter and it involves a most important principle and touches the rights and property of the wards of the nation. Would it not be the wisest and best course to appoint a commission and let us have all the facts and the whole truth of this matter. Surely if the Indians have been defrauded we ought to see that they are righted. Surely if perjury and forgery and fraud has gone on in the guardian's offices to the detriment of his wards, we ought to know it, and the men guilty ought to be punished, and no punishment could be too great for men who would cheat Indians, the wards of the people. If the minister's statement is true that not a man in Selkirk or its vicinity, or in Winnipeg can be found to say that these transactions were wrong, what harm, what risk can come to the government from a commission? After what we have heard tonight I do not think any government should rest a moment until it has put machinery in operation to clear away from the department, and from the government, and this country, that which would be about the lowest, meanest, vilest blot upon its escutcheon, that it would cease to care for the rights of its wards, that it would allow them to be in any way infringed upon or to be in any way despoiled of that which belonged to them. Is it not worth a commission to settle that question once and for all? I wish to repeat there are many things that a man advocates, some for political purposes, some for other purposes, but it is not fair to assume that whenever a man in this House makes a plea for on interest, or a section, he is unworthy in his motives in making that

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plea. I believe that the motives of the hon. member for Selkirk in his plea are pure and honest. All the political capital that he could get out of it, he could have got out of it long ago, but there is this question of right, of absolute justice, and I believe that that is the impelling motive with my hon. friend. I have said before that I have looked into this question most minutely, and I cannot come to any other conclusion than that a wrong has been committed of a kind that should be the last for a government to commit, or for a parliament to allow to go without restitution. That wrong has been committed against the Indians of that reserve, but it is committed against the wards of the country generally.

I repeat that we should not involve this question with the others as to whether circumstances may not arise in which it is better that Indians should be shifted from the reserve they have and be placed somewhere else where it will be better for them and for the country at large. That question is not involved. The question that is involved in this case is simply and only, was it honestly, fairly, justly done. Has the Indian got his rights, or has he been despoiled of his rights?

Mr. J. P. MOLLOY (Provencher). Mr. Speaker, this subject has been so thoroughly discussed that there is little left to say upon it. Reference has been made to sales of school lands adjoining the St. Peter's reserve after the sale, and for the information of the House it may not be out of place to quote the prices of lands adjoining it during the last ten years. I have here a list of transactions furnished me by Mr. William Frank, a large purchaser of this St. Peter's reserve, who was charged with dishonesty in dealing with these Indians. I met him in Ottawa, and went into the matter with him and his statements were to the effect that his dealings and those of every other man whom he knew, with the St. Peter's Indians, had been fair and above board. I asked him as to the prices paid, and how they compare with other sales in the district and he furnished me with this list of transactions in which he was concerned:

January 20, 1911.

The following are a few of the land sales I have put through my office in the Selkirk district during the last eleven years.

Year 1899.—Purchased from the municipality of St. Clements, the southeast of 33 and the north $\frac{1}{2}$ of the northeast of 28-13-6 east, 240 acres. Price, \$175. This land is located two miles from St. Peter's Indian reserve, and is of first-class land.

March 21, 1900.—Purchased from the municipality of St. Clements, the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ and the south $\frac{1}{2}$ of the northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 24-14-6 east, 240 acres. Consideration \$144.85. Terms, one-third cash, the balance in one year at 6 per cent. Torrens title. This prop-