

Mr. STEVENS: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I say that the effect of the argument of the hon. gentleman was to convey to the minds of the people of Canada that this land was worth seven million dollars, when as a matter of fact it is not worth probably one-tenth of that. The value of that property can be calculated in different ways.

Mr. LEMIEUX: My hon. friend is a resident of Vancouver, and he probably knows the value of the land in question; what is his opinion as to the value of that land?

Mr. STEVENS: The value of that land might be estimated in different ways. If you take it from the standpoint of having it chopped up into twenty-five foot lots and each lot sold individually on long terms of payment, you would probably realize a considerable figure for it; you might be able to realize somewhere in the neighbourhood of two million dollars.

Mr. NESBITT: But what is the value of it in block?

Mr. STEVENS: In block, the way it is now, unless it was required by some large corporation on account of its strategic importance, it is not worth anything like that figure.

Mr. LEMIEUX: It is located at the mouth of the river?

Mr. STEVENS: It is located at the mouth of False creek. It was intimated that a large railway was after it but I have no knowledge of that fact, although hon. gentlemen opposite seem to think they have, and I notice reference to that is made in the papers. A railway seeking a particular location which would give it an advantage as regards traffic might be able to pay a larger price for that property than its intrinsic value would warrant, and looking at it from different standpoints different valuations might be placed upon it. There is another point in connection with this; the provincial government have paid the Indians \$219,000 or \$220,000; that I think is the amount to be received by the Indians. Now, that does not represent the entire value of the reserve; it represents from their standpoint the value of the rights of the Indians in that reserve, as they recognize those rights. I am not saying that is a correct way to look at it. They claim a still further value in it which rests in the provincial government. That question is being dealt with, as intimated by the acting Minister of the Interior, and is being taken notice of now by the department. This Government has not consented, therefore, and there is no reason to bring forward any argument to condemn this Government for an act which it is claimed has been done but which has not

been committed at all. First, the value of that reserve cannot be based on the figures spoken of as paid to the Indians; and, second, the suggestion of corruption—which is certainly the suggestion of the hon. member for Edmonton—is entirely baseless.

Having been in very close contact with the matter, I think I am in a position to say that, so far as the Dominion Government is concerned, there has been absolutely no collusion—which also was intimated—between the provincial government and the Dominion Government to do the Indians out of their rights. The provincial government, as I am informed by the Attorney General, took the opportunity of paying off the Indians, because it is extremely difficult to get Indians in a humour in which they will be willing to deal with a government or any person; and the Government had them in that position and offered them the money, and when they found the Indians were prepared to take it, they paid them the money. I am not saying that the action of the provincial government was the right one; I am informed by the Attorney General that that was his motive, he intending to deal with the Dominion Government later.

In conclusion, speaking, not as regards the transaction of the provincial government, but speaking in the interests of the city of Vancouver, this reserve has been desired by the people of Vancouver for many years. The right hon. leader of the Opposition when leader of the Government, was then reported, through a candidate, I think in 1906, as saying that if returned to power he would get from the Dominion Government the rights of the Indians for the city of Vancouver, and this was welcomed by the people. The provincial government have intimated that they would be willing to meet the Dominion Government in that regard. But what I do say that the reserve, situated as it is, is suitable for public purpose for docks, and should be preserved in the public interest and for the public of Vancouver, and not allowed to pass into the hands of any private corporations or individuals.

Mr. NESBITT: As the hon. gentleman comes from Vancouver, I desire to ask for information. Considering it as bought by the city of Vancouver, what would the land be worth in the hon. gentleman's judgment?

Mr. STEVENS: My idea in regard to that was to leave it entirely to the commission that has been appointed to adjudicate the question of value and also what amount should go in trust for the Indians. That is the basis I hoped, and still hope, on which it would be adjusted. So, the Indians can get a perfectly fair valuation, and as to the provincial government: if