

weary the House, but this matter is of such importance to myself, and to the district I represent that I feel I must place before the House some letters and declarations from some of the Indians showing of what they complain. At the time I was urging the minister to investigate, I am satisfied the minister should have known if he did not know that there was a serious wrong done to that band of Indians.

The first letter I will read is as follows:

St. Peter's, May 2, 1909.

Geo. H. Bradbury, M. P., Ottawa.

Dear Sir,—The principal originators of the ruination of the St. Peter's reserve are the chief and councillors. They publicly declared repeatedly before the band, that they would never surrender the land under any consideration. But of a sudden they kept mute, and when the matter was brought before the band, at the meeting September 23, the chief stood to a man for a surrender. The chief received 199 acres of land and ten dollars cash; each councillor received 140 acres of land and six dollars cash; ordinary Indians received 16 acres of land, and four dollars and thirty cents cash (\$4.30). You will see the vast difference. Why should this be? No sooner was the surrender made than the chief and councillors were the first parties that sold their land. After selling their land they began to influence their people to sell their land, telling them that until their patents were issued no proper bargain could be made. But they were only getting advances on land until patent came, but it is far from being the case; the majority of those poor Indians didn't even see the sight of their patents.

True, we have an Indian agent. As far as my judgment goes, and what I honestly think, he is more an agent for the white man than he is for the Indian; what protection can we expect from such a man as Indian agent, as one who took a mean advantage of a poor treaty woman, a widow at that, who had land near the town of Selkirk. This same Indian agent bought this land from this poor woman for a very small sum of money to the acre. This sale of land was made prior to the time of the issuing of patents. I was wondering would that sale be considered legal? An Indian agent, while in office, to buy land from a treaty person, is in my mind illegal.

There is another matter I desire to point out clearly, the chief and councillors offices were terminated on the 4th day of July, 1908. Prior to the time of that date, we requested the government to grant us an election, at that date our request was unsuccessful; from that time the matter was postponed indefinitely. At last we were told that there is no law for our elections. Strange to say it was always interpreted as law by government officials, whenever holding an election it was always declared as law, and the term three years, up to the date of the surrender.

Mr. Pedley, during the meeting, when asked whether the surrender would interfere with our elections, he told us very frankly, just the words he used: No! he said that the matter rests with the band and the law. It is most astonishing to us all, when we are now informed that there is no law for our election: apart from law, if it was only a privi-

lege, as they claim, we have had that privilege for many years in the past, and it should be upheld and maintained. I am fully aware, unquestionably, that it was the only protection we have had in the past, the term of those elected being three years. The band are entirely ignored and know nothing at all the actions of the chief and councillors, in fact they are more for white men than what they are for their fellow Indians who elected them, in fact they are entirely unfit for the position, and do not in any way represent the opinions of the band.

This letter is signed by Wm. Asham, ex-chief of the St. Peter's band, one of the most intelligent Indians I ever met, a man who would average well with the average white man in this House to-day. You will understand, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my remarks, what this man meant by speaking of the chief and council as he has done. The chief and council, as I stated on the floor of this House before, were bribed to betray their band. I beg to read part of another letter.

St. Peter's, Gilolo P.O.,
May 12, 1909.

Hon. Geo. Bradbury, M.P.,
House of Commons,
Ottawa.

Sir,—When Mr. Tracy knew that the Indians of St. Peter's band were going to be permitted to sell so much land from the Indian Department, he made some dealings with them, with hay; he would ask them to put up hay for him, so many tons for him to put up in stacks, and pay them in advance of \$2 per ton, and make them sign some paper; the Indian did not know what he had signed. This was power of attorney, and when the winter came the Indian would come and tell him the hay was ready and he would tell them that he would not need the hay, but have enough; you had better buy it back, and the Indian would take it back without proper understanding, and afterwards he charges them \$8 per ton and charge everything up. He registered these papers—soon comes up a very large amount, sometimes \$100 and more—this is the list I sent to you to see, and when the land was sold he sent these amounts to the land buyers and stopped their money and then the Indian could not draw his money although we, the chief and council, know that this is not right, and though we laid this matter before Indian agent M. Lewis, he would not help us, but he would say let the Indian Department know, and we know that the Indian agent helps the land buyers rather than help us.

Most of the Indians are dissatisfied with the selling of their land. I was trying to stop the sale of land when it was commenced, but the land buyers said they wanted to buy the land in a risk.

This letter is signed by W. H. Prince, one of the councillors. I now wish to read a petition which was sent to me, addressed to myself:

St. Peter's November 1, 1908.

Geo. H. Bradbury, M.P.,
Sir,—The undersigned beg to lay before you their following grievances. The surrender of