

nor in the interests of the Indians morally and physically that they should be allowed to remain there. It has been recognized for a great many years as a very desirable thing that these Indians should be removed from the Kitsilano reserve. It is also well known that there is considerable difficulty in dealing with Indians and their rights in reserves situated as this reserve is. I may say that the action of the provincial Government, as far as I have been able to learn by correspondence and otherwise, has been the result of a desire on their part to have these Indians removed for the general welfare of the community and for the benefit of the Indians themselves. I may intimate that it is also a very strong point with myself, as representative of the city of Vancouver, that this change should be brought about and I have been working towards that end. I may say, further, that the disposal of this reserve to a private interest is a thing to which I am unalterably opposed. This is a valuable piece of land and I believe it should be held for public purposes. The representations which I have already made to the Government will, I believe, lead them to recognize the value of this land for such public purposes and I trust it will be reserved in that way. I may say also that the provincial Government have intimated to me—it is not official, but in connection with correspondence about the matter, and as a result of public notices in the press—the provincial Government have intimated that it is their desire to protect all the public interests that may be affected. Therefore, if the hon. member for Edmonton claims that there is any danger, either to the public interest or to the interest of the Indians, he has no foundation whatever for such a claim.

The hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) stated that there were eighty-six acres in this reserve—I suppose if the debate continues at any length it will double in size; but as a matter of fact the reservation actually contains seventy-nine acres, out of which there is a right-of-way for the Canadian Pacific railway, Lulu Island line, and the electric line, leaving seventy-two acres actually in the reserve. It is situated at the mouth of False creek and is a very valuable location. The question of title has been under discussion in British Columbia, to my knowledge, for the last fifteen or twenty years, and has never been properly adjusted, but the present Government have co-operated with the provincial government and have actually appointed a commission which will sit in the course of the next week or two to adjudicate on these differences about title to Indian lands.

The member for South Wellington said that the title was undoubtedly held by the

Mr. STEVENS.

Crown in the right of the Dominion, and in the next breath he encouraged the idea that the question of title should be left to the adjudication of a commission. Now Mr. Speaker, in dealing with a question of this kind in this House, I think we should treat the question fairly and not seek to embarrass the Government by making false representations—I perhaps should not use that expression—but at all events making representations to the public which are contrary to the actual facts. The question of title is undoubtedly a difficult one to settle. By the British North America Act the charge of the Indians and the trusteeship and management of the land reserved for their use and benefit are to be assumed by the Dominion of Canada, and there are other provisions which have been interpreted to place the Indian lands entirely in the right of the Dominion. On the other hand, the province claims, and I think with considerable weight of argument, that the trusteeship and management only rest in the Dominion and that as soon as the Indians abandon a reserve then the lands revert to the province.

This brings me to the question of the value of this land, and I think I am probably as well qualified as any member in the House to express an opinion on that point. The hon. member for Edmonton said he was advised that the property was worth \$7,000,000. It is not right that any such figure should be given out to the public as the approximate value of that property; it is not worth anything in the neighbourhood of seven million dollars.

Mr. OLIVER: I would not like my hon. friend to understand that I made the statement that it was worth seven million dollars; I read from the Vancouver papers estimates of value of which one estimate was seven million dollars.

Mr. STEVENS: I want to say to the hon. gentleman here and now that on the basis of statements in the Vancouver papers and other papers, he endeavoured to cast reflections on the Government as regards the price which could be obtained for this reservation. He quoted seven million dollars and he said in effect that the iniquity of this transaction had out-distanced entirely the transaction in connection with the Donaldson homestead. He did that with the deliberate intention of conveying to the mind of the people of Canada an entirely false opinion as regards the value of this reservation.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not permissible to say that any member of the House did a thing with the deliberate intention of conveying a false impression to the minds of the people; that would be imputing improper motives to an hon. member.