

large reserves in the same position. There is one at Kamsack, where not more than 25 per cent of the land is occupied by the Indians, and the government is endeavouring to get the Indians to surrender a part of that land also. The reason for asking this legislation is to empower the government to give the Indian more cash so as to get him to agree to surrender. The government cannot take the lands unless the Indians agree to relinquish them, and this legislation will permit the government to give the Indians a larger proportion of what is realized for the sale of the lands. Most of the Indians who are on the reserve where this Act will be applied in Manitoba and portions of the Northwest Territories, are Indians who are living on and cultivating their lands. They are buying wagons, horses and machinery, and farming the land generally. Most of this money will be applied by them to purchasing machinery and improving their farms. That relates particularly to the province of Manitoba. I got that information from the inspector. I think this is a good provision to make. It will facilitate making arrangements with the Indians to surrender valuable lands which they do not require, in order that they may be occupied by white settlers.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There is no doubt about that—at least that is the view I take of it. The question I asked was whether there was to be any control by the government or its officials as to the manner in which the 50 per cent of the money paid for the lands and 10 per cent for the timber, was to be paid to the Indians, or is that left exclusively to be disposed of and managed by the Indians themselves?

Hon. Mr. WATSON—I understand the Indian receives the full benefit of the land that is sold and the 50 per cent.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Who is to spend it?

Hon. Mr. WATSON—The money is given to the Indians and they spend it as they please.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I do not rise to oppose the measure, but I really feel a great deal of doubt as to whether it is a sort of legislation which we ought to pass. Those

reserves are not intended for the Indian of the present day alone. They were intended as a permanent provision for the Indians.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—That is right.

Hon. Mr. POWER—And the law as we have it in the revised statutes provides that only 10 per cent of the money is to go to the Indians, and one of the effects of that is that the Indians, as a rule, are not anxious to part with their reserves because they get very little money out of them. Now we are offering half the price of the land to the Indians. That is a much greater inducement, and my own feeling about it is that there will be a tendency on the part of the Indians all over the country to part with those reserves, which would be rather an unfortunate condition of things. If the disposition of the reserves was confined to the older provinces like Nova Scotia and Ontario, I should not so much object; but in the western provinces, where there are a great many Indians, and where the lands are becoming more valuable every year, I doubt the wisdom or the fairness of the legislation.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—I do not think there is any possible danger of the government who are guardians of the Indians, asking them to surrender more land than they should.

They will protect the Indians and permit them to retain enough land. It is much better in the west, particularly in Manitoba, for the Indian reserve to be further north, because they are no good where there is civilization. They are all right in other territories. If they would relinquish those lands and take other lands further north where the soil is not fit to grow wheat, they would be much better off. They should be where they could hunt and fish. In Manitoba they occupy reserves where every acre, practically, is good wheat land, and so far as any fear of the Indians being able to bargain away more land than they should, I think the Indian Department will take sufficient care that enough reserve is left for the use of the bands.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (B.C.)—We know that in this country there are millions of acres of land in the hands of the government