

House of Commons Debates

SECOND SESSION—ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

SPEECH

OF

MR. GEO. H. BRADBURY

ON THE

SURRENDER OF ST. PETER'S INDIAN RESERVE, SELKIRK

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1910.

Mr. G. H. BRADBURY (Selkirk). Mr. Speaker, before you leave the Chair, I desire to call the attention of the House to a matter of very serious importance, a matter that affects the honour of this country, regarding a transaction that ranks, in my mind, high amongst the meanest ever committed by this government. It was an outrage against everything that was fair, against everything that was decent as between the government of the day and its ward, the poor unfortunate Indian who, this country believes, is watched over, guided and protected by the government. The manner in which this government has discharged its sacred trust towards the wards of the people is well exemplified by the way in which it manipulated and secured the surrender of the St. Peter's Indian reserve at Selkirk, which happens to be in my county. Just about a year ago I called the attention of the minister responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Indian Department (Mr. Oliver) to the scandalous proceedings of the land speculators in relation to this surrender.

I urged the minister at that time to make a searching investigation with the view of protecting the wards of the people and punishing those whom the Indians were alleging to have done them such a grievous wrong. But at that time the minister did not seem to realize that there was anything to investigate, and he practically told me that the Indian had made his own bargain and must abide by it. Now, that the House and the country may know something of this transaction, I purpose placing on record the terms of the surrender, or that part of the surrender that relates to the land which this government secured and divided up with their friends. I hold in my hand a memorandum submitted to the hon. the minister responsible for the Indian Department, by his deputy, Mr. Frank Pedley. This memorandum is dated just about one month after the surrender took place. It is dated at Ottawa, October 26, 1907, and reads as follows:

Mr. OLIVER. Pursuant to your instructions, I left Ottawa on the 17th ult. and reached Winnipeg on the 19th ult. to take