



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

OTTAWA

November 26th. 1918. X

MEMORANDUM

Hon. Mr. Meighen -

By Order in Council of the 19th. September we were given permission to allow exploration of the Sarnia and Walpole Island reserves for oil and gas, and to dispose of the same on terms approved by the Governor in Council. The grounds for this authorization were the representations of the Fuel Controller regarding the increased demands for fuel oil for Allied shipping and war industries, which conditions will likely prevail for some time after the war.

We advertised the oil and gas of these reserves in the public press and have received tenders. I beg to attach herewith report from the Officer in Charge of the Lands Branch and the tenders received.

You will note that there has been some protest from the Indians of Walpole Island, but none from the Indians of Sarnia. In fact, while the Sarnia Indians refused to surrender I think they might now be willing to do so. I do not think we may expect any protest from them if prospecting goes on on their reserve.

The Walpole Island Indians seem, however, to be hostile to the project, and I received a telegram and letter from the Bishop of Huron on this subject; the letter I am sending herewith. I will reply to those portions of the Bishop's letter which need answering; there are some outstanding errors in the letter. There is no very forceful argument against proceeding with the prospecting, except the desire of the Indians to have their own way. It is certainly in their interests to dispose of the oil and gas.

I would recommend that the tenders for the Sarnia reserve be accepted, and those for Walpole Island held in abeyance. The terms offered on the Sarnia reserve seem to me to be fair and reasonable.

*Duncan Chisholm*

Deputy Superintendent General.