

Indian Act

terms that they no longer want to be held responsible for the separation of Catholic married people in Canada.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. Henderson moved that the bill be read a third time.

Mr. Regier: On division.

Motion agreed to on division and bill read the third time and passed.

The Chairman: The business under private and public bills having been exhausted, the house will resume consideration of the business which was interrupted at five o'clock.

INDIAN ACT**AMENDMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR CHANGES IN ADMINISTRATION, AMOUNT OF LOANS, ETC.**

The house resumed consideration in committee of the following resolution—**Mr. Pickersgill**—**Mr. Robinson** (Simcoe East) in the chair:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Indian Act to provide for a number of changes in connection with the administration of the act; and to provide further that the Minister of Finance may from time to time advance to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration out of the consolidated revenue fund such sums of money as the minister may require for loans to Indians under section 69 of the act;

The total amount of outstanding advances under the said section not to exceed at any one time one million dollars in lieu of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars as at present.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Chairman, I am thinking of such lines as carpentry, diesel and motor mechanics, welding, logging, lumbering, saw-mill operation, prospecting etc. For Indian girls a course could be given in elementary household science, nursing, teacher training and other useful occupations. Employment conditions in recent years have been changing in the north. Construction companies are offering opportunities for those who are able and willing to work. This new development is critically important because the traditional livelihood of Indians by hunting and trapping has drastically declined in some areas. A new era is dawning in the north. Large areas are being opened up to development and existing industrial and economic activity is being speeded up. Let us see that the Indians, native to the north, also benefit from all this progress.

The time has come, and rightly so, when racial discrimination should be set aside and all our citizens who obey the laws and who help to build up a better country may be treated with equality. I was glad to hear the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys

[**Mr. Regier.**]

state in the house the other day that in his recent visit to mining districts of northern Ontario he found numbers of Indians employed in the mines and doing a good job. There are other projects as well that could be carried out in the north to give useful constructive employment to Indians. Many of these settlements could be improved by the provision of graded roads, ditches, side-walks, better water supplies and sanitary arrangements: in other words, a general and complete overhauling. This would be an opportune time to supply this employment and these facilities so that the natives could improve their communities. At the same time they would be working for wages to supplement their other income.

I wish particularly in this connection to congratulate the Department of National Health and Welfare on the establishment of two rehabilitation homes in Edmonton for Indians discharged from the Charles Camshell hospital. I understand that in these rehabilitation homes Indians who have recovered their health are given an opportunity to fit themselves for useful employment when they return to their own homes. They are given vocational instruction or on the job training. This project is of special interest to me because the Indian hospital at Edmonton accommodates patients from the Yukon Territory, as well as from the north country generally.

Of course it is true that no matter how rapidly new avenues of employment are found for Indians many of them will continue to depend upon trapping for all or most of their cash income, as well as on game and fish for most of their food supplies. Here again federal, provincial and territorial governments can do much to protect and conserve game and fur bearing animals in our northern areas.

The problem of the application of liquor laws to the Indian population is a persistent and vexatious one. Opinions over what policy is best to follow continue to differ widely among non-Indians who have given this problem much study and anxious thought. On the basis of many years' experience in the north, and as a result of close association with Indians and their problems, I am convinced that Indians should not be dealt with differently from non-Indian citizens of Canada so far as liquor laws are concerned. I pressed this point of view strongly on the special committee on the Indian Act during its sittings in 1951. As I pointed out at that time, the existing system affords the widest opportunity to the bootlegger to ply his trade. I feel that it is far better to appeal to the pride of Indians in this matter. Let us deal with them as adults, not as children.