

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

I have here a copy of a letter I have received from the department which reads in part as follows:

The company has until April 30, 1960, to submit a report on the first year's operation—

I should like to reiterate that this was the first year of operation after the signing of the contract. I am not sure as to the exact date of signing.

—at which time a meeting with all concerned is proposed to discuss and iron out any difficulties encountered. The manager of the company has been away recently but, on his return, all problems will be fully discussed—

I am not criticizing the local officials of the department but at the same time I think a 30-year contract is beyond all reason. At the request of the council I met the Indians in September of last year. I met the band chief and also 20 other members of the band at which time the chief told me in the presence of the band members that he did not sign the resolution and that he also had no knowledge of any portion of the contract. He said that one sheet of paper was presented to him and that he did not sign it. I have recently confirmed that at a time when he was just getting over his illness he apparently did sign it and possibly did not know what he was signing.

There has been a certain amount of trouble in the past season with respect to Christmas trees in that area and I believe owing to the efficiency of the local officials the matter has been straightened out to some extent. Certainly there is a feeling developing in the area against a contract of this nature. I think the department would be well advised to look into the matter very carefully and take into consideration all the facts with respect to operations in the past year. I sincerely hope they will shortly have a report on the operations during the past winter, and I believe that the matter should be given some consideration because of the competition that is developing in the Christmas tree business.

There is one other point I should like to bring to the attention of the department. I should like to suggest that five members representing the Indian bands of Canada from districts which can be designated at some future time should be elected to the House of Commons so that they themselves can bring their difficulties directly to the floor of the House of Commons. We have already made a start during the regime of the present government by the appointment of an Indian to the other place. It appears to me to be ridiculous that hon. members should bring the difficulties of the Indians to the floor of the House of Commons when they, the Indians, are more familiar with their problems than any other group in Canada.

[Mr. McFarlane.]

**Mr. Benidickson:** Mr. Chairman, I simply want to refer to a few items that are of concern to the people of our area where, as the minister knows, we have quite a substantial Indian population. We have four rather large Indian residential schools, all of which have required expansion. I think the minister will be very glad to know that she can expect from me today many more bouquets than brickbats. Our experience with the progressive developments made by the department has been a very good one during the past year. I saw the McIntosh school recently and the magnificent new addition there. The staff there are extremely pleased with their plant. The school offers a good practical training in home economics, woodworking and so on and is really a most excellent operation that cannot be bettered in other schools anywhere else in the country.

I want to remind the minister that in the Sioux Lookout and Dryden areas there are still a very substantial number of children living in the country northward for whom there is no accommodation at any of our schools in those areas. The schools are all too crowded. Neither location is asking for a school to be located there. Therefore I am satisfied that when the need is presented to me it is not based on any local enthusiasm for the construction of a building or school simply for its value to the community along commercial lines. I have written recently about the matter. I think it was brought up in debate here last year at which time it was said that an investigation would be made. Perhaps the minister has something to report in that regard.

I want to say one more thing about education. Recently I wrote to the department and pointed out that the trend that has been operative for quite a number of years now of trying to increase the number of day schools and thus avoid the separation of families is in my opinion a very worth-while development. I referred to one school where there seemed to be the kind of staff likely to provide good training in the practical arts and talents of home economics for the girls and woodworking and machine shop practice for the boys. I think these facilities are available in all four of our residential schools. I know it is hard to get staff but it would seem unfortunate if in developing the day school system we have schools where such courses could be given and are not available. I think that these facilities should be provided where possible.

A good example is Whitefish Bay. The minister knows our area because she has been a welcome visitor there. Whitefish Bay is situated midway between Fort Frances and Kenora. Because of the tourist industry