

*Concurrence in Committee Report*

they would have subcommittees of seven or eight members which would attend these Indian reserves on an itinerary on which they decided some time early last summer with the co-operation of the minister.

I should like to refer to the itinerary which most of the members of the committee were not interested in following. On Friday they would leave for the Caughnawaga reserve. They would leave here at seven o'clock in the morning and spend eight or ten hours on the Caughnawaga reserve where they would have a tour and meet with the chief and the council. I have been to the Caughnawaga reserve many times and I am sure I speak with some knowledge when I say it would be impossible in that time for an organized group to meet with the chief and the band council and complete an investigation of the many things that would be brought up in respect of that reserve.

The next day they would be at the Caradoc agency from 12.45 p.m. until 1.45 p.m. when they would meet with the Oneida council in the council hall. Between 2.30 and 3 p.m. they would meet with the Chippewa and Muncey councils at Mount Elgin school. Then between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. they would meet with the Moravian council at the band hall.

On the second day they would have three hours during which they would meet with the Indians at a formal meeting and, in my opinion, would have no opportunity to speak to the people there in order to discuss their problems. On Saturday they would have from one to one and a half hours to meet with the chief and council of the Sarnia reserve. They would have a maximum of three hours in which to meet with the chief and the council and tour the reservation on Walpole island. At 3.30 p.m. they would have an hour or an hour and a half after arriving at Kettle Point to meet with the chief and council and tour the reservation. On Sunday they would have approximately five and a half hours in which to meet with a large number of band councils and would have very little time in which to observe and investigate the problems which are facing the Indians. On Monday they would be on Christian island and would have a maximum of four and a half hours in which to tour the island and discuss problems with the band council.

Mr. Chairman, if the young member is wondering why some of the members were not impressed by this kind of a tour, then he fails to understand the real problem. As the hon. member for Skeena said, this is what the

[Mr. Peters.]

Indian agents submitted as to how members of parliament should investigate the problems which affect Ontario Indians. This is the kind of inspection the mine inspectors made of the mines which I worked in. They would phone to the mine and say that they would be there to make an inspection. They would arrive and make the inspection the following day. In the meantime the part of the mine which would be on the inspection tour would be all cleaned up. The safety conditions would be no better than they were before the inspector arrived except along the route that had been planned.

In the case of this itinerary it is no wonder that some hon. members objected. I have not given the complete itinerary but merely the time in which members would have an opportunity to hear the objections and representations made by the Indians. Considering the time involved in arriving and leaving, they would have ten hours to hear the representations by the councils.

I think every member of parliament is concerned about the problems which face the Indian today. I am certain there is not a member of this house who has not read with interest and certainly a great deal of shame the reports concerning the Indian community in Kenora over the last year. I am sure there is no one who is not of the opinion that the House of Commons must give direction to the Indian affairs branch through the minister. With the advice he received from the committee the minister must modernize the treatment which is provided for the Indian population.

Yet we see members of the committee being criticized. I am not a member of this committee, so this criticism is not directed to me. However, the members of the committee are criticized because they will not participate in the Cook's tour engineered by the Indian affairs branch which obviously will not accomplish anything. Such a tour would show the members of the committee that we have Indian reserves at five or six places. They would receive a first class view of those places and would have an opportunity to hear some of the leaders outline the problems which the members of the committee have heard over the years when Indian delegations have appeared before them.

I think it behooves us to exert more influence on the chairman of the committee and on the government so that instead of having motions such as this we will see some action in respect of the things which I believe the