

ravages that tuberculosis had made among the Indians of British Columbia. A few days ago I was reading the report of the board of health of that province, and in my opinion the situation has not improved. I am going to try to impress upon this committee in a few words the seriousness of the situation. The Indian population of British Columbia amounts to 3 per cent of the total population, but in 1940, of all infant deaths under the age of one year, 30 per cent were of Indian children. This is something which should give those charged with the care of the Indians some reason to think. Sixty per cent of all Indian deaths were of persons under thirty years of age; one-quarter were of children under one year, and one-third of children under five years of age. The report states:

For certain diseases, especially tuberculosis, pneumonia and bronchitis, Indian mortality exerts a very unfavourable influence upon the vital statistics of the province. As the Indians are the wards of the federal government they do not constitute a direct public health responsibility of the provincial board of health. Indirectly, however, their existence as a potential menace to the health of the people cannot be ignored in the public health programme.

So bad is the situation among the Indians of British Columbia that the vital statistics are issued in two columns, one including Indians and the other excluding Indians. I would suggest to the minister that in some way, in cooperation with the provincial department of health, which cooperation I think would gladly be given, he should work out some programme by which better care might be taken of the health of the Indians. In the next item, if I may be allowed to refer to it, I notice that grants to hospitals have been reduced from the very small amount of \$7,900 last year to \$5,400 this year. Under the circumstances I do not believe that is good enough. We cannot allow diseases such as tuberculosis to go unchecked among the Indian population and at the same time hope to stamp it out in the white population. That is all I wish to say, but having drawn this matter to the attention of the minister previously I wanted to draw it to the attention of this committee, in the hope that this time something may be done about it.

Mr. CRERAR: I do not like to delay the committee, but there are one or two matters in connection with which my hon. friend may not be aware of the facts. For the last four years we have been carrying on a steady programme of treatment of tuberculosis among the Indians, and that is particularly true of British Columbia. Only within the last eighteen months we have completed a fully equipped hospital at Sardis, not far from

Vancouver, and in that hospital to-day there are over 140 patients. Last year in British Columbia alone we spent over \$56,000 in the treatment of tuberculosis, and from April 30 of last year to January 31 of this year we spent \$218,000 throughout the dominion for the same purpose probably the full amount was spent by the end of March. We have under treatment some 671 patients. I may say to my hon. friend that this work was commenced only within the last four years; substantial progress is being made, and I can assure him that British Columbia is not being overlooked.

Item agreed to.

Indian Affairs branch.

169. Grant to provide additional services to Indians of British Columbia, \$100,000.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: Would the minister explain the reason for this extra \$100,000 for British Columbia?

Mr. CRERAR: This vote originated some fifteen or sixteen years ago and has been continued every year since that time. It is a vote to develop agriculture and to aid the Indians in fishing, and occupations of that kind.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: It is largely for medical services.

Mr. CRERAR: Part of it may be devoted to medical services.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: There is provision for a medical officer, a graduate nurse and special services to the amount of \$37,000. Why is it a special grant in this instance?

Mr. CRERAR: That originated in this way, that the Indians of British Columbia do not benefit from treaty moneys, while those in other provinces do. In lieu of that this special vote of \$100,000 was given for the Indians of that province.

Mr. COLDWELL: Is it correct to say that the Indians of the other provinces benefit from treaty money? Do the Indians of the White Bear reserve benefit in that way, and, if not, is something analogous to this done for those Indians? I do not believe the Indians in the White Bear reserve of Saskatchewan are treaty Indians. That is the reserve with which the hon. member for Weyburn is familiar.

Mr. CRERAR: Some Indians came to Canada from the United States. Probably that is the reserve my hon. friend has in mind. They do not participate in the treaty money. A majority of Indians in the provinces other than British Columbia do participate in the treaty money.