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different Indian reserves. There are many Indian reserves in Saskatchewan and there are many urban Indian people in my province as well. We must never forget that the Indian people were the first people of Canada. We often talk of two founding peoples or two founding nations, but the Indian people were the pre-founding nations, if you want to use that term, of Canada. There were many nations, languages and cultures from one part of what we know is Canada today to the other part of this great country. I believe very strongly, and our Party passed a resolution in 1973, that Indian self-government, Indian rights, must be enshrined in a positive way in the Constitution of Canada. I want to support as strongly as possible that position on behalf of my constituents and our Party in this debate today. That argument was put forth very forcefully and positively by the Hon. Member for Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands (Mr. Manly). It is also important that those rights be enshrined in such a way as to protect the traditions of the Indian people across Canada.

I want to quote one passage from a book entitled *Pathways to Self-Determination—The Canadian Indian and the Canadian State*. This book is edited by Leroy Little Bear, Meenno Boldt and Anthony Long. In talking about the Indian people we read:

They do not want merely a European-western model of Government that is run by Indians; rather, they want an Indian Government that operates in accordance with traditional principles and customs, one that rests on a spiritual base and emphasizes group, not individual, rights. They want a Government that will restore the relationship with the natural environment rather than trying to assimilate them into a dominant society.

It is a way of life that Indians should have the right to have enshrined in the Constitution of Canada. We will do whatever we can in this House in our Party, and I am sure other Parties will as well make sure that that happens very shortly. The constitutional conference comes next week, and I call upon the Premiers of every province to co-operate fully in recognizing the rights of the Indian people of Canada.

I do admit, for reasons I have already mentioned but also because I think we have treated Indian people in a very disgraceful way as a Canadian society over the past 100 years of our history, that Indian people have been discriminated against in very overt ways, economically, scholastically and in almost any way you can possibly think of.

Let me outline a few things and perhaps personalize it to my own province. I have eight Indian reserves in my riding, the Coté Reserve, the Keeseekoos Reserve, the Key Reserve, the Fishing Lake Reserve, the Peepeekisis Reserve, the Okanese Reserve, the Little Black Bear Reserve and the Starblanket Reserve. As I travel around these reserves I see a tremendous amount of poverty and a large number of children who do not get proper education and who are going hungry, I see a lot of young people dying, I see violence, crime, alcohol and drug use. As I travel into the City of Regina where many Indian people live, I see the same kind of thing. Many young people do not have jobs, are tied to alcohol, drugs and prostitution. They are involved in breaking and entering because they do not have opportunities and are leading a pretty listless life. We

are to blame as a white society for not giving these people the proper opportunities from one generation to the other.

Let us look at some of the facts of being an Indian in Canada to understand why the problems are so grave. For example, let us consider child welfare. The proportion of Indian children in care has risen five times the national average. Five times more Indian children are in care than the national average. In education, one in five Indian children graduates from high school, or 20 per cent. The national average is 75 per cent. On income, the average income of Indian people is one-half to two-thirds of the national average. Unemployment averages 35 per cent of the working age population of native people, compared with about 9 per cent or 10 per cent for the country as a whole. In some areas it goes as high or higher than 90 per cent. In my own riding there are some reserves where 75 per cent to 80 per cent of the people are unemployed and on welfare. They have nothing to do. On some other reserves, of course, in my riding the unemployment rate is much lower than that.

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A meaningful statistic for me is that of housing. Nearly 19 per cent of on-reserve Indian homes have two or more families living in them. Most of those homes are very small. Indian families are on average a lot larger than the average non-Indian family. In many cases you have 10 or more people living in a very small house. That is not conducive to proper rest for children who attend school and so on. Back in 1977, only 10 years ago, fewer than 40 per cent of Indian homes had running water and sewage disposal. At that time, over 90 per cent of Canadian homes had indoor plumbing. If you look at violent crime, the violent death rate is three times higher for native people than the national average. Infant mortality, for infants up to four weeks of age, is 60 per cent higher than the national average. Life expectancy among Indian people is much lower. If, for example, an Indian infant survives its first year, it can expect to live 10 years less than a non-Indian. Putting it the other way around, the Canadian average is 10 years longer than the Indian average. The average length of life for an Indian woman is 66 years. For a non-Indian woman it is 76 to 77 years. There is a tremendous difference in life expectancy. Hospital admissions for Indian people are more than double that of the non-Indian population.

I have given you just a few of the statistics covering the tremendous hardships faced by Indian people. We as a society must do whatever we can to try to right these wrongs. I realize that history has left us with many wrongs. This has happened over generation after generation after generation. We are not going to snap our fingers and write those wrongs in a single day, single year or single decade. However, I remind the House that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. I hope that next week this Parliament will see the First Ministers come back from their conference with a positive decision to enshrine in the Constitution self-government for the Indian people of this country. If that happens, we will be