

Adjournment Debate

very serious and menacing problem that is being posed by the growing movement of treaty Indians into urban centres that are not equipped to receive them.

Mr. Cliff McIsaac (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, we were treated tonight to the eloquence of my good friend from Rocky Mountain for the second time. I appreciate very much the points he made in his reference back to his question to the Minister of Indian Affairs some time earlier last month.

I can well appreciate the hon. member's concern. I think he also indicated that he appreciates the difficulties faced by the minister and the government, no matter who the minister is or which government it may be, in dealing with the very legitimate grievances of the Indian people in this twentieth century. We must remember that the problems of the Indians today were not foreseen, and could not have been foreseen, at the time the treaties were written a century or more ago.

The question of who is responsible for band Indians who leave the band and go to the cities has been with us for the last decade to a much greater extent than ever before. I am

sure the situation in Alberta is not much different from that in Saskatchewan. Through the years I have had something to do on the provincial side with finding solutions to this situation. It is regrettable that to some extent a federal-provincial jurisdictional squabble has arisen from time to time. Here again some of the representatives of the Indian people have themselves generated some of the difficulties, and this does not help resolve the situation.

In a brief sentence or two, may I support the present minister. He has been in my riding and is doing his level best to deal in a calm and rational manner with these problems. I am advised by departmental staff that in the particular situation referred to by the hon. member the minister's responses to the Treaty 7 Indians bands were, to the best of my knowledge, fair, direct and very positive ones.

I might add that the preparation of the various responses to some 20 briefs was done within a period of a month or so by officials in the minister's department as well as by himself, and a great deal of serious consideration was given to these briefs at the band meetings.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.
