

Supply—Northern Affairs

moments to express some of my views with regard to what I will term Indian matters. I should like to thank the hon. member for Skeena for referring to the problem of treaties 8 and 11. I recently had an opportunity of visiting many of the band councils in the areas affected by treaties 8 and 11 and know there is great concern on the part of the Indian peoples in the Territories for the settling of these two treaties.

The commission, which dates back to 1959, has made its report and I would join with the hon. member for Skeena in asking the minister of Indian affairs and northern development to give this matter urgent and serious attention. When doing this I would also suggest to him that the Indian peoples living in the vast Northwest Territories and Yukon have felt in the past that the commission visited them; and they did not have the opportunity as a group of people from one end of the land to the other to sit down and discuss among themselves what they would consider to be the resolution of treaties 8 and 11.

Therefore I would hope that the minister and the government will consider that treaties 8 and 11 must be resolved at an early date in order that the fears and apprehensions of the Indian peoples in the Northwest Territories and the northern part of Alberta may be resolved, so that they may believe that the government of Canada has acknowledged that the conditions of these treaties are to be met and the particular problem of land settlement will be resolved once and for all.

The second area which concerns me very much is the matter of economic stability for many of our Indian people who will not have the opportunity of education and growth in our economic community. I am thinking of the people who are continuing to live by the traditional means of hunting and trapping and are dependent on long-haired fur for their existence. One of the great problems facing this particular group of Indian people is the instability of the fur market and the fur trade itself. It is very difficult and frustrating for an individual who has decided to leave his home community and spend the winter months in the bush to return with what he might consider to be a fair catch of fur, sufficient not only to pay off his grubstake but help support his family in the coming months, and then find that the price of furs has depreciated and he is unable to sell the furs at a reasonable price.

[Mr. Orange.]

On the other hand, in the years when fur prices are high you also have the problem facing the Indian that the catch may not be great. I would hope that through the officers of the department of Indian affairs and northern development some consideration might be given to this question and a serious examination made in order to provide some means whereby a floor price would be established for long-haired furs. It is rather interesting to note that only in this particular primary industry is there no subsidy. It can perhaps be argued that fur is a luxury item. It is for the person wearing the fur, but not for the person responsible for bringing it to the market.

I can think of no better way whereby our peoples, who will not participate in economic development as a result of our educational and development programs, will be able to hold their heads high in our society, to be accepted as people able to maintain themselves, than to have some system of floor price, subsidy, call it what you may, introduced into our economy.

I know that during the course of the committee's hearings great interest was expressed in the proposed visits to various Indian communities throughout Canada. I believe the subcommittees will have an opportunity of visiting Indian communities and, hopefully, obtaining from the Indian people to whom they talk a free expression of their views. Perhaps on the return of the subcommittees the committee will be able to recommend to this house ways and means of improving and helping the economic growth and cultural development of our Indian peoples.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Chairman, my remarks will be brief. They deal with a point that is connected with the minister's administration, although it is not directly under him but is part of the administration of his colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare. This deals with northern health services and the position of the Charles Camsell hospital in Edmonton. My remarks are perhaps a little irrelevant but they are germane and timely in view of the comments made by the deputy minister of national health to the committee on national health and welfare the other day, in that he felt the principle that should apply is integrated health services with regard to Indians and Eskimos.

The Secretary of State is in the house and she will recall the lengthy interchange of correspondence between herself and myself