

Far from opposing such encroachments made under the false pretense of progress, especially by the creation of golf courses as in Oka and Caughnawaga, the Indian affairs branch has encouraged and helped some without thinking in terms of the Indian future and Indian interests. The last in line is the one brought by the hon. member from Bonavista. But the Oka Indians believe that this policy is not a peculiar one to the government, but that it has been the line of thought of the branch since its creation.

When our brethren from Caughnawaga were expropriated by the St. Lawrence seaway authority, the lawyer for the Indian affairs branch who at this time was paid with funds earmarked for the protection of Indians, and who normally should have been looking after the interests of the Indians, did so well to "legalize" the expropriation that, once it was completed, he was rewarded for his services by being appointed an officer for the St. Lawrence seaway authority.

Is that the role of the Department? It should work only for the benefit of the Indians. They cannot help themselves without the help of the department; and yet whenever there is a problem of importance the Indians are told to look after it themselves, to seek legal advice at their own expense and to do whatever they will. But once again the Oka Indian asks: What is the purpose of the Indian affairs branch?

The Oka Indians have come to consider the Indian affairs branch as the refuge of colonels, and all kinds of people who had to have a job somewhere, but who could not fit in anywhere. So they were appointed to the Indian affairs branch. They have no preparation for the job, no interest in the work and, above all, they have a marked dislike for Indians and Indian demands. Of course there are exceptions to the general rule. We do not want to put in this category all members of the Indian affairs branch.

The Oka Indians believe that it is about time the whole problem of Indian affairs in Canada should be reconsidered in the light of the 20th century. Canada has been encouraging the birth of new nations and the explosion of strong nationalistic movements.

The Indians of Canada have taken cognizance of their identity, originality, fundamental characteristics and history. They now want to share responsibilities in Canada. They have realized that it is time for them to obtain official recognition in their own country and that they be entitled to seek redress for the numerous injustices their forefathers had suffered in the past, and are still suffering today.

The time has gone when they could be parked in reserves like cattle, left to themselves, without help, with no possibility to have their point of view heard and understood, and with their lack of education and knowledge of the white man's numerous legal tricks.

A reserve must become a meeting place where the children of the same family gather, and therefore it must be designed for the benefit of the band as a whole, and not only for the few.

Housing facilities should be of the same quality as that of the surrounding Canadian communities. In fact, it should be better, because the Indians should receive the help of the best urbanists who can design the reserve facilities in terms of Indian traditions. The Indian arts and crafts should be developed the same way as the Eskimo arts and crafts have been developed in recent years. Whatever the facilities, they should be created right on the reserve. Small industries could be incorporated, and Indian souvenirs could be manufactured by Indians and not stamped "Made in Japan".

Indians should be given greater opportunity for self-government. For that purpose they should be encouraged to make their own decisions, and to look after their execution under the guidance and leadership of Canadian experts.