

OIL BENEFITS INDIANS: The oil industry last year paid a total of \$860,000 to Canadian Indians for exploration rights on Indian reservations and as royalties on producing wells, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Mr. Walter Harris, said on January 15.

The majority of Indians benefitted, he said, live in Alberta and Saskatchewan, where oil exploration and production is most active. They have used this money in various ways: for farm machinery, better housing, medical services, and personal incomes.

The practice has been for Indian bands to surrender mineral rights in their lands for negotiation by the Indian Affairs Branch, which operates under Mr. Harris' Department. Indian Affairs then offers exploration rights for tender and the income thus derived goes into the band fund.

There are approximately 5,500,000 acres of Indian reserve land in Canada, of which the mineral rights to 2,500,000 acres were surrendered to Indian Affairs for negotiation. At present, 1,700,000 acres of this land has been placed under contract with various oil companies. There are 302 contracts involving approximately 1,200,000 acres in Alberta; 65 contracts covering about 500,000 acres in Saskatchewan, and a few more covering a total of around 50,000 acres in Ontario and Manitoba.

Among the more fortunate is the Enoch band, whose Stoney Plain reservation west of Edmonton earns approximately \$8,000 a month in leases and royalties. Approximately half of this, amounting to \$15, for each man, woman and child in the tribe, is distributed in cash. The remainder goes into band funds for special projects such as an extensive housing programme and assumption of all hospital and medical expenses.

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REHABILITATION AGREEMENTS: The Minister of Labour, Mr. Gregg, announced on January 20 that Newfoundland and Alberta had signed agreements with the federal Government for the co-ordination of rehabilitation services for disabled persons. Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Manitoba had signed agreements late last year, and similar agreements were now being studied by other provinces.

Mr. Gregg said that the signing of each of these provincial agreements was an important step forward toward a complete national system of rehabilitation, through which any handicapped Canadian could be helped to gain his place in the community, regardless of where he lived or what his disability was. There were thousands of handicapped men and women in this country who were anxious to become self-supporting, and who could be placed in suitable jobs through a complete rehabilitation service.

The agreements signed by Newfoundland and Alberta, like those signed by the other three provinces, provided that the federal Govern-

ment would spend up to \$15,000 in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1954, to match expenditures by the Provinces, on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

The specific purpose of these agreements, the Minister stated, was to aid the Province in the appointment of a Provincial Coordinator of Rehabilitation and the maintenance of his office and staff. The Coordinator would be a member of an inter-departmental rehabilitation committee to be established within the province.

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FARM PRICES DOWN: The Bureau's index of farm prices of agricultural products for all Canada (Newfoundland excluded) moved downward in November, according to the preliminary estimate, to 228.9 from the revised figure of 235.8 for October. From September to October the index, which is based on 1935-39 equals 100, was unchanged. The decline in November was largely a result of substantially lower prices for live stock and eggs. Prices of dairy products rose, while almost no change was recorded for grains and potatoes.

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EMPLOYMENT REPORT: During the last few months, the expansionary trend in output and employment in the Canadian economy has lost some of its momentum, the Department of Labour and Dominion Bureau of Statistics announced on January 20. In the autumn of 1952, total employment expanded contraseasonally particularly in the manufacturing sector, and remained high during the winter of last year. During the same period in 1953, total employment declined somewhat more than seasonally although it still remained approximately at year earlier levels. This combined with the continued growth of the labour force resulted in a level of unemployment considerably higher than the relatively low level of 1952.

In addition to the usual seasonal declines in many industries, substantial inventories and increased import competition resulted in lower levels of output and employment in a number of industries. Manufacturing employment, which last August was about 4 per cent above 1952 levels, declined so that by November it approximated the 1952 level. While employment in many industries such as construction, transportation equipment, transportation, food and beverages, electrical apparatus, service and others is still well above 1952 levels, employment stabilized or declined in producer goods, some consumer hard goods industries and in lumber, textiles, clothing and mining industries.

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Premier Frost of Ontario prophesies for his Province a population of about 6,000,000 in the next five or six years.