

Supply—Indian Affairs

mission to inquire into that very matter in order to see that the hunting rights may be reserved in those very areas for the Indians. The Indian department is taking steps so that its representatives may be able to appear before that commission and present the case of the Indians. The former Superintendent General of Indian Affairs has stated that the expenditure has been growing, and that is true. We have been building residential schools throughout Canada so that these people may become educated, and as the schools increase in number of course both capital expenditure and cost of maintenance will increase. That is being looked after.

The main reduction this year is in capital expenditure; that is, we are not undertaking this year to build new schools or to construct new roads in these reserves. But it will be observed that the sum of \$200,000 has been inserted in the supplementary estimates to provide for hospitalization and against destitution that may occur amongst our Indian wards. This was necessary because the condition which now prevails could not have been anticipated when the main estimates were brought down. We had hoped, as every Canadian had, that conditions would become better, but under conditions that now prevail, when it is difficult for white people to secure work, it is more difficult for Indians to do so, and in addition to that the Indians' former hunting rights have been curtailed by reason of the hunting by the whites. But we have taken the necessary steps to provide for these people.

Mr. DONNELLY: What is the Indian population by provinces?

Mr. MURPHY: The total Indian population is in round figures about 108,000.

Mr. BENNETT: Men, women and children.

Mr. MURPHY: By provinces it is as follows:

Nova Scotia..	1,827
New Brunswick..	1,606
Prince Edward Island..	315
Ontario..	27,420
Quebec..	12,885
British Columbia..	25,107
Manitoba..	12,263
Saskatchewan..	10,784
Alberta..	10,311
Northwest Territories..	4,150

Mr. DONNELLY: Is the Indian population increasing or decreasing?

Mr. MURPHY: It is about stationary.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): It is not in any spirit of criticism but rather to be helpful that I wish to offer a few remarks with respect to the question raised by the hon. member for East Algoma. For some years we tried to make arrangements with the provincial governments for the purpose of having set apart in Ontario or Quebec or the older provinces, hunting areas from which the white trapper would be excluded, that is, areas in addition to the reserves that are set aside for the Indians. Naturally the provinces did not view this matter at the start with a great deal of favour, but after considerable discussion about the matter on different occasions with various ministers, I found a disposition on the part of the provinces—and I am passing this on to the minister now—to consider with some favour a proposition of that kind. What the minister says is probably true. The plains Indians with a tendency towards farming have a much better chance of securing a livelihood than those in the wooded areas, who have to obtain their living by hunting. If an arrangement could be made with the provinces whereby the Indians might have the exclusive privilege of hunting in certain areas, this would be of immense benefit to the Indians and helpful to the exchequer of the federal government. I mention this now merely in order that the minister may be able to say with full assurance that he has the complete support of those who were in office before him in endeavouring to secure this privilege for our Indians, because unless something of this kind is done, the plight of the Indians who gain their subsistence by hunting will be serious. Year by year it has been growing gradually worse, and the fact that the price of fur has increased in value has only added to the difficulty. This situation is not confined to any one province; it is general throughout Canada.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Several weeks ago I brought to the attention of the minister the complaints of the Indians on the Pasqua reserve with regard to the granting of a lease to the Antapa Club. I should like to ask the minister if it is possible in some way that the wishes of the Indians may be met in this case.

Mr. MURPHY: I understand at the present time there are no complaints before the department, although in former times protests were received in regard to the matter.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I took some time to bring to the attention of the minister and the house the protests which the Indians had definitely made to me with regard to the lease. Those protests were very active and recent; they came to me only a few weeks

[Mr. Murphy.]