

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions that any member of the committee wishes to ask? If not, I shall ask Dr. Percy Moore to tell us something about medical conditions and what the department is doing, or may do, for the Indians. Dr. Moore?

Dr. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome this opportunity to discuss some of the problems in connections with the health of the Indians of Canada. Now, there were some questions which I have read, but I do not think they are very specific. Any specific questions that may be addressed to me, I will endeavour to answer them to the best of my ability.

Mr. MACNICOL: My question has to do with several remote Indian reservations which are quite a long distance away from civilization, as we understand it. I visited one such reservation and I asked the chief, "When the Indian agent arrives here, who comes with him?" He said, "The doctor comes with him or the nurse, and others". Some doubtless who should not be allowed on the reservation at all when the Indians are getting their treaty money. Hangers-on should be kept off at the time of the treaty money disbursement. Now, on this particular reservation several people had died lately and I asked the chief why the doctor did not look them over when he was here. The chief answered that the doctor comes in with the Indian agent. Now, this particular agent came in by a Diesel engine boat, because he had to go quite a piece to get there. The chief said that the doctor comes in with the Indian agent and goes out with him, remaining for a period possibly running from morning till afternoon. On that reservation there were—I am now speaking from memory—perhaps 150 people. Now, isn't it a physical impossibility for any doctor to examine that number of Indians in a few hours' time?

Dr. MOORE: Quite, sir.

Mr. MACNICOL: Then, what would you suggest?

Dr. MOORE: If I might be permitted to enlarge on what our facilities are, I would tell you what I think we probably should do. I might cite some of the more acute and pressing problems in connection with health administration among the Indians. I know the problem of which you speak. Unfortunately, it is not confined to one reserve. It is quite general. Our health services vary from adequate and complete health service in some areas—

Mr. MACNICOL: You said adequate?

Dr. MOORE: Yes, adequate, to almost nothing in others, in the more unsettled areas. In some of the areas which have been under discussion we have as good health services as have many rural districts, such as the Brantford reserve, and the same at Caughnawaga and St. Regis.

Mr. MACNICOL: They have a very nice little hospital there.

Dr. MOORE: We operate, in all, some fifteen hospitals, and our services range from that all the way to the more remote areas, say to Island lake, where there are 1,100 Indians, and we have not even got a resident nurse.

Mr. MACNICOL: Why is there not a resident doctor there?

Dr. MOORE: We have not got the facilities for it. The closest doctor to that place is at Norway House, which is roughly 300 miles across the hinterland.

Mr. MACNICOL: If the department or you should recommend to the minister to bring in an estimate and include in that estimate provision for a doctor for that reserve and the cost of putting up a residence for him to live in, the house would certainly pass it.

Dr. MOORE: I hope that I am still in the department at the time when we can supply that type of service, because, to my mind, we are at the present time doing far too much for the Indians in the settled areas, in proportion to what own medical services out of their own pockets and call a doctor from Lachine we are doing for the other Indians. Those at Caughnawaga can supply their