

killed on February 16, 1941, on highway No. 21, about two miles from his home. The police and the county coroner were informed at once, and an inquest was held in Southampton on February 19. The jury reported that Ernest John met his death as a result of being hit by an automobile, and up to the time when Mr. McGill, director of the Indian Affairs branch, was good enough to give me a report about the matter, namely March 13, 1942, the car and the driver had not been located.

There was a second case. An Indian named Louis Kahgee was killed on the same highway on October 25, 1941. This time the automobile and the driver were found, the name of the man being James Porter. He was tried, convicted and fined \$20 and costs, and his permit was cancelled. A fine of \$20 and costs, after the second death on that highway, seems to me to be out of proportion to what should be done in cases of this sort.

I assume that efforts were made though without success, to find the car and the driver that killed the first Indian. We, I am quite sure, would have prosecuted in every way that inquiry had it been in one of our provinces and had one of our own white citizens been killed, and I am quite sure that had a second white man been killed on that highway within a few months, the man responsible having been found, we would have made very careful investigation as to whether he was responsible in both cases. In any event, I do not think the fine would have been \$20 and costs.

I am not blaming the minister. I am not blaming the department. But I bring this to the attention of the committee because I think it shows in some degree that there are people who value these Indians rather lightly. I am not going into the health situation, because that comes under another item. I believe the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis) is going to say something on that score, and I do not want to duplicate to-night, because it is getting late. But I bring the matter I have mentioned to the attention of the minister, the department and the committee, to make a protest against the manner in which these cases were apparently treated by some authority, I do not know who they were.

Mr. MacNICOL: Are there any Indians working in the Indian department here in Ottawa?

Mr. COLDWELL: May I have an answer from the minister?

Mr. CRERAR: Before I answer the question of the hon. member for Davenport, may I say a word with regard to the matter raised by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart. It is true that these regrettable incidents happened. Whether the victim be an Indian or a white person, it is the duty of the provincial authorities to do all they can to apprehend the person who is guilty and to punish him. Unfortunately, in the first case cited they were not able to find the culprit who had run this Indian down and killed him. I do not wish for a moment to reflect upon the care or the energy with which the provincial police discharged their duty. I assume that they exhausted all the means they had to try to find the guilty party. Precisely the same thing happened in the second case. The guilty party was apprehended; he was taken before a magistrate; he went through the ordinary processes of law where the crown prosecuted. Whether or not the magistrate, in the light of the circumstances revealed, showed undue leniency, I cannot say, but the point I wish to make is that the administration of the law in regard to both these cases rests precisely where it would have rested had the victims been whites instead of Indians.

I am inclined to agree that on the face of it the penalty imposed in the second case appears light. In saying that, I do not wish to reflect on the administration of justice. However, I think my hon. friend has probably rendered some service in drawing the matter to the attention of the committee, and I have not any doubt that his remarks, and perhaps my own also, will reach the proper authorities who have to do with the administration of the law in these matters.

As regards the question raised by the hon. member for Davenport, there is one Indian working in this department. I should say that that is in the head office here. We have, of course, a number of Indian schoolteachers teaching in day schools in various parts of the country.

Mr. MacNICOL: I investigated the Indian department in Washington and in a number of states of the American union. In each case I found quite a number of Indians in the Indian department.

Mr. CRERAR: As a matter of fact, I believe there are several in the service here in Ottawa.

Mr. MacNICOL: That is what I asked.

Mr. CRERAR: I mean, in various departments of the government service. I am speaking now of the Indian branch of Mines and Resources.