

doctor, dentist and so forth for 1,724 Indians amounted to \$17,240, or \$10 each. On another occasion I asked the minister about gardens and the raising of poultry by the Indians for their own use. In one reservation I visited there were two tractors, and they were cultivating from ten to fifteen acres. One tractor was afterwards moved to operate a small sawmill and another was placed in an outshed. Cultivation becomes expensive under such conditions, especially when one considers that they raised 1,000 bushels of potatoes of which they used only 200 bushels, sold 200 bushels and allowed 600 bushels to rot.

I suggest that the situation with regard to launches should be investigated. If a launch cost \$1,500 and it is found that it already has had approximately \$7,000 of repairs put on it, there is something to be looked into. I am not blaming anyone. Perhaps it was left outside during the winter, the same as was done in connection with a sawmill, with its belts and wheels, and tractors, with no covering, except a board roof but without sides. That is expensive.

However, I will close my remarks, although I should like to have said a good deal more on behalf of the noble red man. His fish are being killed through pulpwood operations; the streams and lakes being poisoned so that one can find dead fish strewn on top of the water. There seems to be no one delegated to defend the Indian. The department in Ottawa is hundreds of miles away from the remote reservations and cannot possibly know what is going on. If we had a parliamentary committee with power to look into the whole question thoroughly, then I think many things that are not as they should be in our Indian administration would be remedied. They are not attributable to anyone and I hope no one in the department will take offence but there is room for improvement.

Mr. CRERAR: Substantial progress is being made in administration.

Mr. MacNICOL: I said so.

Mr. CRERAR: The Indians are scattered over Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific, there being a total Indian population of 118,000 or 119,000. Their welfare and their health are the constant study of the officials of the department, and while in many instances the progress which has been made has not been such as we should like to have seen, I can assure the committee that considerable advance has been made. Take, for example the matter of health. In 1936, for the first time, we tackled the problem of tuberculosis among the Indians, and we have made considerable progress since then in eradicating this disease so far as the Indian

is concerned. That is of importance not only for the welfare of the Indian but from the point of view of the white population as well.

Another thing I would mention is the effort that has been made in the last four or five years towards the restoration of fur in the northern parts of the provinces. One-third of the Indians live in the northern parts of the provinces or in the Northwest Territories, and their only means of livelihood is their fur catch. By wasteful methods it has become depleted, and it may be of interest to the committee to give some of the results of what has been attempted in restoration in this direction. In the northern part of Manitoba there are over 5,000 Indians and their livelihood had practically gone. In one particular area, sixty or seventy miles east of the Pas—

Mr. MacNICOL: I have been there.

Mr. CRERAR: —there used to be at one time a large production of muskrats, but it had declined to the point where in 1935 fewer than 2,000 muskrats were taken off that area. I approached the provincial government in 1936 and offered to pay half the expense of rehabilitating that area, and the province was interested from the point of view of the half-breeds. We were interested from the point of view of the Indians. Works were carried on at a total cost, including supervision and everything else, of around \$130,000 over a period of two years. The area was opened up for trapping in 1940, and in that year the amount of fur taken off the area was valued at about \$162,000.

Mr. MacNICOL: To the Indians?

Mr. CRERAR: No, to the half-breeds and the Indians. The share of the Indians was \$35,000. About 100 families of Indians were provided for at \$20 a month the year round. A few months ago the trapping season for this area was opened, and the total catch for this season was about 200,000 pelts. The revenue from it was \$350,000.

Mr. MacNICOL: How much will go to the Indians?

Mr. CRERAR: There were 700 trappers of whom 180 were Indians. Of these, 155 will receive about \$300 each, and twenty five head trappers will receive about \$380 each. That is not paid out to the Indians when the fur is sold. It is placed in a trust account and each Indian trapper is paid so much a month. We have taken several hundred Indian families in that region off relief in the last two years. Some investigations are going on in Ontario, and there are other areas in Manitoba that are being