

conomic and other conditions of the Indian people improved in the last two decades. They still, of course, remain well below the conditions enjoyed by other Canadians. That document removes all doubt about that fact. Life expectancy, a reflection of health standards, is still ten years less among Indians than it is among the national population. University enrolment has increased, however—this is on the positive side—from 57 in 1963 to 2,700 in 1979. That was the good news.

The following is the bad news. Indian participation in the labour force is still less than what would be desirable. It is about two-thirds of the national level. Only about 32 per cent of Indians of working age are employed. Generally speaking, reserve resources have not been developed, due partly to the fact that many Indian reserves do not form economic units, and almost half of them are relatively inaccessible.

During the past ten years the greatest proportion of increases in government expenditures for Indian affairs have been in community services and economic development, but development funding remains at less than 10 per cent of over-all funding in the department. That is a source of frustration to myself and has been to my predecessors and others. It is indicative of the problem with respect to limitation of funds. It is a problem I have as Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, but it was also a problem faced by my immediate predecessor. Many programs involve heavy funding commitments.

I would like to deal with one matter to which my hon. friend referred. He said that only 30 cents of each dollar reaches Indians. I would like to have that figure examined in more detail by the committee because, quite frankly, I question its accuracy. The figures I have, and those which I think have been put before the committee, indicate that the administrative costs of the department are not more than 12 per cent of the entire budget. Certainly the 30 cents comes into question when one looks at that figure, and also when one recognizes that 35 per cent of the entire budget of the department is administered by the bands themselves. Perhaps when the hon. member refers to that figure he is talking about those bands which have taken over administration. They are taking over 35 per cent. There are bands which have not, but moneys expended on their behalf is not counted as part of the 30 cents. This casts a very different light on a figure of that kind, but the hon. member quotes it without further analysis.

I will carry on with some positive aspects. I think they should be emphasized simply because, when I talk with many Indian people, they express some unhappiness about the constant conduct of some of us in the House of Commons who continually refer to the gloomy aspects of their conditions. One said that he is a little tired of being considered the "poor little Indian" all the time. I can understand how they feel in that regard, so there might be some merit in talking about some of the positive things which have happened.

For instance, one could look at the participation of natives at all levels of government and, more particularly, at the active involvement in Indian political associations which have developed over many years. However, setting that aside and talking

just about their representation at all levels of government, I refer to Senator Guy Williams, a native from British Columbia; Senator Willie Adams, an Inuit from the Northwest Territories; and the hon. member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Ittinuar), an Inuit from the Northwest Territories who is a member of the New Democratic Party. I understand that the hon. member for Winnipeg-St. James (Mr. Keeper) will speak after I do. He is a native member.

Frank Calder is a native MLA in the B.C. legislature. Not now active but defeated are the Hon. Leonard Marchand, a native from British Columbia, and Wally Firth who was a Dene member of Parliament from the Northwest Territories. Many others ran but were not elected. They ran and conducted good campaigns with the determination to serve here one day. Some of us have been defeated. I certainly was. Bill Shead is native Liberal from Manitoba. Don Moses is a native who ran for the Liberals for a seat in the House of Commons. He is from British Columbia. George Erasmus is a member of the New Democratic Party who ran in the Northwest Territories. Archie Patrick is a native member of the New Democratic Party from British Columbia. Jim Gladstone, I think, became a senator under the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker. Tagat Curley is an Inuit Liberal. Andrew Kirkness is a native Liberal from northern Manitoba, and Charles Sark is a native from Prince Edward Island.

Mr. Nielsen: And Joe Jack.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I missed Joe Jack, and I am sure I missed some others, but this list is indicative of the number who are sitting or who have run.

Mr. Nielsen: Erik Nielsen, Whitehorse Indian.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Erik Nielsen from Yukon. It is a positive thing that band governments have emerged to take basic responsibility for local administration. That is a very encouraging sign and, as I say, 35 per cent of the entire funds are now under local administration. That trend is going upward and I am sure will continue, ending the problem of self-reliance about which the hon. member in the official opposition complains.

There is general agreement among Indian people and the government that relations between the two are more positive now than they were. There are still complaints. There is a far greater degree of Indian participation in the provision of health, education, community and other services than there was a decade ago. Indian people have greater access to more kinds of employment, both on and off reserves, than they did before.

I might talk about a greater degree of recognition of the government's position. The hon. member says that the government has done nothing to protect the culture, language and health of Canadian Indian people. I might add that one of the reasons for the preparation and release of the "Indian Conditions" report was to create an awareness among those interested in the affairs of Indians—including, presumably, the official opposition—of the real nature of the problem and to