

the people are worse off than any of the Indians who didn't sell their land.

When cattle were introduced to our reserve many of the Indians did very well in looking after their own individual herds. But again the Government stepped in and told them that the cattle should be handled as a single herd. The owners reluctantly obeyed, with the result that, as the years went by, the only time they knew they had cattle was when they got a cheque from the agency office. But when severe losses were caused by bad winters, the herds dwindled to such an extent that the individual owners were told to look after the cattle themselves. Some of the owners were glad to get them back and became successful ranchers, but most of them had lost interest during the years the herds had been taken away, and so they sold them to other Indians or let them wander out on the range.

It has been things like this that have discouraged many of the Indians and made them quit farming or ranching. When they first settled on their reserves most of them were anxious to work, but the Government kept taking away more and more responsibilities until they lost their initiative and confidence. Some attempts have been made in recent years to restore these things, but it will take time. When a man is treated like a child for many years, he is naturally slow to take any responsibility. On some reserves the Government has done the Indian's work, transacted his business, taken his children away from his home to be educated and given him no chance to think for himself or do anything as an individual. And yet he is expected to show progress.

The great need today is to assist and encourage our people to work their lands for themselves so they can support their families by their own efforts. On reserves such as mine, where there is good farming, the young men should be screened before being located. There are some people who would never make a success of farming but might be happier raising cattle or doing other work. But they should be encouraged to do these things themselves, without being under the direction of the agent and being forced to do things that they cannot succeed in.

I remember that I had no experience in 1929 which illustrates how the agent's control can kill a man's initiative. I had threshed about three thousand bushels of grain that fall and had an operating debt of about \$500 which was endorsed by order supplies from the Indian agent. When the price of wheat went up to \$1.34 a bushel some of us farmers asked the agent for a permit to sell our grain

so that we could clear our debts. But he would not listen to us. He said he was holding out until the price rose to \$1.40. Well, the price dropped to about \$1.00 and just before Christmas it rose to \$1.23. We felt sure the agent would sell, but he didn't. Then came the crash and our wheat was finally sold for less than 80 cents a bushel in the spring of 1930.

I was so discouraged that I quit farming to go to work in the coal mines so that I could support my wife and family. I didn't go back to farming for three years. Other farmers also were getting fed up with having all their business transacted by the agent and were talking about quitting. It was then that the Inspector of Indian Agencies asked me to go back to my farm. I said I would on condition that I would have the right to do my own business under his direction, but I felt I should have the right to sell the proceeds of my land when I saw fit to sell it. Those of us who were farming made a better success of our lives when that right was given to us.

During my recent travels to the various reserves in the northern part of the provinces I have seen that many of their timber resources have been exhausted. There is evidence in sawdust piles and stumps to prove that they had timber, but all that is left is bush and poplar. Where the land is suitable it should be cleared and used for farming or raising fodder for stock cattle, rather than the Indians living on relief. It would be much better if they could be put to work to clear the brush off these lands so as to make it productive for grain for fodder and such like.

Most of these areas I have visited also complain that commercial fishing has depleted the supplies and the Indians are having a hard time catching enough fish to make a living. But possibly the hardest hit is the trapping industry, upon which so many of the northern Indians depend for their livelihood. Their problem is in not getting a sufficient price for their furs to make their efforts worth while. Inasmuch as other industries are receiving assistance or subsidies from the Government, it might be wise to investigate the possibility of assisting the Indian trappers by a form of subsidy that will keep these people employed.

All these setbacks in farming, fishing and trapping have contributed to a deep feeling of frustration among these people. Many of them want to work but they are thwarted by a lack of employment or the lack of a sufficient education to enter new kinds of work. This frustration is also present among some employees and agents of the Indian