

Deputy Superintendent General, Mr. D. C. Scott.

Mr. Speaker, having listened carefully to the case as presented by Mr. O'Meara, on behalf of the allied tribes of British Columbia and having given the whole subject and his argument such study and consideration as I am capable of doing, and having in mind the fact that the land question was their main reason why this Bill should not pass, (they not having presented or urged any objection against the provisions of the Bill itself), I am fully convinced that his objections are groundless and in the main hypothetical, and believing that it is highly desirable in the interests both of the Indian and of the white population of British Columbia, that this Bill should pass, I support it with full confidence that its administration will be marked by kindness, consideration and firmness.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall clause 1 carry?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: What was the nature of the amendments made by the committee?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Where compulsory education is provided the amendment suggested by the committee states that the children shall only be compelled to attend such school as shall be the nearest available school of the kind required.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Will the minister state generally the nature of the amendments?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I think it will be better to state them as each clause is dealt with.

Section 1 agreed to.

On section 3—Enfranchisement of Indians.

On subsection (1)—Enquiry and report as to fitness of Indians to be enfranchised.

Mr. BOYS: Mr. Chairman, with regard to the amendment in clause 1 that has been referred to, and which is to be found on page 2 of the Bill, it provides that in the case of compulsory attendance the child shall be sent to the nearest available school of the kind required. In other words, it was thought that the child might be taken, for instance, from one province to another, and the amendment was made to guard against that.

Are we to take up section 3, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: We are on section 3. Sections 1 and 2 were carried.

Mr. BOYS: There is a more or less important amendment in section 107. As it read before it was as follows:

The Superintendent General may appoint an officer or person to make inquiry and report as to the fitness of any Indian or Indians to be enfranchised.

The amendment suggested by the committee is to strike out the words "an officer or person" in the second line and insert the following words—I will read the clause in its amended form:

The Superintendent General may appoint a board to consist of two officers of the Department of Indian Affairs and a member of the band to which the Indian or Indians belongs. The Indian member of the board shall be nominated in writing by the council of the band within thirty days after the date of notice having been given to the council and in default of such nomination the appointment shall be made by the Superintendent General.

It was thought that instead of leaving it entirely to the Superintendent General it would be better to have the board that the amendment provides for and on which the Indians will have representation. Then there is another amendment, merely in accord with that, in the last line of subsection 1, where the words "officer or person" are struck out and the word "board" inserted. Perhaps it would be better to deal with that before I make reference to the amendment which takes place in subsection 2.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall subclause 1 carry?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Were the amendments unanimously carried in committee?

Mr. BOYS: That amendment was unanimously carried. It might be proper to state here that we had a division of opinion regarding compulsory enfranchisement. But I think I am correct in saying that every member of the committee agreed that if we are to have compulsory enfranchisement the method proposed therefor is a desirable one for accomplishing that purpose.

Mr. ROBB: Was any particular desire expressed on the part of the Indians generally throughout the various provinces to become enfranchised, or were they opposed to it?

Mr. BOYS: The majority of the Indians who appeared before the committee were not in favour of compulsory enfranchisement, but so far as this particular method is concerned, I think I can say they were not opposed to it. We have to make that