

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

minister a pat on the back for having made a good start. I told the present minister I was prepared to co-operate with him in any way I could to bring about a change in the condition of these people. This offer is still open, and I have not yet made up my mind whether or not the minister is a good minister.

I think he has had too much to do during the last few months to give as much attention to this department as it should have received. Before I am through I am going to make the suggestion that perhaps this department should be split again. For instance, we have the Minister of National Health and Welfare looking after the health and welfare of our Indians, and I am going to suggest later on that perhaps the Minister of Agriculture should be of some assistance as well.

Mr. Pickersgill: He has been already.

Mr. Campbell: As I said, some progress has been made during the last few years but I am not a bit satisfied with the kind of progress that has been made. While progress has been made in some directions, we have lost ground in others. This is the problem to which I want to address myself this afternoon.

I was simply amazed, Mr. Chairman, when I received an answer to a question which was in a series of some 18 questions that I asked early in January. The question was No. 9 and it asked what relief had been provided to the Indians in the Battleford agency in 1956. I knew that a lot of relief had been paid out but I was simply amazed when I received this figure because in the Battleford agency there are somewhere in the vicinity of 1,500 Indians. That is the approximate Indian population. These figures add up to \$99,307 and that is the amount that was paid out in relief during the year 1956. I could hardly believe my eyes because most of these reserves have tremendous potential wealth right on them that is not being developed. Wherever you have people on relief you have a demoralizing effect. We had the experience during the hungry 1930's where the little relief that we were giving was simply demoralizing the young men and young women of this country. I say that if we cannot do better than just provide relief for our Indian population we are falling down and we have fallen down to such an extent that we ought to be ashamed of ourselves.

Of what do the relief rations consist? For one person, flour, 24 pounds; rolled oats, 6 pounds; baking powder, 1 pound; tea, 1 pound; sugar, 2 pounds; lard, 3 pounds; beans, 5 pounds; rice or potatoes, 2 pounds;

cheese, 1 pound; meat or fish, \$2.50; salt, 10 cents per month; matches, 10 cents a month; tomatoes or tomato juice, 9 tins; milk 1 pound or the equivalent of milk in evaporated or powdered form for each child of the indigent family. That is the relief they get.

On one of my visits to the Indian agent at Battleford he complained that he had found work for some of these Indians on the railroad not very far away from home but they lasted only three or four days and then they quit. Perhaps I have done as much heavy work as anybody in the house, Mr. Chairman, and I am satisfied that if I had to go to work on a construction job on these kinds of rations I would not last more than two or three days either because those of us who have done manual work know that if you cannot get good food you cannot stand the work. Therefore, this idea of relief is abhorrent to me especially when, as I said a few moments ago, there is a tremendous potential of wealth on these reserves.

I am going to deal with one of the reserves, which is probably the most backward reserve in my constituency. It is called the Red Pheasant reserve. It has a population of 220 souls and a total acreage of 24,328 acres. Of that amount 8,502 acres are arable and consist of good soil. I have gone on that reserve a number of times. I was there with Canon Wickenden twice last summer, and the canon and I both took a good look around the reserve. We decided that it would be very easy for the department to start a work and wages program of development on the reserve which would provide work for the Indians. In that way we could get away from this handing out of rations.

I do not know how long the people of Canada are going to be willing to provide rations to Indians. We have been doing it now for over 100 years. As far as I can see, if we do not start to do something, and do it soon, many people will say, "Why should we pay a big income tax to buy food for our Indian population?" I know the problem is a big one. I know that from what I have learned by moving around amongst the reserves. In the first place, the Indian himself has a background and in that background he never used to work steadily at any job. In the early days they used to work hard for a matter of a few days during the buffalo hunt. They would kill many buffalo and they would smoke and cure the meat and cure the hides, and that is about all they had to live on. They worked hard for a few days, or a few weeks in the year and the rest of the time they loafed. Therefore, their whole idea of living has to be changed. They have to be taught that in the modern