

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

I wonder if the minister would just bring us up to date on the relief assistance scales that are now applicable with respect to payment both in cash and in kind for indigent Indians. I read last year that at least one of the Indian agencies has an Indian superintendent. I was wondering to what extent the department is finding that Indians are leaving school with a background of education adequate to meet some of the requirements for clerical positions and other of the better positions in the agencies from which they could advance to the superintendency, as this one Indian did. I believe it was at the Muskeg lake reserve in Saskatchewan. I was wondering in how many instances Indians attain senior positions in the agencies.

I indicated to the minister that I have found some difficulty with respect to the financial responsibility for children born of Indian women and white men where the white man is either known or unknown and, if known, is perhaps a transient. He has no record of residence in any one municipality which would indicate that he belongs to that municipality. I am speaking now really of neglected children under these circumstances. As I understand it, the children's aid society has to go to the courts and get an order naming the party or government responsible for the maintenance of this neglected child. As I understand it, our constitution does not make it possible for the courts, under any provincial welfare legislation to impose a liability on the federal government. The court is obliged to name a municipality as responsible for maintenance of the child of an unknown white father. I should like to have a statement if the minister is prepared to give us one.

I know this matter is bothering a great number of the municipalities which are extremely poor, particularly those in some sections of my riding. As the minister knows, some are in remote areas. I am thinking of the rural areas where really there is just a little bit of tree farming and pulpwood cutting and there are practically no taxable assets on which to build up for municipalities of this kind an assessment which will allow them to make many payments of this nature. The burden is heavier in our area than most because of the proximity of Indian bands and the fact that there is a greater number of these deserted Indian children.

This matter was brought very much to my attention by some of the children's aid societies recently. As you know, Mr. Chairman, there are probably more people seeking to adopt healthy white children than there are children available. I refer to children without handicap and who are in every way normal. Unfortunately, however, out in our

area I am told that a high percentage of the children who must be maintained for long periods of time by the children's aid society are of mixed blood and that they are not being placed so readily, particularly because our population of those seeking children is not large. The children of mixed parentage are a little bit different in appearance and somehow these children are just not taken to their hearts as quickly as are white children. This situation is proving to be a financial burden on the children's aid societies which, as you know, canvass in substantial part for voluntary givings in order to carry on their work.

It is the deserted Indian child, and particularly the Indian child of mixed blood, that is of great concern in our area in this province. We are a long distance from the big populations where prospective parents might be found in greater numbers. If we had more people nearby I am sure that the record would be a little bit better. I am also sure that if many of the prospective parents were not in the heavy population centres more than 1,000 miles away but actually on the scene to see these attractive children the situation would be different. But when they are obliged simply to correspond with respect to a child of this background they get only this description, and there is a tendency to lose interest.

The department is frank, and I think properly so. They are quite honest and frank about the description of the children they have. If it is obvious that they are Indian children or of mixed blood, I think the children's aid society tells a correspondent. As I say, the heart appeal of these children face to face not being seen, disinterest sets in. I think this matter would be something that would be of interest to our several children's aid societies for which it is a problem, and to the municipalities which are very much concerned about it.

I think I have been fairly complimentary so far but I wish to say this. Much and all as we appreciate the fact that after a number of years of assurances we are going to get a replacement residential school at Fort Frances for the 50 years old edifice that has been there, I hope that this experience can be looked upon as rather an example of how difficult it is to co-ordinate with the Department of Public Works in order to assure that some of this kind of work is made available in the winter time.

I tried valiantly, as everybody knows, before the winters of 1958-59, in 1959-60, and again last year very actively even a little bit as to the program for 1960-61, with regard to work on this project which I think was originally promised by the former minister in