

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

areas. The payment of provincial subsidies or straight sharing of project costs by the provincial departments concerned have resulted in more and better roads being developed and, in many instances, having these joined up with important provincial and municipal road systems. A continued high level of expenditure on these capital works is anticipated in the new year.

In these introductory remarks I have endeavoured to make it clear that these estimates are designed to meet our needs if certain clearly defined objectives are to be attained: First, a continued acceleration of our educational program so that Indian youth will be assured the opportunity of a full academic life and the opportunity of learning those skills which are necessary tools with which to work and progress in our national life; second, the development of projects designed to enable him to take full advantage of knowledge so gained; and, third, the improvement of home and community facilities so that he may walk securely among us as a fellow citizen blessed with a proud heritage.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I think it is a great advantage to the committee to have had the quite comprehensive survey that has just been given by the minister. I should like to thank the hon. lady for the neat way in which she summarized what she felt to be the most important aspects of the work of the department. I am very happy to see that there seems to be no difference between us that the most important part of the work of the Indian affairs branch is in the field of education. It is incomparably more important than anything else. I am very glad also to observe that it is realized more and more that education does not stop at the age of 16.

One of the most tragic features—I think I have mentioned this on several occasions before but it does no harm to mention it again—of Indian affairs administration for many years was the lack of any provision for those young people who came out of residential schools and who went back to the reserves. These people often came from broken homes and were orphans at the age of 16. They returned to the reserve because there was no place for them to go and, in some cases, they were quite disoriented from their band. This was something that certainly should not have been allowed to continue even as long as it did.

We do know that after the war the government began to repair the damage which had resulted from the neglect of the war years, and there was so much to do in so many directions that it could not all be done at once. It is reassuring, and I am sure it is true, to find that today no Indian who can

get through high school and who is willing to go on and take further education, is denied the opportunity for financial reasons.

Mrs. Fairclough: Yes, that is right.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think this has been true since the days when Mr. Harris was the minister, and the provision of the scholarships, with which I was associated when I was minister, was just another stage in the development. I think it was more a moral change than anything else in that it seemed to me that the scholarships established a recognition of merit. Before the scholarships were established the Indians were not denied the education that they were capable of taking. The gratifying thing is that there are more, not as many as we would hope perhaps, of these young Indians who finish high school and who go into universities, more who go into technical schools and, more recently, into vocational training.

It is very encouraging also to find, if I understood the hon. lady correctly, that there has been an increasing interest on the part of adult Indians, particularly the younger adults, in securing vocational training of one kind or another. I must say I should like to look again at what the hon. lady said about the placement service to see whether there is an adequate reflection in the placement of the increased educational training. I would hope there is, but of course we do recognize that in the present circumstances employment is not quite as easy to get as it was a few years ago when people were coming to beg us to provide Indians for various occupations. We know it is not quite so easy to get jobs today.

I think it would be interesting, when we are considering these estimates tomorrow in somewhat more detail, to have the minister tell us about some of the areas in which there is an increasing amount of regular employment being provided for the Indians off the reserves and particularly in the northern and frontier areas. It seems to me that they are much better adapted to provide really stable employees than are many of the people who drift into these areas from the more settled parts of the country and who also quite often drift out quickly afterwards.

I intend to make a request of the minister and I should like to give her notice of this request now. Some time tomorrow I intend to ask the minister whether she could have a computation made and could give it to us, first of all, giving the latest available figure of the total Indian population which I believe is growing. I presume a D.B.S. estimate was made.