

1965 thirty-two per cent of Indian births were illegitimate.

The illegitimate birth figures are, perhaps, the most misleading. Since 1957 the government has refused to acknowledge tribal rite marriages as legal; any child born of such a marriage is automatically illegitimate. Much more important, however, are the economic factors that influence statistical illegitimacy. Many Indian couples choose to remain legally unmarried because to marry would deprive them of income. An unmarried woman with three children gets three times the allotment she would get if she were married but separated. Further, a status Indian woman who marries a nonstatus Indian or a white man automatically loses her rights as a status Indian.

The average white person's income is around five times as great as the average Indian's. Again the use of an average is confusing; income varies greatly among Indian bands. In recent years some Indian bands have had cash incomes as low as an average of \$55 a year, and some have averages over \$4,000. The range remains today, though the respective levels have changed with inflation. The hard fact is that eighty per cent of Indian families are probably living in poverty by North

American income standards. Indian employment is heavily concentrated in the least-skilled and lowest-paid jobs—only three per cent are in professional or managerial occupations.

Twenty-eight per cent of male and twenty-five per cent of female prison inmates are Indian.

There are, nevertheless, signs that the Indian's lot is improving both through their own efforts and with the help of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. The National Indian Brotherhood, for example, has been encouraging Indian involvement in and control of Indian education for several years through workshops, papers and negotiations with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. This year, Indian and Northern Affairs will spend approximately \$459 million on various projects including education (\$183 million), community affairs (\$188.8 million), economic development (\$34 million) and native claims. In education, the emphasis is on Indian content and bilingual (Indian and French or English) training. Other projects include assistance for native local governments, an Indian branch of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Saskatchewan and on-and-off-reserve housing programs.

Hearings on a Northern Pipeline

THE MACKENZIE VALLEY of the Northwest Territories may be the site of a pipeline for natural gas. The government, recognizing the possible impact on the lives of native people, committed itself to finding "lasting solutions of cultural,

Rick Hardy, president of the Métis Association of the Northwest Territories (right) met with Mr. Justice Berger (left) and the commission on November 20. He encouraged pipeline construction and suggested that "only a minimal number of years" should elapse between claim settlements and construction of a pipeline. "We as Métis people object strenuously to the ideal view taken of native people and [their] . . . attachment to the land. . . . We submit that life on the land is tough. So tough that the majority of native people have left such life. . . . This is not to say that in moving away from the trapping and hunting life that Métis people are wiping away that aspect of their cultural heritage but we are also taking on and receptive to other ways of making a living."

social and economic problems." Beginning in the spring of 1975 a commission, headed by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger of the British Columbia Supreme Court, held hearings on the possible effects on hunting and fishing, on the native econ-

