

*Indian Act*

in the educational approach to a solution of the Indian problem. Formerly the emphasis in the department was on residential schools. It seems that both the English and later the Americans when first approaching this difficulty of dealing with the native population already resident on the North American continent, when the white man first arrived, automatically adopted isolation and segregation as a solution. When it became a matter of providing educational facilities the isolationist and segregationist approach was adopted and the emphasis was placed on residential schools.

In carrying out this program the children are removed from the reserve and from parental influence for a few months annually while they attend a residential school. In the summer they return to their homes on the reserves. It was demonstrated by the residential school system that the Indian child was quite capable of adapting himself to the white man's educational program.

However, emphasis on the residential school has aggravated the isolation and has made it quite impossible for the Indian to adapt himself gradually to the wider culture of the white man. It meant that a child having completed the prescribed educational program in a residential school returned to the reserve and was eventually absorbed into the cultural pattern of the reserve. This system was doomed to failure from the beginning because in any society the authority descends from the adult rather than ascends from the child, and there was no hope whatsoever that the child would have any influence upon the cultural pattern of the parents.

Now the department is gradually moving away from the emphasis on residential schools. The new look today is on the establishment of day schools on the reserves. That seems to me to be the beginning of the breakdown in the isolation of the reserve system that has worked against any possible movement towards integration.

The Americans adopted this method as far back as 1926 and have been experimenting with it with a fair degree of success since that time in handling their own native population. The Indians in my constituency have very close blood relations across the border, and it is obvious that the relations living in the United States have made a much more successful and rapid adjustment to the white man's society than their cousins living across the Canadian border.

In our Canadian program, although it has been in effect for only a few years, we are already running into some administrative difficulties. In the day school system on the United States reserves the emphasis is on

the educational role. The educational program is comprehensive. It embraces more than the children. In fact, the schools serve more as community centres, rather than performing the basic functions of providing the rudiments of education. There is a very comprehensive adult education program. It is realized that, if you are going to raise the whole level of life on the reserve, you must work with the adult population as well as with the rising generation.

They avoided too the difficulty which is a carry-over from the emphasis on the residential schools. The residential schools had to provide comprehensive religious education for the children, who were removed from parental influences, and religious instruction dependent on the denominational emphasis of the particular school was an integral part of the life of the residential school.

Coming back to the day schools on the reserve, however, the fact that the members of the various reserves are divided in their religious affiliation has caused certain difficulties. There are two reserves in my riding—the Oak river reserve and the Oak lake reserve—and on both these reservations this problem has emerged in connection with the day school programs. If the majority of the population are of the Roman Catholic faith, they want the Roman Catholic religious emphasis in the schools. If, on the other hand, the majority are of the Protestant persuasion, they want the guarantee of a Protestant religious emphasis in the schools.

The situation is precipitating a type of segregation that is perhaps even worse than the former isolation and segregation of the reserves, in that each group wants its own school on the reserve. This produces the unhappy state where you not only have the basic problems of reserve segregation from the normal community but you have the reserve itself divided down the middle on religious grounds. I do not know what the solution is but I hope that in reconsidering some of the problems that have emerged under this new day-school emphasis the minister will find a solution whereby we can break down this most awkward type of segregation.

I have had letters on the problem from the chiefs of both the Oak River reserve and the Oak Lake reserve. I noticed that in the issue of the *Brandon Sun* of June 8 there is an announcement of the construction of a new school on the Oak River reserve which will supplement the school already in existence in that place. I visited that reserve last summer and I was quite impressed with the type of educational program they had there. It would seem that the appearance of the new