

# THE INDIANS SPEAK TO CANADA

---

---

E78  
.C2  
C37  
c. 1

E18.C2  
C37  
C.3

# THE INDIANS SPEAK TO CANADA

---

A Series of Broadcasts

*Sponsored by*

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

*in co-operation with the*

Indian Affairs Branch,

Department of Mines and Resources



OTTAWA

J. O. PATENAUDE, L.S.O.

PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

1939



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword.....	v
The Micmac, by J. J. Sark.....	1
The Indians of Quebec, by Rev. M. K. Jacobs, S.J.....	5
The Iroquois, by G. C. Monture.....	9
The Cree, by Herman Crate.....	15
The Sioux, by Daniel Kennedy.....	19
The Blackfoot, by Teddy Yellow Fly.....	24
The Haida, by Rev. Peter Kelly.....	28
Canada and Her Indian Wards, by the Honourable T. A. Crerar.....	34

## FOREWORD

In collaboration with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation a series of talks by the Indians of Canada was arranged by the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources which were broadcast on a nation-wide hook-up. The purpose of these talks was to give the public some knowledge of the mode of life, past and present, manners, and habits of the various tribes of Indians through the medium in each instance of one of their number. The co-operation of the field officers of the Department was sought in selecting speakers to represent the particular tribes indigenous to those parts of Canada chosen for the broadcasts. Following those by Indian speakers a final summary was made in a speech given by the Minister of Mines and Resources. The broadcasts were well received and aroused much interest. For this reason, and in view of the permanent value of the material they contain, it was decided to have the addresses printed.

## THE MICMAC

BY J. J. SARK

*Charlottetown, P.E.I., October 23, 1937*

[**Announcer.** We will offer you now a brief talk, the first of a series to be given by one of the aboriginal inhabitants of Canada in each province of the Dominion. The speaker to-night represents the Maritimes. Nova Scotia, as you remember, was sighted by Cabot in 1497, only 5 years after Columbus discovered the West Indies; and it will soon be celebrating its 500th birthday. It is no longer an infant, but the oldest settled province in the Dominion. Nova Scotians are proud of their antiquity, and justly so. But if they rejoice in an ancient descent, what of the Indians of their province, whose forefathers, if our scientists speak the truth, came to America not a paltry 500 years ago, but 10,000 years, or perhaps even 15,000. For it is our Indians who are the old, the really old, inhabitants of Canada, who were its first explorers. Hundreds of years before Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence they were netting the cod and the salmon in our coastal waters, hunting the moose and the buffalo, and tilling the rich farm lands of southern Ontario. So now representatives of these Indians, our oldest inhabitants, will address you from each province at this hour during the next few weeks. Tonight we will listen to a Micmac Indian from the Maritimes, Mr. Sark, who teaches in an Indian day school on the Indian Reserve at Lennox Island, P.E.I., and speaks to us from Charlottetown. **Mr. Sark.**]

As brother to Chief Sark, chief of the Micmacs of Prince Edward Island, I feel it is an honour to speak to you of our race, and particularly of the Micmacs. Ours is a fascinating story of which, in the short space of time at my disposal, I can only touch the fringe.

The oldest French writers, Champlain and Lescarbot, called the Micmac Indians Souriquois. It was not until about 1693 that they were given the name Micmac, "allies," because they were faithful "allies" of the French all through the colonial

wars. They themselves used other names, such as O'Mog for the Micmacs of Cape Breton, "Listogojeog" for those in Restigouche, and "Epegoitnag" for those of Prince Edward Island. Even today you will find these names in use.

The Micmacs were the easternmost tribe of the Algonkian family. They roamed through the vast forests of what was once called Acadia, that is to say, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and that part of Quebec that borders on Chaleur Bay. Almost certainly they were the first Canadian Indians ever seen by white men, for we believe Sebastian Cabot carried three of them away with him in 1497, only 5 years after Columbus' first voyage.

It was just about Cabot's time, or perhaps a little earlier, around 400 years ago, that the ancestors of my family, the Sark family, moved from what is now Halifax to Prince Edward Island, crossing over from Cape Tourmentine in birch-bark canoes. In those days our people had not yet learned to farm, but lived solely by hunting and fishing. During the winter months they would hunt the moose and the caribou inland, then in the spring and summer pitch their conical wigwams covered with birch bark either on the sea-shore, or near the mouths of the rivers, where they could net and spear the salmon and also harpoon the seals that were then so common off the Nova Scotia coast.

It was the men's task to hunt and fish; the women remained in camp to cook, to tan the skins of the moose and caribou, and to make them into fine garments decorated with fringes and painted with beautiful lace-like designs. The girls naturally stayed near their mothers, who watched over them all the time and brought them up very strictly; but the boys, as soon as they were old enough, went hunting and fishing with their fathers. No boy could marry or take part in the council meetings of the tribe until he had killed big game, either a moose or a bear. After he had killed his first moose or his first bear, he might become engaged to a girl, but he still had to wait a year, as a rule, before he was allowed to marry her; and even then he could not take her away and set up his own household, but had to live with her parents for a year, work at anything they ordered

him to do, and turn over to them all the fish and game that he killed. A chief sometimes had two and even three wives, but the ordinary man in the tribe had only one.

We all belonged to the one tribe, the Micmac, but we were divided into several clans; and every clan had its symbol or mark, which the members painted on their clothing or on the bows of their canoes, just as the Highlanders of Scotland display their clans on their tartans. The symbol of one of our clans was a Cross, which so surprised the first Jesuit missionaries that some of them speculated as to whether we were not really Irishmen who had crossed over to America after St. Patrick introduced Christianity to the Emerald Isle. These early Jesuit missionaries taught us the meaning of the Christian Cross, and one of them, Father Le Clercq, after watching our children make marks on birch bark, invented a hieroglyphic script to help us memorize the prayers that he taught us. We do not use this script any more, but we still have prayer books written in our own Micmac tongue, although our children now receive a good education in the English language in regular day schools.

The first Indians to be baptized were our Grand Chief Membertou, Champlain's friend, and twenty of his braves. That was at Port Royal, in Nova Scotia, in 1610. Those of us who are now living on Lennox Island held a great celebration in 1910 to commemorate these first baptisms 300 years before.

Our men still hunt and trap and fish, but not on a large scale, because game is not as plentiful as in the days gone by. A few have small farms, but the majority earn their living by basket weaving. The ash that we need for weaving baskets is very scarce now on Lennox Island, which is my own home, and we have to import it from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Some of these baskets our women colour with beautiful vegetable dyes that our ancestors discovered long ago before there were any synthetic paints and dyes.

Nearly all of us now have very comfortable homes, well looked after in every way. The coming of the white man has taken from us the carefree life our forefathers enjoyed; but we are afforded every protection, and not anywhere will you find more loyal subjects of King George. From our own small Lennox

Island band, which numbers only a little more than 200, no fewer than 29 men voluntarily enlisted for service in the Great War, and of those 3 were killed in action, and 10 others were disabled. Two of them enlisted in different battalions and did not see each other until they met quite by chance in the thick of the fighting at Vimy Ridge. They were so begrimed as a result of the hard day's fighting that they failed at first to recognize each other.

My own band was not alone in proving its loyalty. From our Micmac band at Sydney every eligible man went to the front; and from other parts of the Maritimes we sent nearly all our able-bodied men. One Micmac won both the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal. Such was the record of the Micmacs in the Great War.



## THE INDIANS OF QUEBEC

BY REV. M. K. JACOBS, S.J.

*Montreal, P.Q., October 31, 1937*

[**Announcer.** From time immemorial the history of Canada has pivoted around Quebec. When the first settlers arrived here from France they found two groups of Indians struggling for the mastery of the St. Lawrence River. To the south were the Iroquois Indians, who broke up the land to plant corn and built extensive villages in the midst of their grain fields; north of the river were Algonkian tribes who knew nothing of farming or the settled life, but wandered continually from place to place and supported themselves by fishing, hunting, and trapping. The same struggle is going on today, with this difference, that the white farmer, joining forces with the Indian, has pushed the frontier of agriculture many miles north of the St. Lawrence, and has established a number of industries along its banks. The vast area beyond this frontier remains even yet the home of the hunter and trapper, and there the Indians still hold sway, some of them the most primitive in Canada. The Naskapi tribe that roams the heart of Labrador Peninsula may have acquired a few of the outward trappings of civilization, guns and steel knives, cloth trousers and woollen caps; but in all the essentials of life it has not changed since the coming of the white man. Our speaker tonight, Father Jacobs, is an Indian from the southern part of the province, but he will represent all his 14,000 countrymen scattered over the different parts of Quebec. **Father Jacobs.**]

The earliest record of the history of Quebec mentions that what are now the two largest cities of the province were occupied 400 years ago by two Iroquois tribes akin to the Hurons. However, in less than a century after Cartier's discovery of Canada, the Indian villages along the St. Lawrence were no longer inhabited by these two nations.

The Hurons and the Iroquois, however, never ceased to urge their claim as the first dwellers on the banks of the St. Lawrence,

and this is one of the reasons for the numerous forays and skirmishes that spelled fear and anxiety to the French colony during the seventeenth century.

It is now recognized by every Canadian historian and modern Indian philologist that there existed, in the eastern half of our Dominion, two aboriginal races from which all the lesser Indian tribes in this area sprang—the Algonquin family, or Algonic race, and the Iroquoian family, which embraces also the Huron.

The Huron nation, with its different tribal groups occupied, in the seventeenth century, the Georgian Bay Peninsula between Lake Simcoe and Nottawasaga River. They then numbered about 30,000. Almost exterminated by the League of the Iroquois in 1648 and 1649, the remnants of this people settled at "l'ancienne Lorette," near Quebec, in 1673. At the present time, their descendants, numbering 478 in 1934, are settled at the "Jeune Lorette" Reservation.

The League of the Iroquois comprised the famous "Five Nations," namely, the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas, and they occupied that part of northern New York from near Schenectady to Niagara Falls. They numbered about 25,000. Later some of them settled at Caughnawaga, near Montreal, and at St. Regis, near Cornwall. The population of these two villages numbered about 5,500 in 1934.

The Algonquin family, or Algonic race, extended north of the Iroquois and Hurons from the Atlantic coast to the prairies. The story of the evangelization of their tribes is graphically told in the well-known "Jesuit Relations."

At the present time the Indians in Quebec number 13,281 in all, according to the latest census figures available.

The most important Indian reserves in Quebec are: Lorette (Hurons), Maniwaki, Pierreville (Abenakis), Pointe Bleue, Lake St. John (Montagnais), Caughnawaga, and Oka (Iroquois).

With this brief summary of the past history of the Indian race, I should like in the brief space of time remaining, to give you a rapid sketch of one of the oldest and most important reservations in Canada, that of Caughnawaga.

Founded in 1667 by the Jesuit Blackrobe missionaries as a centre for their Iroquois converts, this village, after a number of migrations along the south shore, was finally established in its present location, about 10 miles west of Montreal. The repute of this settlement soon spread abroad and the "Indians of the Praying Castle," as they were called, left a precious heritage of constancy and piety to their descendants, who still, after 300 years, occupy the site of their forefathers' Christian homes.

That the colourful career of these Iroquois has been saved from comparative oblivion is due in great part to the work of the late Rev. Edward J. Devine, S.J., whose "*Historic Caughnawaga*" presents a fascinating account of the fortunes of the Caughnawaga Iroquois throughout three centuries.

Were I asked what has been one of the greatest assets in causing this relatively small Indian community to survive the common fate of obscurity, I should unhesitatingly reply, "the memory of one of the most remarkable converts to Christianity of the seventeenth century—Kateri Tekakwitha, the 'Lily of the Mohawks'."

Time will not allow me to dwell upon her life story; let it suffice to say that her cause is at present being studied in Rome with a view to her beatification and canonization, and when this is accomplished, as is hoped in the near future, the Indian race in North America will rejoice in the official recognition of the sainthood of one of its daughters.

Visitors to the village of Caughnawaga are attracted by the many relics of the past to be found there: sacred vessels, paintings, gifts of kings and queens of long ago, and the remains of the old Fort St. Louis.

The more serious inquirer will find in the Caughnawaga Reservation the remarkable results of the combined efforts of Church and State to bring gradually, and without violence, the benefits of European culture and civilization to the Red Race of North America.

It is but just and true, and, moreover, on my part, a personal expression of gratitude to proclaim far and wide the admirable organization and the benefits that the Indians of Canada receive

through the competent and disinterested efforts of the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa.

I speak with a knowledge of what is being done in the Caughnawaga Reserve, and I imagine the same policy is being carried out in other reservations of the Province of Quebec.

In the past 20 years, the education in our schools at Caughnawaga will bear favourable comparison with the best schools of our largest cities. In recent years the Church, the bar, and the medical profession have received into their ranks Indian boys from Caughnawaga who have graduated with university degrees.

With such facilities and opportunities before them we may look forward with confidence to the children of the rising generation, thus prepared, forming a worthy group in the vast number of useful and loyal citizens of Canada, "our home, our native land."



## THE IROQUOIS

BY G. C. MONTURE

*Ottawa, Ont., November 6, 1937*

[**Announcer.** We present to you now a short talk on the Indians of Canada, the third of our weekly series. The speaker this evening, Mr. G. C. Monture, is an Iroquois Indian from southern Ontario, a member of the nation that aided the British settlers of New England to block the expansion of French Canada southward, and, a century later, again espoused the English side in the American War of Independence. There are about 8,000 Iroquois Indians living in Canada today, and an equal number, approximately, in the state of New York across the border; but their war-whoops no longer sound along the St. Lawrence. Mr. Monture learned the gentler arts of peace and scholarship at Queen's University, and has been practising them since as editor of an important department in the Federal Government. Nevertheless, he is steeped in the lore of his Iroquois ancestors, maintains the closest ties with the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford where he was born and raised, and can speak with authority on the problems and outlook of his people. **Mr. Monture.**]

It is with a feeling of pardonable pride that I welcome this opportunity of speaking to you tonight about my people, the Iroquois. To many of you the name is familiar, having perhaps in your school days been required to learn the names of the tribes of Iroquois, or the Five Nations as they were sometimes called. In case you have forgotten, the Iroquois consisted of five tribes—Mohawks, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Senecas. Because they formerly lived in long houses of elm or cedar bark, capable of sheltering 15 or 20 families, early writers sometimes referred to them as the people of the Long House. Our people were the first farmers in Canada, and to us the world owes many of the varieties of corn and beans grown today. I wonder how much more history of our nation you remember, and if you recall the part we played in making what is now Canada a part of the British Empire.

You will recollect that Champlain in 1609 joined a war party of Algonkian Indians to fight the Iroquois near Lake Champlain, and how again in 1613 he and his Huron allies invaded the country of the Senecas. Little did he realize then, that these acts of unprovoked hostility would lead to more than a century of bitter warfare, which would block France's colonial expansion towards the southwest into the valley of the Ohio River.

Little is known of the detailed history of the Five Nations prior to European settlement, as my people had not yet developed a written language. Our history could be handed down only by story-tellers.

At that time a number of tribes somewhat related to one another by speech dwelt in what is now New York State and the valley of the St. Lawrence River. These tribes, much like the European nations of the past and present, were constantly engaged in inter-tribal warfare. About the year 1570, two great chiefs, Dekanawida and Hiawatha, gifted with a genius for political organization, succeeded in forming five of these tribes into a confederacy with a central council fire and a governing council of 50 hereditary chiefs or sachems. About the year 1715, the league was opened to admit the Tuscarora tribe, then resident in North Carolina, whose lands and hunting grounds had been taken by the English colonists. The Iroquois have since been known as the Six Nations. You thus see that our league antedated your League of Nations by several hundred years. The league had for its object, mutual support in case of attack. Later, however, it became a powerful league of aggression. Between the years 1600 and 1660 its members made themselves supreme over all the other tribes from the upper reaches of Georgian Bay in Canada on the north, to the Tennessee River on the south, and from the Hudson River on the east, to the Mississippi and the land of the Sioux tribes on the west.

In 1649 the Iroquois, fearful of losing their position as intermediaries in the rich fur trade, utterly destroyed the Huron nation around Georgian Bay. The Neutrals fell in turn, and later the Eries and Conestogas. The prosperity of New France was threatened, and it needed only the action of Governor

Denonville, who in 1687 treacherously seized at Kingston a number of Iroquois warriors who had come to a banquet given by him, to bring the frightful wrath of the Iroquois down on the French colony. Fortunately, the succeeding governor, Frontenac, by a series of bold raids, was able to force the Iroquois to sue for peace; and it was not until almost half a century later when England and France declared war that the red hatchet was again dug up.

At this time our support was being courted by both French and English, as it was realized we swayed the balance of power, and when we chose the side of the English the French cause received a staggering blow.

Following the capture of Quebec our loyalty was soon put to the test, for in 1763 Pontiac, one of the greatest of all Indian chiefs, realizing that one European nation in power in America spelled the doom of the Indians, conceived his plan of re-establishing the French. Had we not stood firm or had we joined with him the current of North American history would have changed. But the great council fire at Onondaga was burning low—the long series of wars had weakened the numerical strength of the confederacy, and the tide of settlement was slowly but surely flowing westward. Came the Revolutionary war. Would we fight for the Crown or for the colonists! The colonists hoped that if we would not support them, at least we would remain neutral. When the question of declaring for the English came up, the Oneidas alone resisted the proposal. Their refusal defeated the war measure, as unanimous approval was a fundamental law in the legislation of the league.

It was finally decided that each tribe might engage in the war upon its own responsibility. The Mohawks, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas took up the tomahawk for the English.

In the terms of the peace treaty between Great Britain and the United States no provision was made for the Iroquois, who were left to make such terms as they could with the victors. It was the end of the league as a political entity; henceforth its members were a dependent people. Our loyalty to the Crown was to cost us the rich lands of New York State, Pennsylvania, and part of Ohio. We sometimes wonder whether any other group of United Empire Loyalists sacrificed more than we.

Through the efforts of our great war chief, Captain Joseph Brant, however, and the kind offices of Sir Frederick Haldimand, large tracts of land were obtained in Canada, and between the years 1784 and 1800 several thousand moved to reservations near the Bay of Quinte and on the banks of the Grand River in Ontario, and Caughnawaga and St. Regis, in Quebec. The original grant on the Grand River was 6 miles on either side of the river from its mouth to its source. It was a gift which, to quote the terms of the award, "the Mohawks and others of their posterity were to enjoy forever." Today, by sale and surrender by the Indians, this reserve is much smaller.

I have said the council fire had been burning lower. It was now virtually extinguished, but was again re-kindled on the banks of the Grand River, and in the war of 1812-14 the Iroquois again took to the war-path and gave valuable service to the King beyond the great waters.

Today the council fire is no more, the old system of chieftainship with its fifty hereditary chiefs has been abolished. We now govern our local affairs under the supervision of the Indian Affairs Branch at Ottawa by a system of elected councillors, quite like your city and municipal councils.

Because I was born and raised on the Grand River Reserve I am most familiar with conditions there, and it is of these I propose to speak to you during the next few minutes. My white friends have often asked me how we lived. Well, that is not easy to tell in a few words. Our reserve contains some of the best agricultural land in Ontario and most of our people are farmers. Like all agricultural communities, however, we have failures as well as successful farmers. Some have well-built houses of brick or frame construction with good barns and stables. Most of the houses, however, are of log, but as a rule are substantial and are cleanly kept. Many of our young men show a particular aptitude for ploughing, as many contestants at the Ontario ploughing matches can vouch for. Some of our men work as farm hands for nearby white farmers; others, including the women, find work on the fruit farms of the Niagara Peninsula.



Because the Indians are craftsmen by nature, a number engage in carpentry and allied work. Others go to your large cities where they enter into automobile and other manufacturing shops. The Indians of the Caughnawaga Reserve near Montreal are rated as the best structural steel workers on the continent, and their services are asked for wherever particularly high steel structures are being erected. For example, they worked on the Parliament buildings and the Chateau Laurier at Ottawa, the Quebec bridge, the Woolworth building, the Empire State building, Radio City, and the Golden Gate bridge.

Our public schools, thanks to the efforts of the Government, are the equal of those of the neighbouring white schools. The buildings are up to date, well equipped, and of the eleven schools on the reserve ten are manned by fully qualified Indian teachers from the reserve. Our children pass the same entrance examinations as yours, enter into high school, and a number are matriculated and enter your universities. Numbered among those who entered the professions are teachers, doctors, lawyers, dentists, ministers, engineers, and a Doctor of Pedagogy. Churches of several denominations dot the reserve, the Indians contributing largely to their support. The old Mohawk church at Brantford, or as it is known His Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks, is the oldest Protestant church in Ontario. It was erected by Joseph Brant in 1785 and contains a bible and communion service presented by Queen Anne in 1712. The Indian Affairs Branch has established a well-equipped and well-staffed hospital at Ohsweken, the principal village. Health, education, and sanitation are being steadily improved and the death rate is no higher than in white communities.

Nearly all our people speak English, in fact only among the older people is the ancient language preserved. In consequence, our old legends, myths, and traditions are in danger of being lost. It is in these legends and myths that I have hope our Canadian authors and poets will find a source of inspiration for the creation of a distinctive school of Canadian literature. The poetry of Pauline Johnson, the famous Indian poetess, owes much of its inspiration and charm to her Indian background. The music of our chants and native dances is characteristic enough to bear preservation. In passing I might add that many of my

people have a distinct talent for music and a number of them are achieving more than casual success. Fortunately, the National Museum of Canada and similar institutions are collecting and preserving many of our legends and chants before it is too late. Mention must also be made of the work done by J. B. Hewitt of the American Bureau of Ethnology at Washington in collecting the myths and legends of the Iroquois. Mr. Hewitt, himself a Tuscarora Indian, is regarded as one of the world's greatest authorities on Iroquois lore.

During the Great War our loyalty to the British Crown flamed up with characteristic fervour. Almost 300 members of the Iroquois voluntarily enlisted, 200 of them from my reserve alone.

And now what of our future? That which has been is no more. The Long House is in ruins. The dead ashes of the council fire have long been scattered by the winds. The trails stamped by our war parties have been wiped out by your shining roads. Your towns and skyscrapers now stand where once our rude villages and cornfields stood. I think it is well for our old men to remember this. Let us leave them their dreams, but our young men need to be given a vision of the part they can and must play in helping to build up Canada. Such a vision can only come from within, and it can be inspired only by capable and intelligent leadership, coupled with sympathy and understanding. Our numbers are increasing and soon our reserves will be too small to support us and our children solely as farmers. We must, therefore, forget the old traditions and take our place among the whites. Because some cannot forget our ancient glories, their paths are not easy. They are as wanderers between two worlds, the one lost and the other not yet ready to receive them. It is for them that I make a plea to our white brothers, asking that you be patient and understanding. We have contributed much to your culture. We are capable of contributing more. To do that, however, we must merge our identity with yours. You must accept us, not as Indians, but as Canadians, whose ideals are the same as yours—the building up of a united Canada free from sectionalism and the prejudices of race and creed—a Canada founded on the British principles of justice, truth, and loyalty.

## THE CREE

BY HERMAN CRATE

*Winnipeg, Man., November 13, 1937*

[**Announcer.** We offer to you now a brief talk by a Cree Indian, Mr. Herman Crate of the Fisher River Band, Manitoba. As you know, the Cree were the most numerous Indians in Canada, and occupied the greatest expanse of territory. You will find them today, more than 30,000 strong, all through the forest belt from Hudson Bay to the Rockies, and even far down Mackenzie River. A few have settled on farm lands in the Prairie Provinces, but the majority have lived in the northern forests from time immemorial. There they can name and describe the virtue of every tree and shrub, can point to a moose track and tell you whether the animal passed 5 days ago, or only 5 hours. Many of the furs you ladies wear have come to you from their traps. Life is hard and stern in those northern forests. Often in winter snow covers the tracks of the moose and the deer so that no hunter can find them, and even the rabbits seem to disappear from the woods. Then the kettles in the hunting lodges are empty, and the little children cry from hunger, in spite of the fine furs that hang from the rafters. There are, of course, happy times too, when the Cree kills game every time he goes out hunting and the fish almost tumble over one another to crowd into his net. But I must not anticipate what Mr. Crate will tell you. **Mr. Crate.**]

It is my privilege to address you on behalf of the Cree Indians of Manitoba and the adjoining territory where our people live.

For hundreds of summers and winters my forefathers lived on these vast plains and in the great northern hinterland of Canada. Upwards of two centuries ago, together with our allies, the Assiniboines, we occupied most of the prairie country of this great west land and the bush and lake region extending north-east to Hudson Bay. Our only real rivals for the supremacy over these plains were the Blackfoot tribes of the southwest and their confederate neighbours, the Sarcees. With these tribes we

fought many a bitter and bloody battle, and through these wars our numbers were greatly reduced. Other enemies more deadly than rival and hostile tribes invaded our ranks and took a terrible toll of life in our camps and villages. I refer to the ravages of disease, especially that of smallpox. Those who know the situation best tell us that the oft-recurring epidemics of smallpox during a period of almost 200 years destroyed a total of nearly 100,000 Indians of this west land. Our Cree people suffered their share of this deadly disease. Another arch enemy of my people, in common with all Indian tribes, has been and still is tuberculosis. This white plague has invaded most of our homes and claimed many lives, both young and old.

Notwithstanding these great losses in our ranks, we have survived and have made an important contribution to the opening up of this great west land. It was through the energy of my forefathers that the famous Hudson's Bay Company, which once claimed to rule over the whole of northern and western Canada, rose to success. It was in our Cree territory around Hudson Bay that the company established its first trading post and gathered wealth from the fur-bearing animals that my people trapped and snared for it. It was my ancestors, too, who guided the company's explorers a century later down the Mackenzie River to the Arctic Ocean and across the Rocky Mountains into British Columbia. For 250 years, right down to the Riel Rebellion, which men still living can remember, we Cree, serving under your leadership, explored and opened up the Dominion. All through our history we have been hunters and canoeemen, at home in the woods and on the rivers, and as long as the woods abounded in game and the waters in fish neither we nor the white men we guided in their explorations needed to fear starvation and want.

Back in the pre-European times, and after, my ancestors lived largely by the chase, and according to their standards of living at that time, they lived well. Buffalo herds were abundant. Furs were easily obtained and readily bartered. Fish were plentiful in streams and lakes. This abundance of food, no doubt, fostered improvidence and I am afraid often led us into wasteful habits. Then serious changes began to occur. In the sixties and seventies of the last century the buffalo disappeared



from the land and left us without that abundance of food they had supplied and without their skins and robes, which we had used so much in making our tents and clothing. Then the white settler invaded the plains. Fields and fences obstructed our erstwhile freedom. New regulations restricted our activities and, although trapping and fishing were still the chief means of making a living, it was clear that a transition period in the life and habits of my people had commenced and must continue.

The situation today calls for a thoughtful consideration in all its details, both on our part and on the part of those who shape our destiny and direct our future.

Hunting, trapping, and fishing continue to be our chief occupations and the main source of our revenue. These give us about one-half of the money we receive apart from Government annuities and interest on Indian trust funds.

Fishing as a commercial enterprise has become a comparatively small source of income for my people. The large fish companies with their modern equipment and wider business connections have been extending the area of their activities and are supplying the market adequately. Many of our men, however, find ready employment with these companies, and our independent efforts in fishing are confined largely to the supplying of our local needs.

Trapping, upon which so many of our people have depended for making a living, is becoming more difficult each year. Nearby fields have been well trapped out and have become depleted even of the breeding stock that we have during the years of the past been so anxious and careful to conserve. As we push farther afield to distant trapping grounds transportation for ourselves, our families, and our supplies becomes a serious consideration. Our competitors cover by aeroplane in a few hours the distance that takes us many arduous days by canoe or by dog-team. Then on the return trip with our winter's catch, we find ourselves weeks behind in the race to the market with our pelts.

Although we love the woods, the lakes, and the streams, and although many of our people, and perhaps most of them, will

continue to live in the northland, to trap and hunt and fish, many, no doubt, will turn aside to fur farming as their means of livelihood.

Perhaps agriculture, or what is generally known as mixed farming, with its outdoor life and contact with nature, offers the most inviting opportunity for the future of my people, and although it is said that a successful hunter makes a restless farmer, yet a fair beginning has already been made on our reserves. Tipis and tents have largely given place to the log house or the frame dwelling. Stables and farm buildings are becoming more evident and better. Gardens and flower beds are increasing in number and size. Our livestock is improving in quality and growing in numbers. More grain is being produced. Some of our farmers in favourable years have sold their wheat by the car-load and their cattle have demanded the best prices.

My people are naturally mechanical and creative, and our young men take their place favourably with their white competitors at mechanical work. I believe, also, that the time is opportune for the revival of Indian arts and the production of bead and leather work, which our people do so artistically and for which, today, there is a growing demand.

An increasing number of our more ambitious and aggressive young people are anxious to obtain a higher education and qualify themselves for the best places they may be able to fill in the life of the nation. We appreciate the fact that the opportunity of education is so freely offered to us.

With wise planning and the adoption of comprehensive and far-reaching policies my people will go forward with hope and courage to take their place in such useful work and constructive enterprises as may contribute to their own success and happiness and also make a valuable contribution toward the future well-being of our great Dominion.

## THE SIOUX

BY DANIEL KENNEDY

*Regina, Sask., November 20, 1937*

[**Announcer.** We offer you now another of our weekly talks by a Canadian Indian. The speaker tonight is Mr. Daniel Kennedy, a Sioux from Carry the Kettle's Reserve, Saskatchewan. If you visit the larger Art Galleries on this continent and study their Indian pictures, you will be surprised to notice how often our artists have chosen Sioux Indians for their subjects. This was because the Sioux was not only the most powerful Indian tribe on the prairies before we converted their country into wheat fields, but also one of the most picturesque. Imagine yourself gazing down on one of their camps 70 years ago—at the tall, conical tipis arranged in a wide circle, women resplendent in beaded skin dresses wandering from tent to tent, warriors sitting around in council smoking their long stone pipes, and young men riding up with loads of buffalo meat, or patrolling the troops of horses grazing on the outskirts of the camp. This was a common sight on the prairies only 70 years ago, when the Sioux numbered about 40,000 persons, divided into many independent bands. Mr. Kennedy will now tell you what has happened to them, and how they have faced the new conditions that we white men have introduced. **Mr. Kennedy.**]

I am Ochanku gahe, which translated into English means "The Path Maker." I am a member of the Assiniboine tribe residing on Carry the Kettle's Reserve, in southeastern Saskatchewan. I am 62 years of age and was educated in the Government schools provided for the Indians of Western Canada.

It is a pleasure for me to have this opportunity to say something over the radio about my people, which I hope will be of interest to our white friends.

My forefathers were in America long before any Europeans set eyes on this continent, but in the early days they made their home in what is now the United States, and only occasionally entered Canada, to pursue the buffalo or to raid their enemies.

Before the white man invaded the Plains, the smoke from our campfires curled skyward all the way from the Mississippi to the Rockies; we lived in tipis made of buffalo hides, generally decorated with Indian designs, and we always had quantities of fresh buffalo meat.

We increased in numbers, and some of us, my own special tribe, the Assiniboine (which, as the name "Stony Sioux" implies, is a branch of the great Sioux nation) moved north to that section of the country now known as Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan, to become inhabitants of the Dominion, not consciously, of course, for at that time there was no Dominion, only a handful of French settlers in the Maritime Provinces and in Quebec. For two more centuries we prospered, we Assiniboines in Canada and our kinsmen south of the boundary, although with the introduction of firearms the herds of buffalo were rapidly diminishing.

The Assiniboines had been more closely associated with the Crees in Canada than with the Sioux for many, many years, and were treated in the same manner as the Crees, when the Qu'Appelle Treaty was signed in 1874. They were accorded the same privileges and their Chiefs signed the treaty.

No treaty was made with the Sioux, but later on they were assigned to special reserves.

At that time you Canadians were beginning to press westward to block out your prairie lands into farm sections. The remnants of the vast buffalo herds that once gave us our livelihood now graze peacefully in your parks, and we, the erstwhile hunters, have set our hands to the plough. Our fields bear the same crops as your fields; our children receive the same education as your children. You must not forget, however, that farming is a new occupation to us, an occupation very different from the old free hunting life that has been bred into our bones through the centuries. Hence, if we find it hard to learn the most up-to-date methods of cultivating the soil, it is for you, white Canadians who have been farming for generations, to help us, so that our progress and yours together may bring prosperity to the Prairie Provinces, and bequeath happy and contented homes to your children and ours.



Even now on many reserves the Indians have good farms and gardens, fine herds of cattle, and comfortable homes. The milking of cows, making of butter, and raising of poultry is common among our people, who a few years ago knew nothing about these matters.

As you well know, we, who reside in Saskatchewan, are passing through trying times brought about by drought, which has, in many cases, caused complete crop failure. In my lifetime I have seen seasons such as this, followed by abundance of rain. Indians much older than myself have discussed this with me and have told me that they have passed through periods of drought as bad as this.

The Indian population on the prairies, which was rapidly decreasing a few years ago, is now showing steady increase. This is largely due to the fact that present-day mothers have been taught something about hygiene at school. They know that when a child is sick the proper thing to do is to call a doctor. They also know something about the proper feeding of children. There was a time when three was an average family, but now it is quite common to see five or six.

The Indian Medicine Man is a thing of the past on most reserves in the settled part of the country. At one time the Indians had implicit faith in him, but now they believe in the white doctors.

The Indians are living in better homes than they formerly did. The food is better prepared; they have more variety and they eat more vegetables.

Hospitals have been established on many reserves and traveling nurses visit the homes and give instruction and help along health lines.

The Assiniboines have many traditional customs, but time will not permit me to dwell upon many of them. I should like, however, to touch upon a few.

First I should like to speak of the Eagle Feather, which is used by the Indians for head adornment. It is a decoration very much sought after and coveted. It is won by an act of distinctive bravery in battle, and few obtain this high honour. I am sorry

to say that screen and pictorial magazines portray an entirely wrong impression of this highly distinctive decoration by displaying feathers on all and sundry who have no right whatever to wear them, particularly on Indian maidens, who never wore feathers. These remarks of mine do not apply to the traditional head-dress that male Indians wear to dances and on festival occasions.

One of our oldest traditions has to do with the origin of the Chief's pipe. In our mythology the first one was given by the Great Spirit to a far distant ancestor, in much the same way as the Ten Commandments were given to Moses, and it was for much the same purpose. It was to help the Chief to speak and act wisely. As it was a sacred rite, no one was ever known to refuse to smoke this pipe when it was offered by the Chief, and the smoking of it meant that one gave up all thoughts of hatred and revenge towards those who had wronged one. It was a great responsibility to be holder of the Chief's pipe and there were many who did not wish to have it. But when it was offered to anyone by the tribe it was considered dishonourable not to accept it.

There are many traditions in connection with the smoking of other pipes at all kinds of ceremonies. However, I have not time to discuss these.

Some of our conventions are very confusing to white people, and, for that matter, to many other tribes of Indians; our "in-law relationship," for instance. When a marriage takes place, both the bride and the groom enter into a peculiar relationship with their in-laws. Although they are the best of friends, still they will not look at nor speak to their in-laws. If they wish to speak to them it must be done through a third party. If a man or a woman happens to be walking along and sees an in-law coming, they will avoid meeting each other by one stepping aside at a respectful distance, until the other passes. If he went to visit friends, he would listen outside the door to ascertain if any of the voices within were those of his in-laws. If any of them happened to be within he would not enter. The parents-in-law will never name their sons-in-law nor their daughters-in-law, and this is reciprocated by the latter. Should, however, one be

unfortunate enough to forget and accidentally name his or her in-law, there is always someone around who takes great delight in reminding them of the slip, by pinching their ears. You may ask me "What does this mean?" and I would have to answer, "I do not know." But if I may be permitted to make a guess—Don't you think the red man solved the traditional mother-in-law problem in this unique way?

Another one of the admirable traits of the red man is practically a challenge to the "Believe it or not" columns. The red man never profaned nor blasphemed the Great Spirit, consequently such words are unknown to him and were never introduced into his vocabulary. Our young people have to learn the white man's language to acquire the habit. But I pray they will exercise discretion and will not try to make up for lost time.

Our people are most law-abiding and there is little crime amongst them. The Indians know that their interests have been carefully guarded. They also know and admire British institutions. They feel that if at any time they should get into difficulties the Government would deal the same with them as with other citizens of the Dominion. When I read of the manner in which others have dealt with primitive peoples, we feel fortunate that we are under the British Crown. We feel that the conditions of the Treaty signed by our people have been generously kept.

It is only a little over a half a century ago that we roamed the prairies, in our primitive conveyances, the travois, lived in buffalo skin lodges, hunted the buffalo with our bows and arrows, and gloried in our war-paths; and tonight, standing before this microphone, addressing an unseen audience, through the medium of this wonderful instrument of the white man, has made me feel as if I were transported from another planet, from another world.

## THE BLACKFOOT

BY TEDDY YELLOW FLY

*Calgary, Alta., November 27, 1937*

[**Announcer.** I will now introduce our Indian speaker this evening, Mr. Teddy Yellow Fly. Mr. Yellow Fly is a Blackfoot Indian from Alberta. His people received the name Blackfoot because their moccasins were blackened, either with paint, or with the smoke of prairie fires. There are only about 2,200 of them in Alberta today, and an equal number in Montana across the boundary. At no time in their history were they a numerous people, but their skill and courage in buffalo hunting and in war won them the admiration of every early explorer. Not only did they repulse the attacks of all the hostile tribes around them, but one war-party raided up to the gates of Winnipeg, which was then a tiny trading post, and another travelled so far south that it sighted the Gulf of Mexico. Only the very oldest Indians now recall those tempestuous years, but their memory still lingers in every Blackfoot tepee. That is the heritage their fathers have handed down to them. I will now ask Mr. Yellow Fly to speak to you. **Mr. Yellow Fly.**]

Greetings, my friends, I have the honour to represent the Blackfoot nation. The members of the Blackfoot nation in Canada are the Blood Indians, the Piegan Indians, and the Blackfoot band, of which I am a member: all are located in southern Alberta. A fourth part of our tribe is located near Glacier Park in Montana. Our home has always been in the western plains, and, as is well known, the buffalo was our mainstay and made my nation independent and resourceful. In olden days we had no horses, but when the horses appeared, the Blackfoot, the horse, and the buffalo was a hard combination to beat. With the disappearance of the buffalo the old life had to go, and it was then the Blackfoot nation answered the call of the Great White Mother and made a treaty, the terms of which made possible the friendship, peace, and contentment that we enjoy today. I will take as my subject tonight Indian tepee



designs, because it carries our minds back to the history of my people and is one of the main means used to record the thoughts and inner life of the Blackfoot.

Time does not permit me to go into details. The tepee, as you know, is our big, conical tent, which we used to make from buffalo hides, but now from cloth. Tepee designs are divided into three principal classes: first, traditional designs; second, designs from visions and dreams; and third, war designs. These will be dealt with separately later on in this talk. There are, however, certain symbols that may be embodied in any tepee design. For instance, on the flaps or smoke regulators at the top of a tepee is a group of seven circles arranged to form a dipper; these represent the constellation of the Great Bear or the Dipper. Then on the back of the tepee, near the top, is another circle or a cross, representing either the morning or the evening star. Thus we denote the sky which is above the earth. Then all around the bottom of the tepee there may be a complete chain of triangles or perhaps half circles, symbols of the mountains and hills upon this earth.

I shall now give you a brief outline of the three principal classes of designs widely used among the tribes of the Blackfoot nation. The first class, the traditional designs, were created in a remote era, and passed on from one generation to the next. With most of them goes a story, recording the incidents that occurred when the designs were created. Hence, an intensive study of these designs, and of the incidents they record, may give valuable information on the early history of the plains Indians. Unfortunately, the legends connected with them are so numerous and so complicated that many of them have been forgotten already, and it is only a matter of a few years when the rest, too, will be completely forgotten.

The second class of tepee designs comprise those created from visions and dreams. The Indian in his natural state is a worshipper of nature. He believes that everything has a spirit, the birds, the animals, even forests and mountains. It is from these, therefore, that the Indian seeks a sacred helper, or what is sometimes called a guardian spirit. He will have a dream or a vision in which the spirit of a bird or animal will appear to him

in human form, for the spirit is supposed to possess supernatural powers. It will tell him that it will be his sacred helper, and, among other things, instruct him to paint a certain design upon his tepee; and it will teach him the songs he must sing and the ceremonial rites he must perform when the design is made. That is why Indian tepees bear figures of the deer, the eagle, and the bear; they are symbols of the Indians' sacred helpers. The tribe will not accept every such design, however, but only those created by Indians who have proved that they possess powers from their sacred helpers not granted to other Indians.

The third class of tepee designs are the war designs. There are no special objects represented in designs of this class. According to Indian mythology there are various war deities, and the tepee designs are gifts from these deities, though they have to be painted on the tents by Indians who hold exceptional records as warriors. It is possible for an Indian to purchase the title or right to a war design on his tent. First he performs all the ceremonies that are necessary; then he makes his tent. When the tent is ready he summons a number of warriors and allots each one an area on the wall of the tepee. The warrior counts or relates his war successes or coups, and these are painted on his section of the tent wall until the record extends all around the body of the tepee. Thus, a tepee bearing these war designs is literally a monument recording the deeds of prominent Indian warriors; but there are not many of these war designs in existence today.

No Indian can copy any design or any part of a design that is the property of another Indian. Neither can a design be created by imagination. If an Indian creates a design along other methods not recognized by the tribe, that Indian is subject to the penalty of being ostracized by the tribe. Tepee designs may be purchased or given away as gifts by those who possess the right or title to them. The man who receives them must go through the proper ceremonial rites; only after these are performed do the designs become his property.

All Indian tepee designs are based on well-established rules. Each object in the design has its own meaning and its own place in the ceremonial rites; and each design has its special ceremonial songs.

These rules, however, are not strictly followed in all modern tepee designs because many changes have taken place to suit modern tastes. Many of these changes have been caused by the white man's idea of Indian art and by the commercial demand for articles of Indian design and manufacture. Nevertheless, it remains true that the Indian has kept for centuries a heraldry of his own, a heraldry that records not only his achievements but his thoughts, so that a Blackfoot design is really a record of the Indian's soul.

It is in the hope that the white man and the Indian who seek to live together may understand each other better that I have spoken of this part of Blackfoot tradition. I have finished.

## THE HAIDA

BY REV. PETER KELLY

*Vancouver, B.C., December 4, 1937*

[**Announcer.** During the last few weeks you have listened to a series of talks by the earliest inhabitants of Canada, the Indians. They have spoken to you from the Maritimes, from Quebec, from Ontario, and from the Prairie Provinces. Tonight we will carry you across the Rockies and present to you a representative Indian of the Pacific Coast. Mr. Peter Kelly is a Haida Indian from Queen Charlotte Islands. One hundred and thirty years ago his people, and their neighbours on the Pacific Coast, used to scour the coast-line in big war canoes carved from the trunks of the giant cedar trees; they fished in the fiords and rivers, traded with friendly villages, and raided the settlements of hostile tribes, carrying off men, women, and children as slaves. Women on Vancouver Island would frighten their little children by telling them the Queen Charlotte Islanders were coming, just as our ancestors long ago would frighten their children with tales of the Vikings. There was chivalry, too, among the Pacific Coast Indians, just as there was in Europe. A chief would send a challenge to some rival chief along the coast, and on the appointed day meet him in single combat on the beach. Now, however, the days of chivalry and raids are over. We are in a machine age, an age of electric power plants, and of steam and gasoline engines. Mr. Kelly will now tell you how his Pacific Coast Indians are adapting themselves to this new era. **Mr. Kelly.**]

Many different tribes of Indians dwell in what is now called British Columbia, but I will speak mainly of my own people, the Haidas, who live on the Queen Charlotte Islands and in southeastern Alaska. Those on the Queen Charlotte Islands are separated from the northern mainland coast of British Columbia by Heeate Strait and Dixon Entrance.

The homes of my people on the Queen Charlotte Islands were made entirely of red cedar. Each house was about 50 feet



square, with side walls 14 feet high and a gabled roof 20 feet. The frame and ridge pole were logs 3 feet in diameter, and the walls were planks 4 feet wide and 4 inches thick. Before the white man came, these planks were split from red cedar logs with bone wedges and stone mallets. The cedar grew from 60 to 100 feet high below the branches and, therefore, it was easy to split as it was free from knots. In front of the house stood a 50-foot totem pole carved from top to base. In the earlier times the door itself was merely an opening 4 feet high at the base of the pole. There were no partitions inside, just one large room with a fireplace in the middle, and two or three tiers of heavy planks around the walls, on which the inmates worked and slept. A gap in the roof served as a chimney; it could be opened or closed with a trap door.

Picture now, if you will, this massive house standing in a row with twenty or thirty similar houses along a gravel beach, and with the totem poles, both house-pole and mortuary, standing in a row in front of these houses, presenting quite an imposing picture as one approached the village from the sea. On nearer approach you would see many canoes on the beach, and people engaged in different activities. The men would be making canoes, paddles, long spears, bows and arrows, and fishing paraphernalia for halibut and other kinds of fishing. In the spring large racks of sliced halibut would be seen drying in the sun. Fish-eggs, as herring spawn were called, would be seen drying in abundance. There would be seaweed also and many other varieties of foodstuff. In the autumn dog salmon, cohoes, and humpback choked the streams. These were either speared or trapped in great quantities and dried for food. Everybody worked, young and old alike. In the summer and early autumn the women gathered wild berries. The huckleberry, the salal berry, the high bush cranberry, other kinds of berries, and crab-apples were gathered in and cured to be put away in boxes. Various kinds of wild roots were gathered in for food purposes. The potato was unknown on our Pacific coast until 1791 when it was introduced by a white fur-trader. The white men, of course, first got potatoes from the South American Indians. Ducks and geese were very plentiful, and seal and sea-lion, as well as porpoises, could be killed nearly all the year round and

dried for food. Although there were no game animals to be got on the Queen Charlotte Islands, there was no shortage of food. Of course the sea took its toll of those who braved it. The words of the poet, "Men must work, and women must weep," apply to all mankind, but particularly to those who follow the sea.

Houses, such as I have just described, are no longer to be seen; they were abandoned over 50 years ago. I was born in one, but lived and was raised in a modern house; for all the Haidas now live in modern houses. The sudden change from the large, well-ventilated community house to the air-tight modern house has been, in my opinion, injurious to the health of my people.

Many white people believe that we worshipped the totem poles that stood in front of our houses; that they were like the graven images before which the old heathens used to bow down. But our totem poles were not idols. We never prayed to them or revered them in any way. They resembled rather the coats of arms of European lords and knights. We had our nobles just as Europeans had, and it was only a nobleman who might erect a totem pole on the occasion of his accession to the family title. The pole was a tribute to his ancestors; and the birds and animals, real or imaginary, that were carved on its face were creatures that tradition said had played a part in the adventures of these ancestors.

The erection of a pole was no light matter. First of all the nobleman hired a trained sculptor to cut down a suitable cedar tree in the forest and to work on it, day after day, in absolute privacy. No one might see his carvings, not even the nobleman who had ordered them, until the work was completed. Then when the sculptor had finished his task the tribesmen dragged the pole to the village, messengers sped up and down the coast in swift canoes to invite distinguished guests, and the family of the nobleman made its final preparations for the feasting and entertainment of perhaps one thousand people during 1 and perhaps even 2 weeks. In the early days they had to spend 2 or 3 years in gathering the necessary presents and food.

The forests of cedar, spruce, and hemlock, from which the mighty totem pole was carved and the sleek, swift war-canoe hewn, still stand, but the Indian has lost the freedom that was

his to cut where he would. The timber has passed into the hands of large timber companies. The waters are still teeming with fish, but now the Indians must share the catch with other fishermen—Scandinavian, Finlander, Dalmatian, and Japanese. These fishermen with large purse-seines scoop up the fish for the canneries to can and for reduction plants to turn into oil and fertilizer. Everything has changed over-night. Once the Indian was "monarch of all he surveyed"; now he looks on bewildered.

Yet, in all the tremendous change and development that is going on in this great province of British Columbia there is, and should be, a greater place for the Indian. In the fishing industry the Indian is equal to his competitors—white and Japanese. The Indian women are considered the most reliable cannery workers because of their patience and thoroughness. The result of centuries of handling salmon has made the Indian salmon-conscious; it is in his blood. Moreover, given a little training in mechanical appliances, the men become proficient mechanics. They build good boats and houses, operate engines, and are good sailors. Some of them are excellent carvers of gold and silver, making bracelets, rings, and ear-rings, as well as carving beautiful wooden and slate totem poles. The women are clever with their hands in weaving baskets, mats, and embroidery, as well as sewing. In the interior of the province some of the Indians have made good at ranching, where individual Indians run herds up to one thousand head; and in the lumbering industry, he has achieved some success.

The Indian problem today is economic, and it is well to recognize this fact. White civilization has educated the Indian almost completely out of his former mode of living, giving him habits, customs, and tastes that require money to satisfy. Many of my brethren in British Columbia live in restricted areas, areas that are, to some extent, economically lifeless. With the assistance and guidance of the Canadian Government these conditions are being faced and shall be successfully overcome.

I should like to mention the encouragement being given to the promotion of Indian handicrafts by the Welfare and Training Department of the Indian Affairs Branch. Indian arts and

handicrafts are peculiarly distinctive, and quite unlike anything else in the world. The revival of these Indian industries should help considerably in providing wholesome and interesting work for many of our Indian graduates of the residential schools who, at present, have but little to occupy their leisure time, more especially during the winter months.

Technical education already has a definitely organized place in the school system of the Indian Affairs Branch, especially in the Indian Residential Schools, and the teaching of Indian handicrafts is not considered as out of harmony with the general function of technical training. There is much evidence that the financial condition of the Indians could be improved by the extension of the manufacture and sale of their own handicrafts.

What are the future prospects of the Indian? Has he had his "little day"? Is he now doomed to pass into oblivion? Some people think so, and sometimes, I believe, others desire it. However, I believe he will not only survive but will "make good." He is improving in health, thanks to the careful oversight exercised by the Government. The last census reveals that the Indian population is gradually increasing. I believe that in making the leap from paganism to civilization the Indian suffered inevitably, but he is beginning to adjust himself to his new environment. This is being made possible through the tireless co-operation of Church and State. I speak most gratefully from personal experience. To have climbed up to the teaching profession, ministerial ordination, and officer's standing in mercantile marine service, as some of us have done, are worthwhile achievements. A great deal more can be done. If the leaders in the industrial world would recognize some obligations to the Indian and lend him an encouraging hand some of the latent qualities of the Haida that once made him the "Viking of the North Pacific" would be rekindled. After all, the ultimate goal envisaged by Church and State for the Indian is full citizenship, so that he can stand shoulder to shoulder with his fellow-men.

The several churches that labour so patiently among the different Indian tribes of the province are to be commended for their love of the Indian in the Spirit of the Man of Nazareth.



The Indian Service of the Dominion Government also devotes itself to its task and trust of guardianship with alertness, persistence, and sympathetic understanding. These joint efforts have yielded returns and in due course will yield greater returns.

In conclusion I should like to express my sincere appreciation for the privilege of speaking to the people of Canada on behalf of the Indians of British Columbia.

## CANADA AND HER INDIAN WARDS

BY HONOURABLE T. A. CRERAR,  
MINISTER OF MINES AND RESOURCES

*Ottawa, December 11, 1937*

The opportunity of concluding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's series of talks, "The Indians Speak to Canada," gives me a distinct sense of pleasure. I have listened, as many of you have, with great interest to members of the various tribes as they told you of the traditions and customs of their people, the part they have played and are playing in developing our country, and how they are adapting themselves to the new civilization and culture they have encountered.

These talks have brought home to the people of Canada an appreciation of the many difficulties that are being faced by the Indians and by the Government, who is responsible for their welfare. They have shown the progress that has already been made towards solving the problem of utilizing the potential capacity of the Indians, who now number over one hundred and twelve thousand.

Our anthropologists tell us that long before there was any civilization in Greece or Egypt, or indeed anywhere in the world, small bands of hunters began to move out of northeastern Asia into Alaska and through Alaska into Canada to become the ancestors of our present-day Indians. In the years that followed small bands of Old World people continued to drift across Bering Strait into America. Each band brought with it its own peculiar customs, and in many cases a peculiar language of its own. That is why Canada, when Confederation was brought about, found within her domain no less than fifty distinct tribes of Indians, tribes that spoke eleven languages, as different from one another as English and Russian.

Here was an intricate problem for any government. When Confederation came there was no railway spanning the country; large areas of it still remained unexplored. Legislation that

might have seemed advisable for the Indians of eastern Canada, who had long intermarried with Europeans and in many cases adopted European habits, could not be applied to the western and northern Indians, many of whom were still outside of all government authority.

Let us consider, for a moment, the condition of these Indians in the middle of last century, just a few years before Confederation. The prairies, which are now crossed with fences separating one wheat field from another, lay then wide open to roving herds of buffalo that provided four tribes of Indians with meat for food and skins for shelter. In the intervals of hunting the buffalo these four tribes lined up against one another, or rather two against two, and raided each other's camps for scalps and horses. One scalp was as good as another, so that many a white trader or settler who was trying to establish a home for himself on the margin of the prairies met with disaster; and on more than one occasion Old Fort Garry, now the city of Winnipeg, had to close its gates to keep at bay the marauding bands.

By the time Confederation brought the prairies under Federal control the situation had changed a little. The Indians still raided one another's camps, and cut off an occasional white man, but the herds of buffalo were soon so nearly exterminated by the rising tide of settlement that they and their families were starving. They were only too willing, therefore, to submit to government control and supervision, provided that they were assured food and clothing for themselves and their children. But what was the government to do with these warriors and hunters who knew nothing about tilling the soil? How was it to set about transforming them into peaceful and prosperous citizens?

Now let us turn to the Pacific Coast. There the Indians lived by hunting, not the land animals, but the animals of the sea, seals, sea-lions, and whales, and by netting and hooking the salmon, cod, and halibut. During centuries of isolation they had evolved a kind of feudal system in which families of nobles, living in huge houses made from planks of the giant cedar tree, ruled over a multitude of retainers and serfs like the lords and barons of the middle ages. Like the old barons they raided

each other's domains, and challenged each other to single combats. They patronized, too, the arts and the sciences, so far as these were known to them, by engaging the most skilful craftsmen to carve their house-posts and totem poles, and by devoting the winter months to dramatic festivals that required elaborate costumes and stage settings. In short, they had built up a unique civilization of their own, a primitive and barbaric civilization that lacked much of what we consider the comforts and even necessities of life, but still a genuine civilization. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, this civilization had crumbled into the dust. Cities and towns had arisen on many of the old Indian village sites; steamers plied up and down their waterways; white lumber companies made larger and larger inroads on their forests; and white fishing schooners and canneries took an ever-increasing toll of their fish. The old noble families lost their prestige and were degraded to paupers when their retainers and serfs threw off their allegiance and sought employment with the white men; the feudal system broke down; the old religion and the old morality collapsed; newly introduced diseases such as tuberculosis and measles swept through the ranks of the Indians; and though food remained still plentiful, the once flourishing communities became scenes of misery and despair. Clearly the problems that faced the Federal Government on this Pacific Coast were quite different from its problems on the prairies.

Finally, let us turn our eyes to the northern parts of Ontario and Quebec, and to the vast area covered by the Northwest Territories and Yukon. There, 70 years ago the Indian population was small, but the white population still smaller; there were, in fact, no Europeans at all except the fur-traders attached to the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, and a few missionaries. Little was known of the natural resources of the region except that its climate prohibited agriculture. Consequently, the Government could safely neglect it for a period while it devoted all its energies to the expansion of settlement in the more accessible parts of Canada. But when mining and lumbering crept northward it could no longer postpone the issue. Willingly or unwillingly, it had to assume the burden of many thousand Indians who had no settled homes, but wandered in



family groups, half a dozen individuals here and half a dozen there, wherever they could obtain a livelihood. All their food came from fishing and hunting; and by that time the larger game and fur-bearing animals over many areas were greatly reduced in numbers. It was known, too, that some of these fur-bearing animals were subject to seasonal fluctuations. Years in which they were numerous were followed by years in which they were very scarce; and during these lean years the northern Indians suffered such great hardships that whole families sometimes perished from starvation. How was the Government to deal with a situation like this?

It is evident, therefore, that in the matter of our Indian races alone, apart from all its other problems, Confederation shouldered the Federal Government with a very difficult task. Already the Indians in the more settled parts of Eastern Canada, through treaties made in earlier years, had been allotted tracts of land considered adequate to maintain themselves and their families; and they had been provided with certain educational and medical facilities. The authorities had realized that these Indians could not be made citizens immediately and absorbed at once into the commercial, industrial, and agricultural life of the country. Yet their segregation on these tracts of land was not intended to keep them permanently aloof. On the contrary, it was thought their reserves would become training schools in which they could learn to adapt themselves to modern conditions, and from which they would graduate as full citizens as soon as they were qualified. By this means it was thought Canada might honourably discharge her obligations towards the native inhabitants of the Dominion, and, at the same time, by encouraging the Indians to become self-reliant, change a grave financial and social burden into an asset.

This was the policy already adopted in Eastern Canada, and this was the policy that the Federal Government has gradually extended to other parts of the Dominion. Annually, for more than half a century, it has expended large sums on the care and training of the Indians. It stocked many of the reserves with cattle, horses, and seed, endeavoured to educate the children, and provided medical service and hospitalization. In the north

country, where the Indians have no other means of livelihood than trapping, it has set aside large areas where only Indians may trap and hunt.

The task confronting the Federal Government can be better appreciated, perhaps, from its cost. The education of the Indians—the maintenance of more than 300 schools with an enrolment of 18,000 children—costs each year in the neighbourhood of \$2,000,000. Their medical care—the maintenance of a staff of doctors and nurses and the upkeep of hospitals and dispensaries for their benefit—adds more than another million to the yearly bill. In this connection we should remember that certain diseases such as measles and tuberculosis were not common among the Indians until they were introduced from Europe, and that, consequently, the Indians are less immune to them than we are. Moreover, during the long depression years when the Indians suffered as severely as ourselves, there were heavy expenditures for relief and a great deal of this still continues.

There may be some who regard the work as purely gratuitous. To these I would say that we must recognize our moral obligation to help the Indian adjust himself to the vastly changed conditions that we ourselves have brought about. We, the intruders, so to speak, have deprived him of his old mode of living. We have swept him off his feet. In fairness, we should help him to regain them again.

It has been frequently suggested that the Indians have not responded to the efforts of education and training as well as they might. We should, however, not lose sight of the fact that many of them have been in contact with our European civilization only slightly more than 100 years—a short time, indeed, in the history of the development of a people from a wild nomadic life to a civilized state as we know it. Our own civilization has been thousands of years in the making and changes as a rule have come about gradually. What the effect would be of having an utterly alien civilization thrust upon us even today we can only conjecture. Events of the last quarter century of industrial development seem to indicate that not all of us are capable of adapting ourselves to changing conditions to the same degree.

There are now more than 112,000 Indians under the direct care of the Federal Government, and the problem of absorbing them into the life of the country is almost as serious as it was 60 years ago. Part of the responsibility of doing this lies with the Government; the other part rests squarely on the shoulders of the people of Canada. We, as individuals, have a great opportunity of helping the Indian along the path of self-development and progress, by extending to him a kindly sympathy and an understanding of his problem. The economic and industrial development of the country have decreed that his life in future must come into closer relation with our own. Our purpose should be to guide and assist him in developing a new culture, in which all that is best in the old native life shall be blended with the best of our own. To achieve this there must be mutual understanding and sympathy. These qualities are essential, not only for the solving of our Indian problem but for the solution of many other problems now facing the Canadian people.