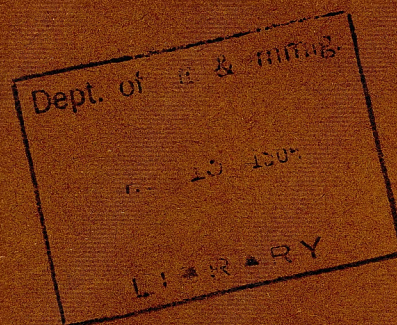


ADDRESS OF  
LT. COL. H. M. JONES  
DIRECTOR OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS' CONFERENCE

BANFF

SEPTEMBER 14, 1959



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DIRECTOR OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS' CONFERENCE

BANFF

SEPTEMBER 14, 1959

Madam Superintendent-General,  
Col. Fortier,  
Gentlemen:

Madam Minister, I would first convey to you the very sincere appreciation of all of us that you have taken the time to grace this Conference with your presence. I know that your very presence will of itself contribute much to the morale of our staff and will serve to confirm in the minds of all your genuine and sincere interest in Indian Affairs.

I would point out that many of our field officers here today are seeing you for the first time and hearing your inspiring and practical views. I can say without fear of contradiction that they find both aspects pleasing and satisfying.

As many of you are already aware, last month the Minister visited reserves and met with Chiefs, Councillors, and Band Members in the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, and southern British Columbia, including Vancouver Island. Altogether she met with representatives from 53 bands and from 218 reserves. There was ample evidence wherever she went of how deeply the Indians appreciated this personal visit from the Superintendent-General. My impression was, throughout this strenuous three-week tour, that the Indians accepted it as confirmation of the sincerity of the Minister's interest in their welfare.

I think, too, that personnel of Indian Affairs gained much from the Minister's extensive field trip. Mrs. Fairclough now has first-hand knowledge of our day-to-day work in the field and of the difficulties and obstacles we encounter as we endeavour to press forward.

I am acutely aware of the fact that today Indian Affairs, and the Indian people of Canada, are at a cross-roads in history. Which road is taken, and the speed and care with which we move up the right road will be a matter of much concern to us all and even more to generations yet unborn.

I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that never before has the Indian Affairs administration in this country received such searching examination as it is receiving today. This examination is being conducted by Parliament, in the Press, by interested private agencies, and by the public in general. I suggest to you, gentlemen, that it would be wise and prudent if we engaged in this examination ourselves.

However, if our introspection is to be of benefit to us, and what is more important, to the Indians, it must be as realistic as possible. We should recognize what shortcomings we have and be prepared to overcome them. We should also recognize our achievements, of which there are many, so that we may not only take courage but know just what strength and capabilities we have to harness.

It has been said that faint heart never won fair lady. If fair lady is the realization of that day when the Indians of Canada have become firmly established in the economic and social life of this country, then there is no room for hesitancy or lack of purpose in our efforts.

On the whole, I am sure we do not have to apologize for the efforts we have made in the past, especially during most recent years. There is, of course, room for improvement, and I shall be dealing with that later. For now, I am going to look on the positive side and review briefly some of those things we have accomplished. This review is not to be taken as a symptom of self-satisfaction, but as a signpost of hope for the future and an indication of our potential.

I think every person in this room will agree with me that our most vital role is in the field of education. If we fail in this we fail in all things.

In its final report to Parliament in 1948, the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Indian Affairs, which had

convened over a period of three years, recommended that in the field of education steps should be taken, and I quote, "to prepare Indian children to take their place as citizens"; and to quote further, "Wherever and whenever possible, Indian children should be educated in association with other children".

How far have we succeeded in carrying out this mandate?

First, let me point to the noteworthy increase in the number of Indian children receiving elementary, secondary, vocational, and professional education which has risen from 23,285 in 1948-49 to 38,836 in 1958-59, an increase of 15,551. In part this increase reflects the large growth in the Indian population, but it also represents the admission of Indian children to school at an earlier age and the extension in the school life of the average pupil. For example, in 1948-49 there were 611 Indian students attending high school, whereas in 1958-59 this figure had increased to 2,144. The number taking vocational courses ten years ago was 41; in 1959, 469.

With this considerable increase in the school enrolment of Indian children, there followed a proportionate increase in the administrative work-load and the expansion of educational facilities. Since 1948 some 838 teachers have been added to staff, and school inspectors have been appointed in each administrative region - and this at a time when school teacher shortage was a national problem of serious import.

The number of classrooms in operation in Indian schools has risen from just under 700 in 1948 to over 1,150 in 1959. Other related factors in the expanding school program include a much improved teacher salary schedule; a more comprehensive program of courses in the adult education field; student guidance; the provision of scholarships for



able students; and, what I consider to be of great importance, the establishment of Indian school committees on the reserves.

As I have mentioned, the mandate with which we have been charged in regard to education includes the integration of Indian children in non-Indian schools wherever and whenever possible. Have we made progress on this front?

I think we have. The number of Indian children attending non-Indian schools increased from 1,406 in 1948-49 to 8,186 in 1958-59. In British Columbia, where substantial progress has been made in this respect, one out of every four Indian pupils attends such schools.

The value of integrated education is, of course, the opportunity that Indian children have to mix with non-Indians and thereby become better acquainted with the wider social environment at an earlier age. I am not being less than serious when I say without doubt that their non-Indian classmates have benefited by the experience as well.

Before leaving the subject of education, at least for the present, let me say, as I have said on numerous occasions in the past, that education is one of the most important keys in Indian economy. Already a level of prosperity equal to that of their fellow citizens has been achieved by many Indians as a direct result of the qualifications for employment that education and technical training have given them. Our effort in this direction must not relax; indeed, it must be accelerated.

It may come as a surprise to some of you that in reviewing our achievements over the past ten years, I am going to speak of the greatly improved health of Indians. This you may say should more properly be the claim and concern of the Indian and Northern Health Services of the Department of National Health and Welfare, which has done such outstanding work in the field of Indian health. Certainly no one would question the

excellent accomplishments of that Agency or detract from the splendid medical record of the Indian Health Services. However, when I speak of Indian health, I refer also to the general well-being of Indians which is, after all, fundamental to their physical fitness. This general well-being relies on such pre-requisites as adequate diet, decent housing, and an adequate social and economic environment. Let us not think that these pre-requisites have all been adequately met, for there is still a great deal to be done. However, let us see how far we have come in meeting them.

An adequate diet depends, of course, on the means with which to procure food and the proper use of food. In those families where the breadwinner is employed in attaining an income, and I am happy to say this applies to most Indian families, the means with which to procure food is available. What of those families less fortunate? Progress has been made in establishing a standard of relief for Indians comparable to that provided in non-Indian communities. Also, a special diet for Indians who have been exposed to tuberculosis or who are convalescent after treatment, has been introduced. Food assistance has been given increasingly by way of cash or by way of vouchers having a dollar value, and this has done much to remove the stigma attached to the provision of food requirements in kind. Insofar as the proper use of food is concerned, I would mention the pamphlet on nutrition which has been prepared in co-operation with the Department of National Health and Welfare for use by Indians.

All this we now accept as routine. It does no harm to reflect for a moment on how far we have really gone since the days of the old Prairie ration warehouse. A good many of us here today well remember those storehouses of alleged nourishment which were from time to time the object of marauding mice, gophers and others, and the subject of police reports in quintuplicate.



The construction of over 10,000 houses on reserves since 1948, and the repair of thousands of others, has contributed substantially to the well-being of the Indians. During this period, expenditures for new housing and repairs from Welfare Appropriation exceeded twelve million dollars. Financing has also come from Band Funds, V.L.A. Grants, and the personal contributions of Indians, which together have exceeded the amount provided from Welfare Appropriation in the past two or three years. This fact, I think, is encouraging because it is an indication of the greater interest being shown by the Indians themselves in improving their housing conditions.

What of the social and economic environment of Indians?

In recent years, professionally-trained social workers have been added to the staff. These officers now provide consulting and interpretation services to both field personnel and Indian bands on social welfare matters. They establish and maintain liaison with public and private welfare organizations and, together with Indian Superintendents, play an important role in promoting and fostering community development on reserves.

Community development on Indian reserves has gone some distance in the past decade. Indian band councils, Homemakers' Clubs, young peoples associations and other organizations, have all contributed to the improvement of social and economic conditions. The Leadership Training Program was introduced in 1954 and has proved most successful. As you are aware, the Program has been designed to help Indians, selected on the basis of demonstrated leadership qualities, to identify and understand reserve problems and to become familiar with accepted methods of community organization. On return to their reserves, they may thus take a leading part in improving conditions and promoting activities.

In recent years, federal legislation has given Indians many of the benefits provided to their fellow citizens in the field of social



welfare. These benefits include Old Age Security, Old Age Assistance, Blind Persons' Allowances, and benefits in connection with the Disabled Persons Act. Indians have also been brought more and more into the social welfare programs of the various provinces and private agencies, not the least of which are concerned with child welfare.

Gradually, provincial authorities are coming to give recognition to Indian residents as being citizens of the province in which they reside, both de facto and in law, and are moving away from the erroneous theory of federal wardship excluding provincial responsibility or interest. I am not at all sure but that this trend is not the most important development of the past decade from the long-range Indian point of view.

The economic environment of Indians in some areas has changed rapidly in the past few years. In the North and other areas that were previously considered remote, an intrusion of industrial activity has taken place and is continuing to expand. This activity is notable in such fields as hydro-electric power, mining, commercial fishing, lumbering, transportation, and communication. In southern regions, many Indian communities have been affected by the spread of urban areas. Other Indian communities have felt the influence of new demands for resources on or near reserves.

Recognizing the need for Indians to participate as fully as possible in their changing economic environment, especially where the old occupations of hunting, fishing, trapping and farming have become less reliable, the Department has taken a number of steps to meet this challenge. As you know, a Placement Program was initiated in 1957 to advance employment opportunities for Indians, and Placement Officers have been added to staff at several regional offices. Vocational training programs have been implemented in various parts of the country. Increased

efforts have been made to encourage the development of reserve resources through the provision of a more adequate source of credit to Indians in the form of the Revolving Fund Loan. Where hunting, fishing, and trapping still hold promise, the Department, in co-operation with the various provinces, has introduced measures to help maintain and, in some areas, to substantially increase the yields from these occupations.

To meet this challenge of an improved economy for our Indian people, we are setting up a new division at Branch headquarters whose responsibility will be to explore and develop every possible channel which may lead to a more prosperous and stable economy. Already all levels of government and many industries have co-operated with us to this end. I have every hope that our new Economic Development Division will accelerate this movement so that eventually Indians may share fully in our rich national economy.

These things I have mentioned are now taken for granted by those concerned, but they do constitute the corner-stone for the building ahead.

And let me here make a personal suggestion. When you become discouraged to the point of losing heart, spend a few minutes quietly reading "A Review of Activities. 1948-58" and just consider the discouragements faced in that same period. Yet so much was accomplished because we had determination, and the long view constantly in mind.

I hope that you will all take pride in the achievements I have mentioned and in the many more I have not had time to mention. I personally take pride, not only in the achievements themselves, but in our field staff - you, who have made them possible.

We are, as I have said, now under close examination. The Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons, appointed



last spring to examine Indian Affairs, is expected to reconvene at the next session of Parliament. Many private agencies and the public at large are taking a greater interest in Indian welfare as each day passes. It is particularly important at this time that we take a hard, honest look at ourselves.

In doing so, an analysis of current criticism is not out of place. It seems to me there are two distinct sources of criticism. First, Indians themselves; and secondly, that increasingly large segment of the non-Indian public who are becoming conscious of the fact that there is an Indian problem.

It is my opinion that the numbers and enthusiasm of both sources will grow rather than diminish, and it is right that it should be so.

In regard to Indians, more and more they are inclined to make their problems known by writing the Minister or their Member of Parliament, or expressing their views in the Press. In short, Indians are becoming familiar with the use of weapons available to all other citizens in this democracy of ours. It is axiomatic that the further we progress towards our goal of making the Indian a responsible citizen, the greater will be his use of these channels of public opinion. Believe me, this is a good thing. It indicates that Indians in increasing numbers are seeking a better world and it will serve to keep all of us on our toes to see that he is helped along the way.

Now, a comment on criticism from non-Indian agencies and the Press in particular. This I can only interpret as a long-overdue awakening on the part of other Canadian citizens from a long period of indifferent slumber. Let us pray that it continues.

However, the one regrettable aspect is that so much of this type of criticism seems to be based on misinformation, with the result that its

effectiveness is lost.

For a long time I have thought that we have a very definite responsibility here. I refer to the use of every available media of mass communication to inform the public on the true facts of the problem. Only when the public is in possession of these facts can we expect constructive and enlightened criticism and co-operation.

I am pleased to note that Mr. Norman Riddiough of the departmental Information Service is attending this Conference. His purpose is to explore ways and means of expediting the right type of information from the field so that it may be prepared for national or regional dissemination. I commend his mission to you as being one of no little importance, not only to ourselves but to the Indians of Canada.

At this crucial stage in Indian administration, let us consider honestly our individual working relationship with the Indian himself.

First, let me say that we should work with Indians, not just for Indians. Only in this way may they assume to an increasing degree the responsibility of administering their own affairs, both as individuals and as communities. Secondly, if we are to work with people, we must cultivate patience and understanding at all times. It is a fact that a single irritable word can spoil the best laid plans. On the other hand, an occasional word of warmth and praise can do much to strengthen the bond of co-operation.

Two other factors which should be kept in mind in considering our working relationship with Indians are consultation and explanation. When something needs to be done for the benefit of the band, it should be done in consultation with the band council. Indeed, the very need for action itself should be something in which the council may express its views. Again, the way in which the action is to be carried out is a matter



for the Council's concern.

With regard to the factor of explanation, let me say that whenever a proposal is brought to the band council's attention, all of its aspects should be carefully explained. This includes the "whys", the "whens" and the "wherefores". Following the initial explanation, a question period is almost always of value. Questions should be dealt with thoroughly and facts and figures made available when requested. I am sure this is the procedure many of you follow. I mention it here because I feel that adequate explanation is essential to a good working relationship with Indians.

Encouragement should be given to band councils and individual Indians to initiate action which they feel is necessary. We should not allow rules and regulations to stifle this initiative or make them an excuse for doing nothing. There is usually some way of reaching objectives within the framework of existing legislation when we really look for it. If one has to say "no" to a particular proposal, he should have an alternative ready.

I have said that our approach in Indian Affairs is to work with Indians and I have mentioned two or three things regarding our working relationship. I know these things have been said before, but I have repeated them because I am afraid that all too often we pay lip service to the idea of Indian participation in the administration of their affairs, while maintaining an attitude of paternalism. Perhaps the reason why policy has not been transferred into action to a greater extent is that uncertainty exists as to where to begin and how to proceed.

You will have noted that one of the committees at this Conference will be discussing the question of the extension of authority and responsibility to Indians. I am sure that concrete suggestions will be

made by that committee. However, it is my opinion that if Indians are to achieve greater independence in the conduct of their affairs, more emphasis must be placed on the positive rather than the negative side of their abilities. Indians, like others, can be expected to make mistakes, but this must not rule out their chances for local self-administration.

The most pressing need, in my estimation, is the development and encouragement of leadership. On my visits to reserves across Canada I am made more and more aware that the difference between a successful Indian community of a proud, happy people and the reverse is to be measured by the degree of leadership found thereon.

Similarly, this quality of leadership and example is required also to encourage young people to venture from the reserve and take their place among fellow Canadians. Naturally, this leadership must rise from within the group itself. Nevertheless, it is our duty to encourage the development of such leadership by use of all the skill and patience we can muster.

Now, gentlemen, let us look into the future and attempt to see what lies ahead.

In January of this year I gave a few basic facts at our Regional Supervisors' Conference in Ottawa. Some of them bear repeating at this time.

- (1) At the present rate of increase, by 1968 the Indian population will be 227,888. This represents an increase of 58,000, roughly equal to the present Indian population of the Prairie Provinces.
- (2) We can predict that from 25 to 40 per cent will remain on or return to their reserves.
- (3) We can also predict that from 60 to 75 per cent will live off reserves and make their way in the company of fellow Canadians.



These are self-evident facts that point irrefutably to two essential objectives which must be attained in the next decade:

One, to lay the foundation for well planned, happy, and more prosperous Indian reserve communities in which the Indians themselves assume increasing responsibility and pride.

Two, by adequate educational facilities and by the development of economic and job opportunities, to assist Canadians of the Indian race who choose to leave the protective confines of their home reserve and venture out into the competitive world of their fellow Canadians.

To meet this double-headed challenge, an acceleration and expansion of educational and welfare programs will be necessary.

In the field of education, more Indian pupils will be taking their place in non-Indian schools. Others will seek to further their education in schools on the reserves. Moreover, greater encouragement will be given to Indians to extend their education into the higher grades and beyond the high school level.

In our welfare program, housing will continue to take a leading place in the next few years at least, during which time over 7,000 new houses will be built. The need for considerable relief may possibly continue in certain areas of the country for some time to come, and further study will be given to improving relief administration. This matter will, in fact, be taken up in committee later on in the Conference.

In the field of economic development, more and more assistance will be given to Indians in finding jobs, in developing resources on the reserves, and in vocational training. It is appropriate at this Conference that the subject of education for employment is to receive special consideration at the committee level.

When looking to the future, we should not fail to include the question of community development. This is of major importance to those Indians who will be remaining on the reserves rather than seeking their livelihood elsewhere. As you know, the population increase of Indians in this country over the past ten years has exceeded that of any other ethnic group. In 1949, there were about 136,000; in 1954, nearly 152,000; now, over 175,000. This represents an increase at the cumulative rate of about 3% per year. Now, if only less than half of the rising generation remain on the reserves, there will be too great a burden on existing reserve facilities. The answer to this problem must surely lie in sound community development.

I have spoken about additional housing. To this I should add electric power, roads, bridges, schools, sewers, and all the other physical properties of a modern community. However, the addition and expansion of these physical properties will not properly meet the demands of growing communities without intelligent organization and planning. Many Indian communities have developed in a haphazard manner. All too often there has been no co-ordination of planning whatsoever. To correct this situation, all Indian communities should have an overall plan of development so that new facilities can be placed in the most advantageous positions, having in mind not only the needs of the present, but of the future as well.

I expect that much of the community planning will be undertaken by the Indians themselves, serving on special band council committees. Such communities should be concerned with what I might term the "cultural" as well as the physical aspects of community development. Education and recreation would be included under this heading.



One of the major problems in community planning and development lies in finding capable people willing to devote the necessary time. I believe that the leadership training program, begun in 1954, is one of the best answers to this problem. However, I might add that those taking the leadership courses should be placed as quickly as possible into community work so that neither their interest nor the value of their training will be lost. I foresee that the subject of community planning will be touched on by more than one committee at this Conference, and I look for positive and practical recommendations on this increasingly important aspect.

You will have noted that besides participation in the work of the committees, each dealing with subjects vital to Indian administration, an opportunity has been provided for all to raise problems or to present ideas in the various plenary sessions.

I urge you to engage in these discussions and deliberations with complete frankness. The problem, gentlemen, cannot be solved by one man or even a select group. Only by team work of the highest order can we achieve the degree of success required of us. The basis of such team work is sound planning, and healthiest plans are those born of a free exchange of ideas.

In closing my remarks to this, our second national field Conference, I shall endeavour to sum up briefly the thoughts I would leave with you.

I am sure some of you have the impression that I have dwelt too long on the immediate past. This I assure you was deliberate and for reason.

The past decade, through which the most of you served, was an arduous phase, not without its mistakes but, in the main, successful and one we can reflect on with a degree of pride.

It saw a sick indigenous people brought back well along the road to health. I refer, of course, to the mind as well as the body; to the reclamation of a once hardy and vigorous people from the illness of lassitude and despair. It involved providing them with the basic needs of body and mind to equip them to enter and participate on equal terms with their fellow citizens in a vigorous Canadian economy.

This I will term the "Help Phase" - and you know as well as I do that this must and will continue for some time to come.

But now, gentlemen, we are on the threshold of a new phase. Already it requires our immediate attention and, as months and years pass, it will assume accelerated and increasing importance. I refer to the phase of "Self-Help". Gradually all actions of a paternalistic flavour or import must go. The Indian "Agent" of old, and his role of stern father or provider of rations must go and be replaced by a Superintendent walking shoulder to shoulder with the Indian as a friend and adviser as he walks out into new paths of national life.

I need hardly tell you, gentlemen, that phase "Self-Help" will call for a degree of patience and understanding not heretofore required. The disappointments will be many and, to meet this new challenge, we must prepare our way with sound planning and prepare ourselves to further these plans with fortitude and dedication.

Let not one of us forget that phase "Help" will be little else than an empty victory unless phase "Self-Help" can eventually be brought to an equally satisfactory conclusion. And, gentlemen, I would stress with all the conviction I can muster that phase Two is not something we might have to meet tomorrow or the day after. We are already in it - it is here now.



Therefore, it is my hope that the committees of this Conference will bring this self-evident fact to bear in their deliberations. And, more than that, when each one of you returns to your field post, refreshed, I hope, with the ideas and purpose of your colleagues, you will seek to set in motion the principles of "Self-Help" among those people who look to us for understanding and guidance.

If these are the fruits of this Conference, then indeed will the Indians of Canada have reaped a good harvest.

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