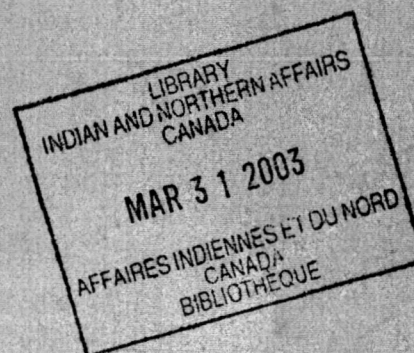


FOURTH ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

SHERATON-CAVALIER HOTEL

SASKATOON, Saskatchewan

May 9 & 10, 1967.



DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

REGINA, Saskatchewan.

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Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development

Indian Affairs Branch - - - Education Directorate

FOURTH ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

May 9 & 10, 1967.

AGENDA

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| <u>May 8</u> | 8:00 p.m. | - Registration and Orientation. |
| <u>May 9</u> | 9:00 - 9:20 a.m. | - Address of Welcome: His Worship, Mayor S. Buckwold Mr. F.A. Clark, Regional Director, Saskatchewan. |
| | 9:20 - 9:40 a.m. | - Mr. N. Elliott, Executive Assistant, Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association. |
| | 9:40 - 10:00 a.m. | - Discussion and Questions. |
| | 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. | - COFFEE |
| | 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. | - Mr. C.M. Bedford, Associate Professor, College of Education, and Chairman of Canadian Home and School Indian Education Committee. |
| | 11:00 - 11:30 a.m. | - Discussion groups. |
| | 11:30 - 12:00 noon | - General Assembly--reports from discussion group leaders. |
| | 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. | - LUNCH |
| | 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. | - Mr. L.G.P. Waller, Chief Superintendent of Schools, Ottawa. |
| | 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. | - Discussion and Questions. |
| | 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. | - COFFEE |
| | 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. | - Discussion groups--organization and formation of constitution for school committees. |
| | 6:00 p.m. | - Banquet. Guest Speaker, Reverend Father André Renaud, O.M.I., Associate Professor, College of Education, Saskatoon. |

AGENDA

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- May 10 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. - General Assembly. Reports and summary from group discussions on constitution.
- 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. - COFFEE
- 10:30 - 10:50 a.m. - Mr. O.N. Zakreski, Regional Superintendent Of Vocational Training and Special Services, Saskatchewan.
- 10:50 - 12:00 noon - General Assembly. Discussion and Questions on formation of Regional School Committee.
- 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. - LUNCH
- 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. - Agenda to be determined by the Steering Committee.
- 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. - Summation and Evaluation --
(to be appointed by Steering Committee)

DELEGATES

| | |
|--|--|
| Allen Ahenakew | Gordon Albert |
| Mrs. Albert Bear Campbell Brass Edward Burns | Harold Benjoe Albert Bunn |
| Louis Chicken John A. Courchene (Manitoba) Miss Ida Crowe | Dave Courchene (Manitoba) James Crookedneck Ernest Crowe |
| Mrs. Margaret Deer (Quebec) Mrs. Katherine Delver | Solomon Delver |
| Pat Eaglechild (Alberta) Mrs. Rose Ewack | Robert Ermine |
| James R. Favel Felix Fontaine | Edward Fineday |
| Mrs. Dolly Guibeault (Manitoba) Norman Henderson | |
| John James William Joseph | Mrs. Laura Johnstone |
| Henry Kayseas Morris Kinequon | George Kayseas |
| Mrs. Mary Lavallee Miss Loretta Ledoux= David Lemaigre | Mrs. Mary Ledoux Paul Ledoux |
| John R. McLeod Solomon Mosquito | Ken McNab Roy Musqua |
| Albert Netmaker | George Nicotine |
| Joe Opikokew Spencer O'Soup | Glen O'Soup |
| Arnold Pechawis Mrs. Pauline Pelly Mrs. Alice Poitras Reverend Father Porté, O.M.I. (Interpreter for Louis Chicken) | Joe Pelly Ed Pinay |
| Albert Seesequasis Victor Sparvier | George Seesequasis Lawrence Stevenson |
| James Thomas Louis Thomas James Thomson | Leo Thomas Mrs. Miriam Thomas |
| Mrs. Therese Wildcat (Alberta) Albert Windigo Ed Worm | Joe Williams Thomas Windigo |

GUESTS AND OFFICIALS

Deputy Mayor, Mr. Harold Latrace, Saskatoon

Mr. N. Elliott, Executive Assistant, Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association

Mr. C.M. Bedford, Associate Professor, College of Education

Mr. L.G.P. Waller, Chief Superintendent of Schools, I.A.B.

Reverend Father André Renaud, O.M.I., Associate Professor, College of Education

Mr. D. Daniels, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Alberta

Mr. J. Slobodzian, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Manitoba.

Mr. F.J. Foss, Regional Superintendent of Vocational Training and Special Services, Manitoba

Mr. G.T. Ross, District School Superintendent, Selkirk, Manitoba.

Mr. O.N. Zakreski, Regional Superintendent of Vocational Training and Special Services, Saskatchewan

Mr. W.J. Wasylow, District School Superintendent, Battleford, Saskatchewan

Mr. R.H. Gent, District School Superintendent, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

Mr. F.M. Frey, District School Superintendent, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

Mr. J.B. Freeman, District School Superintendent, Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan.

Mr. J.A. Dolan, Assistant District School Superintendent, Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

Mr. W.R. Sinclair, Assistant District School Superintendent, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan.

Mr. W. Karashowsky, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Saskatchewan.

Mr. M. Rehaluk, Acting Assistant Regional Superintendent of Schools, Saskatchewan.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

Indian Affairs Branch

May 9 & 10, 1967

The Fourth Annual School Committee Conference was held in the Starlight Room of the Sheraton-Cavalier Hotel, Saskatoon, commencing at 9:00 a.m., May 9, 1967, and ending at 5:00 p.m., May 10, 1967. Registration took place Monday evening, May 8.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. McLeod, Chairman for the morning session.

Mr. McLeod introduced Deputy Mayor, Mr. Harold Latrace, acting on behalf of Mayor S. Buckwold, who was away on holidays. Mr. Latrace remarked that school problems are among the greatest problems facing everyone in Saskatchewan. Only discussion with other people can resolve these problems.

Mr. M. Rehaluk, Acting Assistant Regional Superintendent of Schools, was then introduced by Mr. McLeod. Mr. Rehaluk expressed Mr. Clark's and Mr. Karashowsky's regrets at not being able to attend the Conference. Delegates from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and one from Quebec, were in attendance. He mentioned that delegates from other provinces suggested they would be interested in being host to the Conference another year. However, this decision must be made by the delegates at the Conference. He then outlined the agenda of the day, and was pleased to announce that the members of the steering committee had accepted the responsibility of chairing the proceedings at the Conference. Mr. Rehaluk commented that the School Committees were the backbone of the community with regard to educational matters. The Chief and Council have so many problems to cope with that they cannot deal with school problems. An effective School Committee, working closely with the Chief and Council, can bring about a greater interaction between the home and school. This greater awareness will result in better education for the community.

Mr. McLeod introduced Mr. Elliott, Executive Assistant, Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association. Mr. Elliott, speaking on behalf of the school boards in the province, stated that they believed that parents should have a voice in the education of their children. The Indian Schools are not part of the school district, and are not included in the Saskatchewan School Act. Mr. Elliott set forth three resolutions which could remedy this situation:

1. An Amendment re definition stating that parents resident on Indian Reserves should be considered resident ratepayers of the school district which their children attend.
2. With federal concurrence, school districts might be organized on Indian Reserves--residents would then have full voting rights in the school units to which their districts are attached.
--Problem is that Indian group would be isolated--solid Indian district.
3. Boundaries of existing school districts could be altered or enlarged to include adjacent Indian Reserves, thus producing a larger district of mixed racial origin. Might be the best of choices.
--There would have to be Federal concurrence to ensure co-ordination.

He suggested local committees could be formed while awaiting changes in legislation. These committees could be elected for various terms, thus providing continuity.

They should invite members of the unit board to sit in on their meetings, discuss problems with them, and so work out solutions. One person who has the confidence of all could act as liaison between the parents and the teachers.

A question period followed Mr. Elliott's talk, and the keen interest taken in the Conference was displayed by the number of questions raised. One delegate wished to know the reason for discrepancies in the rate of pay to school bus drivers for the same period of time. In reply, Mr. Elliott said the local school unit secretary would be in a position to answer this. However, he felt that if the drivers worked the same hours, the rate of pay should be the same.

"What is the difference between a school board and a school trustee?" was one question. The reply was made that a school trustee was only one person--a member of the school board, with no authority to make decisions. Only the school board as a whole has this authority. The Board takes on the profile of a person, having the power to make contracts.

It was asked what the qualifications of a member of the school board were. To be able to read and write, and conduct meetings in the English language were the only requisites. Only people with an interest in education should be put on the School Board.

"Why are Indians not members of the School Board?" Mr. Elliott was of the opinion that changes in the Indian Act would have to be made, and should be made, to bring this about.

Mr. C.M. Bedford, Associate Professor, College of Education and Chairman of the Canadian Home and School Indian Education Committee, was the next speaker. His topic concerned the functioning of Home and School Associations.

"It is the basic right of parents to determine the education of their children. The future of any race lies with the children." A government is elected every few years. They see to the education of our children. The provincial government delegates responsibility to the local school boards. These school boards hire teachers, build schools, and see to it that the law of the land is carried out in the school. The most important function of the Home and School Association is the opportunity it affords to the parents to know what is happening or what is not happening, and to get guidance.

"Who organizes a Home and School Association?" Anybody can organize a Home and School Association by talking with other parents and teachers, and writing to Mrs. Hennigan, the Executive Secretary of the Home and School Association in Saskatchewan. This same opportunity is available to Reserves. In the past, Home and School Associations have not worked out very well on Reserves. To form one on a Reserve is the right of the Indian people, and has the approval of the government in Ottawa. To belong, you only have to be interested--there are no restrictions at all. It is not necessary to have children in school. The usual membership fee is \$1.00. Mr. Bedford outlined various ways of raising money for playground equipment, levelling school grounds, etc. For major projects--such as a library--more attention will be paid by the government to several Home and School Associations making this request. Mr. Bedford outlined a program for a "meet-the-teacher" night at the beginning of the year. Health committees could be formed to sit with the government for a year--perhaps 2 years--to discuss health problems. Individual problems concerning children should not be discussed at a Home and School meeting, but rather should be

taken directly to the teacher. If no satisfaction is gained from discussing it with the teacher or principal, the matter should be brought to the attention of a trustee, and if there is still no satisfaction, a letter should be written to the Minister of Education who, in turn, will advise the Superintendent of Schools of the situation. One of the main purposes of the Home and School Association is to make friends with the teachers. Too many children in one class; fire hazards; the safety of school buses;--all are topics worthy of discussion at a Home and School meeting, and if these topics indicate changes that are sensible--these changes will be made.

A question period followed. One delegate from the File Hills-Qu'Appelle Agency had favourable comments to make on Home and School Associations. The Conference formed groups for discussion and later reported to the meeting. Ed. Pinay, speaking for the first group, recommended that the committee work with Provincial and Federal Governments to amend the School Act so that they could have voting members on the school board. One delegate wanted to know if this would mean loss of Treaty rights. It seemed that Indian students obtaining free supplies in the classroom was causing difficulties.

Mrs. Lavallee reported for the second group. It was found that there was a lack of communication between the Indian people and the administrators. Indian people don't know enough about the functions of Home and School and trustees. They wondered if it was necessary for Chief and Council to sanction Home and School, etc., and how do you get parents to attend? What is the responsibility of the Chief in regard to Home and School? A question to be directed to Mr. Bedford was: Why are Home and School Associations not too successful on Reserves? With regard to Section 118 of the Indian Act--the section dealing with Truant Officers: Why is it up to Indian people when the government is responsible? They also inquired as to the meaning of Section 106 of the Indian Act. Does Section 113 mean there is no need for change in the School Act?

The Conference adjourned until 2:00 p.m., at which time Mrs. Lavallee took the Chair. Mr. L.G.P. Waller, Chief Superintendent of Indian Schools from Ottawa, was introduced. He congratulated the Speakers for getting the Conference off to a good start. He felt that past Conferences had not been a waste of time as tremendous changes have taken place since the first one was held--there has been more integration, more children entering high schools, universities, and vocational training. A request from the Indian people regarding proposed changes in the Indian Act will have a bearing on the changes in the development of school boards. Mr. Waller then delivered a paper for the School Committee members, which is enclosed with this report.

The Conference was then open for discussion.

"Who is responsible for the organization of school committees on the Reserve?" was one of the questions raised. The essential thing is the desire on the part of the Indian people. The impetus comes from them. The delegate who made the query said they had been waiting for two years for help from the Superintendent, and no aid had as yet been received. In reply, it was stated that the Indian people should start doing something on their own--then help would come from the Superintendent. Two new Assistant District School Superintendents--Mr. James Dolan and Mr. W.R. Sinclair--would help ease the situation. More time could be devoted to matters of this nature.

'Is there a lack of communication because of a language barrier?" Mrs. Lavallee reiterated the statement that they should not wait for assistance from Indian Affairs or anyone else, but do more on their own.

The subject of poor housing, schools, conditions that were not conducive to studying in certain areas was brought up.

It was mentioned that school board members are not paid, although allowances are made for loss of time from work, and travelling expenses are covered. It is an honour to act as a member of the School Committee to serve the children of the community better. One delegate from the Battleford Agency remarked that they are going to have elections for a school committee, and are thinking of paying \$15.00 for every member who attends meetings. Mrs. Margaret Deer from Caughnawaga, Quebec, was of the opinion that women make better members than men because of the instinctive interest in their children aroused by motherhood. She also felt they make more effective truant officers.

After the coffee break, Mr. David Courchene from Fort Alexander, Manitoba, indicated his wish that Manitoba host the Conference next year. The Alberta delegate, Mrs. Wildcat from Hobbema, also extended an invitation to the group to hold the Conference in Alberta next year. A decision was left for the following day's agenda.

Mr. McLeod asked the Conference to consider having two members represent the group at the Schools of the Forest Conference beginning May 11, 1967.

Mrs. Lavallee then spoke on behalf of Mr. Chicken of Stony Rapids. In this area there was a problem of communication between parents and teachers, as no one could speak English. Mr. Zakreski, Regional Superintendent of Vocational Training and Special Services, felt that a Kindergarten where the children would be taught the English language at an early age was the answer to this problem.

The Conference then broke up into discussion groups regarding the organization and formation of a Constitution for School Committees.

The first day of the Conference was followed with a banquet at 6:00 p.m. Reverend Father André Renaud, O.M.I., Associate Professor of the College of Education, Saskatoon, was the guest speaker. A copy of Father Renaud's speech is included, see Appendix B.

The Conference re-assembled at 9:00 a.m. May 10. Before hearing the reports from the group discussions on the Constitution, a Resolutions Committee was appointed, consisting of Mrs. Lavallee, Miss Loretta Ledoux, Mrs. Johnstone, Mr. Harold Benjoe, Miss Ida Crowe and Mr. Ed Pinay. Reports from the various groups then followed, with the first report being given by Mrs. Ewack. It was decided by the group that they needed larger school committees--at least five members instead of three. One member of the Band Council should be included to report progress on the meetings. A School Committee member must be at least 21 years of age, and meetings should be held at least once a month.

Sports and miscellaneous grants should be deposited in the bank as funds to be drawn on as needed.

The group felt that, because of the language barrier, it should be explained in simple language how a committee should function.

Miss Ledoux reported for the group voting on the revised school committee regulations, copy of which is attached (see page 12). Out of about 30 members of the group, 8 were in favour of the first resolution; 12 were in favour of the second; all were in favour of the third and fourth resolutions; 14 were in favour of the fifth; 12 were in favour of the sixth; and all were in favour of the seventh and eighth.

Mrs. Lavallee reported for the third group.

Once again, a strong plea from Mr. Chicken of Stony Rapids was presented to the Conference, asking if they could have a white man to act as Secretary-Treasurer on the school committee. Mr. Rehaluk said any teacher could act in this capacity, but as soon as a Band member is ready for this position, they should be willing to take this over.

The difference between constitution and regulations was clarified.

A Constitution is essentially a framework--the basic objective of an organization--it sets out aims and goals of the Association.

Regulations constitute the authority you have to carry out these aims and goals. A school committee was not made a legal entity by the constitution--it would have to be made a legal entity by law, by the Indian Act.

School boards are a necessity. They have responsibilities and, in this respect, have legal status. School committees, on the other hand, may or may not have responsibilities, and have no legal status.

Mr. Zakreski remarked that Band Councils are the only legal entity on the Reserve. Perhaps they are asking for school committees to have more responsibilities and become legal entities.

Mr. Mosquito requested that two members be added to the steering committee for the purpose of getting a start at drafting a constitution at this Conference. Mr. Waller replied that he would be happy to help draw up the constitution, which must not be in opposition to the regulations. However, he pointed out that it cannot be done today--it takes time--perhaps six months--but a start could be made today.

Following the coffee break, Mr. O.N. Zakreski, Regional Superintendent of Vocational Training and Special Services, was introduced. Mr. Zakreski remarked that he had noticed delegates attending conferences seemed worried. They discuss things, make resolutions, and then nothing happens. He pointed out that this was really not the case: things have been accomplished. The Indian Affairs Branch are now more in the background, as the Indian people are now chairing and directing the course it should take. Perhaps next year the Conference could be planned and carried out completely by the Indian people and reports distributed afterwards. Regarding the Constitution, he suggested that perhaps they could draw up a rough constitution during the year and present it to next year's Conference. Mr. Zakreski briefly reviewed the resolutions of last year's meeting, and then requested the Conference form groups for discussion of the formation of a Regional School Committee.

The three points under discussion were:

- 1.. Is a regional school committee a good idea?
2. If so, why? What value is it? What benefit would you derive from a regional school committee?
3. If a good idea, how do we go about setting it up?

Mr. J. Slobodzian, Regional Superintendent of Schools for Manitoba, pointed out that the title "Regional School Committee" is probably the wrong term--they are thinking rather of an association of school committees where the membership would consist of a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and executive officers from each school committee. Therefore, the title "Regional Association of Indian School Committees" (RAISC) would be more suitable.

Before forming groups for discussion, one of the delegates brought up the problem of children dropping out of school. She felt that, with the divisional system, there was no need for children to drop out of elementary schools. She wanted the right of parents to sit in on Board meetings. Mr. Slobodzian remarked that the School Act must be amended to allow this. He also suggested that it was possible that the Board would allow them to sit in on meetings if they requested it.

Reports from the group discussions then followed. Mrs. Ewack, speaking for the first group, again raised the question as to why Indian people cannot sit on the School Board--they felt they had this right. They paid a tax although it was a hidden tax.

Mrs. Lavallee reported for the second group from Saskatchewan. In answer to the first point, they felt that a Regional School Committee was a good idea. The reason for this was that a Regional School Committee would be in a position to influence policy pertaining to education. They could appoint a member to sit in on curriculum activity. They did not want to lose their identity as an Indian. In order to set this committee up, they suggested that each Agency send two representatives.

Reporting for Manitoba, Mr. Courchene said their group felt they were not ready for a Regional School Committee as there were not enough school committees in the province yet, and they thought that what was needed was a crash program to form more school committees.

Mrs. Deer, the delegate from Quebec, also felt they were not prepared for a Regional School Committee. They only had a few school committees at present but, with the ideas gained from the Conference, Mrs. Deer was sure that much could be done to remedy this situation.

The delegate from Alberta, Mrs. Wildcat, stated they were willing to sit in on Board meetings if they were ready to co-operate with them.

Another problem--that of education for retarded children--was brought up. Kindergartens had been tried for these children but were not suitable. Mr. Slobodzian said that under Bill 16, a teacher grant was available for 8 - 14 pupils, and if there were more pupils, there would be two teacher grants, or three as the case may be. He said the Divisional Board provided for this education.

Summing up the discussions, it was felt that (1) A Regional School Committee was a good idea. (2) It would serve the purpose of organizing the Conference--it could take action on the resolutions made and see that they were directed to the proper people--could act as a pressure group in trying to change policies. The Chief and

Council should be aware of everything that goes on on the Reserve. (3) The committee could be formed on an Agency basis and come together with representatives from each Agency.

Integration was another problem--in a religious sense as well as racial.

Nominations for representatives to attend the Schools of the Forest Conference followed. As Mrs. Lavallee and Mr. McLeod were to represent the steering committee, only two representatives were required. Nominees were:

William Joseph, who declined. Nominee from Big River Band
Pat Eagle, who declined. Nominee from Blood Reserve, Alberta.
Chief Leo Thomas, Pelican Lake.
Miss Ida Crowe, Guidance Counsellor from Saskatoon Office.
Ernest Crowe, Piapot Band
Laura Johnstone, Mistawasis Band.

It was moved by Campbell Brass and seconded by Ed Pinay that nominations cease.--
Carried.

Mrs. Laura Johnstone and Miss Ida Crowe were elected as representatives to the Schools of the Forest Conference.

A vote was then taken as to where the next Conference would be held, with the result that Alberta would be next year's host.

The resolutions, which were read by Mrs. Lavallee earlier in the day, were voted on and all were carried.

Once again, the difference between a Regional School Committee and a Regional Association of School Committees needed clarification. It was pointed out that the former consists of one regional committee, whereas the latter is an association of all school committees in the province.

Mr. Karashowsky congratulated the group on its active participation in the Conference. Everything possible would be done to attend to the resolutions just passed, and he expressed the hope that he would see as many school committees formed as possible. He also said he would visit as many Reserves as possible.

It was moved by Mr. Mosquito and seconded by Campbell Brass that the steering committee draw up the resolutions and present them to Mr. Karashowsky, today. The Conference voted on adding resolutions drawn up by Indians representing all the Indian people at the National Conference of Indian and Northern Education. This vote was passed.

A summation and evaluation of the Conference was given by Dr. Ahab Spence. A copy is attached.

Mr. George Ross, District School Superintendent, Selkirk, Manitoba, thanked the Saskatchewan people for the invitation to attend the Conference. He said that intensive work will have to be done in Manitoba in the organization of school committees. The Conference has given them the inspiration to do this.

Mrs. Deer also thanked the Conference. She realized that Quebec is away behind in their school system, and they would have to work very hard.

The Alberta delegate, Mrs. Wildcat, extended her thanks to the group, and said they would try to give next year's Conference the same service they received here this year.

The Conference was then brought to a conclusion with Mr. Courchene voicing his thanks to everyone in attendance.

Conference adjourned.

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR
REVISED SCHOOL COMMITTEE REGULATIONS.

1. The school committee should be elected by voting members of the Band. At present it is appointed by the Band Council
2. The School committee should make up its budget in February in consultation with the Agency Superintendent to coincide with the preparation of estimates.
3. The school committee should appoint a Secretary-Treasurer, preferably a Band member, to replace the Agency Superintendent who now acts as Treasurer.
4. The allotment of funds for sports equipment should be granted on the Band school population (children 5 to 18 years) rather than on the number of classrooms on the Reserve.
5. The school committee may, on request, assume responsibility for the enforcement of school attendance regulations and appoint attendance officers at rates of pay approved by the Branch.
6. The school committee may, on request, assume responsibility for the preparation of school lunches on terms set forth by the Branch.
7. The school committee may, on request, assume responsibility for school maintenance and repairs under terms established by the Branch.
8. The school committee may, in consultation with the school principal, arrange a program of instruction in Indian folklore, Indian language, Indian art, Indian dancing, etc., of not more than thirty minutes weekly per classroom or group of classrooms, the instructors to be paid for their services by the Branch on terms established by the Branch.

Presented by: Mr. L. G. P. Waller
Chief Superintendent of Indian Schools
Ottawa, Ont.

I am pleased and privileged to be with you at this meeting which may prove to be one of the most important in this period of development and growth towards self-government for the Indian people. Although I stand before you prepared to read a short paper designed to assist you in reaching decisions on a matter of tremendous significance to you and your communities, my chief role is, I believe, to listen to your views and opinions, and to answer questions that you may wish to ask me. I have been involved in the introduction of school committees from the start. Over the years I have read the minutes of many of your meetings and I have gained some insight into the work you have done. On a few occasions I have met with your committees to discuss matters of interest and concern to your children and your communities.

The intent and the accomplishments of the school committees over the past ten years must surely be clear indications to you of the genuine desire of the Branch to permit the Indian people to participate in the management of their schools to the same degree that other Canadians do. The Branch is sometimes accused of showing reluctance to give you power over your own destiny. This is not so. You have wisely approached the organization of school committees with caution. Today there are only fifty to sixty working school committees, leaving the majority of the Indian communities without them yet. However, it is clear that all Indian parents are vitally concerned with the education of their children and it can be predicted that within a few years all Indian communities will have school committees.

The influence of your work on the education of your children cannot readily be measured, but I believe that much of the progress that has been made in the past five years in improved school attendance, better achievement and smoother community-school relationships can be attributed to the work of the school committees. You have gained a great deal of satisfaction in doing things for yourselves, planning programs for the children, raising funds for these programs, advising our field officials on numerous problems and taking an active part in finding solutions. You have learned too, I am sure, that operating schools or providing school service in provincial schools is no easy matter. We have all experienced the pleasure of sitting down together with good will to deal constructively with a wide variety of school matters affecting the lives and futures of your children.

During the past ten years, we have, I believe, proved to those who are honestly interested in the affairs of the Indian people that we can work together for your benefit. Any doubt on this subject must have been dispelled by the words of our Minister, Mr. Laing, addressed to the Convention of the Native Brotherhood at Vancouver in February, - "From one end of Canada to the other....the Indian Bands are coming to the essential decision to manage as much of their own business as they possibly can. Up to last week there were 136 bands who had taken the step of assuming control over their own revenue funds.

"This helps them to create a band civil service...similar to the city hall employees found in other municipalities. In the long and arduous steps which lead to self-reliance...this is one of the first and most essential.

"The Department has funds available and makes grants of many kinds to encourage this process. This is a new program and it will gain momentum in time. We want to

.....

see you all assuming as much of your own administration as you are ready and willing to take on.

"Local government is the training ground in which your leaders will find self-realization and will explore their own capabilities. They will find within themselves that they have the capability and the resources which will lead them on to greater steps forward.

"With self-reliance...with self-realization will come an awareness of the possibilities for good which will provide the lift for their people in the struggle for parity. The Department's role is to help you to do these things for yourselves... for no one can do them except you...yourselves.

"You will get every encouragement from me and my officials. We want to see as much self-government on the reserves as the reserves are willing to accept. You in this room have a part to play in showing your friends and fellow Indians the benefits of assuming control of their own destiny with the Department assisting in every way you want us to but not interfering when you want to be left alone."

The regulations for school committees have been used largely as a guide in the development of self-government. You have been permitted to interpret them to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. In some cases you have assumed responsibilities beyond the framework of the regulations which you have now outgrown. The new regulations must reflect your present views and future developments in self-government within the wider provincial community.

If the Indian community is to participate in decisions on the education of their children in the same degree as the non-Indian community, the Indian people must be recognized as citizens and residents with equal rights and privileges with respect to education. Today over fifty per cent of your children are enrolled in provincial schools and about ninety per cent of them will attend a provincial school at some time in their school career. The provincial courses of studies are in use in the 350 Indian schools across the country. The teachers in these schools are trained in provincial normal schools and teacher training colleges. The provincial school inspector visits your schools. Indian schools are federal schools only to the extent that they are administered by Branch officials under the terms of the Indian Act. However, in spite of the influence of the provincial school system on your community schools, Indian children still attend school, whether federal or provincial, under the terms of the Indian Act. This is an anachronism which those charged with the revision of the Indian Act should attempt to remove.

It is almost impossible to consider Indian education apart from the provincial systems of education because, as I have already indicated to you, the latter permeate the Indian schools. This in no way infers that the educational needs of Indian children need be ignored or that a uniform provincial system will mold the minds of your children. All educational systems in Canada attempt to meet the needs of the individual child. Special teachers, special classes, flexible curricula and courses of study within any one system attempt to deal with individual needs. Most of you know, I am sure, that the universities are concerned about the education of Indian children and they are creating special intercultural training courses to prepare teachers for Indian and Eskimo children. To my mind, this is a clear indication of the responsibility that universities have accepted towards the Indian people.

One of the most frequent comments on Indian education is the need to bridge the gap between the school achievement of Indian and non-Indian boys and girls.

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Persons interested in the welfare of the Indian people want to see a larger percentage of your children in high school and university, fewer dropouts in the elementary grades, and less retardation. If these are legitimate goals, if they are supported by you and your children, then obviously we must attempt to remove all factors contributing to failure in school. A great deal has been done in this direction over the past twenty years, the most significant actions being the transfer of so many Indian children to provincial schools and the operation of kindergarten classes.

The point I wish to make is this -- responsible Indian school boards, who in the future will be making important decisions on education, should be fully acquainted with the present system of educational services for Indian children, the provincial involvement, policy with respect to the privileges of the Indian people as far as provincial educational services are concerned and what these services mean for the Indian children.

In Canada each province has its own school system. There is no federal system. Schools operated by the federal government must somehow be fitted into the provincial system. Each province has its own school legislation governing the operation of its schools -- usually called the School Act. Provincial governments have delegated their powers to local school boards which, under the terms of the School Act, operate the schools under the watchful eye of the province. The tendency today is towards the consolidation of small school districts into large school divisions, and the elimination of numerous small schools in favour of large central schools offering a wide program of studies and served by fleets of school busses bringing the children in rural areas long distances to those modern schools which give these children the advantages of the large school once enjoyed only by city children.

The School Act carefully defines the authority of the school board. Some school laws such as those concerning the governing of school attendance, teacher employment, and school finance, are mandatory or compulsory; other school laws are permissive. If the school committee on an Indian reserve is to have real authority, it too should have the legal status of a municipal school board under provincial legislation. Under such circumstances, the school committee could call on the provincial department of education for technical assistance in almost any area of school operation.

May we consider for a moment the function of the local school board in relation to the federal and provincial governments.

Education is a matter of national interest. A high level of education for all of the people in Canada is fully supported by the federal government which contributes large sums of money to the provinces for this purpose.

However, education by the provisions of the British North American Act is the responsibility of the provincial government. Each province has its department of education and minister of education whose duty it is to make laws governing education, establish policy and provide funds for schools and services throughout the province in an equitable manner.

The province, in turn, may delegate authority to school boards in cities, towns, villages and large rural areas called school divisions or counties. In Canada, we believe that the people should operate their own schools looking to the provincial government for leadership and services that cannot be provided locally. School boards are given very specific powers and duties under school legislation -- some of the more important of these are:

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- (a) Providing and maintaining school buildings,
- (b) Appointing school staff,
- (c) Providing textbooks and school supplies,
- (d) Sending reports to the Minister,
- (e) Providing school lunches,
- (f) Providing school transportation,
- (g) Appointing a secretary-treasurer,
- (h) Operating the schools under the terms of the School Act.

At this meeting you will decide what powers you wish to assume and how they will be exercised. You will make your wishes known to the Minister who must then decide how and to what extent he can delegate power to you. When these decisions have been made and Treasury Board approval has been given, new regulations for school committees or school boards will be prepared.

The types of organization towards which we are now moving are, in my view, as follows:

1. Policy and legislation will remain the responsibility of the Minister, formulated and modified in consultation with the Indian people.
2. Branch officials at all levels will provide professional leadership and services as required. Where necessary, field staff will continue to administer schools and services in those Indian communities where school committees have not yet been organized. Field staff will be available to assist and advise school committees.
3. Indian representatives, either elected or appointed, will sit on the boards of provincial schools in which Indian children are enrolled. Legislation to permit this is as yet largely lacking but there is every indication that the provincial governments and the people they represent realize the need of legislation to give Indian parents a voice in the operation of the schools attended by the majority of their children. By reason of the success of integrated education and its rapid annual growth, the work of the Indian people on provincial school boards across the country will prove to be the most influential and of far-reaching importance to Indian education and to the status and dignity of the Indian people.
4. Provision will be made for the establishment of school boards to administer the operation of schools on Indian reserves. The Band will have the privilege of requesting the government to establish a school district on a reserve to be administered under the terms of the Indian Act by a school board duly appointed or elected in conformity with the regulations. Ideally, these boards should be set up under provincial legislation to bring the school district within the jurisdiction of the province and entitled to the services provided by the department of education. New provincial legislation may be necessary before the school boards can operate in this manner.

The authority to be granted these school boards will be specifically stated. The duties of the school board will be enumerated together with procedures on accounting and reporting

Branch or provincial field staff will be available to assist the board in the details of administration, supervision and finance. By reason of the complexities of school administration today, no board can function without the guidance of professional personnel.

The prospect of local, independent school boards, answerable to the community and the government, charged with the operation of schools on Indian reserves is full of excitement and wonder. It is an indication of maturity on the part of the Branch and the Indian people -- the Branch has learned to trust and respect the ability of the Indians to assume this responsibility and the Indians have said we are ready and willing to accept it.

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ADDRESS TO THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INDIAN
SCHOOL COMMITTEES OF SASKATCHEWAN
Presented by: Father André Renaud
Saskatoon - 1967

Mister Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with a distinct feeling of pleasure and honor that I have accepted to address you this evening. From the sidelines, I have been watching the growth and progress of your annual conferences. Earlier today, from what Mr. Waller was saying this afternoon, I gather that you have been asking yourselves if there has been progress. Let me tell you, as one who has been engaged in Indian education for close to twenty years, that there has been serious progress. If you could only recall the topics that you were discussing the first year as well as the way you were approaching them and compare with today, you would see the difference. You now discuss with much more maturity a broader range of issues and you zero-in on them with an accuracy worthy of the target-shooters of long ago. I only wish that all the teachers who are teaching your children, whether in schools of Indian Affairs Branch or schools under public and separate school boards, could be witness to these discussions. They could not help but be impressed as I am. What has taken place of course over the years not only through the conferences but through your work on school committees is a definite learning process. Most of you, unless I am mistaken, did not benefit from a high school education let alone a university training. During the last four years, through your steady work on school committees, you have familiarized yourselves with the educational program and system of the province as well as with the services of the Branch. You have also learned how to study and discuss together and more particularly how to make worthwhile decisions. All this is coming to a head this year and this is why you feel ready to envisage the erection of school boards on the reserves as well as the participation into the public school administration system.

You are not the only ones who have learned through the school committees and through these conferences. With all due respect to their initial competence and qualifications, I can assure you that the officials of the Branch have also learned over the years through these activities. Nobody ever knows everything when he comes into a new job. Even the professors at the universities with their doctor's degree and what not still have to learn many things once they start teaching or working at the university. The same thing applies to government officials. Those at the regional level who have initiated these conferences and help you start the committees have learned to respect your points of view and to accept discussing with you those issues and problems that you wanted to discuss. They have learned how to implement your recommendations and resolutions. The same applies to the officials at the National Headquarters that have approved the activities of your school committees and the holding of these conferences and have ratified with their authority those recommendations that were of their jurisdiction. They have even anticipated some of your decisions and initiated talks and negotiations with provincial governments that you are presently endorsing concerning the participation of Indian people in the public school structures. We have learned this afternoon that they are now considering the possibility, in fact the feasibility, of instituting Indian school boards to manage the schools on the reserves. This is definitely a major break-through which will help convince provincial governments that Indians are just as competent as anyone else to participate in the election of school trustees and to act as school trustees and participate in the management and administration of schools.

As much progress as has been accomplished, you must not think that there is

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little left. As long as the Indian Act carries such statements as "the Minister may.....", in fact as long as there is an Indian Act of the nature of the present one, you have to keep working. As long as the officials working for and with Indians and the reserves are not responsible to the control of the Indian people themselves, there is progress to be accomplished. It is now quite clear to see how this can be achieved at the local level through the transformation of band councils into local municipal authorities like is proposed to do in British Columbia and Ontario, among other provinces, and through the erection of school boards or the integration of Indian voters in the school structures of the provinces. This is only the local level. Incidentally, in doing a little historical research, I have found out that as early as 1866 the great John A. MacDonalld who was then Commissioner of Indian Affairs advocated the same goals and introduced legislation for that purpose. Why it has taken so long to come as close as we are today to achieving these goals is beyond my little historical competence. The fact remains however that today band councils and school committees are seriously and definitely moving toward the same status as those of other Canadians for the same purposes. The next step is not so clear and will require a lot of study and discussion on your part. It is how to set up structures within each province and at the national level which will give to you full control over your own affairs.

Following the introductory words that Mr. Zakreski said in introducing me, I would like to tell you more of what we have done and are trying to do at the University of Saskatchewan in the field of Indian education.

The first and most important thing we have undertaken at the College of Education has been to help teachers do a better job with your children, in whatever classrooms they are found, federal, public or separate. The College offers two special courses exclusively for such teachers. In these courses the teachers are helped to see clearly what are the particular problems that a large number of Indian children have in their school work because they come from the reserve and because they are of Indian tradition. These are problems which other children do not have because the course of study and the training of the teacher is such that whatever problems they have are met by the regular program. Because of present living standards on the reserves as well as because of the traditions and the ways of life on the reserves, your children do encounter special difficulties in their school work. Teachers are helped to understand the nature of these problems as well as the causes, then they are helped to find solutions to these problems. These problems, incidentally, are not exclusively the problems of Indian people in Canada. Indian people in the United States and in Latin America have similar problems so that the most successful solutions found in these countries can be used in part at least to solve our own problems. These problems are also found in Africa, in Asia, everywhere there are people with different traditions that are trying to move into the industrial and city society. Again, the solutions found in these countries and continents can be used and this is what the teachers learn when they come to our courses. In fact, some of these problems are also found among white people in North America and again the solutions discovered in working with these white people can be used in part in working with Indian children in Canada. It is just that mostly Indian children have these problems in Canada rather than others which makes it important to offer these courses to teachers of Indian and northern children.

Besides these two courses which are aimed more particularly at classroom work with Indian children, the teachers coming into our program have to take other courses, particularly in the Department of Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts, to learn more about the Indian people. These courses help teachers discover what the Indian people of Canada and of North America in general accomplished during the

thousands of years that they were alone in the country. The teachers also learn what happened to Indian people after the Europeans came, how they suffered and dis-integrated to the point where they are now today and finally, what can the school do to help them persevere as better Indians and better Canadians.

It is extremely important that at least the teachers should know all this history of the Indian people. To begin with we must admit that these facts are not known by the majority of Canadians. In fact, unfortunately, these facts are not known by the Indians themselves. All the knowledge about the Indians of the past is preserved in thick books in university libraries and in museums and, because of the way they are written, are beyond the reach of the average Indian who has at the most a Grade VIII education. Yet, this is information which belongs to them and to which they must have access eventually. We think that the first people who must learn these facts are the teachers who teach your children and who teach other children. We think that teachers must discover how the Indians of long ago were the representatives of mankind in North America and did absolutely the best that any group of human beings could do in North America under the circumstances. It is necessary for teachers to discover this in order to appreciate and understand the greatness of the Indians and to share this respect and appreciation with their pupils, Indians and others. We think it is important for the teachers to integrate these facts into the study of the history of Canada and of mankind so that all the children, Indian or not, may learn that the Indians of long ago in Canada and North America faced the same problems as other human societies and people anywhere else in the world and found answers to these problems which are just as valid and important as the answers found by the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, the Romans, etc.

We also think it is important for teachers to know what has happened to the Indian since the coming of Europeans and particularly the present conditions in which the Indian people are living. We think it is important for the teachers to use these facts together with other facts in developing the program in the classrooms. This is important so that the Indian child will understand that school deals with the problems of his people as well as with the problems of other people in Canada and in the world. We also feel that it is important for the children who are not Indians to know of these problems and to discuss their solution with their Indian classmates as well as with their own parents. We live in a democracy and it is every Canadian who has the right to vote in the elections which eventually sends to Ottawa the people who decide what goes into the Indian Act, what goes into the Indian Affairs budget and eventually appoint the minister to whom everyone is responsible. At least through the schools, in the way I have just described, Canadians can learn more about the current problems of Indian people, understand the difficulties and support the programs that the Indians are asking for and that Indian Affairs Branch is trying to implement. The same goes for provincial governments who increasingly have to help Indians through changes in their own school legislation and other legislation as well as in providing to Indian people the same services that they are providing to all other residents of the province.

Besides the courses that I have just described in the College of Education and in the Faculty of Arts, the University College of Education is also helping the teachers in their classrooms. We know that teachers are very busy people who may not have the time to think of the ways to integrate the facts I have just mentioned into their program. Consequently, the students and the staff at the College of Education have been working steadily at preparing notes that will show the teacher how to use the facts in teaching Social Studies, Arithmetic, Reading, etc. in such a way as to help the Indian child better to progress in his school work, understand who he is and where he can go if he keeps on learning and, at the same time, help other children understand who the Indians are and what are their problems. We also collect or

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produce books, films and filmstrips which will help the teacher to do this work in the classroom in a more efficient way. Finally, we publish a journal called THE NORTHIAN which keeps the teachers informed as to what is being done in Canada and elsewhere in Indian classrooms or in other classrooms in the countries mentioned earlier.

The university will soon approach the federal government and other agencies in order to have more money to produce more of these resources.

I must also mention that the Extension Department of the university is also at work on behalf of people of Indian ancestry on the reserves. It has recently signed a contract with Indian Affairs Branch to organize special programs, courses and services in home economics to help Indian mothers budget their income and run their houses in such a way as to help their children better as they go through school. The Extension Department also has on its staff Dr. Howard Adams, who is related to the Indians by blood and identifies himself with people of Indian ancestry, to help community development programs on the reserves.

These are not the only activities of the university. There is a whole field of work which goes under the name of Research. This word "research" is not of common use. The word "searching" is easily understood for instance when you lose a key and you "search" for it. Research means that specific problems are studied with great care and everything which is learned or done is written down in such a way as to give a complete picture of what was going on in the past or what is taking place now. As you know, the Indians of long ago did not write down what they were doing. They had no need for this kind of activity. This makes it a little bit difficult to find out exactly what they did. As a substitute, there are people who are trained at the university to work on those spots where it is assumed that the Indians of long ago lived for a while and dig down to see what these Indians or people have left behind. This is called archaeology. The university is not only training people to do this but is using them to find out exactly what was going on in Saskatchewan hundreds and thousands of years ago. It is amazing what can be discovered by digging in the ground and putting together what the people of long ago have left behind. Houses and villages can be reconstructed. The activities of the people can be described such as hunting, fishing, family life, religious rituals and practices, etc. This work must go on constantly if teachers and others are going to learn what the people of long ago were doing.

But the present is also very important if it is going to help plan the future. This is why the Department of Sociology for instance is getting ready to study, among other things, why people from certain reserves and certain northern communities succeed better when they come into cities like Saskatoon, or Regina, or North Battleford, Yorkton, etc. If we can find out what is there that makes for success then we can encourage it in other communities that do not have such results with their young people when they come to town. This again will help the school program as well as a lot of other services and agencies working to help Indian people adjust to 20th century civilization.

At the College of Education we have undertaken a series of studies as to how school integration is really working. We have selected a given area in the south and we have looked at everything that happens to Indian children from the time they are born until they complete Grade VII. We have studied the people that are around him at home, on the reserve, in the school where he goes and in the community where the school is located. We are trying to find out which are the people and the factors that are helping him to achieve success in the classroom as well as those who, unfortunately, are not. This is only a first study. It will be published

next Fall we hope under the name of "Cree Childhood on the Canadian Prairies". We hope to make other studies similar to this one as well as to experiment with certain ways of changing what is presently taking place so that children will succeed better.

Among the things we have discovered and learned, there are some that I would like to tell you about right now because I feel that it is exactly in your line of work. The first thing we have discovered is that Indian children as they grow older work in school to the extent that their parents and the grown-ups on the reserves care. Other children who are not from the reserves and who attend the same classrooms have parents who push them in the back all of the time to achieve good in their school work and to stay in school until they have completed high school and perhaps go on to university. These parents do so of course in part because they themselves have been to high school and they know what it is all about. We find that too often Indian children do not feel they are supported and encouraged by their parents and the grown-ups on the reserves in general. Mind you, this is a feeling on the part of the children. It can be explained by the traditional attitude of Indian people to respect the child just as if he were a grown-up and to let him go about his own business as he seems fit. This is a wonderful tradition. The fact remains however that in practice the children are interpreting this as a lack of interest and encouragement. This is where you people come in. You must find ways and means of getting all the parents and the grown-ups on the reserves involved in the school. This of course is done in other communities through participation in election of school trustees. This is why it is so important that either through the setting up of school boards on the reserves by Indian Affairs Branch or by the provinces approving such boards or including the Indians in the elections of larger boards, or all these things put together, Indian adults get involved in education. If the children could see their parents and the adults discuss school matters then they would know that their parents and the grown-ups are interested.

Of course, we have also found out that this apparent lack of interest and participation is not only because Indian adults respect Indian children as being grown-ups already. It is also due to the fact that the adults themselves, the grown-ups, the parents do not feel able to help their children in their school work or going through school in general. Parents and grown-ups do not seem to know what to do to help the children, not necessarily do their homework but to organize a family life which will make it possible for the child to do his homework and to be at school on time, well-fed and well-clothed. Too often unfortunately for instance there will be activities and parties in the homes and the children will stay up late and be very sleepy when they come to school and as a result will not understand what goes on. Or their parents will not get up in the morning and the children will miss the bus or maybe they will come to school without any breakfast, without any lunch and try to go through a school day without any food. At the same time however we have found that Indian adults and parents were extremely anxious to know how they could help. The university man who was visiting the homes on the reserves and was supposed to ask questions in order to find out how parents felt about various things, this university man was probably asked more questions than he was asking. The parents wanted to know what school was all about, what was happening to their children, what they should do to make life a little bit easier for them so that they would succeed, etc. This has led us to the conclusion that there is great need for a crash program of adult education on all reserves to let grown-ups and parents in particular learn what school is all about, how school works, who is responsible for what and who should do what and when, what kind of facilities and what kind of time-table is necessary for children as they go higher in the grades so that they will be successful. We think that the Indians of the province are anxious to know these matters and that they want to get involved in their own home as well as in a

group through school structures like school boards, etc. It is very nice to hear that Agency Superintendents and School Superintendents and others are going to help in this matter. In fact, from our research we know that all these worthy gentlemen are all too busy doing other very important things such as arranging for the sale of grains, the repair of houses and tractors, the care of the sick and needy, the signing of contracts with school boards for integrated education and new buildings, etc. We think that a task force should go on all the reserves, sit down with the people and talk all these matters over until everybody knows what the score is about education, particularly integrated education, and how Indian people individually in their homes and on the reserves as a group could help. This is the problem or the need that I would like to leave with you to discuss tonight at your meeting and come up with specific resolutions tomorrow. Perhaps it means that the Branch must hire people to do just that or maybe ask the university to do it provided the Branch pays for it. It is not up to me to suggest exactly how the thing can be done but I feel I must tell you on the basis of what we have found that it is high time that such a job be done. If school integration is the most important program of the Branch, if the next step is for Indian people to participate in school structures, this will come about best if Indian people are helped to understand what they can do, what they could do, and what they are expected to do.

I thank you.

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RESOLUTIONS

(As proposed by the Resolutions Committee)

1. Moved by Mr. L. Chicken. Seconded by Mrs. L. Johnstone.

WHEREAS in some Indian Reserves conditions are such that no adults can read or write in the English Language;

BE IT RESOLVED that such school committees be allowed to appoint a non-Indian person to act as Secretary-Treasurer for their school committees.

Approved.

2. Moved by Miss L. Ledoux. Seconded by Mr. H. Benjoe.

(a) BE IT RESOLVED that school committee members be elected by the voting members of the Band.

Approved.

(b) BE IT RESOLVED that the school committee may appoint a Secretary-Treasurer--preferably a Band member.

Approved.

(c) BE IT RESOLVED that school committees prepare their budgets at a suitable time to co-incide with the Superintendent's preparation of his estimates for his Agency.

Approved.

(d) BE IT RESOLVED that the allotment of funds for sports equipment should be granted on the Band school-age population, regardless of what type of school the children attend.

Approved.

(e) BE IT RESOLVED that school committees be given power, upon request, to assume responsibility for the enforcement of school attendance regulations, and appoint attendance officers at rates of pay negotiated by school committee and provided by the Branch.

Approved.

(f) BE IT RESOLVED that the school committee may, at their discretion, assume responsibility for the preparation of school lunches.

Approved.

(g) BE IT RESOLVED that the school committee may, on request, assume responsibility for Indian Day School maintenance and repairs, on terms negotiable with the Branch.

Approved.

(h) BE IT RESOLVED that the school committee may, in consultation with the school principal, arrange a program of instruction in Indian folklore, Indian language, Indian art, Indian dancing, etc., of not more than thirty minutes weekly per classroom or group of classrooms, the instructors to be paid for their services by the Branch, and constructed so as to fit the demands of each school involved.

Approved.

(i) BE IT RESOLVED that terms of regulations for school committees, as set by the Department, can be amended and renegotiated by individual school committees and the Department to fit particular community needs.

Approved.

2. (j) BE IT RESOLVED that the parents should have the chance to negotiate with the Department to have their children attend the school of their choice where reasons warrant.

Approved.

(k) BE IT RESOLVED that communicating personnel be established by Education Division of Indian Affairs Branch to help in communicating programs set up by the division for Indian communities so that there will be better understanding between the communities and the Department.

Approved.

3. Moved by Mr. E. Pinay. Seconded by Miss L. Ledoux.

WHEREAS the changes in the Provincial School Act are brought under consideration, the "Indian Peoples' Voice" in the government is yet to be heard and recognized:

BE IT RESOLVED that from this Conference, this group recommends that a committee be appointed to act on a provincial basis to study, talk with people at Federal and Provincial levels, and get some action in getting the School Act changed to give Indian parents an active voice and active participation in the education of their children.

Approved.

4. Moved by Mr. E. Pinay. Seconded by Mrs. L. Johnstone.

WHEREAS in the case regarding retarded children there has been inadequate facilities set up to cope with the retarded children program;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Indian Affairs Branch adopt a much more rigid policy by buying accommodation and space in schools set up for retarded children.

Approved.

5. Moved by Mrs. L. Johnstone. Seconded by Mr. E. Pinay.

WHEREAS the Indian Act is now being reviewed, and changes being proposed to be submitted to Parliament in the near future;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Conference go on record as requesting that school committees be recognized in the Indian Act to give them a legal status.

Approved.

6. Moved by Mrs. A. Poitras. Seconded by Mr. H. Benjoe.

WHEREAS there is a lack of information and communication in relation to the policies of administration of Indian Reserves;

BE IT RESOLVED that Indian Affairs Branch Field Manual be made available to Band Councils of each Reserve.

Approved.

7. Moved by Mr. S. Mosquito. Seconded by Mr. C. Brass.

BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the steering committee present to their proper Regional authorities the resolutions from this Conference.

Approved.

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE - DR. AHAB SPENCE

The first thing that I wish to say is thank you for giving me the honour to "summarize and evaluate" the Fourth Conference of School Committee Members. My original idea for inviting myself to this Conference was to get a bit of background for the Fifth Schools in the Forest Conference, - so you see I stand before you because of expediency rather than ability. As the saying goes, "We couldn't get a 'worse' speaker than you" sort of thing.

I wish to say also, Mr. Chairman, in the way of introduction, that this is my second opportunity to attend the Conference of School Committee Members. Last year I dropped in for an afternoon to greet some of my friends. The Convenor or Co-ordinator of that Conference spotted me - yes, you guessed it, I ended up by closing that Conference too!

You see -- I was out of this province for two years, 1963 - 1965, and during my absence things really happened! But listening to Orest Zakreski this morning assured me that you certainly have made progress. And may I add my personal congratulations to you. Of course, my congratulations are very much mingled with pride. Who says, "What has the Indian to be proud of?" I can say, and I know you join me in saying, "It's occasions like this that make you proud to be an Indian! A Real Person!"

I know you are anxious to start on your journey home, and I will try to be as brief as possible. Because we are in a hurry I must plead lack of time, but I feel incompetent also. So if I miss too much, please forgive me. Please again, may I remind you that in accepting your invitation to sum up this Conference I do not consider myself better than anyone here. I know Indians attending these meetings who are far more capable than I am. What I have to say to you is not intended as criticism, but I am sure you would agree that this Conference has been run well. And the attendance at the sessions has been better than 90% perfect. Two or three or five who have put in "appearances" can be overlooked. But on the whole, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, the attendance of the delegates has been superior. "Absenteeism" is a national ill. At the end of last April some of our Indian people attended a night session of the House of Commons-- Brother, Absenteeism there was in evidence! Then you ask the Indian 'Why doesn't he vote?' However, my dear brothers and sisters, not all examples of the white man's way of life need to be followed. I think we had good responsible delegates at this Conference, and I hope the importance of that will always be kept in mind when choosing delegates to our Conferences.

The good people who chaired these meetings must be commended. You did a wonderful job. Of course, our culture is not to hurt people. This is your Conference, and once or twice I had the feeling that you allowed the white man to talk too much! In this Conference, You are the Bcass -- You are the Director -- The shoe was on the other foot for a change. But here you showed how you are not the kind of a person who will take advantage of the 'little fellow'. Advise--don't take over!

All the three or four speakers you invited were excellent. I heard all of them, and each had a message.

Mr. Elliott, Professor Max Bedford, Mr. Waller and Mr. Zakreski are to be commended for their contribution to this Conference. I wish I had more time to comment on each speech that was given. I understand Mr. Waller's speech is in print. May I commend it to you--read it again--study it, and perhaps it can be the subject for one of your meetings at home.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I must admit partiality to Parsons and Priests (even R.C. Priests who don't wear their collars). I must plead forgiveness in taking the liberty to underline some points of Father Renaud's address to the banquet last evening. I've known this man a long time. I have been known on at least one occasion to use an obsolete, unacceptable, but nevertheless Biblical word to describe him at another Conference last November. But when Father Renaud makes a statement about Indians, it is worthwhile--and he gets away with it! In reference to a forthcoming publication of a study entitled "Cree Childhood on the Prairies", he made this observation: "Grown-Ups or Indian parents didn't seem to care--They don't know what school is about". We hope that that one statement along will be reported by every delegate at this Conference.

I picked up so much material that I would have liked to comment on. Anyhow, even though I realize time is a-fleeting, I think I would be very much remiss if I didn't disclose some other observations:

1. The fact that we Indians are in direct communication and sitting with our officials in Conference is still hard to realize--that it is an actuality. We've come a long way, and when I say 'we' I mean the Indian Affairs Branch people as well, and indeed we still have a long way to go.
2. We Indians still lack the finesse and techniques, but we have nothing to apologize for. Many white men's meetings do not run smoothly either.
3. We plead for patience and charity on both sides of the fence. Communication is a two-way street.
4. We know, Mr. Chairman, and Ladies and Gentlemen, that in some Reserves suspicion is aroused when delegates go to Conferences in the city. Such notions as being brainwashed are created in some of our own Indian people, or jealousies are created in the minds of some of the Indian people, because they were not chosen to represent their people. We have to overcome and outgrow such ideas, and go to Conferences anyway. If we Indian people are sincere in seeking consultation and involvement, we have to start some time, somewhere, and I'm happy to see (judging from the Indian representation here) that we are being involved, and I plead for extension and expansion of Indian consultation and involvement.
5. Obviously, Indian Reserves are in difficult states of development or advancement if you like. Some of the more advanced Indian people are being accused of "Oh, he has gone white man! He is helping to take us out of Treaty!"

So, may I here appeal to you to be discreet, to be patient, to be more considerate of those who may not have been so much exposed to "urban life" or 1967 every day "civilization". YOU can do MORE than anyone else to help our Indian people.

To those of you who come from isolated areas, may I commend to you the example of those Indian delegates who have attended this Conference. Don't forget we have been more fortunate than yourselves, perhaps, but the point is that we have gone through your stage too. We congratulate you for coming and listening, because I know it takes much courage to attend these gatherings in the city for the first time.

The School Committees could help to unite our Reserve people. Yes, indeed it could be a unifying force--a strengthening and reinforcing of our dream which is, I'm sure, to help us (dear Indian people) to regain our independency and remove the dependency that seems to have reduced our Indians to be contented "spectators".

Again, thank you, safe journey home---and come back stronger and more determined than ever next year.