

STATEMENT OF POLICY

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INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Recommendations from Conference of Indian Workers, held in Winnipeg, June, 1936, and from Commission on Indian Education, as finally adopted.

(1) The Aim of Indian Education-

The ultimate aim may be stated as Christian citizenship -- an ideal that looks forward to the abolition of the Reserves, with their restrictions, and the mingling of our Indian people in fulness of personality and privilege among other Canadian citizens. We are of the opinion that even now this stage has been reached for some and that the experiment being conducted of permitting Indians to give up the Reserve and become full citizens should be carefully studied, and that the Church and the Government should get together on a survey of the possibility of a process of gradual enfranchisement. We feel that this ideal must be kept in mind when it comes to the determination of the curriculum of Residential Schools. Our estimate is that at the present time possibly 5 per cent. of the pupils in our schools can be so trained and educated that they will leave the school and integrate themselves in the common life of the Canadian people, but that the great majority of those now in residence must return to the Reserve and live under the regulations, as well as share in the benefits and protective influences, which the Reserve system throws around them. The larger part of the problem which we are studying lies in aiding that 95 per cent. to become healthful, capable, cultured, Christian people -- preparatory to a wider mingling and co-operation in the full status of citizenship which will be reached by many of their children.

We cannot escape the conclusion that no programme of either the Government or the Church, looking towards the development of the Canadian Indian, can be successful which does not provide an adequate and substantial economic foundation for Indian life.

- (2) In the meantime, both the day school and the residential school should be continued.
- (3) Approval is given to the suggestion that a practical course for boys and girls should supplement the academic course, the general outlines of which should be as detailed on pages 16 to 20 of the Commission's Report.
- (4) Approval is given to the following statement re personnel:

"It is axiomatic that the staff of a Residential School should be composed entirely of people who believe in the possibilities of the Indians and who are willing to devote themselves sympathetically and wholeheartedly

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to the task of their Christian, economic and social development. This would require -

(a) A Christian motive, or, in other words, a missionary purpose, coupled with skill in some particular field and ability to teach this specialty to the pupils.

(b) That every staff member should be chosen with a view not only to the special field in which he or she is to work, but also with the idea that he or she will have some definite contribution to make to the social, cultural and recreational life of both pupils and staff. In this connection, we would like to emphasize the importance of employing graduates of the United Church Training School and men who have had special training in the leadership of boys.

(c) That the staff should be composed of people of varied ages, and transfers from one school to another should be arranged, where desirable."

(5) The following recommendations of the Commission, as approved by the Conference of Principals and Missionaries are adopted:

- (a) Every staff member should have a half day once a week and a week-end entirely away from the school once a month, where possible.
- (b) In view of the nature of institutional life, provision should be made for an annual holiday of at least one month away from the School for the Principal and all members of his staff.
- (c) Arrangements should be made, where advisable, for leave of absence to permit of post graduate study, visitation of other schools and general improvement.
- (d) A small committee should be appointed at the beginning of each term to arrange for social gatherings, and the staff sitting-room should be equipped with a radio, attractive pictures, comfortable furnishings, games, papers, magazines and books.
- (e) Regular staff meetings should be held for the purpose of considering the life and work of the school.
- (f) A Leadership Library in connection with the programme of Religious Education should be provided for the staff and a small annual amount included in the budget to keep it up-to-date. If the school funds will not permit of this, we believe it to be of sufficient importance to be provided by the Board of Home Missions or the Woman's Missionary Society.

- (g) Special opportunity should be given the teachers from time to time to study the most approved methods being used in the teaching of backward pupils.
 - (h) Where possible, the staff of a residential school should be closely related to and actively interested in the work of the nearest United Church and the Presbytery concerned.
 - (i) The Conference of Principals and Missionaries suggests that the standards set out for the staff of a residential school should, as far as possible, apply to the teachers employed in all schools under the care of the Board of Home Missions.
- (6) Approval is given to the suggestion that there should be a certain degree of follow-up work in connection with the graduates of residential schools, and in that connection the following definite suggestions are made:
- (a) Hearty appreciation of the type of work done in the File Hills Colony by Miss Bessie French and extension of that type of work where the reserves are large enough to justify it and more especially on the reserves contiguous to Indian Schools.
 - (b) That the type of training for such a position be some special training in social service and nursing.
 - (c) That as far as possible the school keep in close touch with graduates.
 - (d) That the Department of Indian Affairs be urged to give more attention to the follow-up work on the Reserves through inspectors, agents and principals.
- (7) The following principles are laid down to govern the committee of the Woman's Missionary Society and the Board of Home Missions, appointed to draw up a constitution, covering the management of Indian Residential Schools: (1936 Digest of Minutes, P. 86)
- (a) The work and management of these Schools should be more closely related to Presbytery and Conference.
 - (b) Appointments of matron and class-room teachers should be approved by the Board of Home Missions, the Dominion Board of the Woman's Missionary Society, or their Executives.
 - (c) Only under exceptional circumstances, and only after the Board of Home Missions or the Woman's Missionary Society has been consulted, should more than one member of the same family be on any residential school staff.

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- (d) Copies of all estimates prepared by the Principal of a residential school for the Department of Indian Affairs should be forwarded to the respective Boards of the Church.
 - (e) It is laid down as a rule that all appointees to residential school staffs must be acquainted with and sympathetic towards the religious education programme of the United Church, including Tuxis, Trail Rangers and C.G.I.T. work.
 - (f) Some minimum educational qualifications for staff members should be outlined.
 - (g) There should be a salary scale, indicating minimum and maximum salaries for all grades of staff members.
 - (h) The Secretaries are the representatives of the Board of Home Missions on the proposed Committee.
- (8) The establishment of graduates of residential schools on colonies similar to that of File Hills is recommended to the Department of Indian Affairs.
- (9) We urge upon the Department of Indian Affairs the maintenance of the standard of care and attention in connection with the health of Indians, established by the Medical Branch of the Department, and urge that this be not curtailed or impaired in any way, but rather developed and extended, so as to provide for the fullest possible well-being of the Indian population of this country.
- (10) The Department is urged to provide financial assistance so that young married people, who have been students in our residential schools, may have a home of more than one room.
- (11) Consideration is to be given to the preparation of a magazine in English, for distribution among the Indians, it being understood that this is merely an experiment and that the issues be few in number until the scheme is further developed.
- (12) The following recommendations are sent forward to the Department of Indian Affairs:
- (a) That Sec. 230 of the Criminal Code be amended to make it an offence for any person to have carnal knowledge of an unenfranchised Indian woman outside the legal relationship.
 - (b) That the Indian Act be amended to make it an offence for any person or Indian to have carnal knowledge of an unenfranchised Indian woman not legally his wife.

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- (c) That the Indian Act be amended to make it an offence for an unenfranchised Indian woman to have carnal knowledge of any person or Indian not legally her husband.

13.- Because missionaries appointed to Indian Missions are not given adequate training for their work in language and methods before going to their fields, the Board will make a study of the whole question.

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