

January 11, 1965

Rev. E. C. Prinselaar
Bowsman, Manitoba

Re: High School Education - Nelson House, Man.,
- Mr. Roland Lauze

Dear Ed:

I am enclosing the statement of opinions expressed by Mr. Roland Lauze who has taught at Nelson House for more than 35 years in the R.C. Day School. I have summarized his opinions as follows:

1. Boy-girl familiarity and sexual relationships develop a sense of security and gang spirit.
2. Tremendous cultural transition.
3. Supervisors in residential schools or teachers do not always treat students with respect.
4. Favouritism within residences.
5. Students are often discouraged and frustrated by sheer volume of studies and difficulty of first examinations.

Yours sincerely,

NKC/mcm
encl.

N. K. Campbell

January 11, 1965

Rev. E. C. Prinselaar
Bowsman, Manitoba

Dear Ed:

Re: High School Education of Indian Students -
Problem of Drop-outs - Nelson House, Man. -
Parents Statement

I am also enclosing the statement which Nelson Rajotte prepared after meeting with the parents of High School students at Nelson House. I have summarized the answers as follows:

1. Students are provided with everything but do not have economic freedom or financial responsibility. They do not learn the value of money or how to spend it.
2. Older teenagers may have developed habits of heavy smoking, late hours and unwillingness to accept regulations or punishments.
3. Teenage Indian has abundant freedom at home.
4. Some parents are concerned that their children remain in high school for their own good and do their best to persuade them to continue.
5. Students do not realize fully the consequences of their actions when they drop out of high school - lack of sufficient goals.
6. Students living in private non-Indian homes (as in Thompson, Man.) felt a lack of freedom of action out of school hours.
7. Parents feel that children are basically not at fault, but cannot understand their misconduct.

I wanted to make a comment about this matter of parental discipline and will write a separate letter about it.

Yours sincerely,

HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION - PROBLEM OF DROP-OUTS

WHEREAS the United Church of Canada is concerned to see that adequate provision is made for the educational and personal development of every young person within its care, so that the full potential of each may be attained;

AND WHEREAS this concern embraces both the acquisition of knowledge and the standards of value by which the knowledge will be used in society;

AND WHEREAS the development of personality involves growth in self-esteem, initiative, self-reliance, and perseverance in overcoming obstacles;

AND WHEREAS the Manitoba Conference Sub-committee on Churches in Indian Communities has a particular concern for the education of United Church students of Indian ancestry;

AND WHEREAS this Sub-committee has been requested to make a survey of High School education for Indian students within Manitoba Conference;

AND WHEREAS a large number of students of Indian ancestry are failing to attain their potential in education and personal development, by absenting themselves from school before a school term is completed, or by failing to return in the Fall to complete the next higher grade;

WE, THEREFORE, REQUEST THE CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE ON CHURCHES IN INDIAN COMMUNITIES TO:

1. Invite statements from the following groups and individuals:

- Parents of High School students;
- Ministers and Lay Supplies in Indian Communities;
- Principals of United Church Indian Affairs Day Schools;
- Principals of United Church Indian Residential School and School Residences;

asking them to -

(a) outline their reasons for the students failing to remain in attendance for the full term, and/or failing to return the next year for the next higher grade; and

(b) make suggestions for changes which could improve this serious situation;

2. Summarize the answers received and report these to the Home Missions Conveners of the Presbyteries concerned by January 15, 1965;

3. Devote one session of the Spring Meeting of the Sub-committee (perhaps the morning) to this study;

4. Invite the following to be our guests at a Dinner and Meeting at the time of the Spring Meeting of the Sub-committee, and request the Board of Home Missions to be responsible for the meals for them:

- Education Officers of the Indian Affairs Branch at the Regional Offices in Winnipeg and Toronto;
- Supervisor of Special Schools of the Department of Education in Manitoba;
- Director of Community Development Services for Manitoba;
- Liaison Officer of Citizenship Branch in Winnipeg;
- Two representatives of each of the following denominations:
Anglican, Mennonite, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic who have been contacted prior to the meeting and have received a copy of this motion.

January 8, 1965

Rev. E. C. Prinselaar
Bowsman, Manitoba

Dear Ed:

Re: High School Education for Students of
Indian Ancestry - Nelson House, Man. -
Rev. N. B. Rajotte

I am enclosing the statement sent in by Rev. Nelson Rajotte with his evaluation of the cause of the high school drop-outs among students of Indian ancestry.

For the summary which I will send out to the various Home Missions conveners, I have made the following summary of Nelson's statement:

Drop-outs at the High School level are the result of inadequate preparation at the primary level of education because of:

1. Inexperienced teachers unprepared for special needs of Indian pupils,
2. Lack of continuity of teachers,
3. Inadequate motivation of teachers,
4. Curriculum unrelated to pupils experiences,
5. Inability or unwillingness of teachers to identify with the community,
6. Group pressures on pupils to conform,
7. Lack of concern for education of pupils on part of parents.

Thinking ahead to our meeting with the government officials, I am wondering if the names of the persons submitting the various statements should appear in our summary reports. I don't know as it would make too much difference if the name did appear but I am wondering if there might be some value in leaving the name off as it is actually the statements which are most important rather than the name of the person. I realize how easily tensions develop in isolated communities and I certainly do not want to be cause of promoting further tension through some feeling on the part of some official that any representative of the church has been unfair or too strong in this criticism. I would like your reaction to this.

In preparing these summaries, I am making separate ones for the

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Principals of the Residential Schools, Principals of Indian Affairs Day Schools, ministers and lay supplies, and parents of high school students.

Yours sincerely,

NKC/mcm

N. K. Campbell

January 8, 1965

Rev. N. B. Rajotte
Nelson House, Manitoba

Re: Nelson House, Man. - High School
Education - Problem of Drop-outs

Dear Nelson:

Thanks very much for the very carefully prepared evaluation of the high school situation and its relationship to the ground work that is laid at the primary school level.

I have listed the reasons as you have outlined them for the inadequate preparation at the primary level and have sent your statement forward to Rev. Ed. Prinselaar, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Churches in Indian Communities.

Yours is certainly the kind of evaluation that can be very helpful to our committee in preparation for our meeting with government officials and representatives from the other denominations which have work in the Indian communities.

I am also grateful for Mr. Lauze's opinions as well as those expressed by the parents of the high school students. Would you please express my thanks to Mr. Lauze and to the Chief and to the parents.

I hope it will also be possible for you to get some statements on the Questionnaires from students who have been out to high school but who are now living at home at Nelson House. I feel that this can very well be an additional source of information in which we may get somewhat different reactions to that of the parents.

Yours sincerely,

NKC/mcm

N. K. Campbell

cc: Rev. E.C. Prinselaar

cc: Rev. E.C. Prinselaar

January 11, 1965

Rev. N. B. Rajotte
Nelson House, Manitoba

Re: High School Education - Drop-outs -
Parental Discipline

Dear Nelson:

I wanted to make a comment in connection with the reference to the lack of parental discipline in connection with both the public school children and high school children.

It seems to me that we have to recognize that the present lack of discipline is a reflection of the breakdown of the old culture of the Indian people. I may be entirely wrong on this but I have the idea that there was a discipline exercised by the Indian families and, I believe, there still is a strong discipline of a certain type being exercised but the Indian parents are now taking the attitude that, if the white man wants to educate their children to a superior way, then the parents are simply going to sit back and let it happen.

A couple of years ago, when Gilbert McDonald was Chief there, he mentioned the lack of discipline on the part of the parents and I asked him if the discipline which he experienced as a boy was different from what the youngsters of Nelson House experience now. His reply was that discipline in those days was quite different to what it is today. I think this is true of non-Indian families too!

My only reason for mentioning this at all at this time is I feel we ought to give the Indian credit for characteristics which are truly Indian and not blame them for lacking something which is the result of a conflict of culture over which they had very little, if any, control. It seems to me that it is one thing to recognize a lack of discipline in certain areas on the part of the Indian parents today, and quite another thing to attribute this to being something which is part of the Cree culture. I realize that this does not make the particular problem at the present time any easier but I do feel that this is one of the things which is required of us if we are going to be able to relate effectively to the Indian people.

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I would appreciate your reaction to this comment and, once again, I want to thank you for all the time and effort you have put in to preparing the evaluation yourself, getting the statement from Mr. Lauze, and meeting with the parents.

Yours sincerely,

NKC/mcm

N. K. Campbell