

New Credit - Six Nations Reporter

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Remedial action urged (continued)

Negotiations are now underway, he said, to determine what share Ontario would receive of royalties from any of the reserves' mineral wealth.

In an interview Mr. Clark said the provincial department of Lands and Forests is bargaining with officials of the federal department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Royalties from mineral wealth on all Indian reserves belong to the federal government, he said, but Ontario had won rights to half the wealth of some southern reserves under the Land Resources Agreement of 1924.

Mr. Clark said the province had not yet tried to collect any of the money. He said the Six Nations Reserve near Caledonia is one of the Indian areas covered in the Ontario-Ottawa agreement.

He criticized Ontario for trying to make money from the reserve without providing financial or social assistance for the Indians.

Eamon Park, assistant to the Canadian Steelworkers director, said the federal government spoke with a "forked tongue" on Indian problems. The steelworkers official rapped federal administrators for encouraging U.S. mining companies to exploit Canada's northern resources without ensuring that the companies used native workers.

(Latest government statistics show that about 97 percent of Indian students fail to reach Grade 12. Mr. Park said U.S. mining companies were demanding Grade 12 education for truck drivers.)

Federal government policy was defended as uniform, if outdated, by MP Mark McGuigan who was substituting for Mr. Andras.

But Mr. McGuigan, a former dean of law at the University of Windsor Law School agreed that federal government should honor some Indian treaties. "We can hardly ask Indians to respect the laws of Canada when the law means nothing but broken treaties to them," he said.

"A white man's world" - Chief narrates frustrations

Indian Chief Omar Peters set the tone for a weekend discussion of human rights here when he told how he had gone without sleep for 24 hours to catch buses to the conference. "But I had to come because if I didn't then you'd say: "That's those darn Indians again, they never keep their promises."

Chief Peters, executive director of the Union of Ontario Indians, then described the frustrations and fears of an Indian in a white Canadians' world. He talked haltingly, sometimes laughing at his own mispronunciations. But his words - and those of Chief Wilmer Nadjawan - seemingly made a greater impression on a group of Ontario unionists than the studied speeches of white experts on the Indian-Eskimo-Metis problem in Canada.

The setting was the human rights panel of the annual education conference of the Ontario Federation of Labor meeting at Niagara Falls, Ont. Saturday and Sunday.

About 85 union members heard Chief Peters tell how he had repeatedly tried to enter the Toronto headquarters of Ontario Hydro when he was a young man looking for an electrician's job. "But I couldn't get past those two big pillars. I don't know how many times I tried but there was a psychological block about them," he said.

And they heard Chief Peters - a stocky man in his late fifties - tell how he sat, head down, during his first year in a white man's school, afraid to speak in his poor English.

Both chiefs said they had belonged to the Just Society during the Second World War. "I joined the Just Society in 1942," said Chief Nadjawan, of the Cape Croaker Reserve on the Bruce Peninsula. "And I was mustered out in 1945 and went back to being a "Native Canadian."

There is no sense in the federal government spending millions of dollars annually in educating Canada's 250,000 treaty Indians if some died from malnutrition in freezing shacks, Chief Nadjawan said. There wasn't much sense in education either, another speaker suggested, when school textbooks in Western Canada said Indian intelligence had been permanently dulled by the cold climates in which their ancestors lived.

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