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JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONG INDIAN GIRLS

An Examination of the Causes and  
Treatment of a Sample Group, and  
the Resulting Social  
Implications.

by

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this is juvenile delinquency among the British Columbian Indian girls, but it is presented against a background of the living and opportunity conditions of the native Indian, especially the girl who leaves her home and comes unguarded to the metropolis. The study attempts to throw light on the causes of Indian delinquency and the current method of treating Indian offenders from a specific sample of cases. The main research material is taken from the Girls' Industrial School records of the girls of Indian blood (twenty in all), who were committed there between the years 1944 to 1948.

The project was undertaken in full knowledge of the scant material available, but this very lack of material forms one of the findings of the study. So far as the records take the story, Indian delinquent girls show the same causes for their anti-social behaviour as White delinquent girls, but because they are Indian and part of a greater problem, negligible inquiries are made into the reasons for their actions, and their behaviour is "explained" as 'typically Indian'. Secondly the findings show that Indian girls are treated as an extraneous group. Their rehabilitation into society is unsuccessful because the British Columbian authorities are overwhelmed by the administrative difficulties involved; attention is at present concentrated on other delinquent problems which are not so complex.

The conclusion is drawn that the fate of these Indian girls must promote greater awareness of the part social work could play in helping other Indian children. The conditions under which the Indians live are a discredit to Canadian welfare standards. It is evident that not only personal social services are needed, but-as with other delinquency problems - standards in homes, health and education must be raised. At present Indian delinquency is too isolated as a purely legal offence; a new approach is needed which will recognize it as a welfare problem as well as a criminal problem.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## CHAPTER I

### INDIAN DELINQUENCY - AN ASPECT OF HUMAN WELFARE

There is a small racial group of people scattered throughout the provinces of Canada who live in a semi-primitive unenlightened state. They are the native Indians. Because as a whole their standards of living are primitive compared with the rest of the country's population, the Dominion government with a view to re-education has undertaken sole responsibility for the task of governing them. For this purpose reserve lands have been set aside in each province where the Indians may live under the guardianship of the Indian Department, and free from the dangerous influences of civilization. The provinces are divided into territories with an Indian agent at the head of each who is responsible for the management of Indian affairs in that agency. Besides this the government has developed a special system of education, health, and assistance in order to promote their welfare.

The great plan to enlighten the Indians and bring their standards up to an acceptable level has not succeeded. At present they live exactly as they did fifty years ago. They are governed by a statute, the Indian Act, which is full of rigid outdated regulations such as the denial of liquor and the confusing reservation status rules, that hinder any progress.

Their standards of living are unbelievably low as evidenced by the existing prevalence among them of poverty, under-nourishment, disease and filth. The educational standards and attainments of the Indian schools are unfavourable compared with the provincial schools and the children do not benefit from the

provincial child protection laws.

Professional people in medicine, education and social work who have come into contact with the Indians, are beginning to realize that the national policy has hampered rather than helped their struggle to gain a more advanced civilization. They see the end results of the Indian way of life in, the warped growth physically and mentally of the children, the loose morality and apathy of the adults, and the dirt and discomfort which prevail in the homes.

The basic causes of juvenile delinquency stem from such social conditions as these. It is a symptom of diseased and mal-adjusted youth and it is everyman's concern, because it is the duty of the community to guide and teach young people of all racial origins to live in harmony with society so that they may become good citizens. Delinquents are children who in some way have not received the planning and protection of the community in which they live. Because they have been denied certain basic needs of childhood, they are unable to adjust themselves to society, and thus they form a group of youthful outcasts.

Like all forms of behaviour, delinquency is complex. So many factors must be taken into account before the reasons for a delinquent child's actions can be understood.. First there is the child herself with her physique, her mentality, her emotional characteristics. Then there is the child in relation to her family. Such things as the economic standard of the family, the type of care and love the parents have given her, and the outstanding

hereditary traits (mentality, character, weaknesses, strengths) all influence the child in her adjustment to society. The child must also be viewed from the standpoint of her surroundings outside the home. The type of friends she makes, the school she attends, the way in which she plays are an important guide to the kind of person she is.

Above all the child herself gives the real clue to her delinquency, and it is the influence of the surround<sup>ing</sup> environment which supports and verifies the reason for her anti-social behaviour. Skilled analysis and understanding can uncover the needs which a child has been denied.

What better topic than 'Delinquency Among Indian Girls' can bring to light the basic causes of anti-social behaviour. Here are children who live in a world of semi-darkness, brought up under appalling conditions, discriminated against by the government and the people, and ill-equipped to satisfy the demands of society.

It was not an easy task to discover facts about delinquent Indian girls because of the small number of them who appeared before the Vancouver Juvenile Court and the disinterest of the British Columbian correction authorities. The logical starting point was an examination of the Vancouver Juvenile Court records. The only available records were dated from January 1946, and these were not the actual Court records but the record which the Vancouver Detention Home kept to mark the girls' admission into the Home following the apprehension of their offences. From the list of names marked on the admission sheet all those who were identified as full blood Indian

(a)  
 were selected, and then the Court from its files supplied the information concerning the girls. The number of girls who appeared before the Court in those three years was surprisingly low, and the information concerning their conduct and background was negligible and poorly recorded.

In an attempt to supplement the information which the Court supplied, the aid of the Vancouver Indian Department was enlisted. Here matters were even worse as the Indian agent for Vancouver kept no case records of anykind and could not recall any details about the Indian offenders. The Indian agency at New Westminster was also approached, but the agent in charge resented any inquiries about the Indians in his territory and insisted that delinquency was not a problem among his wards.

The last resource for material was the record kept in the Girls' Industrial School, and every girl of full Indian blood was selected between the years 1944 to 1948. (b) The case files before 1944 were so inadequate that they were of no benefit to the study. Although the recording at the School was not of the highest quality, and the information was still sparse, they were vastly superior to the Court records and of necessity the main body of material has been drawn from the school files.

Even though the information contained in the thirty-two records that were finally discovered was negligible, the pattern of behaviour in the stories of the girls could be pieced together to

- (a) There were fifteen girls marked 'Indian', between January 1946 to October 1948.
- (b) There were twenty girls admitted to the School in the five years.

throw light upon the root causes of their delinquency. The poor quality of records which omitted repeatedly the most important facts on family life, school and character gave the clue to the whole method of treating Indian delinquents. The fewest possible inquiries were made into the background of these girls and the resultant treatment was passive and useless.

This then is a study of delinquency among a sample group of girls. Because the information on the Indian girls was so sparse, their delinquencies and reactions to treatment have been described against the background of the Indian culture and way of life. Their stories reveal many childhood grievances; deprivation, neglect, sordidness, discrimination and unequal opportunity. The reasons for their behaviour uncovers not only a problem in delinquency, but a problem in welfare: - the welfare of the Indian child.

CHAPTER II  
THE SOCIAL HERITAGE

"Mankind everywhere is faced with certain basic problems of existence. The way in which these problems are dealt with (together with the social usage, sentiments, and attitudes that develop around both the problems and their solutions) has been spoken of as 'culture' or 'way of life'."<sup>(1)</sup>

The Indians are a race of people who have been caught between two ways of life. They have abandoned their own native customs; yet they do not follow the White standards because they are not able to comprehend them. There is no denying that Indians possess a culture that differs from western civilization, but the popular belief that they are a basically inferior race is untrue. The majority of the Canadian public see the Indian as a stolid, impassive, dirty individual who had a colorful past, but who has now sunk to the lowest degree of subjection and decadence. The popular conception of the Indian also pictures him as a remote dark-skinned person, who occasionally rises above his environment to carve totem poles and knit Indian sweaters. This opinion is largely the result of prejudice and lack of knowledge. The average White community criticize the Indian according to the standards set by their own civilization, and this means that a true objective evaluation is lacking. Hence the Indians form a special group, and their differences are accentuated by the ignorance of public opinion.

(1) Leighton & Kluckhohn: Children of the People, page 232.

The policy of the Dominion government further intensifies their speciality. The question of Indian status illustrates this point. An Indian is defined in the Indian Act as:

- 1) a male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band.
- 2) any child of such person.
- 3) any woman lawfully married to such a person. (2)

Often the persons who fall within these categories are not full blood Indians, yet they have special Indian status because they are so classified by the definition. The Act makes no allowances and gives rise to a host of confusing problems.

A typical example of this is when an Indian woman marries a White man. As is often the case a half-breed child is born, and a few years later, the husband often deserts his wife. The mother usually returns to her home reservation, only to find that her child is not an Indian, and cannot receive any Indian benefits. This misfortune naturally falls heaviest on the child. The Indian schools are loth to educate a child who is not legally an Indian, and the White schools feel that if the half-breed child is living with his Indian mother, the responsibility of educating him is not theirs. Usually the public school is miles away from the child's home making such schooling impossible.

As the Indian Act is a Dominion statute, the Indians are precluded from all the social benefits enacted by the provincial legislature. The Department of Indian affairs, is responsible for

the administration of social benefits, education, and tribal funds.

The Dominion also administers Family allowances to the Indians.

The social benefits which the Indians receive are negligible.  
(a)  
The Indian Agent gives assistance in kind to destitute Indians, and a similar form of Old Age Pension supplemented by monthly allowance of eight dollars. The only advantage the Indians possess over the rest of the community is that they are exempt from taxation if they reside on their reservation. They do not possess the right to vote in Dominion elections, nor may they buy any liquor. Indeed they are regarded as children who must be utterly dependent on the Department of Indian Affairs.

This ineligibility for benefits under provincial legislation is a serious problem, especially for Indians who are not living on their reservation. The Indian Act as all Acts, has certain conditions with which Indians must comply in order to retain their status. The most important of these is that they must live permanently on the reservation. The only exception to this condition applies to Indians who work away from their home seasonally but return to the reservation at least once a year.

Residence responsibility is always a confused and complicated area. The Indian Act has avoided the problem of defining Indian residence by completely omitting it. One would deduce that an Indian who has resided in a municipality for a year, and has not returned to his reservation during this period, would have to comply with the British Columbia residence laws and pay his taxes like any other

(a) assistance given in the form of food tickets, clothes rationing, etc.



person in that community. It also appears that Indians who live away from their reservations for more than a year, lose all their treaty rights, benefits and shares of tribal funds and reserve lands.

Besides this they place themselves outside the jurisdiction of the Indian Affairs Branch, and yet they have no claim for provincial benefits. (b)

In spite of these losses, this is a very common occurrence among Indians. They do not attempt to become enfranchised as citizens, and yet they have literally no status. They place themselves in the peculiar position of being Indian by blood, and yet not Indian by law.

Truly it is a shocking state of affairs which implies very poor governmental administration. The unfortunate part is that the faults of administration fall heaviest on the Indian children, many of whom are the victims of neglect and destitution. They can never be afforded the proper protection which the province offers under the Child Welfare Division, because they are either Indians under the Indian Act or Indians with no status.

The damage which has resulted from these status regulations is exemplified by the cases of the twenty Indian delinquents committed to the Industrial School. All these girls were recorded in their case files as Indian by blood, yet eight of them had no treaty status.

This means they were excluded from any benefits to which Treaty Indians receive. In one case the girl's family had been expelled

*no for Indians have this*

(b) Social Allowance, O.A.P., Protection of Children, M.A., etc.,

from their band and forced to leave the reservation. Another girl was an orphan with no fixed place of abode. The Child Welfare Division placed her as a ward under the care of the Superintendent, but the protection offered was negligible as the girl wandered from one reservation to another, and could never be located.

The rest of the girls were living with members of their family away from any reservation. They had resided off the reserve for the period of time which disqualified them for their rights, and when these girls were brought before the court, the Indian Agents had no previous knowledge of their existence. Naturally, when the families of these girls left their band, the Agent had no way of keeping in contact with them. This is another typical example of the inadequate administration of Indian affairs.

The Act should be changed to meet the needs of the Indian people, but as it stands it is rigid and unprogressive compared with the advances of social welfare legislation in the provincial field.

The Indians themselves are not particularly amenable to settling down on one reservation, for their history has been one of nomadic settlement. True, they stayed in one region, yet they were continually moving, trading with other tribes and following the seasons of the game they hunted. It is not possible to govern a half-civilized minority group by an act which denies progress.

The increasing numbers of non-status Indians show the disintegration of Indian tribes. Some of these girls had grandparents and great grandparents who were important personages of their bands, but their customs and traditions had gradually collapsed until their

children's children have lost their racial heritage.

Indians have been the subjects of strong missionary activity since the event of western civilization in Canada. This activity is predominantly Roman Catholic, although the Church of England and the United Church do a certain amount of mission work. The effect of all this energetic missionary work has caused only moral confusion among the Indians.

In past days the Indian tribes all had their own moral codes and taboos. They were perhaps savage and childish to Western eyes, but to the Indians these ceremonies and beliefs, had been built up according to their way of life. The missionaries purposely destroyed their peculiar beliefs, preaching that such heathenish culture would bring disfavour from the 'Great White God' or 'Manitou'. In doing this the Christian churches unwittingly helped to destroy the Indian Heritage, and replaced their beliefs with a religion which was too abstract for the Indian to comprehend.

The Indian Gods were spirits whose beings were directly related to nature, such as the good air, spirits of the wind, the water, the sun, the animals. If there was drought, it meant that the Sun God was angered by the behaviour of the tribe and so on. Upon this basic structure a system of taboos and customs was developed, partly to pacify the vengeful actions of the spirits and partly to protect the existence of the tribe. Then came the Christian church who replaced the material Indian philosophies with an abstract

religion about 'God' and 'Jesus Christ'. Christianity confused the Indians, because it was a new religion imposed upon them. They did not develop it themselves and its purpose was obscure and unfitted to their culture.

Today the Indians are neither Christians nor Heathens. Their ceremonial dances and tribal stories which were an integral, necessary part of their heritage, have been condemned by both the churches and the government, and replaced by a religion which must seem dull and meaningless.

Notwithstanding the eradication of their religious beliefs, the Churches have nobly undertaken to educate the Indians. Religion and education are inter-related in missionary church work. Although the various church doctrines may differ, the basic view that life without religion is life without meaning" (3) is held in common. To the Western world, one religion, the Christian religion predominates so strongly that other beliefs are doubted, and that is why the Indians must be converted. It is true that each person must have a religion, and a set of ideals, but not necessarily a Christian religion. To the discerning eye, antisocial behaviour in most Indian girls is caused partly by a complete lack of any ideals, partly by neglect, unhappiness and poverty.

Although all Indian schools are denominational, the majority of them are owned and operated by the Indian Department, the appointment of staff being done by the various church authorities. There are two types of Indian schools, the residential school and the Indian Day School. In British Columbia there are thirteen

(3) Rev. J. L. Bradley: Report of Conference on Native Affairs. page 45

residential schools and fifty-five day schools. Although sixty eight schools may seem an ample number to suit the needs of the Indian population, there is a surprisingly high rate of illiteracy among the Indian children.

The reason for this is explained by the seasonal type of work which the average Indian family does. When the family goes fishing, farming, and berry-picking the children go too, their education being neglected until a more convenient time. Then again the Indian school may be some miles away from the child's home which does not facilitate regular school attendance. The Indian Day Schools are run on a basis similar to provincial public schools, except for the fact that they are maintained and administered by the Indian Department.

The residential schools are boarding schools, which operate on a ten month basis. Their curriculum varies slightly from school to school, but usually consists of three to five hours of school work, the remainder of the time being devoted to Home Economics, Industrial Arts, Farming and Gardening.

School age for all Indians is from seven to sixteen years of age, and each school is annually inspected by the Department's Inspector of Indian Schools. Although attendance is compulsory, the children may obtain leave of absence to help their family in work. This is a serious loophole and partly explains the lack of education found among the Indian children. Another explanation can be found in the number of non-status Indian children who attend neither White schools nor Indian schools, absenteeism which goes unnoticed.

There have been many heated discussions as to whether the education given to Indians is of good standard or bad. It is certainly not comparable with the education afforded to the White Children. In the first place the overall policy of Indian education entails a division between Indians and Whites, which again intensifies the differences between the two races.

Secondly, teaching staff is difficult to obtain, and when teachers are obtained, they are not of the highest quality, (being either too inexperienced or too dogmatic). Moreover many teachers are reluctant to offer their services to some small Indian day school in a remote area, where contact with the other world is completely cut off.

In comparison with the Indian day schools, the residential schools offer a much higher level of education. Some of the children who go to these schools are orphans. Others are children whose parents wish them to attend a residential school because there is no provision for schooling elsewhere, or so that they may benefit from the training. But however good the residential schools are, their efforts are wasted when the child returns to her reservation. The schools emphasize institutional training which counteracts to a large degree any development of recreational or communal activity on the reservation. When a child returns to her home, she finds the same miserable and squalid conditions, and what she has learned at school is soon abandoned for the lazier, easy way of life.

The school records of the twenty Indian girls are not necessarily a representative sample of the level that Indian education

has attained. These girls are all delinquents, and therefore form a special category apart from the normal Indian girl. It would not be correct to deduce that the delinquent Indian girls' educational attainment is similar to that of all Indian girls. Still it is a sample of education given to Indians, and needless to say the illiteracy among these girls is deplorable.

When a girl is admitted to the Industrial School the Superintendent asks her where she received her schooling, and immediately writes to the school for her record. In most cases the records received by the Superintendent were uninformative and gave no constructive advice either on the girls' abilities or their characters. Only two factors could be deduced from the school record; one was the type of school each girl had attended and the other was the grade she had attained when she was admitted to the Industrial School.

TABLE 1:

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF TWENTY INDIAN GIRLS  
Girls' Industrial School Files, 1944 - 1948

Grades	Residential School	Indian Day School	Provincial Public Sc.	Grade Attained
0	-	-	-	7 (a)
1	1	-	-	1
2	2	-	-	2
3	1	-	-	1
4	1	-	-	1
5	-	-	1	1
6	4	-	1	5
7	1	1	-	2
School Attendance	10	1	2	20

(a) five girls never went to school at all, and two went to residential school but no records were available.

TABLE 2:

GRADE ATTAINMENT IN RELATION TO AGE  
Girls' Industrial School Files, 1944-1948

Grades	Under 14	Under 15	Under 17	17	Grade Attained
0	-	-	5	2	5
1	1	-	-	-	1
2	-	1	1	-	2
3	1	-	-	-	1
4	-	1	-	-	1
5	-	-	1	2	3
6	-	2	1	2	5
7	-	-	1	1	2
Total Ages	2	4	9	5	20

Clearly these girls never reached a very high level of education. The five girls who never went to school at all were completely illiterate. They spoke very broken English and could neither read nor write. Several of the girls ran away from their schools, and one was expelled from a residential school for striking a Catholic Sister.

The majority of these girls went to residential schools but they attended irregularly, because of the constant shifting of their families from one district to another. Also the provisions which the Indians may use for recalling their children from school to help at home explain why these girls were so poorly educated. The two girls who attended the provincial public schools, were living with their families away from the reservation. One of the girls attended a school with such poor disciplinary and educational standards, that her character noticeably altered as the result of early sexual experience at school. The other girl who was sent to a public school ran away



*indifference?*

so many times, that the school authorities gave up trying to help her.

One of the most striking factors in these Indian girls' education is the utter diffidence which the parents displayed. Any girl will avoid school if there is no one to reprimand her, and that is just what these girls did.

Intelligence is very difficult to define, and particularly when it pertains to Indian children. The acceptable method of testing intelligence is to give children a series of tests. The tests vary, for some depend largely on what a person has learned and remembers and others are intended to evaluate what the person can do in a situation for which she is unprepared. Most of the tests are designed for White children and they presuppose the type of educational and cultural experience which the average White person receives.

Out of the twenty Indian girls at the Industrial school, two girls were tested at the Child guidance Clinic in Vancouver. Both children had great difficulty in conforming to the discipline of the school, and displayed such violent tantrums and changing moods, that psychological tests were advised. When the tests were completed one girl was placed in the moron group, the other had only a slightly higher rating. The psychologist stated that it was impossible to rate these girls properly. The test averages were based on cultural background not suited to Indians. The test situation was also poor because the girls were indifferent to any type of interrogation.

The psychologist understands that this stoicism is a trait among the Indian cultures, especially striking when comparing Indians

with Whites. The Indians pride themselves on not showing their feelings. It does not mean that they have no emotions, yet this is what a White person surmises because he cannot understand this characteristic. With all these reservations for the testing of Indian children, the results of the low intelligence of the two girls is not surprising.

In general the level of intelligence among the girls in the Industrial School is distinctly lower than average.

A survey, <sup>(1)</sup> made between 1935 and 1944 at the school showed the following distribution for all the nationalities of girls tested:

Superior Intelligence . . . . .	1
Average Intelligence . . . . .	46
Dull Normal Intelligence. . . . .	58
Borderline Intelligence . . . . .	53
MORON Intelligence . . . . .	41
Imbecile Intelligence. . . . .	3
Unknown Intelligence . . . . .	12

The line between education and intelligence is so faint that it is not easy to say whether the delinquent Indian girls had a high native intelligence but stultifying surroundings, or low intelligence and unsuited education. The majority of the girls were definitely backward and uneducated, but it seemed more a result of their environment than their native intelligence, such as nutrition, schooling, and parental influence that generalizations about the intelligence of Indian girls are dangerous to make.

(1) Harvey, Isobel: Report of Survey Regarding Girls' Industrial School

Mental retardation which was evident among the girls at the school is only another contributing factor to the causes of their delinquency.

Indians tend to be engaged in seasonal types of work and primary activities such as farming, logging, fishing and trapping. According to the Industrial School Records, about half of the Indian girls had done no work of any kind. Two girls had been employed in fish canneries, and one had worked for two years as a ward maid in a hospital. A few of the girls had had experience as domestic servants. There was no record of wages but in all probability they were low.

The majority of the girls had certainly helped with domestic duties at home, aided in farm work, and sometimes travelled with their families to pick hops and berries. Even a cursory glance at their educational attainments show they would not be fitted for skilled work of any type. Their success as domestic servants depends largely on the type of training received at the residential school which is sometimes adequate and other times not. Canning fish, picking berries and working as chars in hospitals does not require too much skill nor does such employment show any great ambition on the part of the girls.

A characteristic of the girls who were working was that they did not hold their employment for long. The Indians do not like long steady employment for they feel restless and shut in. When they work, they work diligently but they see no reason for working when they have earned sufficient money to tide them along for a few months.

Indians are notorious spenders and gamblers. They use money to spend and enjoy in the present, and when it is all gone then they will resume employment. For this reason, and because of their strong family and reservation ties, Indian girls rarely work steadily.

#### HEALTH:

The Dominion Department of National Health and Welfare is responsible for the maintenance of good health standards among the Indians. In British Columbia the Department employs five fulltime doctors, twelve nurses and four field matrons to serve in isolated communities. Besides this there are forty-eight doctors who give part of their services to the Indians.

The standard of Indian health is far below that of the White communities. This is mainly the result of poor nourishment, dirty living conditions and ignorance of the people. The rate of tuberculosis among the Indians is the highest in Canada; in fact, it is fourteen times higher than any other group.

#### RATE OF T.B. PREVALENCE BETWEEN INDIANS AND OTHERS IN CANADA.

1944:	Indians . . . . .	579.2 per 100,000 persons	
	Others . . . . .	42.2 per 100,000 persons	(4)

The prevalence of tuberculosis is one of the most reliable indicators of the social standards of living. It is a disease of poverty and undernourishment spread by ignorance.

The Indians also have very high rates of infant mortality

(4) Joint Submission by Canadian Welfare Council and Canadian Association of Social Work re Indian Act, page 4.

pneumonia and venereal diseases. They live in small overcrowded shacks where sanitary arrangements are unhygienic and an obstacle to any control of disease. Most reservations depend on the nearby creek or spring for their water supplies, and usually this water becomes polluted as refuse and garbage seep into the same source.

Besides this, the average diet of the Indian is unbalanced and they suffer from malnutrition. The staple diet of canned foods, flour, smoked meat, with an almost total absence of fresh milk, fruit and vegetables, lowers their resistance to disease and increases laziness and lack of initiative.

Only concentrated effort by a well administered health authority could lessen this problem, and unfortunately evidence *forthcoming* shows that this is not the case at the present. Such a programme would need a large financial expenditure together with a trained staff to undertake the thankless and difficult job of re-educating the people on the reservation.

The twenty delinquent Indian girls show clearly the level of health among their people. Each girl (Indian and White) on admittance to the Girls' Industrial School is kept in a single room away from the others, until she has been given a medical examination by the school doctor. The medical reports are a question and answer type of proforma in which the doctor checks the prescribed malady. Eight of the girls had venereal disease, and one girl had contracted tuberculosis which she died of two months after admittance to the school. The remainder, described as having normal health, nevertheless suffered from a host of minor ailments such as decayed

teeth, head lice, poor eyesight, acne and pregnancy.

Of the eight girls who had venereal disease, two were sent to Oakalla Jail because of better treatment facilities, the remainder (six of the girls) were treated either at the Vancouver Genereal Hospital or by the travelling clinic. There was no record of any sex and hygienic education being given in conjunction with the treatment, so in all probability the girls could easily become infected again. The two girls who were pregnant gave birth to their children in the School, but were kept apart from the other children until the events had taken place. As soon as the children were born they and their mothers were released to their respective homes, as both of the babies were kept by their mothers.

The only tragic case concerned the girl who had contracted tuberculosis. Two months after her admittance to the school she was examined at the chest clinic who discovered that she had positive tuberculosis. She was immediately removed to the hospital, but nothing could be done to save her, and she died a few weeks after. Her real tragedy was to die alone, in a friendless city away from her home and her people.

The descriptions in the records assessing the girls characters were unsympathetic and prejudiced. The favorite remark used for describing the Indian girls was always that she was a 'typical Indian character'. It is not very enlightening to assess a girl on this basis but the provincial field workers, the School supervisors, the doctors and the police all employed the term 'typical' when speaking of Indians. To the discerning reader it implies that all

Indians are lazy, uninformative, impassive and stolid. Prejudice and misunderstanding explain this type of description. There were only three girls who were pictured in another manner. The fullest description about an Indian was written by a Roman Catholic Priest on her school record. "(Mary) is lazy, intelligent and strong willed; as very likeable Indian girl, but full of the hot passion of her ancestors and resentful that she is an Indian". The next girl was "subject to changeable moods, full of vitality, vivacious and untamed".

*Share* Savageness and hot passion are colourful but misleading words, especially when they are intended to form the basis of a girls' character. The third child was ignominiously called 'lazy, dishonest, immoral, stupid and non-informative'.

Had the basic concepts of social casework been applied where analysing these girls, the story would have been different. A good caseworker attempts to understand human nature, and tries to put away prejudice in an attempt to help the client. This was not the case for any of the Indian girls, thus their problems and behaviour difficulties remained unsolved.

The physical appearance of the Indians together with their dying culture marks them as a race apart from the White race. The social heritage of the Indians is being strangely influenced by the encroachment of Western civilization, yet the biological attributes of the Indian still set him apart from the rest of the community. This racial quality "marks an individual with a sign, be it skin colour, shape of eyelid, or texture of hair, which he cannot eradicate, (and these) distinctive marks serve as stimuli for reactions

(5)  
of prejudice towards an individual of another race".

The Indian girls with their dark copper-coloured skin, their coarse black hair and dark eyes, are instantly distinguishable from the White girls, and they feel the difference keenly. The feeling that they are inferior to White girls is only intensified by their low standard of living, their confused religion and all the other drawbacks of their social heritage.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE FAMILY BOND

The family is the basic unit of society. Giving due consideration to this force, although its character and purpose are changing to fit the needs of the present scientific age, it still remains the most important institution in modern civilization. Social customs and codes decree that marriage is the only legitimate way to procreate children, and this legal tie also enables man and woman to enter a contract, in which each may find happiness and companionship in the other. Although the husband still works outside his home to maintain the family, and the wife is responsible for the rearing of the children and the upkeep of the home, as individuals they are no longer so dependent on each other for support. Home and hearth are no longer the centre of activity and entertainment, for movies, clubs and recreational centres have taken the place of this integral part of family life.

Notwithstanding the decreasing importance of family life, it still answers the basic needs of children. The child benefits, or should benefit, from the joint effort of the mother and father, because through them he derives security, food, warmth and affection. Though experiences in the life of the family his character and personality are moulded, and in this small unit the child meets his first problems, and gradually equips himself for living in larger social groups. Indeed a child's behaviour is the direct outcome of

his experiences in the family, for it is here that his emotional needs are either satisfied or thwarted.

In comparison with the normal White family, the Indian family displays even greater slackening of economic and moral ties.

In its past culture the family functioned as an integral part of the tribe, because it was only through collective strength in fishing, hunting and warring that each person could exist. Survival of the fittest was the bare truth on which life was based, for every day was a continual struggle against the elements of nature.

The Indian children were acquainted early with the stark facts of life, and they were purposely put through endurance tests to strengthen their hardiness for the trials which lay ahead. Besides this they were taught to adhere to the strict family codes and customs which each tribe had gradually developed, and any offenders against these social requirements were severely punished by the elders of the tribe.

With the advent of a new civilization their primitive culture rapidly disintegrated and was replaced by a feeble imitation of the White Society. The Indians learned to live in houses, to drink liquor, to eat the White man's food, and, what is worse, to copy that part of the White man's ethical code which encouraged, divorce, adultery and license.

The process of re-education for the Indians has been so pitiful compared with the rapid influence of new ideas and ways of living, that the old family group has disintegrated. Nothing

can show this collapse of the Indian culture more clearly than the family background of these twenty delinquent Indian girls. Strict tribal customs and vows have been replaced with a copy of the White customs and manners, and the result has produced slovenly living, unhealthy conditions and loose morals.

The Industrial School records describing the background of the Indian girls varied. As the girls' families were scattered throughout the province and difficult to locate, many of the social histories were piecemeal affairs, made up from information given by the Indian Agent, the provincial police, the provincial social worker and the girl herself. The most comprehensive records were compiled by the district Social Welfare Branches, and even these were not adequate, for in all cases only one visit to the family was possible.

#### THE FAMILY AS A UNIT:

One of the most striking facts in the history of these delinquents is the number of children who have come from broken homes. The following is a brief list showing the relationships of the Indian parents.

Both parents living . . . . .	5	(a)
Father living, mother deceased. . .	4	(b)

- (a) One couple separated
- (b) Two girls have stepmother

Mother living, father deceased . . .	6	(c)
Mother living, father unknown . . .	1	
Mother deceased, father unknown. . .	2	
Both parents deceased . . . . .	<u>2</u>	

20

The pattern of home life for these children is practically uniform in the unhappiness and neglect that existed. The children of broken homes start in life with a mark against them for they have never had the opportunity to appreciate the stability and warm security that a family can give.

The best situations naturally existed in homes where the parents were living together; and yet these homes were of a very low standard. Only two married couples out of the five had achieved any harmony in their family at all, and these were hard-working, well-intentioned people with absolutely no ability to cope with their daughters' behaviour problems. Another girl came from a family who had been expelled from their Indian band, because of their low standards and surly behaviour. The provincial police reported that her parents had been very troublesome in the district and were shunned by all the neighbours as the result of their hostile aggressive manners and filthy home standards.

It is not surprising that these Indian girls committed delinquencies, when the examples set by their parents was so poor. The case of Jane illustrates this point clearly.

(c) five girls have stepfathers

Jane had a very marked delinquent career at the early age of eleven. By this time she had run away from school several times, she had been guilty of theft and sexual immorality. Her father, an intelligent, but ineffective man had served overseas in the war for four years. During his period away from home his wife had three illegitimate children. She was nicknamed throughout the district as 'Two-Bit Annie', for being a prostitute of the lowest order. Besides allowing her children to be present in the room while she carried on her trade, she was a bad provider and grossly neglected them.

It is no wonder that Jane became a severe problem, for she had seen a conduct unrivalled in its low standards and she had never known security.

The remaining married couple were separated from each other, and unable to understand or control their daughter. The girl was continually moving between the homes of her mother and father, and in both homes she showed unhappiness, defiance and resentment.

As is so often the case, the girls who had step-parents were very difficult to control in their homes. The Indian girls resented the intrusion of a new parent into their family, and they showed intense dislike towards them.

On the other hand the step-parents were afraid to exert any discipline over the girls lest the harmony in the house should be disrupted, and eventually the situations became so bad that the children left home or became delinquent.

In the situations where the parent had not remarried, conditions were no better. One girl's mother died at an early age, leaving her with the father who was a chronic hospitalized invalid.

She was brought up by her grandparents who offered her a good home and sincere affection. Unfortunately they both died just when the girl was entering her 'teens, and from that period on she was shunted from one disinterested relative to another. This girl had never known any lasting security of home life, and she developed into an embittered adolescent, thinking that all people she depended on had deserted her.

Another girl lived with her old mother in a cannery tenement. The mother was a washed-out, ineffective little woman who worked hard in the cannery to support herself and her daughter. They were extremely poor, and the conditions under which they lived were so squalid that the girl left home, and immediately got into trouble. Poverty rather than lack of affection was the leading factor in the cause of this girl's delinquency.

The three children who were illegitimate all had neglected, unhappy childhoods. The neglect during childhood is illustrated by the early history of the following girl:

Joan was abandoned in infancy by her mother, who left her in the care of her grandmother. In her youth the grandmother had been sexually promiscuous, evidenced by the fact that she was unmarried yet had four children all with different fathers. The grandmother was harsh and cruel to Joan, and made her work long hours on the farm that they owned. The only person Joan showed any affection for was her deaf-mute uncle who gave her candies and sometimes bought her new clothes.

It is no wonder that this child became delinquent with the high illegitimacy rate in her family, and the atmosphere of severity which prevailed.

Another girl who was deserted by her mother as a baby, was brought up by her two uncles. The two men were affectionate but ineffective guardians. Needless to say they were also hopeless parents to their own two children who had been jailed for assault and robbery.

Although she was fond of her uncles, she bitterly resented her mother's desertion; yet the girl herself deserted her own illegitimate baby.

The third illegitimate child was an orphan with no home at all, and was brought up in the Indian Residential school. As soon as she had completed her schooling at the age of fifteen, she was left to her own devices. With no supervision or advice, and no family to turn to, she quickly became a local problem.

The excerpts from the family histories of these twenty delinquent Indian girls show the seriousness of the neglect and moral depravity shown by their parents. The parents of a family set the example to their children, and the influence they exert, whether it is good or bad, makes a lasting imprint on the minds and character of their children. Out of all these girls, there were only two who experienced anything close to normal, healthy home situation, the rest were neglected, deserted children who saw nothing at home save poverty, moral laxity and indifference.

There were only a few reports that attempted to assess the mentality and personality of the parents. One of the reasons for the meagre information obtained on these girls' parents is that only a quarter of the parents were interviewed by a social worker, and as only one interview took place in each case, there is a great deal of missing data.

The illiteracy among the parents, was noted by each social worker. One of the workers related an incident, both amusing and shocking.

She asked the Indian mother how many children there were in the family. The mother slowly counted out the number of boys and girls in the family, and reached the conclusion that there were six boys and seven girls. At this point she seemed rather abashed, and when the worker inquired further, the mother replied that as a matter of fact she thought there were some more children but she could not count any further. It is not surprising to learn that the delinquent girl from this family was completely illiterate and had never attended school.

It has been previously noted that White people are unable to assess the character and personalities of the Indian people. They are for the most part unable to see through the barrier of impassiveness which confronts them, and they assume that all Indians are alike in their depravity and stolidity. However the parental examples shown to the select group of Indian girls, do give a clue to the moral characters of the parents. Adultery and promiscuity occurred frequently among these families, and the majority of remarriages among the parents were common-law, and not founded on stable ties of companionship and love. It would be incorrect to assume that all Indians are degraded and immoral just because the majority of the Indian delinquent's parents follow that type of behaviour. Delinquency is caused partly by bad home conditions, and these girls had their full share of that.



The number of siblings in the Indian families ranged from two to fourteen, not counting the half sisters and brothers of the girls who lived with remarried parents. There was no evidence to show in any of the family records that great affection existed between sisters and brothers. The older children as soon as they were married ignored their families and avoided any matter which might involve them in additional responsibilities. One or two married woman offered their homes to their younger delinquent sisters, and although they showed some interest, they lacked any drive or ability to cope with the problems of delinquency. In general, the brothers and sisters of these girls, were disinterested in their difficulties, and did not wish to offer any help.

Grandparents, aunts and uncles undertook more readily the job of bringing up these neglected Indian girls; yet the results were just as unfavourable. For example,

Nancy, who was an illegitimate child was brought up together with her brother, by her grandmother aged sixty and her great grandmother aged eighty. Both grandparents were excessive drunkards, and so known to the provincial police. Nancy and her brother were spoiled and petted, and soon became uncontrollable nuisances in the district. Nancy was eventually sent to the Girls Industrial School for supplying intoxicants to another adolescent, and the brother was sent to the Boys Industrial School for larceny.

The girl who was living with her uncles, was surrounded by delinquent cousins, for three of them had served prison terms, and besides this there was a great deal of antipathy between the girl and her brother.

It is very easy to generalize when the data concerning these girls is scarce. Information on the disciplinary methods of the parents towards their children was confined to occasional remarks such as 'true to the Indian standard' or 'typical Indian outlook'. Such statements are devoid of any meaning. The general impression gained by reading the Industrial School records was that the Indian parents and relatives were possibly fond of their children but apathetic in applying discipline and unable to bring up their children properly. One worker in discussing the upbringing a girl had received, remarked that the father "in the Indian tradition, does not spank his youngsters or thwart them lest they cry". Another worker who had a great deal of experience in dealing with Indian families made a very penetrating observation when she said "an incorrigible child in an Indian home is seldom if ever regarded as a fault of parents or environment, but just an unfortunate occurrence and a nuisance".

This is an attitude fostered in ignorance and misunderstanding and it will never change under the present condition of Indian affairs.

The Indian parents do not understand that they are responsible for the misdemeanours of their children, and consequently they try to ignore the difficulties until the situation becomes so bad that the children clash with the law. They are inadequate parents; but the reasons for their inadequacy lies with their own faulty upbringing and the disintegration of their social heritage.

It is not surprising that the girls who showed any feeling towards their parents, expressed resentment, bitterness, and defiance.

The unfortunate part is that these girls when they become parents will pass the same hostile feelings onto their children. The girls felt cheated in life, because they had never known true love and security and there exists in all of them an unconscious wish to vindicate this loss on other children.

Indian family life for these girls had not fulfilled its proper function of supplying the basic childhood needs of stability and affection. In fact there could scarcely be any better situations in which to breed delinquency. In addition to the deplorable state of family affairs, the housing conditions that these girls lived in were dirty and squalid. Their homes were over-crowded, stuffy and poorly lighted, and toilet facilities were outdoors and unsanitary. Many of the houses visited by the social workers had no floors and practically no furniture, and were assessed as well below the standard of the normal Western home.

The type of home from which these girls come is well illustrated by the following example.

The Smith family consisting of mother, father, grandmother and nine children live in a cannery tenement consisting of two small rooms. The place is absolutely bare, being made of rough wood, with high built in table and small coal stove. There are no floor or wall coverings, and no curtains. The small children play in both rooms. Water is obtained from a common tap outside, and the outside toilet is used by all the other tenements. Living conditions are crude and un-

sanitary. As there is not sufficient sleeping space, the children are early acquainted with all the knowledge of sex they will require.

Another illustration of a better standard is that of the Black family,

The Black family consists of mother, stepfather and five children living in a one room shack. This home is relatively clean and tidy inside and the stepfather is a good provider for there is an ample provision of food in the house. Inside the home there is a stove, two benches and two double beds. Besides this the family own an old model sedan car.

The delinquent girl from this home resented her stepfather who was afraid to control her. Although this home was cleaner than most, the girl spent most of her time in the district town, and several times she did not reappear for days.

It is wrong to say that one factor such as poverty for example or unhappiness, is the only reason for delinquency in a child. Poverty causes over crowded houses, bad nutrition, greediness and longing for luxury and bright entertainment. Neglect in childhood may cause immature emotional attitudes, instability or selfishness. It is rather like a vicious circle of one factor leading to another, and finally resulting in delinquency. The select group of Indian girls illustrates admirably the cause and effect nature of the factors in delinquency. They all came from families whose standard of life was marginal. The work their parents were employed in was seasonal, and the wages they received were low.

Consequently their houses were small, overcrowded, and lacked any of the small luxuries which make life more endurable.

In the second place the emotional ties in the families were either insecure or non-existent. Undue emphasis on sexual pleasure and promiscuity in marriage, overshadowed the importance of companionship and true affection, so that these girls had no good examples to follow.

The root of their behaviour difficulties lies in their relationships to their families, and it is only in this field that their delinquencies can be stopped, if not for them for their children.

In an ideal situation, trained social case workers and group workers could enter the reservations and gradually through advice and understanding build up healthy family relations. However, the Indian situation is by no means ideal, and social workers alone cannot help these victimized children without the effective support of the government, the educators, the clergy and the doctors.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### INDIANS IN THE VANCOUVER JUVENILE COURT

The Indian girl presents a special problem in the apprehension and treatment of juvenile delinquency. Indians as wards of the Dominion Government form a definite racial group in Canada. They are regarded as a primitive people who need the protection of the state to save them from the dangers of White encroachment. Because they are considered to be backward, they have not yet attained the full rights of responsible citizenship. The assumption is that the Indian standards are too low, and must be raised by a process of re-education. When they reach an acceptable level, the Indians will be entitled to complete enfranchisement.

Legally, however, an Indian is as responsible as a white man for any anti-social act or infringement of the criminal law that he may commit. Thus the Indian girl is equal in status to the White girl when she is apprehended for committing an offence. Although according to the Juvenile Delinquents' Act every delinquent should receive the best possible help and guidance, the Indian girl because she is an Indian receives a much lower standard of treatment.

The basic problem in the study of any type of delinquency lies in the factors which have caused the anti-social behaviour. The Indian girl can only be helped if she is regarded as a real person. The difficulty is that she is looked upon by the community as a separate species.

The community forgets that she is a human being whose personality and behaviour are rooted in her surroundings. The administrative tangle that exists over Indian delinquency, and the resultant treatment that the girls invariably receive, are additional factors which accentuate the basic behaviour difficulties.

A juvenile delinquent means "any child who violates any provision of the Criminal Code or any of the Dominion or Provincial statutes, of any by-law or ordinance of any municipality, or who is guilty of sexual immorality or any similar form of vice, or who is liable by reason of any other act to be committed to an industrial school or juvenile reformatory under the provisions of any Dominion or Provincial statute". (5)

In British Columbia a child legally speaking constitutes any person under the age of eighteen years. When a girl reaches the age of eighteen, any offence which she may commit is dealt with in criminal court. Ordinarily when a child is apprehended, she is taken before the juvenile court. Only in special cases, when a child over fourteen years old has committed an indictable offence, is she charged in a criminal court. The judge of the juvenile court in all cases of indictable offences decides under what court the child shall be tried, keeping in mind, "that the good of the child and the interest of the community demand it". (6)

There are no special provisions set apart in the Dominion Act for Indian children. The Department of Indian Affairs and the juvenile courts are in complete agreement that when an

(5) Juvenile Delinquents Act: Status of Canada 1929, Chapter 46, (d)

(6) Ibid, Section 9

Indian girl commits a delinquency and is apprehended, she is liable to the same sentence as any other juvenile delinquent.

The Indian Act of Canada contains certain provisions that have a definite bearing on the apprehension of Indian delinquency. No person of Indian status is permitted the use of intoxicants, unless it be for medicinal purposes and certified by a doctor. There is strict enforcement of this regulation. Any Indian found in a state of intoxication may therefore be arrested without a warrant by a constable or a peace officer, and be liable to a summary conviction. At the discretion of the convicting judge, an Indian may be imprisoned for a term not exceeding one month, or charged a fine not less than five dollars, or both fined and imprisoned. White people are apprehended only if they are found in a state of intoxication 'in a public place'. Indians may neither be in possession of any intoxicant, nor in a state of intoxication, regardless of whether they are in a public place or not. There are also provisions in the Act pertaining to persons who sell alcohol to an Indian, for it is against the law for any person to do so. If such a person is found guilty, he is also liable to fine and imprisonment. These regulations concerning intoxicants are an outstanding feature of the Indian Act.

They are a good example of the philosophy which underlies the Act and its administration; namely Indians are not yet responsible citizens, and must be treated with special caution lest the evil aspects of White civilization engulf them completely.



Liquor is regarded as a great danger to the Indians, because they are unable to use it sensibly. It is common knowledge, however, that Indians are frequently in possession of intoxicants, yet they are not allowed to frequent the beer parlours, or to buy liquor in the government stores. Consequently they acquire alcohol through bootleggers and White friends. The quality of the liquor in this case is not guaranteed to the same extent as liquor bought from approved sources. More often than not it is commonly known as 'hootch' or 'moonshine'. Indians wishing to drink have to do in a subterfuge manner. In a large city such as Vancouver the temptation to drink is greater than on the reservations, for there are many more means of obtaining alcohol and the risk of discovery is less.

The disintegration of the Indians has often been attributed to liquor and social disease, the two evil things which the Indians learned from the White men. This is only half true for the real cause is that they are caught between two civilizations; the old savage world and the new western world.

The effect of city life on the behaviour of Indian girls illustrates this point clearly. The Indian girls who drift into Vancouver seem to congregate in the worst section of the City. Main, Powell, Cordova and Hastings Streets, the centres of bootlegging, dope trafficking and prostitution, attract the majority of girls apprehended for delinquency in Vancouver. However as this district is a notorious centre of crime, it is possible that the city police 'pick up' most of their cases there.

The British Columbia Juvenile Courts Act of 1936, laid down that in every city or portion of the province the Juvenile Delinquent Act was in force, a court of record known as the juvenile court was to be established.

The Vancouver Juvenile Court situated in Greater Vancouver has jurisdiction within the limits of the city. The Lieutenant Governor in Council is responsible for the appointment of judges, and at present there are two judges attached to the Juvenile Court, whose duty it is to administer the Juvenile Court and appoint the clerk and the probation officers. The municipality pays the cost. Naturally the judge is the adjudicator and on him rest the sole responsibility of giving decisions. Next to the two judges in authority is the chief probation officer, who is the director of the probation department for the Juvenile Court, the Family Court and the Detention Home. Besides the chief probation officer, there is a deputy probation officer and an additional staff of four officers, three of them men and one a woman. The job of these officers is primarily to offer casework services in the form of guidance and supervision to those children who are placed on probation.

The facilities of the Vancouver Juvenile Court are reasonably adequate. The Court is conducted entirely apart from the Police Court, and the building is quite large and well-planned. There is an appropriate waiting room, and good staff accommodation. Each probation officer has an office of his own, where he can conduct his business and interview his clients privately.

The courtroom is well-designed, pleasant yet dignified. The judge's desk is raised on a slight platform at the upper end of the room. Below the desk are three tables for the recording clerk and the presentation of material, and three or four rows of chairs. The atmosphere of the Court, which is so important for the proper handling of juvenile delinquents, is not heavy and drab like that of the police Court, for the officers of the law are not usually in uniform and the court procedure is informal. The juvenile Court is held once a week, all proceedings being 'in camera'.

When a child is apprehended, she is usually detained in the Detention Home until an initial interview with a probation officer is made. Then a social record is compiled containing all available information as to background, parents, character and education. This record is given to the judge to examine before the child appears in court. In some courts no record is made until the judge has made a decision as to the child's guilt, if the child is found guilty of delinquency she is remanded for a few weeks while her background, and mental and physical condition are thoroughly investigated. The child then reappears before the court and the judge or magistrate knowing all the factors in the case decides what the treatment will be.

For Indian delinquent girls the records are very poor and contain scant information. The Juvenile Court is designed to deal primarily with delinquency occurring in Vancouver. Naturally the majority of children who appear before the Court, live in Vancouver

and therefore information concerning them is much easier to obtain. In no case in the last three years, has an Indian girl appearing before the Court, resided in Vancouver. The girls could be termed transient Indians, running away from home or looking for a job.

Some have come off a reservation, and others although they are Indian s have moved with their families away from the reserve, thus making contact with the parents even more difficult. Apart from the girls themselves, the Indian Agents are the primary source of information. The only way of contact-ing the families of these girls is by correspondence, and that is an unsatisfactory way of assessing any girl's environment. From the start then, the Indian girl is at a disadvantage, because no adequate social history can be obtained.

The Indian agents, harassed though they are, co-operate whenever possible and supply what information they have, but it is rarely a full history, unless the girl is a notorious repeater. The view that the agent holds is that by the provisions of the Indian Act and the Juvenile Delinquents Act, he is not responsible for the moral welfare of the Indian girl who commits a delinquency and any help he gives is done purely out of consideration to the Court.

The school records supply the barest facts possible, no more than the name of the school and the completed grade. Most of these delinquent girls have come from Indian schools which are denominational, yet the children's records during the last three years, show that no support of the school staff had been enlisted for the compiling of an adequate social history. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England, are very active in guarding the spiritual

welfare of their Indian congregation, but their support is less evident when any young member is guilty of a transgression against the laws of society.

The probation officer has therefore, few sources from which to compile a social history. The girl's relatives live outside his jurisdiction, and the social agencies who can assist him, are either too far away (in which case everything depends on letter correspondence) or unable to supply any information. This ineffective manner of collecting a record constitutes one of the major problems in dealing with juvenile delinquency of this kind.

All in all the Juvenile Court which is responsible for dealing with the problem of delinquency, is not equipped to handle the difficulties which the Indian girl presents.

The Indian schools and churches are not active in the matter and communication with the families is very difficult. The confusion which exists as to who is responsible for her intensifies the problem. There is also a certain lack of interest over the apprehension of these girls. All these factors lead to the unfavourable conclusion that the difficulties of helping Indian Girls are considered insurmountable and little or no attention is given to them.

The only means of discovering how many Indian girls were apprehended before the Juvenile Court was through selecting those girls recorded as Indian in the Detention Home admittance record. From January 1946 to October 1948, fifteen Indian girls have passed through the Court. Of these fifteen girls, eight have been arrested more than once, bringing the total number of apprehensions up to

thirty-seven.

The rate of Indian delinquency occurring in the Vancouver Juvenile Court is very low, too small in fact to constitute a major problem in delinquency. But though the number of Indian girls apprehended for juvenile delinquency is small, the number repeating is correspondingly high, as will be seen from the following table:

TABLE No 3:

APPREHENSION RECORD FOR INDIAN GIRLS. Vancouver Juvenile Court: 1946 -1948				
Year	1st Apprehension	1st Repeat	Following Repeats	Total
1946	6	2	1	9
1947	5	3	7	15
1948	4	3	6	13
Total	15	8	14	37

The nature of the 'apprehension' is important. There were nine girls guilty of being in various stages of intoxication. Ten charged with vagrancy and six others were guilty of running away, either from their home or an institution. Of the remaining girls, five were held for investigation and one was guilty of sexual immorality. In addition to this, there were no records at all for the offences of three of the girls. It must be noted that only fifteen girls were known to the Court during the three years, yet the total number of apprehensions was thirty seven. Of these alleged Indian

delinquencies twenty-two were committed by girls who had previously been admitted to the Court, and the offences were predominantly pertaining to vagrancy and intoxication.

A vagrant according to the Criminal Code of Canada is "a loose, idle disorderly person . . . who, not having any visible means of subsistence, was found wandering abroad and not giving a good account of himself." (7) Under this charge the girls were picked up either by the local police or the R.C.M.P. They are usually found wandering about the east end of Vancouver, with no money, no place to sleep, and no clothes except what they have on. In a few cases they are found to be living with various underworld characters or young men of the district. Intoxication charges of "S.I.P.P.'s" (a) (as they are commonly called) are always apprehended in the same district. Although one girl was found unconscious in the street, all the other girls were apprehended in the company of men, having a drinking party in some cafe or hotel room. Of course no liquor may be sold to a minor, and for Indian girls especially the possession of intoxicants is illegal. In only one case out of nine were the girls' companions apprehended for giving alcohol to an Indian minor, but curiously enough the charge was not proceeded with. The majority of runaways were girls who had left their reservations. One girl ran away from home twice, whilst two others ran away only once. Besides this one child escaped from the Girls' Industrial School, and one escaped from a Catholic Convent.

(7) Criminal Code of Canada: Revised Statutes of Canada, 1927. Chapter 36, Section 238.

(a) State of Intoxication in a Public Place

The term 'apprehended for investigation' pertains to girls suspected of soliciting men on the streets, drinking, or even wandering aimlessly. It is a vague expression and implies suspicion rather than proof of delinquency. Nevertheless, five girls were apprehended for nebulous crimes. The one case of sexual immorality which occurred was that of a young child of fourteen who had been living incestuously with a close relative. There were three girls whose names appeared on the Detention Home Record as having been apprehended, but the court had no record of them at all.

"Where a child is adjudged to have committed a delinquency he shall be dealt with, not as an offender, but as one in a condition of delinquency, and therefore requiring help and guidance and proper supervision."<sup>(8)</sup>

Whether this guiding principle is followed in the treatment of Indian delinquency, it is in the field of charge and release that the importance of the Indian agent appears. The majority of girls were not sentenced at all, but released to the Indian agent, either at Vancouver or New Westminster. Five girls out of the fifteen were found delinquent. Two of these girls were released to the Industrial School for Girls, one was sent to a convent and two were returned to their homes and families. It is a renunciation of responsibility to send a girl home continually, only to have her reappear in Court a few months later. If repeated attempts to return the girl to her home fail, the Court will sentence her to be placed in the Girls' Industrial Home. In no case was probation recommended; it is always "send her home", send her back to her reservation or to some relative

(8) Juvenile Delinquents Act: Sec 3 (2)



who is willing to look after her. Arrangements are then made with the Indian agent, who escorts her to the boat or the train and pays her fare (though occasionally the court is forced to pay her fare). No matter who pays the fare, they all fervently hope that she will never return to the 'big city' again. Nobody meets the girl at the destination of her journey, and no-one supervises her conduct at home, so that the girl receives neither guidance nor supervision.

The situation is undoubtedly very difficult. The agent cooperates to the extent of seeing that the girl starts for her home, but no further trouble is taken. With the exception of one in Vancouver, there are no Indian social workers, and the workers in the Provincial Social Welfare are under no obligation to supervise the Indian girls. The churches and missionaries are neither asked for assistance nor give help in the matter.

One of the greatest difficulties is of course geographical, for the girls come from all over British Columbia. The Indian agents have enormous territories to cover, and many scattered reserves in their area which makes supervision often practically impossible. The girls do not live in Vancouver, therefore the municipality is unwilling to accept the financial responsibility. The probation officers already carry far too heavy a caseload to ensure proper supervision of White delinquents, let alone Indian delinquents. The jurisdiction of these officers is limited, and it is impossible to supervise an Indian girl who lives possibly two hundred miles away.

There are no resources such as clubs and hostels in

Vancouver to use for the welfare of Indian girls. Thus the authorities temporarily solve the problem by sending the children back to where they came from, hoping that this measure will suffice. It is evident that the Juvenile Court does not exert its power in any degree to rehabilitate the delinquent Indian girl. As the number of these girls apprehended is so slight, the attention and concern of the social agencies is negligible.

The prevailing attitude is that Indian delinquents are a nuisance. They constitute a special type of problem which can be overlooked and shelved for the time being, because there are more pressing difficulties in the field of anti-social behaviour.

"Delinquency" is an inadequate term to describe the situation. Legally speaking these children are guilty of delinquency, but the community in which they are apprehended is guilty of a more serious crime, the crime of neglect. It is unfortunate that the Indian girl is considered first and foremost by the Court as an Indian; one of the first results is apt to be that their delinquency is attributed to the fact that they are Indian. These children are so often the victims of a poor environment, an unhappy home, or a broken family, that it is unjust and certainly ineffective to ignore their problem. There must be a very definite cause, besides the factor of an Indian heritage, which makes one girl a delinquent and another quite acceptable to the community. A certain amount of their behaviour can be attributed to the fact that their social heritage has not prepared them for a life in a concentrated White community; yet this is only one cause among many.

A chief of the Carrier Indians, with his untutored but colourful way of speaking, summed up the situation in this very apt statement, ..... "when they quit school at sixteen with grade four or five, they do not want to live with their parents, because their parents are poor and ignorant. So they go out to the city and town, and what next? They simply make fools of themselves. And when they find out that they have not enough education, through difficulty of securing a job, from town to town, they go home to their parents, and bring back with them only disgrace, including bedbugs, venereal disease, and sometimes paleface babies."

## CHAPTER V

### INDIANS IN THE RURAL JUVENILE COURTS

"A delinquent child is not the sum total of his sex, his age, his nativity, and his offence, but a vastly complex flesh and blood reality in a particular social situation and in a particular time space sequence". The influence of the home and the community condition a child to follow a certain pattern of behaviour; when this influence is detrimental the child becomes delinquent.

The causes of delinquency are applicable to all children regardless of race or social status, for the results of poverty, neglect, unhappiness, and ignorance are universal, and not the exclusive property of one group of people. However, these factors are too often ignored when delinquency occurs in a small racial minority. The unfair discrimination bestowed on racial groups in a country is illustrated by the problem which the delinquent Indian girl presents in Canada. The causes of her delinquency may be caused by the same basic factors which cause delinquency among other girls, yet because of the special status the Indians possess in Canada she is regarded primarily as an Indian, and secondly as a delinquent. There are of course differences between the Indian girl and the White girl which cannot be denied, the most important of which are her appearance and her communal type of life; yet despite these differences the delinquent Indian girl illustrates the same fundamental reasons for anti-social behaviour as any other young offender. Her career is similar to the majority

of delinquent careers in that as children they have all been denied some elementary need.

The total delinquent problem which Indian girls present in British Columbia is difficult to assess because of the inadequate records of the juvenile courts, and the lack of research in this field. Hence the Industrial School for Girls in Vancouver is the only centre where valuable and informative recording may be found on this type of Indian (full blood) girl. For this reason, the records of twenty Indian girls, who were admitted to the school between the years 1944 and 1948, have been selected in order to form the basis for this study in delinquency.

Any juvenile who commits a criminal offence is apprehended and punished according to the Criminal Code of Canada or the Juvenile Delinquents' Act. Although this Act is applicable to the whole of Canada, each province must pass an act providing for the establishment of juvenile courts, (or designating existing courts as juvenile courts), before the Dominion legislation may come into force in that province.

A survey made in 1942 in British Columbia showed that there were thirty-one juvenile courts, serving roughly ninety per-cent of the population. This means that the British Columbia Juvenile Courts Act has been enforced with wide coverage throughout the entire province. While the number of courts may have increased in the last seven years, the administration of these courts has not basically changed. The salaries of all judges, probation officers, and clerks are paid according to a fixed

provincial scale, although each municipality in which the court is established must pay the actual salaries. Herein lies one of the basic causes of the staff shortage in the juvenile courts, for the majority of municipalities complain that they cannot finance the necessary additional trained staff. Victoria, Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster are the only municipalities who have trained probation officers, as well as office staff attached to their courts.

In outlying district, the juvenile courts rely solely on support from the provincial police and the provincial field service staff. These two agencies are of great assistance to the rural juvenile courts, and they offer their services whenever possible in a supervisory and consultative work. The senior court official is always designated as a judge, and usually he serves an additional jurisdiction as a police or stipendary magistrate.

The fact that most of the judges are laymen, and that they must divide their time between adult and juvenile court work, constitute a definite weakness in the British Columbian juvenile court system. In addition to this, juvenile court areas vary greatly. Some serve only well defined municipalities, while others encompass large and poorly defined areas, often thousands of square miles in extent. The facilities for juvenile court session are barely adequate and the juvenile hearings are usually held in the courthouse or in a separate room.

The actual administration of the British Columbia juvenile court system falls far short of a satisfactory correction programme. Besides the noticeable shortage of trained staff, and

the immense areas which some courts must serve, the facilities for detention in these rural areas are quite inadequate. The common practice is to remand a child to his own home, and if this course is not possible the child may have to be detained in the local jail.

Detention in the local jail has the most detrimental effect on juvenile delinquents, for they are forced to associate with the lowest class of criminals, who influence them to an alarming degree to follow a life of crime. Unfortunately the jail is too often the only detention resource in these local areas, for there are no separate juvenile detention homes, and foster homes are so scarce that they are rarely used for detaining young criminals.

As the rural areas are so poorly equipped to deal with the problems of delinquency, few children receive the benefits of supervision and guidance. White children are afforded some treatment, but the Indian children receive negligible attention, if any. The very fact that they are Indian puts them into a special category, although according to the Juvenile Delinquents' Act every delinquent no matter what her racial origin be, is to receive the best correction and guidance available. Indians are treated with special deference by the Dominion and placed in the position of wards of the government. This explains why provincial agencies are so reluctant to interfere in any matter involving them.

An example of this reluctance on the part of a social agency to offer services to Indians, is the attitude of the provincial field service and the child welfare authorities. They are hesitant to assist Indian girls because they are wards of the government and

as such primarily the responsibility of the Indian Affairs branch. Strictly speaking the Superintendent of Child Welfare cannot offer wardship to a girl because she is already a ward of the Dominion government. Thus one of the best avenues for care and supervision is closed to the Indian girl. Besides, Indian reservations are closed to White people. This means that a social worker who undertakes to make a visit to an Indian village is trespassing unless the permission of the Indian agent is obtained. The Indian girl therefore cannot benefit from any type of casework service. It is a pity, for the trained assistance of a social agency would be a great value in correcting the delinquency problems of the Indian girls.

The Indian agent is the scapegoat for most of the criticism levelled against the administration of Indian affairs. He is blamed for the short-comings of the administration, while actually he is merely a civil servant fulfilling the regulations which the Indian Act sets forth. One job of the agent is to administer tribal funds, reserves and pensions. The district he administers is so large that it is impossible to offer casework services to his Indians. There are eighteen agencies in British Columbia controlling between them one thousand six hundred and nine reserves, and one hundred and seventy villages.

The Indian Act which is the agent's Bible, does not give him any moral responsibility for his wards, and therefore he rightly insists that casework services are not part of his job. Nor has he the



training to deal with delinquency which occurs among the Indians. If it is possible, he will represent a delinquent Indian girl in court, and if the girl has committed her first offence the judge may permit him to return her to her home. However if she persists in her conduct there is nothing he can do, owing to the strict regulations of the Indian Act, the lack of funds, facilities and adequate staff, the Indian Agent is powerless to deal with delinquency.

The provincial police are one of the greatest supports in controlling delinquency throughout the province. Although their main job is to apprehend criminals, they often serve in the capacity of probation officers. The overwhelming majority of arrests of Indian girls, both on and off the reservations, are made by the provincial police, and this naturally makes the force unpopular with the Indians.

The police are quite strict in arresting Indians for any infringement of those sections of the Indian Act which deal with intoxicants. The Indians resent being singled out as people who cannot be permitted to drink. The police make a point of being present at all village festivities in order to control drunkenness; yet the Indians continue to drink by obtaining their liquor through bootleggers and White friends. This senseless system is ineffective in practice, and degrading to the Indians. They are so suspicious of the provincial policemen that they will not tolerate their services as probation officers. The girls regard the provincial police only as officers who make arrests and send people to jail. They cannot

understand the dual role of a friend one day and an enemy the next. The logic of the Indians in this respect is correct, for it is a questionable practice in any type of corrective treatment to have police serving as probation officers. A policeman apprehends delinquency; he does not correct it.

#### Study of Records:

Nearly all the girls who were committed to the Girls' Industrial School were apprehended by the provincial police, and at the time of their apprehension they were not on their reservations but in the nearby town. Out of the twenty girls, there were only three who were reported to the court from other sources. Two girls were brought to the court by relatives, who charged that they were "incorrigible" and difficult to control. The third girl was reported by the local doctor to be spreading venereal disease and not complying with the necessary arrangements for treatment. The average age of these girls on admittance was only fifteen; the youngest child among those committed being eleven years old

No one area in the province showed any heavy delinquency. Prince Rupert with a count of four committals, Nanaimo two, Dawson Creek two, and Williams Lake two, were the only municipalities from which more than one girl was sent to the School in the four year period. The area which Prince Rupert serves includes some seven thousand Indians, therefore it is not unusual that more girls should come from here than other districts. Additional committals were served from the juvenile courts at Smithers, Powell River, Duncan, Kamloops, Alert Bay, Clinton, Cranbrook, and Wilmer.

This is a wide distribution though it is not unexpected as the reservations and reserve lands are so widely scattered throughout British Columbia that any town of a fair size attracts a small Indian population. The small number of committals is of course attributable to the fact that the Indian population in British Columbia is only some twenty five thousand.

It is only natural that the girls were apprehended in the towns, for all girls who live in the country long for the excitement of town life. "Going to town" implies having fun. It means movies, dances, parties, a holiday and all the other uncertain benefits of a life which cannot be obtained at home. To the Indian girl who is either at residential school or in her village, the town has even more attraction. She can escape from the squalid atmosphere of the reservation, where there is no recreation and nothing to do but be bored. She wants to "have fun" like any other teen-ager. Parties with boys, dancing, smoking, movies, and drinking (for this goes with them) are all the things which give excitement to her life. The town represents to her everything that she would like but cannot do at home. Reservation life possesses no charm for it is an inactive, dull existence. The Indian girls are of course more vulnerable to the bad influences of the town because of their different upbringing and appearance. When they associate with Whites, they are invariably the kind who will do the girls the most harm. The women who befriend them, usually prostitute for a living and encourage the girls to follow the same type of life. The men they encounter are a poor class and not always responsible for their actions when dulled by

excessive alcohol. The girls know few young people of their own age, for they have lived apart from them all their lives. They go to school only with other Indian children, and they live on reservations which are solely Indian in population. These girls have not been immunized against men or liquor, nor have they had the experience to choose between what is good and what is bad in entertainment.

In becoming delinquent they are therefore showing a very common pattern of behaviour, yet unfortunately when they are apprehended for not conforming to the law they stand out as hopeless problems; not because they have committed unpardonable crimes, but because they are Indian. There is nothing special about their behaviour as compared with the delinquent behaviour of White children. They have their difficulties at home, and at school, and there is nothing to prove that they are more promiscuous than other girls. Environmental forces in their lives may tend to make them accept this form of life with greater ease; but it must be remembered that the Indian girls have fewer avenues in life to choose from.

The Girls' Industrial School had records of twenty three admissions for Indian girls over the five years chosen for study. Actually only twenty girls were institutionalized during this period, for three of them were recommitted on additional charges. The type of offences were very similar to the record of offences assigned to the Indian girls in the Vancouver Juvenile Court.

TABLE 4:

COMMITTAL RECORD FOR INDIAN GIRLS (Girls' Industrial School 1944 - 1948)						
OFFENCE	ARRESTS IN YEARS					TOTAL
	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	
Intoxication	2	-	1	2	4	9
Incorrigibility	1	-	-	2	1	4
Theft	-	1	2	1	-	4
Sexual Immorality	2	1	-	-	-	3
Venereal Disease	2	-	-	-	-	2
Breach of Recognizance	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total Commitments	8	2	3	5	5	23

All these girls except for two were committed to the school for an indefinite period. The two exceptions were charged under the venereal diseases Suppression Act, which compelled them to remain institutionalized until cured.

Intoxication appeared to be the most common offence for these girls. This was a misleading charge for there were usually many other factors constituting the offences.

For example:-

Joan was apprehended for supplying intoxicants to another girl. The report recorded that she was 'incorrigible at home, and could not

be disciplined'. At night she would loiter around the town, drinking with men and generally making a nuisance of herself. The district nurse and the social welfare worker were both aware of the problem Joan was creating, and complained of her conduct to the Indian agent, before she was apprehended. No action was taken to supervise the girl and she was eventually arrested for a first offence, and committed to the Industrial School for Girls.

The record showed clearly the pre-delinquent career of this girl. She was unmanageable at home, and was creating a problem in the local district, yet obviously nothing had been done to correct her behaviour. The intoxication charge was really the factor by which the court could commit her, yet the real problem which faced the court was her uncontrollable conduct. The treatment which she received is typical of the negligible attention given to all delinquent Indian girls. The district nurse, the social worker and the Indian agent were all aware of the problem she was creating, but apart from reporting the fact to each other they did not attempt to help her. As soon as she could be arrested for some legal offence, she was immediately committed to the Industrial School so that she would no longer be a nuisance in the district. Another example of this same hasty action, in order that the districts might be relieved of a difficult problem, is the case of,

Mary, who was discovered by the provincial police, lying on the highway in a state of advanced intoxication. She was holding a half-full beer bottle which she later informed the police had been obtained from some white boys. Mary had no record of previous charges.

In the light of this information her committal sentence seemed unduly harsh. The primary factor in all the intoxication charges laid against the Indian girls was that they were creating problems of behaviour in districts which had no facilities to offer proper treatment. The easiest solution for the juvenile court judges, was to commit the girls to the School and thus the difficulties would be temporarily removed. The inexpediency of this course is exemplified by the sentence which the following girl received.

Janet was apprehended by the provincial police on a charge of intoxication. She was accused of wandering, associating with undesirable characters, and being drunk. Janet told the police that she had only left her home in the neighbouring province "to see what British Columbia was like".

Janet's curiosity remained unsatisfied for she was immediately conducted to the Industrial School! The girl was guilty only of a mild form of vagrancy, but because the court had no facilities to send her home she was institutionalized. This was not a just reason for the committal sentence, for her chief crime was an unhealthy curiosity concerning British Columbia. She was also drunk, probably for the first time in her life; still this does not explain the severity of the sentence that she received. Apart from the futility of committing the girl to the School, a great deal of needless expense was incurred. She was escorted several hundred miles to the Industrial School, where she remained institutionalized for a few months. The Superintendent of the

School obtained a release and then she was escorted all the way back to Edmonton where her family met her. If the municipality had been willing to finance her fare back home in the first place all that unnecessary expense would have been saved.

Mabel exemplifies another factor in the apprehension charges, namely the lack of control which the girls families possess over them.

Mabel came before the court with her mother who charged that her daughter was completely beyond her control. She was very difficult to manage and would not stay at home. Frequently she ran away, and against her mother's instructions she persisted in having promiscuous relations with soldiers in the nearby town.

Throughout all the records of the Indian girls, this inability on the part of the parents to control and discipline their children is striking. They seem quite hopeless in managing their girls, and regard their delinquencies either with complete indifference or stoical fortitude.

The crime records showed in several cases, histories of marked delinquency and moral degeneracy. Some Indian girls had been repeatedly apprehended for offences, before they were committed to the School, and they were offences of a more serious nature. These girls were repeatedly guilty of sexual immorality and indulged heavily in alcohol. Except for one, the girls were living in a town, in conditions very similar to prostitution. Although they had appeared before the court many times none had received any guidance



or advice. For example,

Connie was a young unmarried mother who persistently neglected her illegitimate baby. For days at a time she would indulge in wild drinking bouts in the town, while her baby was left uncared for in some boarding room. The Children's Aid Society finally placed the child in the care of the Superintendent of Child Welfare: yet there was no attempt to assist the adolescent mother whose conduct became so bad that she was finally committed to the Industrial School.

And still another was the case of,

Dorothy who had been a continual source of trouble for the past four months. She was known to be drinking, street walking and residing with a woman who was carrying on prostitution. Finally she was apprehended by the police for sexual immorality and disorderly conduct; but before this no attempt had been made to give advice to this girl.

The neglect of the authorities to make some kind of contact with these delinquent girls, is repeated again and again.

Three girls were admitted to the School as the result of thieving. One of these children was only eleven years old, but she showed a long history of sexual crime and incorrigibility. On being released from the School she repeated a similar theft and was returned again for further corrective training.

Another girl, Aggie, who was an orphan, was committed on a first offence charge of stealing ten dollars from her employer's home. She had been placed several times as a servant at different homes, but could not settle down, and was found continually wandering from one reservation to the other. The field service worker, who had attempted to help this girl summarized the situation aptly by saying in

her report: "Since the crime alleged would hardly warrant a committal to the Girl's Industrial School, especially by the magistrate who professes the belief that the Industrial School should be emptied, worker is of the opinion that the court simply got rid of a local problem by committal."

This case illustrates further the tendency of the court to depend on a committal sentence when a girl becomes an acute nuisance in the district. Thirteen of the Indian girls were sentenced to the Industrial School for first offences, and nine had previous apprehensions; yet only one of these nine girls had been placed on probation. The evidence shows that most of the Indian girls had had pre-delinquent careers and yet there is a glaring absence of any form of corrective supervision. Rather than attempt to solve the problems which these girls created, the district courts indulged in an overuse of the committal sentence merely to be relieved of their disturbing presence.

Treatment for juvenile delinquency is of course difficult in the local areas where facilities are so limited. However there are certainly other approved methods which can be employed in the place of a committal sentence to an institution. There are three important agencies in these local areas who could cooperate in the problem of treating Indian juvenile delinquency, the social welfare branch, the provincial police and the Indian Agent. Naturally the job of probation should fall to the social welfare worker, who should work in conjunction with the other two agencies. When a girl is placed on probation, the sentence implies close friendly supervision by a trained worker, who helps the girl rehabilitate herself. The court is attempting in good faith to give the girl a certain period.

of time in which to overcome her behaviour difficulties. If she breaks her probation and commits another offence, then the court has full power to reprimand her conduct and serve a fresh sentence. Probation is meaningless without the supervision of a trained worker. At the present, rural juvenile courts lack the facilities to administer good probation service to any delinquent, least of all an Indian delinquent.

Yet there are possibilities for improving the present situation. The amount of Indian delinquency is not so large that some probationary plan could not be effected. The provincial social worker could make a friendly contact with the delinquent girl and help her through advice and guidance to improve her life. The Indian agent and the provincial police could give added support to the worker by supplying information concerning the girl's family and the home reservation. The support of the Indian parents could be strengthened, and the case worker might well be able to assist the girl in improving her attitude towards her family. There would be great difficulties to overcome if this plan was ever to come to fruition, and that is why cooperation between the Indian agent and the social worker would be so necessary.

Another great reserve that has been neglected in the past is the enlistment of help from the responsible members of the Indian reservation themselves. Indian parents never feel responsible for the delinquent actions of their children, for they have been conditioned by a governmental policy which denies any civic responsibility to them. Each reservation has its own council of members headed by

the chief which formulates the policy of reservation government. Members in this council could be given more responsibility, and might well be able to control their own delinquent children. Delinquency must be corrected primarily by eradicating the root causes, and the basic factors in Indian delinquency stem from the reservation conditions.

The attitude of all the agencies (the courts included) towards the Indian girls is one of hopelessness. The Indian agent has no responsibility for the delinquency among Indians; the welfare staff are operating outside of territorial area if they give a girl help and advice, and the provincial police are only concerned with apprehending Indian delinquency. Thus the Indian girl falls into a special category. She comes very near to the status of an untouchable and the judge has little choice when confronted with her problem. If the girl is placed on probation, there will be no one to supervise her, and foster home placement cannot be recommended because there are so few foster homes available for Indian children. One judge wrote in a letter to the Superintendent of the Girls' Industrial School the plight which confronts all the rural juvenile court judges when sentencing Indian girls, and he said: "You will, I am sure, agree with me that it is apparently a hopeless task to deal with these Indian girls with our present facilities. Occasionally, perhaps, one is found who benefits from the training received at the School, but in general it appears to be a wasted effort. Unfortunately however, when a girl of this type is charged before the Court, there is practically no other recourse." The judges

of the courts co-operate to the best of their ability, but their efforts are crippled by the lack of resources; there is indeed only the Industrial School. Cause and effect interact; they contribute to the prevailing opinion of the court that Indian delinquents are ignorant, illiterate and hopelessly irredeemable.

## CHAPTER VI

### INDIAN GIRLS AT THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

The task of correcting delinquency among the Indian girls is relegated entirely to the Industrial School for girls. This school is the only institution in the province which attempts to rehabilitate Indian girls, and the juvenile courts knowing that it cannot refuse admittance to any child committed there, rely unduly on it.

This is another example of the wide gap between the theory and the practice of delinquency treatment in British Columbia. In the past institutional training has not been successful in reforming wayward children, for the enforced regimentation and dull monotony of reformatories can never meet the unfilled desires of this type of child. Society however demands protection from the actions of delinquent children, and the short-term solution is to set up reformatories and Industrial Schools for the reclamation of the most serious juvenile delinquents.

The province of British Columbia is sadly unprogressive in its correctional programme. Besides the juvenile court work (which has great distances to cover before it can be called effective court work), there are three main institutions for the treatment of young delinquents; New Haven School, The Boys' Industrial School, and the Girls' Industrial School. The New Haven School for boys is reserved for young offenders over the age of eighteen. It is called a Borstal Type School, and wrongly so for a Borstal system requires a chain of different schools throughout the country,

with each school classified to suit the needs of a certain group of children.

The other two industrial schools are run for children under eighteen years of age and they are the standard type of reformatory school to which Canada clings so doggedly.

The Girls' Industrial School is intended to be for the custody and detention of juvenile delinquent girls, "with a view to their education, industrial training and moral reclamation" (1) The principle of the school is distinctly flavoured with mid-Victorian ideals, and counteracts any experimentation with new correctional methods.

The Minister of Health and Welfare is responsible for the administration and maintenance of the school, and at the present the cost of maintaining the necessary staff and the large building is far out of proportion to the number of girls being trained there.

The school building although of large and inartistic design, has attractive surroundings of lawn and trees and flowering shrubs.

Inside, the halls and rooms are scrupulously clean and shiny, yet there is that permeating atmosphere of institutional life. Besides the dormitories in which the girls sleep, there are pleasant staff rooms, an attractive dining room, a large kitchen and laundry room, a school room, a library, sewing rooms and a large rather barren recreation room with a piano and a radio. In the basement there are a number of single cells used for confining girls who

(1) Industrial School for Girls Acts:  
B.C. 1937, C.33,53

have misbehaved and upset the routine of the School discipline.

The largeness of the building and the prescribed training course necessitates a big staff, however small the number of girls who are receiving treatment. Besides the superintendent of the school, there is an assistant superintendent, a matron, several instructresses, a school teacher, a cook and a janitor-gardener. The institution also has its own woman physician who holds a clinic every Wednesday in the infirmary.

The staff though largely untrained has succeeded in effecting a good, almost happy atmosphere in the School. The Superintendent is a competent and able woman, and during the short term that she has served in this capacity, the case records have improved noticeably and several new training classes have been introduced. The girls seem to like the staff who are in turn interested in the girls and eager to help them.

Apart from the good will of the staff, and the amiable atmosphere they try to create, the other characteristics of the school are similar to the standard juvenile reformatory. The routine of the school follows a monotonous pattern from day to day. As soon as a girl is admitted, she is kept apart from the other girls until she has been examined by the physician. This brief isolation period also serves to assess the child's abilities and character. There is no real segregation of the girls, as such a system is impossible to implement in one large building, but every child is at least placed in the most suitable dormitory, and attention is given in assigning to her the best type of classes and duties.



When she is placed in a dormitory, she begins to share the routine of the school. During the morning hours the girls are assigned household duties such as cooking, laundering, cleaning and dusting rooms. After lunch three hours are devoted either to school work or sewing and handicraft classes. As there is only one teacher and one school room, all the grades are taught together, examinations being written through correspondence. This is not a satisfactory method of educating the girls, but as many of them are over school age or too illiterate to attend school, more importance is attached to the other afternoon classes.

Training is directed definitely on domestic, household lines, for the average intelligence of all the girls is below normal, and cooking, sewing and laundering are jobs which they can master and proudly excel in. Some of their handiwork is very attractive, and some, evidenced by the sack-like pink and blue uniforms they make for themselves, is quite hideous. In all fairness the design and origin of the School uniform was thought of many years ago by the School authorities and not by the girls.

On the weekend the girls are allowed a certain amount of entertainment and recreation. There are weekly picture shows, birthday parties, concerts, radio entertainment and free leisure time. Visitors are also allowed during the weekend.

On the whole the school operates with many drawbacks. In the first place its situation on Cassiar Street, near Hastings Park, is too close to Vancouver City and encourages escape.

Secondly the provincial government is not lavish in expending money for improving the school, consequently the building is

unsuited for the proper rehabilitation of delinquent girls. The most important lack in the school is that the girls are not segregated and they receive no individual help. It is primarily an institution, and no matter how efficient and amiable the staff, there is no escaping from the enforced regimented life.

Although the Indian girls who are the subject of this study, received the same training as the White girls, they responded to institutional life even less well. They were exceptionally difficult to train because of their illiteracy and poor background, and only four girls out of the twenty attended school classes while they were inmates.

None of the girls was an exceptional student, although they tried hard. One child received special academic work, as she was only in Grade Two, while the others plodded along in a 'slow but painstaking' manner.

The Industrial School records were so scant and uninformative up to 1946, (a) that it was impossible to assess the progress of many of the Indian girls. For eight of the children there was no record at all, to describe their training progress, and the information concerning their adaptability to training was gleaned from scattered correspondence of the previous superintendents.

Despite the badly kept records, certain factors in the girls' histories at the School stand out from the White girls'. Presumably the girls who did not attend school classes were trained in cooking, laundry work, sewing and knitting. None of the Indian girls showed more than an average ability in the assigned tasks. A few were

(a) at this date the present Superintendent was installed

were dependable and worked on diligently on their own, but most of them required close supervision or else they daydreamed and avoided doing their work.

Only one child, later recommitted was described as an exceptional allround student. She tried very hard, and her affability and good conduct contributed to the happiness of the whole group.

The difficulty in training these girls is obvious, for their retarded schooling, stunted ability and poor home standards are serious barriers to overcome, especially when the children have reached adolescence. Besides this the Indian girls reacted violently to the enforced confinement of the school, and these reactions were in direct contrast to the ability of the White girls to bear the pressure of discipline and routine. The Indian girls after four to six months of the School, became moody, sullen and subject to violent outbursts of temper. This factor is well illustrated by the school history of Mary.

Mary adapted herself to the school remarkably well in comparison with the other girls. Her conduct during the first few months was exemplary and no disciplinary measures were needed. However, she was increasingly lonely and homesick, and after six months she became restless, difficult and found it hard to conform to discipline.

Save for the one girl who assimilated well with the group because of her own efforts, the Indian girls were unhappy, resentful and difficult to control. Thus Joan, for example,

Showed poor progress in the school during the whole period. She was

unable to get on with the other girls and caused violent disturbances at the School. As the months went by her behaviour worsened, and she fought persistently with the rest, and threw knives and chairs at them. This meant increasing periods of solitary detention for her, which only intensified her difficult behaviour.

Clearly Joan could not conform to the institutional mode of living!

The Indian girls found it difficult to mix with the White girls, because of a feeling of discrimination. For a few months they might behave very well and then they gradually broke under the pressure. This meant that increasing confinement became necessary; but this only enhanced their moody outbursts. The feeling of discrimination is exemplified by Mabel's conduct.

She gained nothing during her whole period. She resented discipline and felt that no one liked her because she was an Indian. Her temperament was variable, either in the heights of optimism or in the depths of despair. She refused instructions and had no pride in her appearance. Close supervision was required because of her marked homosexual traits. Her behaviour soon became so disturbing that increasing detention was needed.

Sometimes the tension and strain was so great that in several cases their violent behaviour suggested commitment to a Mental Hospital. Dorothy is an example showing this.

She was a defiant girl who could not adapt herself to the school. Her institutional history was one of spasmodic confinement, which intensified her resentment to such a degree that her behaviour was similar to that of a 'caged animal'. She was tested at the

Child Guidance Clinic, who recommended her immediate removal from the school as her conduct was detrimental to the other girls. Committal papers were drawn up to admit her to Esson-dale, but a further test from the Child Guidance Clinic, proved she was not really mentally ill. Dorothy was eventually released on probation to a relative in whose care her conduct has been satisfactory.

Dorothy's case also shows what a slim dividing line there is between normality and abnormality, and how detrimental conditions can influence a person's character to the extent of being regarded as insane.

The opinion of all the authorities at the Girls' Industrial School, is that Indian girls should never be committed to such an institution. No matter how bad their Indian heritage is, they are used to that way of life, and the rapid change to a White institution is a shock which they cannot bear. The confinement and discipline is not suited to their needs, and in addition they are sensitive to the overpowering White standards around them. Undoubtedly they feel, and are made to feel by the other girls that they are inferior Indians, and naturally they rebel against the whole system, by being difficult, obstinate, and hysterically defiant.

Because of the difficulties of training the Indian girls, the school authorities are not anxious to keep them any longer than is necessary. The average length of training in the school is roughly six months to a year, and although a girl may be committed for two years this is seldom the case.

When the Superintendent of the School feels that a girl

has received as much treatment as is beneficial, she must make certain plans for the release of that girl. In the case of the Indian girls the Superintendent gets in touch with the responsible Indian Agent, and also the social worker from the provincial welfare branch in that same area. All three persons work together to devise a plan for the girl's after care.

As soon as the plan is completed it is sent to the Head of the Welfare Division, together with the Superintendent's letter recommending the release of the girl. The Head of the Child Welfare signifies her approval by a letter, which is enclosed with the same plan and two release forms to the convicting juvenile court judge. If the judge approves he returns the release forms signed and then the girl is free to leave the school.

This release procedure was followed in every case, and out of the twenty girls, three were later re-committed. Occasionally the judge would not approve of the plan made for a girl's release, and this would mean additional correspondence between the Indian Agent, the social worker and the Superintendent and a delay of another three months while the girl got more restless and disturbed at school.

The appropriate action is difficult in releasing Indian girls, for there is little choice but to send them back to their former situations. Nine girls were released on probation to the care of a parent, and five were probationed to relatives. Two girls were released to other schools, in one case to an Indian residential school, and in the other to a convent. Save for one

délinquent who has been sent to the Provincial Mental Hospital, the rest of the girls are still institutionalized in the Industrial School.

Although co-operation with the Indian Agents and Social Workers has been fully enlisted, there is little planning that can be done. There is no supervision given to these girls after they are released, and they quickly resume their former mode of life. A worker recorded very truly that 'a person sent from a place of correction to her home, is regarded as one feeling she is now superior, and they (the Indian community) see to it that she is again relegated to the old standard'.

The Indian girls are committed, subjected to a type of confinement which even the institutional authorities say is not beneficial and then released (the worse for wear) to exactly the same situation that existed before they were committed. 'Probation' in their case is a term of no significance, for none of the Indian girls received any advice or help after she was released. They were placed on a bus or a boat to their destination and that was all the supervision given to them.

At first glance this seems a hopeless situation, but in reality the growing awareness of the negligible services given to Indian children shows that some people in the communities realize that these children deserve a better fate. Fortunately it is the provincial social welfare branch who are most aware of the problem. A district supervisor who was well acquainted with Indian delinquency summed up the view of this agency by writing to the Superintendent,

"Ours is a preventative service . . . . . and all Indian children of the past and particularly of the future are desperately in need of such a service. Not a worker at a distance but one specifically trained in Indian Lore and constantly among them, learning the habits and psychology most applicable to their race".

One thing is assured, and that is that the Girls Industrial School which is the only institution attempting to correct these delinquents, is not successful in its well-meant efforts. The girls who eventually are placed in the Industrial School are neglected children. They are the end results of broken homes, neglect, poor living conditions and lax upbringing, and they need to be shown the comforts and advantages of good healthy family life. Now, the Girls' Industrial School is an artificial society which no sane person would like to live in. The life of regimentation, discipline and monotony is so far away from family life and the outside society, that it is impossible to hope that the Indian girls can ever be 'morally reclaimed'. The majority of the girls have become delinquent through an unsatisfied need for tenderness and love in their childhood, and the Industrial School will never satisfy this need while it is functioning on the present basis.

The number of Indian girls committed each year is so small, that the use of a separate institution for their confinement is not warranted. However the present institution could be radically changed to fit the needs of both Indian and White girls, and at the same time to protect society.



Instead of one institutional building, there should be a number of cottages, each headed by a cottage mother, trained to her job, and in charge of nine or ten girls. The cottage should be run like a family. Meals, domestic instruction, and recreation should centre around this small unit. The cottage system would also enable a segregation of the girls, not necessarily according to age, but according to personality and character. It might be advisable to put the Indian girls all in one cottage, in order to make their assimilation with the White girls easier. It would be necessary to have a central building, with a school, a church, an auditorium and offices, but the cottages would be the centre of activity for the groups.

The value of such a system, is that it bring the delinquent children into greater reality with the outside world. The feeling of being shut in and herded is eliminated and the small group learns day by day, the meaning of give and take. Naturally the most important person for the success of this plan, is the cottage mother who should be a trained social worker and also a capable motherly person. The social work training gives her a greater ability to understand and help the girls, and the motherly trait helps establish something approaching family ties.

No province in Canada has ever approached the treatment of delinquent girls in any such manner. The cottage plan institution is being rapidly implemented in England, and many of their universities offer special training to prospective cottage mothers. Of course the plan would mean a thorough revision of British

Columbia's present method of treating juvenile delinquency among girls, not to mention the necessary large financial outlay. It is difficult to forecast into the future, but there seems no likelihood of the present Industrial School being changed to a cottage-school system.

The public erroneously believes that a reformatory is just what delinquent girls need; "Something that shows them who's boss". As the principles by which the school functions do not suit the needs of any of the girls, least of all Indian girls, their behaviour continues along the same pattern of anti-social acts. The Indian girls suffer the most, because the treatment meted out to them is misguided and unsuitable and will continue to be so, until proper attention and straight-forward thinking is directed towards the reasons for their delinquencies.

## CHAPTER VII

### A CANADIAN RESPONSIBILITY

The science of humanity unlike the science of chemistry or physics, is full of intangibles and unknown qualities. The basic cause of behaviour can only be tentatively surmised, because a human being is not a chemical element whose reaction can be gauged according to the stimulus applied, but a flesh and blood reality whose behaviour in situations is unpredictable. It is known that there are certain predisposing factors in delinquency, but which is the principal cause no one can say.

The delinquent behaviour of the twenty Indian girls proves beyond doubt that our national policy has encouraged and intensified the stultifying conditions which combine to cause their delinquency. The Dominion government by failing to meet the social needs of the Indians, by denying them full citizenship and equal participation in community life, has fostered a race of slum-dwellers. Delinquency breeds rapidly when poverty, ignorance, family neglect and racial discrimination are the dominant influences in the life of a group.

The stories of these Indian girls are tragic and pathetic, because their behaviour could have been improved, had anyone taken the necessary time and trouble. The so-called 'correction' given them is so shocking and feeble that it calls for immediate rectification. The real blame for their condition however, lies with the Dominion Department of Indian Affairs, which has mismanaged and sub-

jugated the Indians since confederation. Until the national policy has been radically revised, the welfare of the Indians can never reach a standard comparable to the Whites, and they will remain a dependent and subjugated race.

### IMPLICATIONS

The influence (direct and indirect) of governmental mismanagement is illustrated by the case histories of the Indian girls. Their special status denied their race any recourse to the benefits of the provincial welfare scheme, which means that the Indian families are excluded from all forms of provincial relief, and their neglected children can never be offered protection under the Child Welfare Division. It is amazing that although the Indians live within the provincial boundaries, they fall outside its jurisdiction.

Instead of provincial benefits, the Indian Department offers a special scheme of welfare which falls far below our accepted standard. The proof of their low quality service is shown by the poverty and filth which exist on the reservations, the high rates of infant mortality, pneumonia, tuberculosis, the unenlightened types of education, which deaden any community activity, and worst of all by the appalling neglect and apathetic attitude of parents towards their children.

The Indians' lack of moral responsibility and their apathetic attitude are indirectly the result of government policy. They are denied the primary right of citizenship, the right to vote in Dominion elections. There is no reason for them to behave as adults when

they are treated as children. So many rules, such as exemption from Dominion voting, the denial of liquor, are laid down for them, that incentive and self reliance are discouraged.

Indian Welfare health and education must all be drastically improved before the bad social conditions can be effectively corrected, and the responsibility for doing this lies with the Dominion government.

The negligible treatment given to delinquents is to a great degree caused by the administrative tangle in Indian affairs together with the timidity of the agencies involved. Although all children are held equally liable for their offences, the treatment or punishment which the Indian delinquents receive is noticeably different from that which a White delinquent receives. The juvenile courts do not possess the proper facilities for a good correction programme, because they are understaffed, and short of finances. As the rate of Indian delinquency is small compared with the other delinquent groups, and the Indian boys and girls live in widely scattered communities throughout the rural district, the courts direct little attention towards helping Indian youth and prefer to ignore the whole problem.

The provincial social workers decry the desperate needs of the Indian children, yet they have studiously avoided doing any social work in that field because the existing situation is difficult and calls for courage and a tireless spirit. The social workers offer many plausible excuses for their inability to cope with the Indian problem. Instances of these are, that Indians are

not included in the provincial jurisdiction, that provincial social workers are not allowed on the reserves without the permission of the Indian Agent, and that the Superintendent of Child Welfare cannot offer guardianship to neglected Indian children, because they are already wards of the government. Collectively social workers could overcome these barriers, but they feel that there are so many other problems less difficult in nature that the government alone should take the responsibility of meeting the needs of these people.

The civil servants whom the Indian department employs are rarely of the highest calibre of intelligence, and many of them perform their duties as Indian Agents with timidity and little imagination. There are of course exceptional cases, but the majority are untrained in welfare work, and unwilling to improve the existing services to Indians. The agent adheres so closely to the regulations of their Department, that they do not consider themselves in any way responsible for delinquency among Indian children.

This neutral attitude of the courts, the social welfare branch and the Indian agent is a serious impediment to the good supervision and rehabilitation of Indian girls. It means that because no agency is willing to undertake the task (though all are willing to blame the government) the Indian children are victimized and left alone to continue their pattern of misdemeanours.

Only one institution accepts responsibility for training Indian offenders, the Girls' Industrial School. Unfortunately it is run according to the age old concepts of punishment and reform, and as a correction centre it is ineffective. The Indian children show

in this institution a feeling of inferiority, and this attitude together with their marked reaction to confinement, leads the school authorities to the belief that the training is definitely not suitable for Indian girls.

Besides the problems of governmental inefficiency and the uncooperative attitude of the correction agencies, there are racial discrimination and prejudice.

The whole manner in which the affairs of the Indians are managed has increased the attitude of discrimination against them, and hindered their assimilation into the White community. The lives of the Indian girls show that they were segregated into an Indian group from the time they were born. Their homes were on lands 'reserved for Indians', they went to schools that were solely Indian in population, and they lived under social conditions that only the Indian Department would permit. As the Indians in Canada are such a small group, their presence does not create the type of racial intolerance based on fear and hate. The intolerance directed towards Indians is a type founded on contempt and the superiority of the White race. Discriminatory laws exist not because they are a powerful race who might influence the country, but because they are considered to be inferior, half-primitive people who need protection and guidance.

This racial prejudice is an important factor to consider in trying to help the delinquent Indian girls. They sense the attitude towards them, and some react by becoming bitter and defiant, while others resent their heritage. For these girls the damage is

done and can only be modified by the understanding and objective help of a White friend, but for the Indian children of the future, a National policy of gradual assimilation must be started. It is not possible to change the physical traits of the Indians, but it is possible to lessen the prejudice and discrimination shown to them.

SUGGESTED REMEDIAL PROGRAMME:

It has been shown that the problem of correcting Indian delinquency is related so closely to the difficult and complex problem of improving the administration of Indian affairs, that some attention must be given to the former, before delinquency correction can be discussed. The joint submission of the Canadian Welfare Council, and the Canadian Association of Social Work suggested to the Dominion Government committee on Indian Affairs the following recommendations:

"We recommend:

- 1.) The transfer of responsibility for all Indians services from the Department of Mines and Resources to the Department of National Health and Welfare.
- 2.) Acceptance of full assimilation of Indians into Canadian life as the goal of the Government's Indian programme.
- 3.) In line with this objective, consultation with provincial authorities regarding the possibility of extending to the Indian population the services of the provincial departments



of Education, Health and Welfare.

- 4.) If no such general extension of services is possible at the present stage, the purchase of particular services from these departments as well as from private organizations in situations where this seems to be desirable.
- 5.) Appraisal of all present staff members in the Indian services, both at headquarters and in the agencies, and such reorganization as will ensure that persons so engaged are qualified by training, experience and personality.
- 6.) As part of this reorganization the employment of suitably qualified persons for both administrative and service posts, as quickly as they can be recruited and trained.
- 7.) The employment at headquarters of specialist supervisors in the field of welfare, as well as in such other fields as education, health, agriculture etc.
- 8.) The employment in each of the Indian agencies of a qualified social worker to direct a generalized welfare programme, including child welfare, family welfare, recreation and community activities.
- 9.) The modernization of the educational system on the reserves so as to adapt it more fully to the life needs of Indians and to make the schools an educational and recreational centre for the whole community".

The recommendations are primarily concerned with the welfare of the Indian communities, and as it has been shown how the low standards of Indian life affect the behaviour of the girls,

the basic programme for correcting delinquency must start with them. Delinquency must be curbed at its source, and that is why improved conditions for Indian health, welfare and education is so necessary.

In the specific field of Indian delinquency the social worker may make a valuable contribution to the correction of this problem.

Social workers can no longer ignore the need for action in the treatment of Indian delinquency, nor can they renounce the part which they must play without violating the principles and ideals on which their profession is founded.

The first step in improving this racial correction situation is to increase scientific observation of the modern Indian. The type of research needed is one which will promote a greater understanding of the habits and culture of the race, and must be done by skilled observers working and living with the people they are studying and thus obtaining a first-hand evaluation of Indian culture.

Secondly each Indian agency should have on its staff at least one social worker, to devote her time solely to the Indians and their problems. The continuous wail from the Indian agents that they have no moral responsibility over the Indians would thus be ended. An Indian social worker could help the delinquent girls considerably. First she would have access to the girl's family and with her greater understanding of the characteristics of Indians, she might possibly improve the conditions of the home and the relations between parent and child.

The appointment of Indian social workers would also give the juvenile courts an alternative to committing the girls to the Industrial School. What better equipped person is there than the social worker, to serve as a probation officer? Besides this she could improve the case records (which at the moment are deplorable), thus contributing indirectly to further research into the problems of these girls.

It is essential that the social worker be in close harmony with the people she assists. She must gain their confidence and support and strip herself of all racial intolerance. This is not an easy task, and requires a person of high moral integrity and courage. Re-education is one of the things that the Indians need, and can only be given by some person preferably a social worker willing to go and live with them on the reserves and show them how to give their children healthier and happier lives. In this way community life could be stimulated on the reservation, and the children could be taught the art of self-government, enjoying recreation and leisure, and of self reliance.

Social workers in British Columbia have a real challenge before them in this racial problem. They are the protectors of every man's welfare and as such the community is under a strong obligation to them. Hesitancy to attempt a social action for the Indians has been the keynote upto the present and social workers are as much to blame for this as workers in other fields. It is a difficult complex situation and some of them avoid it by contenting themselves with problems they know are more easily solved. With all their

skills, techniques and knowledge, they have failed to live up to their basic aim, which is to promote man's welfare.

Of any group in Canada, the Indians receive the least consideration. Their children are brought up under conditions which appal the rest of the community and yet because everyone is so reluctant to become entangled in Indian affairs, the conditions remain unchanged. It is the Indian children who suffer, and it is they who pay the price for actions caused by the folly of their parents, and the apathy of the Canadian public.

Delinquency is a symptom of a diseased life. Sometimes it can be cured by the medicine of friendliness, understanding, and self discipline, at other times it is too late to cure the malady or apply the right cure. The Indian girls are the children of these other times. They are the victims of a culture who live in poverty and confusion, and the victims of a greater civilization who show them nothing but discrimination and contempt.

The Indians are more aware of their disintegrating heritage than the rest of civilization, for they have seen their society destroyed by a great force. Their sad fate is thus described by Raymon, a Digger Indian Chief.

"In the beginning, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life. They all dipped in the water, but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. It has passed away." (4)

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