

Reply Feb 7/54

Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

February 1st, 1954

Very Reverend George Nunan S.J.
2 Dale Avenue,
Toronto 5, Ontario.,

Very Reverend and dear Father Provincial:

Pax Christi!

Thanks very much for your last letter and advice given!

May I offer our regrets for the loss of the Church and Rectory in Wikwemikong! We did not hear about the disaster until news appeared in the Sudbury Star and people began phoning us about it.

I did my best to get in touch by phone with Father Oliver the same evening but was unable to reach him. The next day, Fathers McHugh and McElligott accompanied me to Wikwemikong with supplies in the way of clothing, bedding and provisions. We found the Fathers in good spirits in spite of the loss and in no wise overcome by the ordeal they had gone through. I gave Father Oliver a cheque for two hundred dollars for what might be needed at once. He thought that would be a very valuable aid.

He thought it might be a good thing if Father Brown went to Wikwemikong for a few days to cheer the people up. However, the Fathers here thought it would not be very helpful. I informed Father Prefect and told him I thought you would have no objection provided he could find a replacement for the three or four classes which he has to teach. He did not know in what way he could cheer the people or console them than Father Oliver had already done. He has not seen me since about the possibility of going over to Holy Cross Mission. Of course he has been busy with his hockey teams which defeated Sudbury High School on Friday and Blind River Juveniles on Sunday afternoon.

I am enclosing photos which Father McHugh took when we down on our errand of mercy.

With regard to Father Richard's anniversary will there be any official celebration and the need of some representative from Spanish? I regret having missed Father Dowling on his recent visit to Wikwemikong. I am notifying the Sault and Sudbury papers to make the anniversary known. Please inform us if you expect anyone from the Community if there is to be a public observance of the hundredth birthday.

Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

I asked Father Maurice to inform you through Father Dowling whom he drove to Mikwemikong, that Mr. Pearson has informed me that he will try to have messages from Her Majesty the Queen, the Premier Mr. St. Laurent and himself delivered to Father Richard on that occasion.

Our boy and girl students are preparing a Spiritual Bouquet for Father.

With best wishes,

Rae, Vae, servus in Christo,

Leo Burrus. S.J.

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With best wishes,

Rae, Vae, servus in Christo,

February 8, 1954

Reverend Leo Burns, S.J.
Garnier School
Spanish, Ontario

Dear Father Superior,

P.C. Thank you for your letter of February 1.
It came when I was away for the installation at Halifax.

I am grateful for your expression of regrets
for the disaster at Wikwemikong. We must be thankful that
no one was injured. Father Oliver is already planning what
is to be done to repair the damage and to get the parish
established again. He is very grateful for the help you
have given him and the sympathy and encouragement he has
received from you and the other Fathers.

If Father Brown would be of any service at
Wikwemikong I would approve of your lending him to Father
Oliver for a time.

Because of the state of Father Richard's health
it was not planned to have a celebration for his 100th
birthday at the Novitiate. He is confined to bed and though
some days his mind is quite clear and he recognizes people
easily, at other times he is not so bright and he may
become upset. I understand that he received the message of
congratulation from the Queen. We must thank Mr. Pearson
for his good offices.

Thank Father McHugh for the pictures.

Sincerely in Christ,

Gellman, S. J.

Indian Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

February 17th, 1954

Very Reverend George Nunan, S.J.
2 Dale Avenue,
Toronto, Ontario.,

Very Reverend and dear Father Provincial:

Pax Christi!

Thank you for your letter of February the eighth!

We were grateful for the news about Father Richard. Newspaper feature articles in the Sudbury and the Sault Stars were forwarded to Father Dowling last night. Also to Father Richard's brother in Montreal (90 yrs of age) who wrote last week for any items of interest we may have at our disposal. As mentioned to Father Dowling earlier in the year, the file in our office under the heading "Father Richard" contains only his baptismal certificate and the application form for his Old Age Pension.

Last week, we celebrated Our Lady of Lourdes feast with High Mass as one of the Marian Year events. We combined the Superior's feast-day with the anniversary of Our Lady's Apparitions and granted the boys an extra holiday. So they had Thursday and Saturday free from classes. This was helpful in other ways as the team had to journey to Gore Bay Saturday afternoon and the others were very busy with preparations for the Annual Winter Carnival. This event was held on Sunday evening and proved a success culturally and financially. The various grades of the boys and girls' school supplied musical, fancy skating, and artistic numbers on the program.

Father Laviolette was in touch with me by telephone a few days ago with the information that the Department of Indian Affairs will pay the Teachers' salaries in the Government-owned schools. He says we stand a good chance of having this legislation applied to Residential Schools (i.e. Church-owned) next year. (1955-56)

He would like our Fathers to write up reasons for the present-standing of our High Schools as the Department is determined and is going through with plans to **force** Indian attendance at local High Schools and Collegiates and will likely not continue our \$17,50 per month capita grant for High School students. He declared Father Oliver presented several good arguments at the Bishops' and Indian Department meeting last Fall.

We have given fuller consideration to the change of weekly holiday as Your Reverence requested. Now, we face a serious difficulty. Following your January letter, I interviewed Miss Straine, present principal and former Prefect of the Girls' School as I had done previous to our Consul-

Indian Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

tation in January. She saw no difficulties in the way of the boys having the Saturday holiday. As to the mixing of the boys and the girls she declared it could not happen if the prefects of both groups were doing their work properly. She also affirmed that the same reason should also hold for the Sunday walks which take place every week-end and without difficulty, as well as the present trend in favor of socials between the two groups, movies, and entertainments.

I consulted Father Oliver last Friday on his return from the Provincial Consultation. He saw no difficulty in the Saturday holiday change. As a matter of fact, he told me that the separation of the small boys' holiday from the older students was an ideal arrangement on paper but that it never really worked out. The purpose was to give the younger lads a chance to use the rink but then the girls were given their hours instead. Since the building of the Arena, problems are more easily solved. The older boys are occupied all morning with works about the house whilst the younger folk are free to use the Arena. In the afternoons too, ^{as now on Sundays} the girls can use the Rink for skating or basketball and other games whilst the boys have their walks and vice-versa. These last two Saturdays we had the holiday without difficulties.

As mentioned in my previous letter the Saturday holiday enables us to carry out your wishes with regard to ministry. Some of our Fathers have been celebrating three Masses on Sunday on account of illness of pastors and emergencies. On account of Saturday class-work this ministry has to be left to the same Fathers instead of being distributed among them all.

This morning, our XI and XII Grades teacher, Mr. Sammon asked me if this Saturday were a holiday. I told him "No!". He had asked previously about the change but I informed him it was still open to consideration. He intimated then that he would not be with us next year if he had to teach on Saturdays. This morning, he informed me that he was not coming to class on Saturday or any other Saturday and would take the consequences. He is a good teacher and has been on the staff for several years and our Fathers think his going would be a serious loss. The Fathers can understand his position for he is the only teacher in the district engaged on Saturday and very few persons now work on that day. Even our station-master and telegraph operator are not employed in this day.

There's my problem! If I let him go what about the teaching of these grades and the students' examination in June? Perhaps, I could employ the Polish Officer who is seeking Mr. Belleau's place when the Department finds a position for him. But would he be able to teach Grades Eleven and Twelve subjects?

We were sorry that Brother Reischman could not stay longer. He came at an opportune moment when our water and heating pipes were giving way on us.

Sorry to present you with these problems
Rae. Var. serves in Christ.
Geo. Burns. S.

P.S. Father Oliver and the Prefect of last two years in favor of change.

Loyola College
Montreal
March 9, 1954

Reverend Leo Burns, S.J.
Garnier School
Spanish, Ontario

Dear Father Burns,

P.C. Pardon my delay in answering your letter of February 17. You will have received my telegram approving the change to the Saturday holiday. It seemed to be the most urgent matter in your letter and I got the telegram away as soon as possible in order that you might put the change into effect for the weekend. I trust that you have had no further difficulty with Mr. Sammon.

In regard to the policy that the Indian Department is adopting in regard to the per capita grant for High School students in church-owned residential schools, it would seem to be a good example of bureaucratic methods. The Dept. is determining its own interpretation of the Indian Act without much regard for anyone else. It would be good to follow Father Laviolette's suggestion and draw up our reasons for maintaining our school in its present position. I will speak to Father Oliver about the matter when he comes here for the consultation on Thursday. In this matter we should keep in touch with Father Laviolette. It seems to be a case where we should ask the help of the Members of Parliament so that some influence may be brought to bear on the Department. It is not a question of some particular detail of administration that is at issue but a general policy and the interpretation of the Indian Act. Father Oliver may be able to arrange an interview with Father Laviolette on his return from Montreal.

I am somewhat uncertain as to whether Father Costello has returned to Spanish after his supply at Killarney. I wrote to him a few days ago in reference to future work. I had a letter from him a couple of weeks ago in which he said that his stay there was very helpful. The fact that he wrote the whole letter himself was a good sign. He seems to be making slow but continual progress.

Kindest regards to all. Please remember me in your Masses.

Sincerely in Christ,

William J. T.

Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

April 16th, 1954

Very Reverend George Nunan S.J.
2 Dale Avenue,
Toronto, ~~S.~~Ontario.,

Very Reverend Father Provincial:

Pax Christi!

Best wishes from the Garnier Community for a Happy Easter! Hope you are not too fatigued after your Eastern visitation.

The last few days have been hectic ones here with the preparations for Holy Week ceremonies and the departure of a large number of our boys for the Easter holidays. As in past years, Indian parents come before time and we find ourselves at wits' end striving to follow Department regulations and avoiding displeasure and animosity towards the school.

Thanks very much for your last letter! The Saturday holiday order was introduced and was welcomed by all except one or two.

We have a number of problems to be discussed with your Reverence on the occasion of your visitation.

Mr. Davey informed me that beginning April, it is proposed to have a per capita Annual Grant for maintenance which will save us having recourse to the Department for purchases and approvals for equipment and repairs as in the past. Our kitchen work has not been done because the Engineering department had not given word one way or the other, and the time elapsed. However this proposed grant is awaiting passage by Parliament. Mr. Davey in his letter stated that my remarks with regard to fifty dollars per student was a misunderstanding. It would be only thirty-five (\$35.00) per boy. He asked me in Ottawa if fifty dollars per capita would be acceptable. Father Laviolette informed me later that he had after consultation with the Oblate Bishops and survey of past years reduced it to the thirty-five limit.

We were allowed to submit other necessary repairs during the year in lieu of the kitchen commitment and have recovered to-date some \$2020.00 of our \$3000.00 proposed grant for 1953-54. As cheques are coming slowly at about ten days' intervals we may have the full amount for which we forwarded triplicate vouchers and receipts.

Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

There was some uneasiness here about the Provincial Government's statements about Residential Schools and there policy with regard to Indians attending the schools of whites. However, Father Oliver on his recent visit claimed we had nothing to be anxious about as he did not think it would affect our schools as so many of our students are problem cases and very few live in places where they would have busses to take them to nearby High Schools and collegiates.

A short time ago we received from the Executors of the McFadden Estate \$900.00 for Masses for the repose of the soul of Mr. McFadden. These are low Masses to be said by Ontario Jesuits. We have been asked to have a set of Gregorian Masses and to take \$100.00 for same from the above mentioned sum. I am communicating with Father Brennan about this matter.

Please pardon this hasty letter. I shall write during the coming week. Father Costello is at present at Blind River. We have been allowing him to come and go ever since he came here in October. It is a distraction for him and keeps him occupied.

With best wishes,

Rae. Vae. servus in Christo.

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Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

April 27th, 1954

Very Reverend George Nunan S.J.
2 Dale Avenue,
Toronto, 5, Ontario.,

Very Reverend and dear Father Provincial:

Pax Christi!

Our Easter holidays are over with the return of most of the boys. A few have not put in an appearance as yet, but this happens every year.

The Cuban Scholastics and our Brothers seem to have made a good retreat under Father Nelson. There have been no complaints. Every one seemed satisfied. Of course, we have a community of good Brothers though few in numbers.

My present worry is about our High School next year. As mentioned in a previous letter the Provincial Government Committee did not speak very favorably of Residential Schools. You know too, the present policy of the Indian Department with regard to assimilation of Indian students with white pupils in public schools. The Indian Affairs Branch has informed the various schools by circular letter that teachers in Government-owned schools will be paid by the Federal Government and are to consider themselves as civil servants.

I have talked matters over with Father Oliver and the Fathers here with the result that I do not know where I stand and what I should do. Father Oliver is of the opinion that we and the Sisters are working ourselves into an hysteria over nothing at all, for things will go on and must go on as in the past. The other Fathers for the most part agree and are convinced it will be so. At the same time they favor the extension or establishment of High School classes in all the missions.

With the elimination of students from Caughnawaga, St. Regis, Fort William and other reserves near the big centres, and then the cutting off of students from our own missions, I don't see, judging from a survey of our present enrolment, how we shall have sufficient students to carry on our High School instruction in both the Boys' and Girls' schools.

Garnier Residential School

Spanish, Ontario

There is also the question of the "High School Tuition" grants which mean a thousand dollars a month to each of our schools.

Now, comes the news to add to the confusion. Miss Whalen, a lay-teacher of the Convent School was in Ottawa during the Easter week regarding her M.A. degree from the Ottawa University. Father Laviolette asked her to convey this message to me.

He fears and appears quite certain that unless we act before the end of June we may lose our High School. The Department is going ahead with plans for next year and are willing to go to any expense (money does not count) to send boys and girls to the nearest schools. He stated that he had interviewed persons in the Deputy Minister's Office, who say that they can do nothing unless directed from higher authority. It is not clear that it is these men's opinion or Father Laviolette's alone, that we have influential friends in the persons of His Excellency Bishop Dignan and Mr. Pearson who could help us. The Oblates have been able to save two schools in British Columbia and Alberta. There are four Residential Schools in question.

Father Laviolette stated he had given me a hint over the phone but could not discuss it in that way or by correspondence. He also stated that he could see that I was a newcomer and not familiar with Indian problems.

The Fathers here are strong in their opinion that we shall always ^{teach} and the Department will have to send us problem children. Should we be content with these? What of the grants and general improvement of Indian students in the surrounding missions.

I mention these matters so that you may consider them and give direction if necessary.

Please excuse this hasty close as I wish to have this letter on this evening's train. I am writing to-morrow to Mr. Davey now Superintendent of Education in the Indian Department as to what we are to expect this coming year, what guarantee we may have for the continuation of our High School. In a word, asking him just where we stand.

With best wishes,

Rae, Vae, servus in Christo,

Leo Burns. S.J.
P.S. I wrote to Father Oliver yesterday about Father Laviolette's desire to meet and discuss the problem with one of Ours.

April 28, 1954

Dear Father Burns,

P.C. Thank you for your report and news of the school in your letter of April 16.

I shall begin my visitation of Spanish and the missions on May 23. We shall leave Toronto Saturday night and be in Spanish for Mass on Sunday morning.

I attended Archbishop Sinnott's funeral and got back to Toronto Saturday morning. Father Bathurst met me at the train at Fort William Friday morning. His legs are still stiff and his ankles swell when he is on his feet too long, but he hopes that with physiotherapy the trouble will disappear.

On Saturday evening I leave for the Provincials' Meeting at Boston and shall be away for a week. These frequent journeys do not give much time for work at home.

Please remember me in your Masses.

Sincerely in Christ,

J. J. Sullivan, S. J.

May 1, 1954

Reverend Leo Burns, S.J.
Garnier School
Spanish, Ontario

Dear Father Burns,

P.C. Your letter of April 27 was received this morning.

It seems to me that you and Father Oliver should go to Ottawa to have a talk with Father Laviolette so that you may be able to form a clear idea of what the Department intends to do. You should also, of course, see the officials of the Indian Department.

When you have got all the relevant information then you should see Bishop Dignan and Mr. Pearson. Bishop Cody is the head of the three Bishops appointed by the Canadian Catholic Conference to deal with the Department and it will be good to present the matter to him. He is an active person and Archbishop Berry expressed to me his admiration of Bishop Cody's way of dealing with public officials. He is ready to see their point of view but is quite firm and insistent in putting forward our case.

It may very well be that despite the policy that the Department is intent on introducing our schools at Spanish may not suffer - that is only a conjecture - but it may also turn out that they will be seriously affected; that can happen too. But we must not be content to let a policy be adopted which of its nature is inimical to our schools and to the good of the Indians, and then simply to hope that it will not in practice do any harm. The point is that the Department is introducing a policy for which it has no clear mandate from the government; it is following the procedure of all such government bureaus, which is determined by the ideas of the civil servants who are in charge. It is for this reason that we ought to seek the help of those who have political influence, such as Mr. Pearson.

We do not wish our High Schools to be confined only to those who are problem children among the Indians. Does not our case consist in this, that for a great number of Indian boys and girls of High School age a boarding under religious auspices is necessary for their right formation and that their being forced to attend the public high schools would be detrimental to them?

I am leaving today for the Provincials' Meeting in Boston. Please remember me in your Masses.

Sincerely in Christ,

G. S. Uman, S.J.

Commission des Oeuvres
Indiennes et Esquimaudes

Missionnaires Oblats de N. S.
Université d'Ottawa



L.J.-C. et M.I.

Indian and Eskimo
Welfare Commission

Missionary Oblates of N. S.
University of Ottawa

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SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL
R.P. GONTRAN LAVIOLETTE, O.M.I.
GENERAL SECRETARY

OTTAWA, May 3 1954
1 STEWART, — ONTARIO.

Rev. Father L. Burns, S.J.,
Principal,
Spanish Indian Res. School,
Spanish, Ont.

Dear Father Burns:

I have it from authoritative sources that the present number of High School pupils at Spanish Res. School, will not be reduced for the next school year 1954-55, nor will the present per capita additional grant for these High School pupils be reduced.

However the Department will commit itself to continue this policy indefinitely; it appears that the structure of High School grants will be revised before the next fiscal year 55-56.

I beg to remain, dear Father Burns,

Yours sincerely in O.L. and M.I.

Rev. G. Laviolette, O.M.I.
Secretary.

GL/cp

May 7th, 1954

R. F. Davey,
Superintendent of Education,
Department of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa, Ontario.,

File 13/25-471-(E6)
Re: Future Status of Spanish Residential School.

Dear Mr. Davey:

In view of the present policy of the Department in favor of the assimilation of Indian boys and girls with non-Indian pupils and their transportation to local schools, and various rumors arising therefrom as to attendance of students and grants for their care and education, we are naturally in doubt and much concerned about the future of our work and schools and the welfare of the Indians under our care.

During forty-eight years in Wikwemikong and the last forty in Spanish we have as members of our Order looked after the welfare of the Indian children and provided education with the help of the Department of Indian Affairs whilst our missionaries looked after their parents' material and spiritual wants. In the latter years, our Boys' and Girls' schools were the first to have High School grades and give their pupils the opportunity to continue their higher education.

We wish to know just how we shall be affected by the present changes which the Department contemplates? Shall we continue to have the same number of students both in the Elementary or Public School grades and in the High School classes? What guarantee can the Indian Affairs Branch give us for the coming years? Will our Residential School be limited to the acceptance of problem-children or the children of broken-up families? Will the students of the elementary courses be able to continue or complete their education through High School?

How will our school be affected by the new grant for teachers' salaries introduced in the Government-owned schools? Will the present grants for tuition for High School students be curtailed in any way?

In short, we should like to know just where we are and what we can count upon for our future work in the care and education of the children.

Our intention in submitting these questions is not to embarrass the Department or your office but to set aside rumors and overcome the uncertainty that naturally arose from the not too favorable report regarding the work done or ^{the} education in residential schools in this province and the public announcements concerning the assimilation policy. The two staffs of our schools (boys and girls) having the education of their pupils at heart and so ardently devoted to their welfare during so many years have prompted us to make this inquiry.

We shall be very grateful for any assurances or guarantees you may find it possible to give us.

Yours very truly,

Leo Burns S.J.
Principal,
Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ontario.,



CANADA

PLEASE QUOTE

13/25-1-471(E)
FILE.....

DEPARTMENT OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
INDIAN AFFAIRS BRANCH

Ottawa

May 18th, 1954.

Reverend Leo Burns, S.J.,
Principal,
Spanish Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ontario.

Dear Father Burns:

Re: Future Status of the
Spanish Residential School

Although it is the long range policy of the department to fit our Indian people for full citizenship, it will obviously be many years before we will accomplish our aim.

It has also been the policy of the department for a number of years to give first priority in admission to residential schools of those children who for various reasons must be removed from their homes. Second priority is given to those children who cannot receive the type of education for which they are ready from their homes. As far as I can see, there is no hope at the present time of reducing the number of high school pupils which you are enrolling at the Spanish Residential School. The department does not believe that Indian high schools should be established on reserves where only a few children would enrol from their homes. The department would prefer, however, to have Indian children attend school, particularly in the higher grades, with non-Indians, but in as much as this involves finding accommodation for them in the white communities, we are faced with an almost impossible situation.

I may say that the above does not represent any change in policy, but to my knowledge has been the accepted views of the department for at least the past five years.

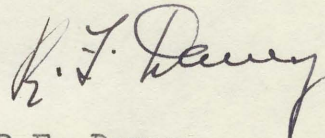
....2

I can give you assurance, however, that if there is any anticipated change in the way in which this policy will affect your school, you will be given ample warning so that you may make your plans accordingly. Certainly there will be no change felt by your school for the coming academic year.

The payment of teachers' salaries at government-owned schools by the department will not affect the Spanish Residential School nor will there be any change in the grant for tuition for high school students for the coming year, although this latter point is one which should certainly receive consideration.

I believe the above has answered the several questions which you have raised in your letter, but if there is any point which requires further clarification, please do not hesitate to write to me.

Yours sincerely,



R. F. Davey,
Superintendent of Education