

then went to work for the New York Life Insurance Company in Pennsylvania. A graduate of the Mohawk Institute, N. E. Lickers, was called to the bar in 1938 and was described by the *Branford Expositor* as the “First Ontario Indian Lawyer.”²¹⁴

Despite these successes, little encouragement generally was offered to students who wished to pursue further education. Oliver Martin, who was raised on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario and went on to become an Ontario magistrate, recalled being told by Indian Affairs Deputy Minister Duncan Campbell Scott: “It’s no use sending you Indians to school you just go back to the reserve anyway.”²¹⁵

For many students, classroom life was foreign and traumatic. David Charleson said he found the regimentation at the Christie, British Columbia, school so disturbing that he “never wanted to learn, so I jumped into my shell. I took Kindergarten twice because of what happened to me. I didn’t want to learn.”²¹⁶ At the Birtle school in Manitoba, Isabelle Whitford said, she had a hard time adjusting to the new language and the classroom discipline. “Every time I couldn’t get an answer, like, you know, she would pull my ears and shake my head.”²¹⁷ Betsy Olson described class work at the Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, school as a torment, in which her “spelling was always 30, 40, it was way down. And when we did spelling, sometimes I freeze, I couldn’t move, I just scribbled because I couldn’t move my hand.”²¹⁸ Leona Agawa never felt comfortable in the classroom at the Spanish, Ontario, school. For much of her time in school, she was frightened or intimidated. “I’d hear my name, but I never got to answer. I stood up, never got to answer what they were saying when they sat me down. And I’d get a good slap after, after you, you leave there for not being nice in school.”²¹⁹

Since the 1920s, Indian Affairs had required residential schools to adopt provincial curricula.²²⁰ The department had also asked provincial governments to have their school inspectors inspect Indian Affairs schools.²²¹ The wisdom of this practice had been questioned during the hearings of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons inquiry into the *Indian Act* in the 1940s. Andrew Moore, a secondary school inspector for the Province of Manitoba, told the committee members that Indian Affairs took full responsibility for all aspects of First Nations education, including curriculum.²²² Provincial education departments, including the one he worked for, were “not organized or not interested in Indian schools.”²²³

In 1963, D. W. Hepburn, the former principal of the federal school in Inuvik, published an article with the ominous headline “Northern Education: Façade for Failure.” He argued that the education being provided in the new federal schools was “hopelessly inadequate. The reasons for this failure are clear: the aims of education set forth by the Department are thoroughly confused, the curriculum is inappropriate, and many current practices of the system are not only ill-conceived but actually harmful.”²²⁴ Although 60% of the students at the Inuvik school were in the first three grades, few teachers had any background in primary education, and “almost none has any special training in native education, and will receive none from the Department.”²²⁵ The schools were producing individuals who “lack