DEVELOPMENT IN THE INDIAN AREAS/OF THE DAKOTAS AND NEBRASKA

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Those who have lived in the Missouri Basin have seen many dramatic changes take place in recent years. Within the life span of those who are here, we have seen the raw uncontrolled power of the mighty Missouri harnessed. Now the Missouri has more power than ever before emerging from the multiple uses of the waters stored in its extensive reservoirs. This accomplishment has accelerated the changes that have come to the people of the Missouri Basin.

Many people who have been affected by the increased activity in the Missouri Basin are Indians. The reference for my comments today will be primarily the area covered by the Aberdeen Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, which includes the two Dakotas and Nebraska.

Approximately 43,500 Indians live on the 15 reservations and perhaps 5,000 or more live away from the reservations in the Dakota and Nebraska cities and rural areas. These 15 reservation areas contain approximately 5,668,890 acres of individually allotted and tribally owned land. This is private land, not government land though it is held in trust for the Indian people.

The change that has come with the development of the Missouri reservoirs was even more traumatic for the Indian people than it was for the non-Indian people. Approximately 353,595 acres of reservation land adjoining the Missouri were taken for the five reservoirs in the Dakotas. This was rich bottom land. The bottom land of the Missouri River itself lay at the heart of several Indian cultures and was the basis of a way of life that had existed for the Indian people for over 600 years. The bottom lands were protected. They were the source of food for buffalo and people. The grass was lush. Berries grew on bushes. Game was abundant. The trees provided fuel and logs for houses. There were also outcroppings of coal. The Missouri was the source of sweet water and was close by.

The relocation of the Indian people from their ancestral bottom lands to the upland benches was upsetting to the traditional culture, and even though the actual distance may have been but a few miles, the change was so complete that they might just as well have moved a thousand miles.

The Indians were paid for the land that was taken. They were paid intangible damages to compensate for game, berries, wood, etc. Relocation expenses were provided. Rehabilitation programs were passed by Congress for the Three Affiliated Tribes from the Fort Berthold Reservation, and the Sioux Tribes of the Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Crow Creek and Lower Brule Reservations. These programs were the beginning of development programs of which I will speak later. But I think we all agree that the Indian people gave much to the development of the Missouri River Basin, that the problem of adjustment was a tremendous one, and that much of their prime land base has been lost. While the compensation and rehabilitation funds were felt to be adequate by usual standards, I know that many of the older people especially felt no amount of money could replace what they had given up.

In other ways, however, the Indian people have gained from this development and they will continue to gain in the future. In a way, this development has just begun. It is incumbent upon all of us, federal, state, and local people, to work with Indian groups or individuals to identify and exploit opportunities for development in both the social and resource fields. We must also do whatever we can to extend to the reservation areas the services and benefits of all the programs and resources that exist for the non-Indian community, be they federal, state, local, or non-government organizations.

Before discussing specifically the development taking place in Indian areas, permit me to point out some of the problems all of us in the field of Indian affairs are concerned about. Speaking from an overall standpoint, Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, recently said that the reservation Indian has serious problems. He listed these problems:

- 1. The low education levels of Indians.
- 2. The need for more opportunities for children and adults to get training and education to catch up with the rest of America.
- 3. Substandard housing.
- 4. Help in community planning and development.
- 5. Substandard living conditions, stemming from poverty.
- 6. Need for more help on health and sanitation.
- 7. Chronic unemployment.

- 8. Need for greater business development.
- 9. Heirship problems that hold back land development.

In varying degree these problems all exist on the Dakota and Nebraska reservations. Unemployment is very critical because of the lack of job opportunities. There are sufficient reservation resources to accommodate only about one-third of the people even if all these resources were used by the Indian people. While other potentialities are being vigorously pursued, employment opportunity on and near the reservation is our greatest need.

What has taken place since the development of the Missouri River began and what is taking place now?

EMERGENCE OF TRIBAL LEADERSHIP

I consider the greatest development to be the emergence of tribal leadership and the continued assumption of responsibility by tribal councils and other tribal entities. For some of the tribes this began several years ago. Tribal councils played a major role in the development and implementation of their river-taking rehabilitation programs. This began with Fort Berthold. Next came Cheyenne River. Their rehabilitation program has developed to the point where over 90% of the Indian owned land is used by Indian operators. Other rehabilitation programs were developed at Standing Rock, Crow Creek, and Lower Brule. For various reasons, including the experiences gained with Fort Berthold, the last four programs resulted in more emphasis upon the development of the people and the reservation resources.

Funds were set aside for scholarship assistance, industrial development, and the purchase of land. Several tribes used funds to establish credit programs and to set up individual tribal members in farm and livestock operations. Some of the funds were used for housing, including housing for the aged. Funds were earmarked also for family improvement programs.

Complete rehabilitation, of course, has not been possible because of the limited resources, but there has been much improvement. Money in itself will not do the job. Adjustment and change are necessary and they evolve slowly sometimes.

It is a real tribute to the tribes that these multimillion dollar programs were, in large part, developed and have been implemented by them. The process is still going on.

Speaking further of tribal leadership in the development of programs, the Omaha Tribe developed programs for the use of their \$2,900,000 judgment award and is carrying them out. Again, scholarship assistance, credit, land purchase, industrial development, and a tribal farm enterprise are components of this reservation development program. They have now received a second judgment award of \$1,750,000 and plan to expand the programs that were developed for the first award. The Omahas fully recognized the need for better and wider educational opportunity. They established a minor's trust fund for the deposit of their children's share of both awards, over \$1,000,000 of the first award, in a commercial bank. The program provides for the use of the accrued interest and principal during the child's school years.

All of the Aberdeen Area tribes have filed claims with the Claims Commission. Generally these claims result from inadequate or no payment for lands which the tribes ceded to the United States when the reservations were established. Within several years it appears that judgment awards will be made to the Winnebagos, Fort Totten, Sisseton, and Flandreau Sioux and perhaps to the Three Affiliated Tribes. It is anticipated others will be coming along. Claims awards offer a tremendous opportunity for tribes to develop and carry out programs and needs with their own funds.

NEW AID FROM BEYOND BIA

With the coming of the Area Redevelopment Administration, Indian reservation areas were designated as depressed areas. Tribal councils in the Aberdeen Area included in these designations the total county jurisdictions, thus the designated area became a greater reservation area. Meeting with county commissioners, judges, state and local officials, they prepared OEDP's - Overall Economic Development Plans. These locally prepared programs were required in order that ARA assistance could be given. Many feasibility studies resulted and these reports have been utilized in planning. The new EDA (Economic Development Administration) is utilizing these OEDP's and providing help and assistance to depressed areas.

The greatest tribal opportunity for planning and carrying out programs has come through the Economic Opportunity Act. The tribes have had assistance and guidance from the Office of Economic Opportunity, the University of South Dakota Indian Community Action Project, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and others.

Eight tribes in the Dakotas and Nebraska have their own Community Action Programs. Four reservations participate in local countywide programs. Community Action Programs contain such components as Administration, Head Start, Ranger Corps, Community Health Workers, Credit Unions, Legal Aid Services, Adult Education, Remedial Education, Recreation, Home Management, Medicare Alert, Community Aids, and others. For Fiscal Year 1966, 1,724 students took part in Head Start. An additional 1,748 students took part in the Neighborhood Youth Corps in Fiscal Year 1966 under the Department of Labor.

Other opportunities implemented under the Economic Opportunity Act include Work Study Program under the U.S. Office of Education, and small business loans under the FHA. Four reservations have Title V programs under HEW and administered by State Welfare Departments. In Fiscal Year 1966, there were 41 VISTA workers assigned to Indian reservations in the Aberdeen Area. Most of the reservations have had Nelson Amendments providing work opportunities for the older or handicapped worker. It is estimated that funding for Economic Opportunity programs for Fiscal Year 1967 in the Aberdeen Area for reservations will approximate \$10,000,000.

The question arises, is the Office of Economic Opportunity program on Indian reservations eliminating poverty? Personally, I think the concrete benefits in terms of permanent jobs and continued employment are still to be evaluated. There are, however, numerous intangible benefits which will have lasting effect. In a way, this is the first real opportunity for Indians, as it is for many other disadvantaged areas in our Country to come up with their own programs and obtain money to carry them out. It gives them an opportunity to say what they want rather than to accept what someone else wants for them. Hope is taking the place of apathy. Attitudes are changing. People are gaining confidence in their own ability. They are having experiences they haven that before. Many agencies are working with them rather than doing to them or for them.

Tribal councils are working directly with many other federal, state, and local agencies, also. These include the National Park Service, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Commercial Fisheries, Farmers Home Administration, Economic Development Administration, Corps of Engineers, the State Indian Commissions, State Fish and Game, State Highway Departments, State Employment Security, State Welfare, and many others. A recent tabulation indicated contacts on the reservations with over 125 federal, state,

and local agencies. More and more tribal councils, tribal and local community committees are also becoming involved in our Bureau activities in the fields of social services and resource management. Service by tribal leaders on national, state, and local advisory committees is accelerating.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS

The housing situation among Indians has been deplorable and has been a hinderance to social development. Tribal leadership, in order to improve family living, has provided a recent important breakthrough. The Pine Ridge Sioux were the forerunners of what is now a national program under the Housing Assistance Administration. Until four years ago no such aid existed for reservation Indians. The legal determination that permitted PHA to recognize tribal housing authorities now permits construction and operation of low-rent housing projects on Indian reservations. The Pine Ridge project, the first on any reservation, now has 150 units including the Felix Cohen Home for the Elderly. Since that time 11 tribal councils in the Aberdeen Area have established housing authorities and initial projects have been either planned, completed, or are under construction. One tribe is in the process of establishing an authority.

The need for housing on reservations is still far from alleviated. Since low-rent housing will meet the needs of only the upper income levels on our reservations, other means must be found to meet these needs. The tribes are taking advantage of a Housing Assistance Administration program called Mutual Help. We call it "sweat equity." Under this plan, the individual contributes land and labor. His contribution amounts to about 20% of the cost, his rental payments are smaller, and his pay out time is shorter. The first Aberdeen Area Mutual Help Housing Project is now under way at Rosebud. Fort Berthold will soon begin and other tribes are in the planning stages. The Division of Indian Health, Public Health Service through its sanitation division, takes care of the water and sewage needs.

A third housing program, a pilot one, is now being carried out by the Rosebud Tribe. There are 375 adequate shelter houses under a 1.7 million dollar program being built as a result of coordinated planning and participation. Here, the Tribe has involved the Office of Economic Opportunity, Housing Assistance Administration, Public Health Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This program, as well as the other housing programs I have spoken about, not only provides housing but also training and employment opportunity. Manpower Development Training Administration or MDTA training is used in a number of projects.

A fourth housing program is the Bureau's limited Home Improvement Program used for those who cannot help themselves nor have funds and assets to do so. Existing houses are repaired if possible, and if not, new houses are built. Again, PHS provides the water and sanitation facilities.

Housing programmed, under construction, or completed under the housing programs I have mentioned is now 1,772 units. But even with these houses under construction and those provided under rehabilitation programs by the efforts of individuals through FHA and other assistance, we still estimate that there are 4,100 houses needing replacement and 1,500 needing repair on reservations in the Aberdeen Area. The need is further accentuated by a high birthrate (44.8/1000 compared to all races in the United States of 21/1000), and the fact that many people have been returning to the reservations, some to take advantage of the new opportunities being developed. Pine Ridge alone had an increase of about 25%, 3,000 people, in the last four years.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

There is also considerable development and activity in the field of reservation resources. More and more of the reservation Indian land resources are being utilized by Indian people. At Cheyenne River over 90% of the trust land is used by Indian cattle and farm operators. Several reservations now have over 60% Indian usage. The total rangeland acreage is 5½-million acres of which 4½-million are in range units. Of this amount, Indian operators use 2-3/4 million acres with approximately 103,000 head of cattle. Because it takes from 25 to 35 acres to graze one cow yearlong, the unitization of the land into range units is necessary in order that it be used in economic units. Very seldom does a person own enough land to care for an economic unit and additional land comes from the use of tribal or other Indian and government owned land. Economic return to the landowner is on the increase. This year, five-year range unit permits at Rosebud allocated to Indian operators brought a rental of \$19.20 per animal unit yearlong. Many advertised units brought higher prices. We have no reservations where the rate is below \$16.00 for allotted land. I do not want to leave the impression, however, that everything is sunny. Leasing is a serious problem. The interests of the cattle operator and the landowner conflict. Many times we have the conflicting interests of Indian and non-Indian. Since 25,000 allotments have gone out of Indian ownership, we have extensive checkerboarded situations, that is, fee land intermingled with trust land. In the three states, there are over 25,000 individual allotments in Indian ownership and these have over 200,000 owner interests. This heirship situation poses problems in land use and management.

Extensive conservation practices are utilized to improve land resource. Much of this is in cooperation with the various Soil Conservation Districts through 24 formal cooperative agreements which have been made in the Aberdeen Area. Stockwater dams and terraces are constructed. Farm plans that support agricultural leases provide for rotation of crops, planting of legumes and other conservation practices. There is active control of noxious weeds. Range stocking rates are carefully determined and there is adjustment upward or downward depending on the condition of the range and annual availability of grass. Soil and range inventories have been made and mapped for most of the Aberdeen Area. Extensive use is made of appraisal staff as a land resource management tool.

Credit is very essential and we estimate there were 12,805 loans last calendar year totalling over \$15,250,000 in the Aberdeen Area. There were 3,838 of these, totalling \$8,863,000 from commercial lenders and 635 totalling \$2,750,000 from government lenders.

RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

The development of recreation areas and the promotion of tourism are receiving increased emphasis by Indian tribes. A number of Aberdeen Area tribes have been working with the National Park Service, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, and the Corps of Engineers in planning and developing recreational areas.

It appears that tribal groups will now be able to participate under the Land and Water Conservation Program as eligible governmental units working with the states. The tribes are now actively involved in Bureau of Outdoor Recreation studies, particularly the Yankton to Fort Benton Study.

Indian tribes know that recreation is the coming BIG THING. They know they have something unique to offer. Several of the reservations border the Missouri Reservoirs. Added to this is the national interest in Indians. These form the ingredients for a dramatic potential development in the field of recreation and tourism in the years to come.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commissioner Bennett recently said, "Indian leadership is developing a real concern for enlarging employment opportunities for Indians. This is an encouraging indication of the interest and foresight of

tribal leaders. It is also an absolute necessity as a basic support for programs designed to attract industries to reservation areas. While much of the demand will be for skilled workers, we know that many untrained Indians, willing to work, quickly learn the skills necessary for entry jobs in industry and can prepare as they work for advancement to higher paying skilled employment."

The greatest overall need on the reservations in the Aberdeen Area is job opportunity. Some of this need must be met by the establishment of industries in Indian country. While we have had some success, we still have a long, long way to go to solve chronic extensive joblessness.

The atrracting of industry to Indian country must be an all out effort using the capabilities of the tribes, state agencies, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. South Dakota Industrial Development and Expansion Agency and the North Dakota Economic Development Agency are aggressively involved in bringing industrial plants to the Dakota country. They sweep off the welcome mat for incoming industries. That mat spreads into many parts of Indian country. While the present cooperative effort is excellent, I am sure you agree with me that this must be intensified. We need to find new and additional ways to implement it. Our cooperative and partnership response to industrial development in Indian country will help to make the Dakotas and Nebraska.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs works with tribes and states through its Industrial Development Program. Technical assistance is provided. Assistance is given in finding ways to finance enterprises. On-the-job training financed by the Bureau is also available while the worker learns the necessary skill for his job.

The impact of industrial development on the community and the individual is tremendous. Hope is born and attitudes change. Family stability is strengthened. Health conditions are improved and school attendance becomes more regular. Higher living standards, including housing, result. Having employment gives one something to do and a different outlook on life. Having no work is demoralizing!

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As you know, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has important responsibilities in providing services to reservation areas. Some of our services are special services to assist Indian people and others must be provided when it is not possible for the usual source to provide them. About

half of the Indian children in this Area attend Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and the other half attend public and mission schools. There were 7,129 North and South Dakota Indian children who attended BIA elementary and high schools last year. Approximately 320 were in college and 233 received \$196,838 in BIA scholarship assistance. Many attended other post high school training institutions. In a number of situations, non-Indian children who would normally attend public schools attend BIA schools under cooperative agreements with the public schools who contribute their share of the financial assistance. Thus these schools are now amalgamated schools. This is a new approach in which Indian children enjoy concern of fellow citizens. The BIA is now working with the Office of Education to bring the benefits of the Elementary-Secondary Education Act to Indian children. We also work closely with the State Departments of Public Instruction and last year provided \$890,000 in Johnson-O'Malley funds to assist public schools in educating Indian children from reservation areas since property taxes are not levied on Indian trust land. Some of this money was used also for special programs. These schools also receive some funds from the U. S. Office of Education under P. L. 874 which provides funds to public schools because of federally impacted areas. We hope to work with the states so that vocational training will be available to Indian children in state schools under the Vocational Education Act. We work closely with state colleges. On an increasing basis. Indian people are being involved in school planning and operations through education committees, advisory school boards, PTA's, advisory committees, etc. There is an increased effort by the BIA in the direction of quality education, research, pilot projects, and working with and utilizing the involvement of tribes, colleges, and State Departments of Education. The importance of education in overcoming the problems of the disadvantaged cannot be overemphasized.

We recognize, too, that there are still many deficiencies to be overcome. The dropout rate is still far too high. The level of education for the Indian population lags behind the national average. The quality of education for all Indian school children in whatever school they attend must be improved and give recognition to their cultural background and the fact that English is a second language for them. As to the future of Indian Education, it lies with the public school systems. Transfer from the Bureau of Indian Affairs is gradually taking place as mutual readiness and other factors make it possible.

Indian people on reservation areas are eligible for and do participate in the State Public Assistance Programs; however, the BIA carries the

poor relief or the General Assistance Program as we know it. Assistance is based on need. The BIA also enters into contracts with State Welfare Departments for foster home care and also with several missions for group care.

The BIA also offers a large scale Employment Assistance Program. This program is voluntary and designed for those who wish a job or training opportunity away from the reservation, usually in a larger city. It also offers an opportunity for vocational training within the Dakotas and Nebraska areas with subsequent placement in jobs. Subsistence, tuition, and other needs are met by the program. We hope soon to expand this program to provide more service in areas nearer the reservations for those who wish and who prefer not to go to the large cities. From 1952 through Fiscal Year 1966, 4,727 units were serviced by the Direct Employment Program and 2,552 units by the Adult Vocational Training Program in the Aberdeen Area. These 7,279 units included 17,785 people. In addition, 3,347 people were served by the on-the-job training program. Extensive use is made of other training programs such as the former Area Redevelopment Act and the Manpower Development Training Act.

Law and Order operations in the Dakotas, except for Cheyenne River, are financed by the BIA. This includes enforcement and payment of most of the tribal court costs. The cost of this program is over \$800,000 a year. The Nebraska reservations are under state jurisdiction.

Health and sanitation programs are the responsibility of the Division of Indian Health, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. These programs include hospitals, outpatient clinics, contract patient care, preventive health, dental and mental health, primarily for reservation residents.

For the most part, we have talked about what has taken place and is taking place. We can now ask - in working with Indian people, what is the thrust of the Bureau of Indian Affairs policy and what is its philosophy for the future? Secretary Udall and Commissioner Bennett have indicated that:

The Bureau of Indian Affairs should no longer serve as a go-between for tribes when they are dealing directly with other federal, state, and local agencies. Tribes should have the opportunity to receive the services and resources of all agencies the same as the non-Indian community. Rather than being the only agency that works with Indian

people, the Bureau of Indian Affairs should be one of many agencies that works with tribes. Its primary role is to give technical assistance and guidance and coordination.

- 2. Indian people as individuals and tribal groups should have the opportunity of making more of their own decisions.
- 3. Indian leadership must be involved in all of the Bureau of Indian Affairs programs to the fullest extent possible and the same should be true of other programs that concern them.
- 4. Indian people should be given the opportunity to choose where they want to live, be it on the reservation area, near the reservation area, or away from it and the programs should be aligned to permit this freedom of choice to take place.
- 5. A prerequisite for progress is community development and tribal and individual member involvement. Local community people need the opportunity to plan programs and have a part in carrying them out.

To further this effort of a new look to meet changing times, the Secretary of the Interior a year ago named Robert L. Bennett, an Oneida Indian and a career employee of 29 years, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He is the first Indian to be so honored for over a hundred years. There has been also reorganization in the Bureau. A new team and new faces consisting of the Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners, have been brought aboard to assist Mr. Bennett.

Last April, Secretary Udall told a top level group at Santa Fe, New Mexico, that he felt a new legislative foundation based on the times we now live in is needed. New legislation is necessary to carry out these new philosophies. Since that time meetings have been held by the Commissioner with the many Indian tribes across the country and others, seeking their suggestions for legislative changes. The legislation as it is now contemplated seeks to:

Enable tribes and groups of individual Indians to organize one or more corporations with charters issued by the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of engaging in any type of business or quasi-municipal enterprises;

Enable Indian tribes to assume increasingly greater responsibility for the management of their properties, and to make increasing adjustments in the responsibility of the Federal Government;

Create new programs of loan guarantees and insurance for loans made by commercial lending institutions to Indian citizens:

Provide that income from tribal operations will be exempt from the Federal income tax:

Provide alternative approaches to resolve or alleviate the long-standing and complex heirship land problem;

Permit a tribe to adopt a plan whereby members may relinquish their membership for an amount agreed upon between tribe and the individual member; and

Make an Indian tribe eligible to participate in projects under the Water Shed Protection and Flood Prevention Act under the same conditions that apply to a subdivision of a state.

CONCLUSION

Indians are not totally a federal responsibility. States and local communities have an obligation to this group of citizens as well as to other citizens. Participation is a two-way thing. Above all they are not a "responsibility" as we so often term them. They are people, not objects. They are people in transition. Continued Indian development in the Dakotas and Nebraska will be facilitated by our working together - Indians and non-Indians, federal, state, and local agencies.