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BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

MISSOURI RIVER BASIN INVESTIGATIONS

PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT

The Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe
Belcourt, North Dakota

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PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT

The Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe
Belcourt, North Dakota

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: This program and policy statement has drawn on earlier studies and reports, among which are the Project Plan for Land Acquisition, A. L. Hook, 1938; TC-BIA Reconnaissance Survey, May, 1939; the Outline of Reservation Program, March 1944; Problems of Turtle Mountain Chippewa Indians and Some Suggestions with Respect to their Solution, Dover P. Trent, 1944; Basic Problems and Suggested Remedies, H. E. Bruce, September 1948; and Agency records of the Land, Education, Extension and Welfare Departments. Principal phases and aims of the program were advanced by local Indian members of the tribe and Advisory Committee members at a series of reservation meetings in November, 1949. Numerous conferences of Indians, Agency staff members and friends of the Indians helped to develop the methods proposed for carrying out the program. Special mention should be made of contributions by John Hart, Executive Secretary of the North Dakota Indian Commission, Garmann Jorgensen, Executive Secretary of the Rolette County Welfare Department, Father Hildebrand of St. Ann's Mission, Mrs. Luba Johnson, Superintendent of Schools for Rolette County, Carl Frehling, State Director, North Dakota Employment Service, and C. H. Beitzel, Superintendent, Turtle Mountain Agency.

Finally, to representatives of the Indian Bureau's regional office at Billings, Montana, fell the task of putting the Program and Policy Statement into its present form. To the extent of their contribution this report represents a part of the Department of the Interior's program for development of the Missouri River Basin.

I. Summary

Established in 1884, the Turtle Mountain Reservation originally comprised two townships in north-central North Dakota. When the reservation was allotted under the Act of April 1904, it was found that the original reservation would provide allotments for only about 20 percent of the Indians. The others were allotted on scattered tracts of public domain lands in western North Dakota and South Dakota and in northern Montana. Through sale and issuance of fee patents these allotments have been reduced in number from 2,691 to 876, and in area from nearly 400,000 acres to about 137,000 acres. None of these public domain allotments is larger than 160 acres and many of them have been fractionated through inheritance. Seventy percent of the land is fit only for grazing purposes. With few exceptions, these allotments are not operated by their owners, but are leased to white farmers and ranchers by the Indian Agency nearest to which they are located. About 4,355 acres of these lands are within the Missouri-Souris and Lower Marias irrigation units of the Bureau of Reclamation. This program recommends (1) legislation facilitating the participation of Indian lands in these irrigation projects, and (2) the sale or patenting of the public domain allotments on request of the allottees or their heirs.

About one-third of the original reservation had passed to white ownership, when, in 1940, the Government undertook to buy fee patent land on the reservation and within a few miles of it for the use and benefit of the tribe. As a result of this land acquisition program the trust lands in the reservation area now comprise 71,272 acres. The "reservation area" is defined as the original two townships, the nearby purchased lands and a few public domain allotments in Rolette County. In this area, within a radius of 20 miles from the agency headquarters at Belcourt, live 6,000 of the 8,900 enrolled members of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe. The remaining 2,900 tribal members are widely scattered, though a majority of them live in 10 cities and towns in western North Dakota and in northeastern Montana. The 1,100 families living in the reservation area are poorly housed, and overcrowding with its attendant evils is common. Net cash income of resident families in 1946 was estimated at \$750, with 60 percent of the 1,100 families receiving less than that amount.

As to means of livelihood the population falls into three main groups. Three hundred twenty-two families live on farms, and while they own about 2,700 head of cattle, they have only 11,600 acres of hay and crop land. The remainder of the 72,000 acres is a steeply rolling, brush and tree covered area which is dotted with lakes, but furnishes, at best, only poor summer pasture for the cattle. Average gross cash income from farming for these 322 families in 1948 was \$500. Another group of 325 families subsists very largely on Social Security benefit payments. One-half of the remaining 450 families live in five

the
towns on or near the reservation, and/others live in the adjoining country. These 450 families and a large percentage of the farm families leave the reservation each spring for seasonal agricultural, railroad or other labor off the reservation. Favored jobs are sorting and cutting seed potatoes in the spring, picking potatoes in the fall, and seasonal sugar beet labor, all in the Red River Valley of North Dakota. Whole families migrate to the potato country and women and children help with the work.

Not only is the reservation land poor from an agricultural standpoint, but there is far too little of it for all of these 6,000 people to make even a part of their living from it. Moreover, the population is increasing. The area has been aptly called a "rural slum". Attention of State and Rolette County officials was called to the situation forcibly during the severe winter of 1947-48 when, in addition to some 300 families receiving Social Security benefits, there was a peak load of 669 families, many with able-bodied employable heads, receiving direct relief.

Long-range aims of the present program are the permanent relocation off the reservation of surplus population, the eventual termination of Federal supervision and control of Indians and their property, and the ultimate acceptance of Indians as full citizens by the people of the County, State and Nation.

The program here proposed has both economic and social aspects. On the economic side, the productive land base of the families trying to farm in the reservation area will be increased through purchase, and through clearing and draining of the better land. Farm families will also be helped to improve the quality of their cattle and the quality and quantity of their winter feed supplies. Farm buildings will be repaired and improved. The revolving credit fund will be materially increased to provide loans for land purchases by individuals, small business and education as well as for agricultural purposes. A dairy bull pool will be established.

The economic side of the program includes, not only making optimum use of reservation resources, but moving the surplus population to full-time, off-reservation jobs. For many adults past 45 years of age and with no special skills there is little in the future except continued seasonal labor off the reservation, supplemented with general relief when needed. For some of these older people and for the younger adults a three-point program is proposed. This program includes (1) registration, listing of skills, and screening of applicants for jobs, (2) finding jobs for workers who are qualified, and (3) follow-up assistance by trained, competent field workers. While becoming established in jobs off the reservation, Indian families face many problems of housing, health and social adjustments. Crises develop and there is need for a type of assistance which the Indian

Bureau heretofore has not rendered. It is proposed that the Bureau explore this field, and make Turtle Mountain a principal seat of its effort. There is need for the Indian Bureau also to make a determined effort to establish local industries and home crafts to add to the income of the people.

The thesis for the social side of this program is that any program which looks toward the termination of Federal supervision and controls and for integrating the Indian people with the rest of the population must be based on the education of the children and young people for life CFF the reservation. To this end the Belcourt Community School should be maintained over the next 20 years or so and increased emphasis in it should be placed on vocational training. A dormitory should be built and operated in conjunction with the Community School. It should be used primarily for high school students and for younger children whose parents are away from the reservation for parts of the school year. Educational loans, grants and scholarships should be made to students in vocational and professional schools. Only as the young people fit themselves for permanent residence off the reservation will it be possible to solve the problems of overcrowding and poverty which exist on the reservation today.

On the social side as well, the maintenance and expansion of the road system in the reservation area, and the continued operation of the reservation Day schools, hospital, and health and welfare activities are essential to the program.

In carrying out this program the fullest possible help and co-operation of State, County, local and other Federal agencies will be solicited. No time limit is set for completing all phases of the program, though the 16 years necessary for children to go through the grades, high school, and college should see the pressure of population on land resources, federal appropriations and relief rolls materially reduced and a definite trend toward further reduction established.

It is estimated that the economic phase of the program will cost \$655,000. This estimate includes \$100,000 for land purchase, \$190,000 for surveys and land clearing and draining; \$315,000 for an increase in the revolving credit fund, and \$50,000 for repair of farm improvements. It is estimated that \$172,500 will be required during the first year of the program (FY/51) and the remaining \$482,500 over a period of from 2 to 10 years, as determined by annual budget estimates. It is noted that \$315,000, more than half of the total amount, is reimbursable and revolving, and that \$340,000 is for land and for improvements on land already owned. For the initial year of the placement and guidance program the cost is estimated at \$52,300 with \$23,300 as an annual charge for salaries and travel expenses of

personnel. The cottage type dormitory for 100 pupils will cost about \$425,770 when fully equipped. The annual cost of operating the dormitory over and above the cost of day school facilities will amount to \$43,100 annually. The initial cost of the program, presumably FY/51, will be \$660,570. Operating costs for the next nine years amount to \$1,146,400, or an aggregate cost of \$1,806,970 for the first 10 years. To continue operating the dormitory and making educational grants for another 10 years will add \$631,000 to the cost, and make the grand total of program costs for 20 years, \$2,437,970.

II. Economic Program

1. The reservation area

Indian trust lands in the reservation area comprise 71,272 acres, of which 35,036 acres are tribal lands acquired through a federally-financed land acquisition program in the early 1940's. The remaining 36,236 acres are trust allotments, both on the reservation and in adjoining townships in Rolette County.

The topography of the reservation area is moderately too strongly rolling. The cover is mostly brush and poplar, with scattered groves of oak, ash, elm and willow. There are many small lakes and natural meadows throughout the area. The climate is that of the extreme Northern Great Plains, with hot summers and cold winters. The average annual rainfall at nearby Dunseith is 15.57 inches and the growing season averages 116 days. Soils are generally dark brown or black loam, with frequent variations of gravelly loam phases. Peat bogs are found in the meadows and along lake shores. Gravel pockets and rocky areas are not uncommon. Hay and the small grains are the principal crops. The area is badly infested with quack grass.

There are 322 Indian families living on the trust lands of the reservation area who make at least part of their living by farming. These families fall into three groups and are treated separately in the following paragraphs.

One hundred twenty-eight families live on tribal farms bought during the land acquisition program. They lease these farms from the tribe for an annual fee equal to approximately 3 percent of their appraised value. These farms comprise 31,000 acres, or 90 percent of the tribal land, and average 242 acres in size. All but nine of these 128 families own some cattle, most of them being grades of the dairy Shorthorn breed. These 119 herds average 11.4 head, and 49 of them include 12 or more cows and heifers of breeding age.

Another group of 84 families leases 10,675 acres of allotted land, much of which is in heirship status. These leaseholds average 127 acres. A few of these families live on the land which they lease, but most of them live on their own or family land nearby. They use the leased land for farming, hay or pasture purposes. Forty-six of these families own an average of 10 dairy cows.

In addition to the above groups who lease tribal or allotted lands, another 110 farm families occupy their own allotments or inherited or patented lands in the area. They own an aggregate of 850 dairy cows or heifers,^{1/} but information is lacking as to the size of their operating units.

These 322 family heads are part-time farmers. Their average gross cash income from agricultural sources in 1948 was \$500, though for many it was much less than that amount. Many of these families leave their homes each year for seasonal agricultural labor elsewhere in the State, though they neglect their farm enterprises in doing so. The logical and desirable means for these families to improve their incomes is through off-farm labor in the vicinity of their homes. Since opportunities for such employment are almost wholly lacking it is recommended that they enlarge their farming operations through increasing the effective size of their land base, and through improving the quality and production of their dairy cattle. Only a few of these farmers may attain complete self-sufficiency, but the others will increase their income from agriculture and thereby lessen their need for off-farm labor and relief. Specific recommendations follow:

(1) As much of the 9,046 acres of patented land remaining on the original reservation should be acquired as can be bought at a reasonable price, and added to the smaller of the tribal rental properties.

(2) Lands suitable for clearing and draining should be so improved. Soil, topographic and cover surveys should be made to determine what areas warrant such improvement. This land improvement program should be carried out in conjunction with the Rolette County Agricultural Conservation Association. Officers of the association estimate that 10 percent of the Indian lands are of suitable soil, slope and cover to warrant clearing, and that clearing costs will approximate \$25 per acre. The Soil Conservation Service will pay up to \$7.50 per acre of these costs to the extent of its available funds. This clearing program should continue over a 10 year period. It should add about 7,000 acres of cropland to that now available and raise the average improved acreage per farm from 36 acres to nearly 60 acres.

^{1/} Cattle numbers in this and the above paragraphs are, with few exceptions, those of cows and 2-year old heifers tested for Bang's disease by State Veterinarians in the summer of 1949.

(3) Buildings, wells and fences on the tribal farms bought in 1941-42 have deteriorated and are badly in need of repair. Two-thirds of the rental revenue from these farms is used to purchase additional land. The Indian tenant hesitates to make repairs lest his rent be raised or the farm rented to someone else. First, the improvements should be put in good repair and serviceable condition. Second, legislation should be passed by Congress to permit the tribe to sell these farms to tribal members with the provision that the proceeds be re-invested in other land.

(4) While dairying is quite generally practiced, the herds are small, the cows are low producers carrying some beef blood, the milking season is short (about five months), and the winter feed is largely slough grass hay of low nutritive content. The tribe should sponsor a bull pool with good dairy-type bulls and favor loans for the purchase of alfalfa, crested wheat and brome grass seed.

(5) Early in 1944 the tribe borrowed \$30,000 of Revolving Credit funds and began making loans to individual members of the tribe. Additional advances by the Government have brought the fund to \$83,000, and, as of June 30, 1949, the outstanding balance was \$52,609 in loans to 90 borrowers. The tribe has also financed a general store at Belcourt. The revolving credit fund of the tribe should be materially increased to provide loans for land purchase by individual Indians, for financing agricultural and small business enterprises, and for making educational loans.

(6) Another type of credit extended by the tribe is that of lending cows and heifers on a repayment-in-kind basis, whereby the borrower repays 11 heifers over a period of years for each 10 head received. The tribe has contracts with 150 members covering the repayment of 818 head of such cattle. A small increase should be made in the repayment cattle herd.

2. Public domain allotments

When the reservation was allotted under the Act of April, 1904, it was found that the original reservation of two townships would provide allotments for only relatively few of the Indians. The others were allotted on unappropriated public domain in western North and South Dakota and in Montana. Some Indian families moved to these public domain allotments and established homes on them. The great majority, however, could not do so for lack of funds with which to build homes, and purchase the implements, stock, etc., required for cultivation of the land. Moreover, the units were too small to provide adequate family support. These scattered allotments, not used by their owners, were administered by the Turtle Mountain Agency until 1932, when they were transferred for administrative purposes to the Indian Agency nearest to which they are located. These agencies advertise the lands for lease, execute leases, collect the rentals and

transfer the money to the Turtle Mountain Agency for distribution to the allottees or their heirs. The sale and patenting of these lands has been a more or less continuous process since the allotments were first made, the trust acreage having been reduced from nearly 400,000 acres to about 137,000 acres by 1949. Of the 1,130 allotments transferred to other jurisdictions for administration in 1932 about one-fifth have been sold or patented since that date. Many owners of the remaining allotments favor selling them.

The following table shows the number of allotments transferred to these outlying agencies in 1932, the number of allotments and the acreage still held in trust by them, the use to which these lands were put in 1948, and the estimated rental from such of the lands as were leased in that year.

Jurisdiction	Allotments transferred to jurisdiction in 1932	Allotments remaining in trust status, 1949	Acres in trust 1949	Used in 1948			Acres used by Indian owners	Acres idle 1948	Estimated Rentals in 1948
				Acres leased for grazing	Acres leased for farming	Acres			
Fort Peck	561	348	53,312	28,589	12,641	5,424	7,153	\$22,455	
Fort Belknap	407	386	59,112	47,293	3,525	640	7,654	7,006	
Rocky Boy's	114	106	16,300	15,124	1,516	160	0	3,336	
Fort Berthold	30	21	6,080	365	275	---	5,440*	76	
Cheyenne River	8	5	800	480	---	0	320	80	
Tongue River	7	7	600	0	0	0	600	---	
Fort Totten	3	3	---	0	0	---	---	---	
Total	1,130	876	137,204	91,851	17,957	6,224	21,172	\$32,953	

*. May have been used partly by Indian owners.

The 91,851 acres of grazing land shown above as leased represents 70 percent of the Turtle Mountain land administered by the outlying agencies. Permit fees return 8¢ an acre for the grazing land under Fort Belknap, and 12½¢ an acre for that administered by Fort Peck. Crop land currently rents for one-fourth crop share or \$1.50 an acre. Crop share leases are on the increase, and on many of them the returns are paid direct to the land owner. Income from leases and permits collected by five supervising agencies and transferred to Turtle Mountain Agency for distribution in 1946 amounted to \$52,339, as shown in the following table:

<u>Transferred from</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Fort Peck Agency	\$42,391
Fort Belknap Agency	6,029
Rocky Boy's Agency	3,367
Fort Berthold Agency	395
Cheyenne Agency	<u>157</u>
Total	\$52,339

Within the taking line of the proposed Medicine Lake Reservoir of the Bureau of Reclamation's Missouri-Souris Unit are 5,990 acres of Turtle Mountain allotments. This land will be acquired by the Bureau of Reclamation. Under this irrigation project there are 1,655 acres of Turtle Mountain allotments that will become susceptible to irrigation.^{2/}

Within the Bureau of Reclamation's Lower Marias Unit are 60 Turtle Mountain allotments totaling 9,597 acres, of which 2,700 acres have been tentatively classed as irrigable. In addition, there are 47 allotments totaling 7,478 acres which, while located outside the Unit, are near enough to it to be indirectly affected by the project.^{3/}

None of these public domain allotments is larger than 160 acres, and many of them have been fractionated through inheritance. The land is generally of poor quality, 70 percent of it being classed as grazing land. The allotments are located in a general area where 640-acre homesteads were too small to enable white farmers to make a living on them. The best use for most of these lands is that they be incorporated into the operating units of nearby white farmers or ranchers. This program recommends that general or special legislation be passed by Congress to facilitate the inclusion of irrigable Indian lands in the Lower Marias and Missouri-Souris irrigation projects. It further recommends that the public domain allotments be sold or patented on request of the allottees or their heirs. The tribal Advisory Committee

2/ Proposed Irrigation Project, Fort Peck Reservation, by Charles L. Arrivee, Engineer, May 20, 1946.

3/ Indian Land Ownership Within Lower Marias Unit, Carl L. Pearson, January 13, 1948, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Region No. 2, Billings, Montana.

could not properly service agricultural loans to Indians operating several hundred miles from the Agency, and it is probable that the Committee would refuse to make such loans. Those few Indians who may in the future wish to cultivate their public domain allotments should expect to look to local credit agencies for financial assistance rather than to the distant Indian Agency at Belcourt.

3. Placement and guidance

An earlier section of this program deals with Indian lands of the reservation area and with the use which is now being made of them. Proposals have been made which point toward a more intensive and effective use of these lands. These proposals, if carried out, should increase the agricultural income of 322 families and make self-sufficiency possible for some of them. Reference also has been made to the 325 families receiving Social Security benefits. It remains to consider the 450 families living in the Turtle Mountain area who have no income from agriculture and who do not qualify for categorical assistance under the Social Security program.

One-half of these 450 families live in the towns of Belcourt, Dunseith, St. John, Rolla and Rolette, and the others live in homes on the reservation. This group of 450 families, plus many of those who live on farms, leave their homes each year for seasonal agricultural, railroad or other labor off the reservation. Wage income from agriculture is derived from spring plowing and seeding of small grain in and around Rolette County, the hay and grain harvests in the same area, and farm work connected with the potato and sugar beet crops in the Red River Valley. Most of the families return to the reservation in the fall where they endeavor by thrift and economy to make the earnings of four or five months of summer work cover the needs of an entire year. It is little wonder that so many of them need relief assistance before the winter is over.

The latest estimate of net income of resident Turtle Mountain Indian families was made in 1946, when the superintendent reported the average family income as \$750, with 60 percent of the families receiving less than that amount. Income from several sources, such as the sale of stove wood and cranberry bark, and Servicemens' dependents allotments, is now much less than it was in 1946. The only item to increase is that of welfare and relief payments.

Roughly half (150) of the farm families should be added to this group, making about 600 families that are actually surplus to the area. The major goal of the program is that many of these people should leave the reservation permanently for full-time employment in other parts of the State.

For many adults past 45 years of age with no special skills, there is little in the future except continued seasonal labor off the reservation, supplemented with general relief based on need. It is true that some families in this category will establish themselves permanently off the reservation. They should be assisted in doing so, but the hope should not be held out that large numbers of these older people will be able to make an adjustment of this magnitude.

For younger adults the program falls into three distinct parts.

a. Local registration, listing of skills and screening of applicants for jobs will require the full-time services of one worker. It may be that the State Employment Service will establish a local office at Belcourt to perform this function.

b. Finding jobs for workers who are qualified for them is the second step in the program for this group. Here the State Employment Service should be of great assistance to the Agency and Area Office personnel.

c. While becoming established in jobs off the reservation, Indian families face many problems of housing, health and social adjustment. Crises develop, and in far too many cases the family moves back to the reservation in order to obtain a little relief or medical assistance that might have been extended at the place of employment. An arrangement whereby the Belcourt Agency could reimburse local welfare agencies for such services should be made a part of the program. Follow-up assistance and advice by trained, competent field workers is indicated. Two such workers should be employed the first year of the program. As occasion demands, these workers should assist Indian families already living away from the reservation, as well as those just becoming established in full-time jobs. For the Indian Bureau this field is a more or less uncharted one, but the need for experience in it is great. There should be no delay in starting this phase of the program.

4. Local industries and home crafts

It has been said earlier that the logical and desirable means for part-time farmers to improve their income is through off-farm labor in the vicinity of their homes. To this statement might have been added one regarding small industries and home crafts.

Many Turtle Mountain Indians engage in trapping, particularly for mink and muskrat, during the short open season. Some years ago there was a considerable trade in cordwood and in cranberry bark, but the supply of these items is now limited. Individual or tribal enterprises such as a cement block factory can be financed by the revolving credit fund. Such enterprises should be encouraged where success seems probable.

It is in the field of home crafts and craft centers that there are possibilities for many Turtle Mountain Indian families to earn supplemental income. This field has been explored by the Indian Bureau during recent years, but to no great extent and with only limited success. The Indian Bureau should make another serious attempt to establish several lines of home craft or craft center work among the Turtle Mountain Indians. Among the lines suggested are tanning, leather and bead work, wood crafts, spinning, weaving, knitting and crocheting, basket making, and clay work. Any income that can be earned by idle hands in idle time will help to solve the problems of poverty and unemployment. This subject is discussed further in the appendix, where a report by Dover P. Trent is quoted at length.

III. Social Program

1. Education

Tribal rolls show that there are 2,246 Turtle Mountain Indian children between the ages of 5 and 18 inclusive. Enrollment as of January 11, 1950, is reported as follows:

Belcourt Community School	424
Four reservation day schools	288
St. Ann's Mission, Belcourt	303
Non-reservation federal schools	117
Non-reservation mission schools	211
Public schools near reservation	145
	<hr/>
	1,488

The Agency has but scanty records of school attendance for children whose parents live away from the reservation.

Many children accompany their parents on the annual exodus from the reservation in quest of employment. They customarily lose a few weeks or months of school each spring and fall and become retarded for their ages. The result of this retardation is that they drop out of school before reaching, or at least before completing, high school.

Five Government schools are maintained by the Turtle Mountain Agency. The Belcourt Community School has an enrollment of 424 of whom about one-fifth are in high school. The Dunseith Day School teaches grades one to eight, and the other three Day schools teach grades one to six. All five schools serve a noon lunch to the children and operate school busses. The system employs 28 teachers. Of last year's 15 high school graduates, five are attending college and three are taking nurse's training. Since 1936, 50 students have taken advantage of an educational loan program.

Any program for Turtle Mountain Indians which looks toward the termination of Federal supervision and controls and their ultimate assimilation with the white population, must be based on the education of the children and young people for life off the reservation. It is, therefore, recommended that the Belcourt Community School be maintained over the next twenty years or so, and that greater emphasis in it be placed on vocational training. The shop work and mechanic arts courses should be expanded and courses in commercial work and agriculture added to those now offered in home economics and arts and crafts. It is recommended that a dormitory be constructed and operated in connection with this school. The dormitory should be primarily for High School students and for younger children whose parents are away from the reservation during part of the school year. Educational loans, grants and scholarships should be made to students in vocational and professional schools. They should be made in large numbers and with some liberality. Continuance of educational aid to individual students should be based on aptitude shown and progress made. As these young people finish their training they will be helped to find jobs through the placement service already outlined. This educational program will be an expensive one, but it is the only program which gives promise of solving the problems of overcrowding and poverty which exist on the reservation today.

2. Welfare, health, roads, law and order

In October, 1949, there were 325 Indian families in the Belcourt area receiving Social Security assistance. Because employment opportunities are virtually nonexistent from late October until the middle of the following April, families of able-bodied, employable Indians also require assistance during part or all of the winter months. During the severe winter and spring of 1947-48 direct relief was extended to 3,385 individuals in 669 family groups at an expense of \$178,958, which included Indian Bureau relief appropriations, public donations, Red Cross disaster relief, and the value of commodities issued. Only as the educational and placement phases of the program result in a net loss of population to the reservation area, and as families become fully self-sufficient through agriculture and home crafts, can hope be held out for a reduction in the relief burden.

A modern 42-bed hospital is maintained at the Agency. The patient load for the year ended October 31, 1949, was 12,045, and the daily average for that period was 33 patients. Some increase in staff is indicated and more emphasis should be placed on public health activities.

The reservation is served by State highways and by a reservation road system designed for administrative, school bus and ambulance use. There is need for additional road construction and for continued maintenance of existing roads. This transportation need will continue as long as the educational and health programs are in effect.

The administration of law and order on the reservation is generally admitted to be inadequate. Major crimes are prosecuted in federal court and minor offences are handled in a tribal or Indian court, which also deals with a majority of the cases involving child desertion and non-support. One Indian policeman is paid from a Congressional appropriation and one Indian judge is paid from fines collected. The attitude of the tribal Advisory Committee in this regard is shown by the following resolution passed at its meeting of January 9, 1950: "That either the State take over the law and order of the reservation and be reimbursed by the Indian Office; or allot sufficient funds to the Agency to set up a good law and order program, build a jail, establish required police positions, and funds to operate the jail, and necessary transportation."

IV. Program Features and Estimated Costs

The program here proposed includes both economic and social features. The productive land base of families trying to farm in the reservation area will be increased through purchase and through clearing and draining of the better land. Farm families also will be helped to improve the quality of their cattle and the quality and quantity of their winter fuel supplies. The small, scattered public domain allotments, except for a few which are potentially irrigable, will be sold or patented at the request of their owners. A major feature of the program is the education of children and young people for full-time employment off the reservation. Facilities will be provided to enable the largest possible number of children to finish the local high school, and increased emphasis in it will be placed on vocational training. This part of the program will be supplemented by liberal loans, grants and scholarships for post-high school vocational and professional schooling. For younger adults and families the field of placement and guidance in full-time off-reservation employment will be explored. The Indian Bureau will make a renewed effort to establish home crafts and local industries. In carrying out this program the fullest possible help and cooperation of State, county, local and other Federal agencies will be solicited. Wherever possible, arrangements will be made whereby the State and its subdivisions will render equal services to Indians and non-Indians. No time limit is set for completing all phases of the program, though the 16 years necessary for children to go through the grades, high school and college should see the pressure of population on land resources, federal appropriations, and relief rolls materially reduced, and a definite trend toward further reduction established. Progress should be reviewed each year, and an annual budget set up to meet the estimated costs.

Program Features and Estimated Costs, Turtle Mountain Program,
January, 1950

Program features	Estimated costs	
	FY/51	FY/52--FY/60 Inclusive
<u>1. Lands of the reservation area</u>		
a. Purchase remaining 9,000 acres of patented land on the original reservation	\$50,000	\$ 50,000
b. Topographic, soil and cover surveys of reservation area	15,000	
c. Clearing and draining an estimated 7,000 acres (10 percent of area) at \$25 an acre	17,500	157,500
d. Increase revolving credit fund for agricultural, land purchase, small business and educational loans	65,000	250,000
e. Increase repayment cattle herd by 150 head	<u>1/</u>	
f. Tribal dairy bull pool of 80 head over 8-year period	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
g. Loans for alfalfa and other tame grass seed	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
h. Provide materials for the repair and improvement of buildings, fences and wells on tribal farms	25,000	25,000
i. Secure legislation to permit sale of tribal lands to individual members of the tribe		
Total	\$172,500	\$482,500
Grand Total		\$655,000

It is estimated that \$172,500 will be required during the first year of the program (FY/51) and the remaining \$482,500 over a period of from 2 to 10 years, as determined in annual budget estimates. It is noted that \$315,000 is reimbursable and revolving and \$340,000 is for land and improvements on land already owned.

2. Public domain allotments

a. Generally the lands should be sold or patented at the request of the owners

1/ Included in 1-d above.

Program features	Estimated costs	
	FY/51	FY/52--FY/60 Inclusive
<p>b. Legislation should be passed to provide for inclusion of these lands in irrigation districts.</p> <p>c. Extension of tribal credit should be limited to the reservation area.</p>		
<p>3. <u>Employment and Guidance</u></p>		
a. One officer at Belcourt to interview applicants, list skills, etc.	4,600	\$23,000
b. Two clerks at \$2,650	5,300	26,500
c. Two field workers at \$4,600	9,200	46,000
d. Three autos at \$1,500	4,500	4,500
e. Travel expense, 2 at \$1800, 1 at \$600	4,200	21,000
f. Office supplies and equipment	500	
g. Two cottages furnished	24,000	
h. Assistance in moving families	2/	2/
Subtotal	52,300	121,000

The estimated costs listed above for the first year of the employment and guidance phase of the program are both recurring and non-recurring in nature. There is little in Indian Bureau experience on which to base these estimates. However, there is need for the Bureau to explore this field and gain experience in it. It is recommended that the Indian Bureau make Turtle Mountain one of its principal centers of effort in this field and underwrite the above program or one similar to it.

<p>4. <u>Education</u></p>		
a. Construction of five dormitory units for 100 pupils	\$407,000	
b. Furniture and equipment	13,770	
c. Miscellaneous items	5,000	
d. Vocational and professional grants and scholarships	10,000	\$155,000
e. Educational loans	3/	3/
f. Dormitory operation, boarding school allowance in excess of day school allowance for 100 pupils at \$43,100		387,900
Subtotal	435,770	542,900
Total	660,570	1,146,400
Grand total	\$1,806,970	

2/ From regular Indian Bureau appropriations.

3/ Roughly one-third of Revolving Credit fund, 1-d above.

Estimated Expenditures for Program by Years

Item	FY/51	FY/52	FY/53	FY/54	FY/55	FY/56	FY/57	FY/58	FY/59	FY/60	Total
Land Acquisition	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000									\$ 100,000
Clearing & draining 7,000 acres	32,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	190,000
Revolving Credit	65,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000					315,000
Repair of tribal buildings, etc.	25,000	25,000									50,000
Employment & Guidance	52,300	23,300	23,300	27,800	23,300	23,300					173,300
Constructing & Equipping dormitory	425,770										425,770
Operating dormitory (costs in excess of day school costs, 100 pupils)		43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	43,100	387,900
Edu. Grants and Scholarships	10,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	165,000
Totals	\$660,570	\$218,900	\$148,900	\$153,400	\$148,900	\$153,900	\$80,600	\$80,600	\$80,600	\$80,600	\$1,806,970

By the end of the tenth year only two items are recurring. \$43,100 for operating the boarding school and \$20,000 annually for scholarships and educational grants. To continue these two services for another 10 years would add \$631,000 to the cost and bring the estimated total cost of the program to \$2,437,970. This figure is in addition to the regular Indian Bureau appropriation for the jurisdiction (which includes Fort Totten) which amounted to \$824,617 in FY/49 and \$755,619 in FY/50. The budget estimate for FY/51 is \$1,045,993. For reference purposes the budgets for FY/49 and FY/50 and the budget estimates for FY/51 for the Turtle Mountain Consolidated Agency (which includes Fort Totten) are shown below. Note particularly the item of \$200,000 for welfare of Indians.

Turtle Mountain Consolidated Agency

Item	Budget FY/49	Budget FY/50	Budget estimate FY/51
Agency salaries and expenses	\$ 36,163	\$ 27,853	\$ 30,420
Management Indian trust property	7,329	7,519	10,554
Education	308,720	328,150	338,000
Health	203,340	216,736	289,281
Extension	4,840	4,240	14,744
Construction buildings & utilities	10,327	9,415	37,100
Maintenance " " "	22,503	23,000	29,000
Roads, Construction	7,065	10,000	28,000
Roads, Maintenance	85,700	75,000	45,000
Welfare of Indians	106,600	31,369	200,000
Law and order	2,030	2,337	3,894
Land acquisition	30,000	20,000	20,000
Total	824,617	755,619	1,045,993

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THE RESERVATION AND ITS PEOPLE ^{1/}

1. Location, date established, area
2. Topography, climate, soil
3. Population and culture
4. Reservation economy and income
5. Land acquisition and rehabilitation
6. Revolving credit and repayment cattle
7. Education, health, roads
8. Welfare and relief

1. Location, date established, area

The Turtle Mountain Reservation is located in the northcentral part of North Dakota, approximately 13 miles from the Canadian border. The reservation consists of two townships, and was established by Executive Order in 1884. The reservation was allotted under the Act of April 21, 1904, but the area, 44,006 acres, was so small that only 326 Indians received land on the reservation. Those who received no allotments on the reservation and those whose allotments were of less than 160 acres, were allotted on scattered tracts of public domain land in western North Dakota, in Montana, and in South Dakota. Allotments to 2,691 members of the band on public domain aggregated 399,818 acres, though by sale and the issuance of fee patents the acreage had been reduced to slightly more than 136,000 acres by 1949.

The original reservation was reduced through alienation to about 27,000 acres. Then in the early 1940's through a federally-financed land acquisition program additional land was bought and put in tribal status. Part of this purchased land was on the original reservation and the remainder was adjacent to or near it.

As of November 1949, there are on the two townships which constitute the original reservation 27,185 acres of trust allotments, 7,778 acres of tribal land and 9,046 acres that have been patented or sold. This patented land is reported to include some of the best land on the reservation. In the general area, principally to the north and west of the original reservation, are 27,258 acres of tribal land and 9,051 acres of public domain allotments. To summarize:

^{1/} Background material assembled by the Indian Bureau's Missouri River Basin Economics Unit, and briefed to form the opening section of this program statement.

Tribal

On reservation	7,778 acres
Off reservation	<u>27,258</u> "
Total	35,036 "

Allotted

On reservation	27,185 acres
Off reservation	<u>9,051</u> "
Total	36,236 "

Trust acres on reservation	34,963 acres
Trust acres off reservation	<u>36,309</u> "
Total	71,272 "

2. Climate, topography, soil

The average annual precipitation at Dunseith for the 40 year ending with 1938 is 15.57 inches. The average frost-free growing period is from May 23 to September 16, or 116 days. The climate is that of the northern Great Plains, with temperatures recorded of minus 49 degrees F. and of 110 F.

The topography, in general, is moderately to strongly rolling. The hills (mountains) are mostly densely covered with small timber and underbrush, the large timber having been removed and used for fuel, fence posts and lumber. The cover is broken in a few places by small lakes and natural meadows which probably are the beds of former lakes. The foothills extend along the southern boundary and a small portion of the reservation extends into the prairie area. The trees are principally poplar, with scattered groves of oak, ash, elm, glacial lakes; the largest being Fish Lake, which has an area of approximately 500 acres.

The surface soils are generally dark brown or black loam, with frequent variations of gravelly loam phases, particularly on the ridges. The sub-soil is heavy loam or clay loam, underlain by gravelly material at 30 inches in depth. Peat or near bog conditions are to be found in the meadows and along the lake shores. Slopes in many places are stony and there are frequent gravel pockets. Although soils resources for farming are rather limited, because much of the land has never been cleared, there are small patches of very good soils which are well adapted to the production of vegetables, small grains and other crops. The soils vary in depth, are high in organic matter, and are generally productive. 2/

2/ Outline of Reservation Program, Turtle Mountain Agency, March 1944.

3. Population and culture

The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians has an enrollment of over 8,900 members of whom, 6,000 live on the reservation or in the immediate vicinity of it, in approximately 1,100 family groups. Population increase has been rapid. In 1892, the tribe numbered less than 1,500 people. By 1913, the population had increased to 2,839. In the 36 years since 1913 the population has trebled to nearly 9,000 individuals. The Indians of the Turtle Mountain Reservation possess a high degree of white blood, much of which is of French extraction. They have lost most of their typical Indian characteristics. Intermarriages and close associations with the white people have resulted in the destruction of the native social customs and tribal controls. Appreciably less than 10 percent of the population are full-blood Indians. All but a very few speak English. The tribe rejected the Indian Reorganization Act, but it is an "Unorganized Tribe" as defined by the Act of July 12, 1943. It has a tribal Advisory Committee of eight members which functions as a governing body between occasional policy-determining general council meetings of the tribal membership.

It is significant that 2,900, or almost one-third of the tribal membership, live away from the reservation area. These people have settled in various localities in North and South Dakota, through all of Montana, and individuals and small groups can be found in several other states. Some of these settlements are in the vicinity of Indian allotments, such as are found at Trenton and Buford in North Dakota, while other settlements are made without regard to the nearness of Chippewa allotments, such as those at Devils Lake, North Dakota, Poplar, Wolf Point, Glasgow, Malta, Harlem, Havre, Helena, and other places in Montana.

The following statements apply to the 1,100 families that maintain a residence on the reservation or in the Belcourt area for at least a part of the year. A large majority of these people are crowded into one-room log houses. Not more than 50 families have homes larger than two rooms. Lacking other places to build, it is not unusual to find as many as five or six one-room houses crowded together on one 40-acre tract of heirship land.

Much of the furniture is home made. There is an acute shortage of household equipment, particularly of beds and bedding. Securing water for domestic use as well as for livestock is a difficult problem. Almost the only wells on the reservation are 25 community wells dug by CCC-ID with relief labor in depression years. Since CCC-ID was discontinued, there has been no money to keep these wells in repair and some of them are not in use. In summer, the Indians depend mostly on lakes and sloughs for water. In winter, they melt snow and cut holes in the ice of the lakes to get their water.^{3/}

^{3/} Basic Problems with Suggested Remedies, Turtle Mt. Reservation, H. E. Bruce, Supt., Turtle Mt. Agency, Belcourt, North Dakota, Sept. 16, 1948.

To get some information regarding size of family and age groupings of resident family heads and single adults a study was made of the families which shared in Red Cross disaster relief during January-March, 1948. This group represents approximately the present winter relief load of the Agency. It includes 623 families and 2,942 individuals, or an average of 4.74 persons per family. Generally, it excludes those receiving Social Security benefits. The age groupings of family heads were as follows:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Family Heads in Group</u>
20-29	139
30-44	262
45-64	188
65 and over	<u>34</u>
Total	623

4. Reservation economy and income

Three hundred twenty-two families live on reservation and nearby trust lands and make some attempt at farming and raising grade dairy cattle. In 1948, these families harvested wild hay on 7,500 acres and raised 4,100 acres of wheat, oats, barley and flax. Sales in that year were \$18,000 for butterfat, \$64,000 for crops and \$78,000 for cattle.^{4/} Average gross agricultural income of these 322 families was \$500. While dairying is quite generally practiced, it must be said that the herds are small, the cows are low producers usually carrying some beef blood, the milking season is short (about five months), and the winter feed is largely slough grass hay of low nutritive content. Cream buying stations are conveniently located in nearby towns, but protein concentrates are prohibitive in price.

Another 325 families are maintaining themselves on Social Security assistance.

One-half of the remaining 450 families live in the towns of Belcourt, Dunseith, St. John, Rolla, and Rolette, and the others in homes on the reservation. Both groups leave their homes for seasonal agricultural, railroad or other labor off the reservation. Most of them return to the reservation area in the fall and are dependent to a greater or lesser extent upon relief assistance during the winter months.

Estimated net income of resident Turtle Mountain Indians in 1946 was reported by the Superintendent as \$850,293, of which \$579,981 was earned and \$270,312 was unearned. This estimate would reflect an average family income of \$750 for the 1,125 resident families, though 675 families received less than that amount. The following tables are quoted from the Superintendent's report:^{5/}

^{4/} Report of Extension Agent, 1948, Turtle Mountain Agency, Belcourt, N. Dak.

^{5/} Superintendent's Annual Statistical Report, 1946, Turtle Mountain Agency, Belcourt, North Dakota.

Estimated net income of Resident Turtle Mountain Indian families by
sources and amounts and as earned and unearned, 1946

Source of Income	Amount	
Posts	\$7,030)	
Cranberry bark	35,500)	
Furs and skins	14,050)	\$159,302
Game	12,050)	
Wood	91,372)	
Arts and crafts		1,320
Agriculture		286,426
Private business		6,000
Indian Service salaries, regular		25,000
Indian Service, salaries, irregular		18,000
Work relief		2,933
Wages, non-Indian employers		<u>75,000</u>
Total earned income		\$ 579,981
Leases and permits		58,500
Servicemens dependent's allotments		60,000
Social Security Assistance		128,247
Indian Service relief		17,618
Land sales		<u>5,947</u>
Total unearned income		<u>270,312</u>
Total individual income		850,293

Distribution of Resident Turtle Mountain Indian Families by Estimated Net
Income, 1946

Total	Number of Families Having Income							
	\$200- \$299	\$300- \$399	\$400- \$499	\$500- \$749	\$750- \$999	\$1,000- \$1,499	\$1,500- \$1,999	\$2,000 & over
1125	150	150	200	175	250	125	50	25

No similar report is available for 1949, but it is known that income from sale of posts, cranberry bark and wood is much less than in 1946. Servicemens dependent's allotments are no longer being received. On the other hand, social security benefits have more than doubled since 1946.

5. Land acquisition and rehabilitation

Under the Act of May 24, 1940, federal funds were appropriated for the purchase of land for the Turtle Mountain Tribe of Indians. During the early 1940's 33,672 acres of deeded land were purchased at a cost of \$204,904 for the land and \$96,581 for the improvements on it. The Advisory Committee administers these lands and diverts two-thirds of the rental revenue from them to the purchase of additional land. The other one-third of the rental goes for administrative expenses and repair of improvements on the tribal farms, though the amount is entirely inadequate for the latter purpose. Lease contracts in effect in November, 1949, call for annual rentals of \$9,342. Since the program was inaugurated 1,464 acres have been acquired by the tribe.

During the period 1935 to 1942 inclusive, rehabilitation grants totaling \$163,000 were made to the tribe. Of this amount \$25,000 was loaned to individuals. It was used principally for the purchase of livestock and farm machinery. A community self-help building was constructed with \$11,000 and the remainder used largely for the construction and repair of houses and out-buildings and for improving domestic and stock water supplies. Agency records show how the money was spent.

	<u>Type of Improvement</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
96	new homes constructed	\$ 51,393
341	homes repaired	15,732
289	out-buildings built or repaired	23,993
59	wells dug or improved	<u>10,094</u>
	Total	\$104,262

The improvements noted above were placed on trust allotments on and near the reservation and on many of the farms bought by the tribe in its land acquisition program.

6. Revolving credit and repayment cattle

Early in 1944 the tribe borrowed \$30,000 of revolving credit funds and began making loans to individual members of the tribe. The fund has grown to \$83,000, and as of June 30, 1949, the outstanding balance was \$52,609 in loans to 90 borrowers. The tribe has also financed a tribal store at Belcourt with a loan of \$30,000. Another type of credit extended

by the tribe is that of lending cows and heifers on a repayment-in-kind basis, whereby the borrower repays 11 heifers over a period of years for each ten head received. The tribe has 150 contracts with members covering the repayment of 818 head of such cattle.

7. Education, health and roads

Tribal rolls show that there are 2,246 Turtle Mountain Indian children between the ages of 5 and 18 inclusive. Enrollment as of January 11, 1950, is reported as follows:

Belcourt Community School	424
Four reservation day schools	288
St. Ann's Mission, Belcourt	303
Non-reservation federal schools	117
Non-reservation mission schools	211
Public schools near reservation	<u>145</u>
	1,488

The Community School teaches grades 1 to 12 inclusive, at Dunseith school, grades 1 to 8, and the other day schools teach the first six grades only. All five schools serve a noon lunch to the children and operate school busses.

The Agency has but scanty records of school attendance for children whose parents live away from the reservation. Many children accompany their parents on the annual exodus from the reservation in quest of employment. They customarily lose a few weeks or months of school each spring and fall and become retarded for their ages. The result of this retardation is that they drop out of school before reaching, or at least before completing, high school.

There were 7 high school graduates from the Community School in 1947, 7 in 1948, and 15 in 1949. Of last year's graduating class, five are attending college and three are taking nurse's training. Since 1936, 50 students have made educational loans aggregating \$10,840 to continue their studies elsewhere.

At the agency is a modern, brick hospital with 42 beds and 10 bassinets. The staff includes two doctors, a field nurse, a superintendent of nurses, 7 staff nurses and 15 other employees. The patient load for the year ended October 31, 1949 was 12,045 and the daily average for that period was 33 patients.

The reservation is bounded roughly on the south, west and north by State Highways Nos. 5, 3, and 43. Within the reservation area is a network of graveled roads designed and used for administrative, school bus and ambulance purposes. The area covered is 19 miles east and west and 8 miles north and south. Eighty-one miles are of high type construction and 34 miles are old CCC truck trails. The entire 115 miles

of road require maintenance by the Agency road department. There is need for further construction to serve the area within which farms were purchased by the tribe in the early 1940's. If the reservation health and educational services are to be maintained and improved the road program must be continued on more than a maintenance basis.

8. Welfare and relief

Employment opportunities being virtually non-existent from late October until the middle of the following April, general assistance to families of able-bodied, employable Indians during at least part of the long winter period is unavoidable.

Old age and blind assistance and aid to dependent children is provided through the Rolette County Welfare Office at Rolla. The case load in October 1949, and the cost of such assistance in that month and for the year ending November 30, 1949 are given in the following table:

Type of Assistance	Families receiving aid in October, 1949	Cost of aid in Oct. 1949	Cost of aid for year ending Nov. 30, 1949
Old Age Assistance	169	\$ 7,728	\$ 99,898
Aid to Needy Blind	13	549	7,384
Aid to Dependent Children	138	13,818	163,862
General Assistance	5 ^{6/}	132	12,624
Total	325	\$22,227	\$283,768

General assistance to families of able-bodied, employable Indians is generally considered and accepted as an Indian Bureau responsibility. During the winter and spring of 1947-48, this type of direct relief was extended to 3,345 individuals in 669 family groups at an expense of \$178,958, which included Indian Bureau relief appropriations, public donations, Red Cross disaster relief, and the value of commodities issued. The staff consists of two welfare workers and a clerk, and the part-time assistance of a representative of the State Employment Service.

The non-resident Indians have become a serious relief problem to the vicinities in which they live. The local officials claim they are wards of the Government and should be taken care of by the Agency,

^{6/} In January 1949 the number was 72.

while the Agency is unable to take care of them due to the fact that funds for this purpose often are lacking. The result is that these people are leading a very precarious existence. They are able to obtain only seasonal employment; they must travel from place to place in search of employment; they are not able to establish permanent homes; in a majority of cases, they must depend on the relief organizations part of the winter months for supplies of food and clothing.^{7/} These statements made by Mr. Hook in 1938 reflect, in a general way, the conditions which prevail today.

^{7/} Land Acquisition Project Plan, Turtle Mountain non-reservation Indians, A. L. Hook, Land Field Agent, Turtle Mountain Agency, Belcourt, North Dakota, 1938.

CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS ^{1/}

Historical Background

The Chippewas, a leading branch of the Algonquin family, during the three centuries immediately following the discovery of America, occupied an extensive territory extending indefinitely back from the Northern and Eastern shore of Lakes Superior and Huron. They filtered through the Sault Ste.-Marie into what are now Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, and moved westward into the present Dakotas and Montana, pushing the Sioux southward in many fierce conflicts over the rich hunting grounds. For more than two centuries Superior was a Chippewa Lake.

As the Chippewas spread to the West and South, they tended to break up into loosely defined groups more or less independent of the wide-flung tribes; and just as in the West they had beaten the Iroquois back to the shores of Lake Erie, their western groups came to grips with the Fox and the Sioux and forced them southward to established treaty boundaries.

For a century or more before the establishment of the International Boundary, the Chippewas and their closely related groups had occupied a wide belt on either side of its future location and across it freely mingled the Chippewas and their blood brothers, the Crees, even down to the present, so that recent restrictions are extremely irksome.

The Turtle Mountain Chippewas, so called because the nucleus of the band was settled in the Turtle Mountains, or hills, occupied an extensive area with necessarily indefinite boundaries, since the country was not surveyed. It was located in the extreme northeastern part of North Dakota and extended from the Canadian border south to Devils Lake and from Pembina Mountains on the east, indefinitely westward.

The southern boundary, and to some extent, the western boundary, had been in undisputed possession until about 1880. In addition, their claims lapped far over into Canada. Their disregard for the border led to many complications later.

The Chippewas or Ojibways were also at one time the most numerous tribe north of Mexico. The Indian Handbook says: "Although strong in numbers and occupying an extensive territory, the Chippewas were never prominent in history, owing to their remoteness from the frontier during the period of the colonial wars." Nevertheless, into their country came the great fur companies, the Hudson Bay and the Northwest, and into their territories pushed the French pioneer hunters, trappers and woodsmen.

As hunting, trapping, and lumbering diminished and river and lake navigation changed, while agricultural enterprises came in, the Chippewas were left stranded as they have been for three generations.

^{1/} Outline of Reservation Program, Turtle Mountain Agency, Belcourt, North Dakota, March 1944.

Although the Government recognized the claims of the Turtle Mountain Indians, no reservation was set up for their use for many years and the Indians were left to shift for themselves, obtaining their living mostly from fish and game within the region. Game was scarce since the passing of buffalo, and the Indians were often reduced to starving conditions.

On March 3, 1873, Congress appropriated \$25,000 for the purchase of a township on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota as a home for the Turtle Mountain Indians. An additional \$10,000 was provided in the bill to enable the Indians to move to their new locations. The Turtle Mountain Band refused to accept this proposition of Congress and continued to occupy their former home in the Turtle Mountains since they felt that their claim to the territory was valid and that they must continue occupancy of the lands to protect their interests.

Final settlement of the claims of the Turtle Mountain Indians was provided for in a treaty made October 2, 1892, which was amended and approved by Congress April 21, 1904. By the terms of this treaty the Turtle Mountain Band ceded all claims to the territory except two townships within the Turtle Mountain area. The treaty further provided for a cash payment of \$1,000,000 to the tribe as payment for the land ceded (9,000,000 acres). Provisions were also made for the allotting of the reservation and the allotting of such other lands within the Public Domain as might be necessary for the members of the tribe unable to secure land within the designated reservation.

In carrying out the allotment feature of the treaty, it was found that only a small number of the Turtle Mountain Band could be provided with allotments on the reservation, and other members of the tribe were allotted on scattered land in North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana. A large number of the families who were allotted land outside of the reservation moved to the vicinity where their land was located and remained there.

Personal Characteristics

The Indians of the Turtle Mountain Reservation possess a high degree of white blood, much of which is of French extraction. Because of their high percentage of white blood and long association with the White race, these people have lost most of the typical Indian characteristics. Their physical features vary from the dark straight hair, dark skin and black eyes to blond hair and blue eyes.

These people have very few tribal customs and practically all of them speak English, dress and live as white people. Even in the most poverty stricken homes where the housekeeping is most primitive and crude, it is the simplicity and the crudity of the white. Inter-marriages and close associations with the white people have resulted in the destruction of native social customs and tribal controls and the suppression of native cultures without providing the facilities by which the customs and cultures of the white people are maintained. The destruction of native customs and controls upon which tribal unity, unselfishness and welfare depend, has instead developed an individualistic attitude expressing itself in jealousies, petty feuds and a lack of confidence in their own ability. It is impossible to be among them very long without being impressed by their patience, resignation, and expression of long suffering. This is especially true of the women who are struck most cruelly during periods of acute privation.

In general these people have a keen sense of the value of money. They are property conscious and in most cases take good care of their property and do not give anything away. In their dealings with each other, they are frankly business-like and expect to pay for value received except during periods of acute privation when they help each other as far as possible.

Housing

The average Indian house is constructed of poles and plastered with a mixture of clay and straw. Many of the houses consist of one room about 14 by 16 to which in many cases has been added another room in the form of a 'lean to'. The main difference between the houses is in the quality of the poles used in construction, the materials used for floors and roofs, the desirability of the location, and the workmanship shown in the construction. When the house is built of sound poles on a location where drainage is good; where careful workmanship is in evidence; and where satisfactory materials have been secured for the roofs, doors, windows, and floors, the building is usually quite satisfactory. The worst feature of the housing situation is over-crowding. Families of five to ten or more persons often live together in one or two rooms.

The furnishings are very simple. Usually there are one or two beds, a small kitchen table, stove, perhaps a radio, two or three benches or chairs, a cupboard, and perhaps a chest for clothing. Clothing and bedding resources are often at a minimum.

Housekeeping

The close correlation between income and standards of housekeeping is evident everywhere among the Indian people. The possession of furniture and equipment is determined to a large extent by the income of the family. In many instances the income of the families is so low that all

cash resources are used for food but during the past two years family incomes have been increased considerably. This is made evident by the increased amount of furniture in the homes and the wearing of better clothing. However, the hand to mouth existence in the past has tended to promote attitudes of futility and helplessness. This is one of the contributing reasons why some households do not make the most of their meager resources and it is also true that a few families squander their income on drink, gambling and purposeless spending. However, it is safe to say that the majority of the families make good use of their incomes. Many of the homes show good management and are as clean and well kept as the best white homes in this area.

Moral and Social Relationship

Moral and social relationships are closely related to the standards of housing and income. Due to the overcrowded condition of many homes, privacy is non-existent and sleeping facilities are inadequate since there are seldom enough beds.

Non-existent privacy, inadequate sleeping facilities, light, ventilation and lack of recreational facilities are some of the environmental factors surrounding these people and constantly making their impact on them. These are contributing factors to the low moral and social standards that exist in many homes.

WAGE INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT ^{1/}

Lack of reservation resources compels Turtle Mountain Indians to depend in large measure upon summer earnings from agricultural labor for a livelihood. Families are large and it is not unusual to find homes with 10 or 12 children. Except for a relative few with special skills who have year-around employment, there is no work in this area for Indians from the time they finish the potato harvest in October until spring planting starts the middle of the following April. Thus a family must endeavor by thrift and economy to make the earnings of four or five months of summer work stretch over all the needs of an entire year, a truly impossible undertaking.

In recent years, the matter of trying to establish small reservation industries here to provide winter employment for Indians has been seriously considered. Projects which appeared to offer most possibility of success involved hand work for women, which would be disturbing to home and family life. Among the factors which would doom to failure any reservation industry attempted are lack of power, transportation facilities and raw materials, initial cost of plant construction and housing for workers, inexperience of workers in factory production methods and distance from markets for sale of any products produced. The rapid rate of population increase is another factor; any industry attempted must expand its operations in proportion to this population growth from year to year to meet Indian employment need.

Wage income from agriculture is derived from spring plowing and seeding of small grain in and around Rolette County, the hay and small grain harvests in the same area, spring cutting and sorting of seed potatoes, some beet field work and harvesting potatoes in the Red River Valley in the fall.

Just as tractors, combines and other modern farm machinery have almost eliminated use of Indian labor in general farming operations close to their reservation, machinery has been developed and is gradually replacing Indian hand labor in both beet and potato fields in the Red River Valley. Thus as Indian population increases, the annual wage income from these sources decreases.

Extra gang work on railroads provides summer employment for several months starting early in May for approximately 50 Indian men who must leave their families at home, live in boxcars and pay room and board. Unemployment compensation and railroad retirement deductions are made from their earnings, but they seldom work long

^{1/} Basic Problems with Suggested Remedies, Turtle Mountain Reservation,
H. E. Bruce, Superintendent, Turtle Mountain Agency, Belcourt,
North Dakota, September 16, 1948.

enough in any one year to receive unemployment compensation benefits, and the work is not sufficiently regular to benefit them much toward retirement.

During the war, large numbers of Indians availed themselves of war industry employment while 472 more were inducted into the armed services. Since the close of the war, Indian income has declined steadily for the following reasons:

- (1) Due to the housing shortage and other causes, there has been a marked "back to the reservation" trend on the part of those who were in war industry, eliminating both the sums they sent home for support of relatives and the unemployment compensation they received when temporarily idle, since their wage income now is derived from agriculture.
- (2) Pay allotments from men in service have become just a trickle. Nearly all veterans now have drawn and spent their "52-20" money and have acquired families they must attempt to support from seasonal farm work.

Our efforts this spring and summer to place Indians in jobs on Garrison Dam and other large construction projects were not fruitful. Unions already had an ample supply of skilled men for operation of heavy equipment. Family housing was non-existent for common labor. Rooms in barracks were available but Indians with large families to support could not earn enough at prevailing wage scales to support families at home after paying room, board and expenses on the job.

All prevailing trends point to the urgency of endeavoring to help Indians to scatter and find permanent rather than seasonal employment in communities where some family housing can be obtained and preferably in jobs where unemployment compensation benefits will affect short periods of idleness.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF HOME CRAFTS AND CRAFT CENTERS

AMONG THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN CHIPPEWAS ^{1/}

Already some excellent work in Arts and Crafts is being done through the schools on Turtle Mountain. Because of limited facilities the work is confined largely to students in the schools and to a limited number of Chippewa women who work under the supervision of the Arts and Crafts Department. Some excellent articles are being produced and a ready market is found for certain articles which are made by students and women. The Arts and Crafts work in the schools needs to be greatly strengthened and emphasized and there is urgent need for increased facilities and for additional trained personnel, if the work is to be expanded materially.

There are a number of older Chippewas who retain some of the skills in native crafts which they learned from their parents and which were practiced extensively among the Chippewas many years ago. There are still a few older persons who are expert in the tanning of hides and furs, a few who do good bead work, and a few who make creditable willow baskets. But in large measure the skills in home craft have been lost and if expansion is to be undertaken in home crafts among the people generally, it will be necessary to revive and stimulate these skills through organized and systematic training. In exhibits of native crafts which were recently arranged, the people manifested a keen interest and some of the people themselves suggested that the services of skilled Chippewa craftsmen might be utilized effectively in the teaching and training of others.

Factors to be Considered. Some of the factors which influence the possibilities in crafts and the types of activities which might be undertaken are the following:

1. Native Talents and Skills. There are native talents and potential skills among the Chippewas which might be revived and stimulated to great advantage, as evidenced by the excellent specimens of work formerly done among them and by their adeptness with their hands and their ability to learn intricate and artistic skills.

2. Characteristic Chippewa Art. There appears to be an inherent love for the artistic and beautiful which will be a great asset in development and production of salable articles. There is a special character to the design and quality of early Chippewa crafts which should be preserved in any new development.

^{1/} Informal Analysis of Problems of Turtle Mountain Chippewa Indians and Some Suggestions with Regard to their Solution, Dover P. Trent, U. S. Indian Service, March, 1944.

3. The Need. There is an urgent need among the Chippewas for increased opportunities and increased income and there is a desire among them for better things and a better way of life, and in general, there is the initiative and potential energy which will contribute much to the success of craft enterprises.

4. Resources and Materials Limited. There is a great scarcity of materials with which to work. Buckskins and leather are increasingly scarce, beads are difficult to obtain, the scrub timber does not provide material suitable for woodcrafts, wool is produced in only very small quantities, only willows are available for basket making, and other materials are correspondingly unavailable. The scarcity of materials on the reservation and the necessity of importing and purchasing materials constitute a serious handicap but not necessarily an insurmountable one.

5. Marketing and Transportation Problems. The distance from major markets for which salable articles might be produced is a handicap. Transportation costs on heavy articles such as brick and tile are almost prohibitive. This makes it necessary that preference be given to production of articles which are of limited weight and size. Tourist traffic through this locality has been very limited in the past and is almost non-existent at present. There is reason to anticipate that tourist traffic through this area will greatly increase in the years ahead and it is possible that through improved roads and tourist facilities and through development and advertisement of craft enterprises on Turtle Mountain a worthwhile outlet for articles to tourists can be developed.

6. Personnel and Facilities Needed. The personnel and facilities for developing extensive and high-class craft enterprises on Turtle Mountain are very limited. To develop a program of sufficient scope to be worthwhile, the facilities and personnel must be greatly increased, the services of expert craftsmen in specific lines must be made available for at least short periods, and financial assistance must be made available in obtaining needed equipment and materials and in assembling and marketing articles in considerable quantity.

7. Continuity of Personnel and Plans. A frequent comment heard around Turtle Mountain with respect to Arts and Crafts is that there has been no continuity of personnel and effort in this field, that when good teachers in Arts and Crafts developed an interest and began to make progress, they were too often transferred and the work taken over by a new person, frequently with a new and different point of view. Whether that be true or not, it is appropriate to suggest that to succeed with a program such as is being considered there must be continuity of qualified personnel and continuity of plans and support.

8. Now a Good Time to Expand Program. Under present circumstances the availability of remunerative employment to many of the people may appear to constitute a temporary handicap in the development of crafts enterprises. The returns which may be expected from crafts, at least in

the early development, will probably be small in comparison with the wages which many are able to obtain. However, this handicap will largely disappear as employment opportunities decline and it is not believed that the problem need delay the initiation and development of the program among those who remain on the reservation.

9. Idle Time and Its Use. The problem of idle time and idle hands during the long winter months of confinement to small homes may be a distinct asset to home crafts undertakings. The people generally are depressed by this idleness and there is evidence that they will respond to any movement to develop means by which their idle time may be put to effective use in improving their situation, and that they will respond readily to efforts to develop activities which may be carried on in the home and which will employ the whole family in busy and productive work.

HOME CRAFT ENTERPRISES WHICH MIGHT BE DEVELOPED ^{2/}

The following specific suggestions are offered with respect to the home craft articles which might be produced, for which materials are available or obtainable, and for which a ready market might be found. The suggestions grow largely out of information which has been obtained from various sources, and out of discussions and consultations which have been held with teachers and employees and with the people themselves. The suggestions will indicate some of the things which seem feasible in the light of preliminary consideration. Before any activities of an extensive nature should be undertaken, the whole problem should have much closer analysis and study, with the assistance and guidance of the best qualified technicians available in each specific line of work.

1. Leather and Bead Work. Since beautiful articles of leather work and bead work are representative of the early native crafts of the Chippewas, there would be a distinct advantage in emphasizing bead work in the production of articles for sale. The older specimens of bead work are characterized by the beautiful bright-colored designs of flowers and vines, and there would seem to be definite value in adhering generally to these original designs. Originally, the best bead work of the Chippewas was applied in the making of ceremonial garments and scarfs, but obviously ready market might be developed. Because of the limited quantity of buckskin or elk skin which will be available, the production of beaded leather articles should be limited generally to smaller articles which require only a limited amount of material. Also, the smaller articles can be made as truly representative of Chippewa art and can be sold profitably at more popular prices than would be required for the larger articles which require more material and labor. Some of the articles of bead work which it would appear might be produced in quantity for market are the following: Beaded purses (either of leather or of velvet, already being produced for market); belts; jewel bags, buckskin gloves; tobacco pouches; beaded dolls (of leather or cloth); napkin rings; lapel pins; beaded handkerchief bags or kits (for ladies' dressers), leather book covers, etc.

2. Porcupine Quill Work. In the past the Chippewas made excellent and artistic use of porcupine quills in their crafts work. Porcupines are still to be found in limited numbers on the reservation and the use of quills, in their bead work, or otherwise, might well be encouraged.

3. Wood Crafts. Literature on Ojibwa crafts indicates that in their earlier history these people produced excellent articles from wood, such as bowls, spoons, ladles, forks, flutes, etc. This was done when maple and birch were available to them. Most of the timber on Turtle Mountain is small and consists mainly of "popple", scrub oak, ash, willow and various kinds of small brush. These woods are available in considerable quantity and there is no market

^{2/} Op. Cit. Dover Trent.

for them except in the form of wood and posts, and it is possible that small articles could be developed which would better utilize some of the timber. This appears to be a type of crafts in which the men and the boys could be interested and at which they might readily become proficient. Judgment on the matter and the development of appropriate articles would necessarily require the services of an expert in the art of wood carving. Some articles which it would appear might be made out of the wood available are the following: Letter knives (substantial, neat and artistic); desk trays (artistic and substantial, to hold pencils, pens etc.); ink-well bases (artistic, for holding the inexpensive base and inverted ink bottle and pens); slipper spoons; artistic wood plaques, tobacco jars; book ends, etc. In a work center, with lathes and other machinery available, cigarette boxes with covers, powder-puff boxes, sewing boxes, etc., might be made in quantity. To be salable and profitable, all of these articles must be of high quality workmanship and should bear the distinctive label of the Chippewa woodcraftsman's art.

4. Spinning, Knitting, Weaving, Crocheting. From the standpoint of quantity production, it appears that this line of work probably offers greatest possibilities. The keeping of small flocks of sheep by most families and the use of wool from their own sheep would greatly stimulate spinning, knitting and weaving. (It is believed that from other angles as well, the introductions of farm flocks of sheep is a very desirable step.) However, no serious obstacles exist in obtaining wool from outside sources. The suggestions with respect to spinning, knitting and weaving are equally applicable regardless of the source of the wool, but production of the wool at home would provide an added stimulus to the family in conversion of the wool into finished articles. Use of the homeproduced and home processed wool would add to the intrinsic value of the article.

The Chippewas have long engaged in spinning, weaving and knitting. Woven bags and sashes appear to be typical of their earlier work. Inquiry and discussion among the people on the reservation has indicated a keen interest in knitting and weaving. The recent introduction of a number of spinning wheels and looms through the schools of the reservation has stimulated a keen interest and already a number of spinning wheels have been placed with families and requests have been received for small looms which can be used in the home. It appears desirable to place major emphasis upon the production of articles which can be produced in the homes, so as to interest the whole family in the work and thus to utilize the abundance of idle time and energy in the home. The social value of having the family group cooperate in interesting and industrious work in the home is important.

Any articles which may be produced by the Chippewas should be particularly representative of Chippewa art. The Chippewas should not undertake to duplicate the blanket and rug work of the Navajos, or the basket and silver work of the Zunis, but should develop their own distinctive products and should produce them of such quality and in such quantity as will create a demand for them.

Some of the articles of spinning, weaving, knitting and crocheting which might be considered are the following: certain woven woolen bags (such as formerly made); knitted mittens and gloves (with ornamental design similar to those made by certain Indians in Wisconsin); knitted woodsmen's socks, sweaters; knitted stocking caps; knitted baby's sweaters and booties; knitted or woven men's neck scarfs (might be woven on small hand loom in home); knitted or woven head scarfs for girls; fingerweave ties and scarfs for men and belts for ladies (now being developed and improved); knitted bed slippers for ladies; woven saddle blankets (using Navajo process but in characteristic Chippewa design); woven desk pads or dresser runners (Chippewa design); woven sofa-pillow covers, etc.

In a centralized weaving enterprise, under expert supervision and management, yardage goods (for mens' and ladies' suits); rugs and blankets, possibly a special type of bed blankets or bed spreads; ladies' shoulder shawl (particularly for older ladies); woven couch covers and chair covers and various smaller articles might be produced in quantity. It is believed that in general Chippewa women and girls have the inherent skill and ability to learn, and have the patience and industry to perform such work. They would require intensive training and continued supervision, in order to obtain a high standard of quality. Decision as to the articles and the techniques in development would require the services of experts who have the "know how".

5. Basket Making. Chippewas have long made baskets, of willow reeds and to some extent, of grass and birch bark. Some of the older people still make excellent baskets and find a ready market for them. While it is not believed that these baskets can compete with the excellent baskets made by certain other tribes who have more suitable materials available, it is believed that the making of the willow baskets by the Chippewas could be greatly expanded and improved to advantage. The materials are readily available, the baskets are usually made in spare time and usually by the older persons who are not capable of performing regular labor. The Arts and Crafts Division at the high school is working on a baby basket for infants and it is believed that the development of baby baskets or bassinets of a distinctive type offers possibilities.

6. Clay Work. Suitable clay is available for the manufacture of brick and tile and there is reason to believe that such products needed within a reasonable distance from the reservation is limited and shipment to distant centers of population would involve such transportation cost that it is believed such enterprise would not be profitable. However, it is possible that available clay could be used in the manufacture of artistic and utility articles of limited size and weight and that a profitable outlet for such articles could be developed. Judgment as to the feasibility of such enterprise and the articles which might be produced to advantage would require the services of an expert in clay work and pottery. Such enterprise might be carried on as a centralized factory or some of the work might be of a type which could be done in

the home, by workers who are trained and who work under close supervision so as to maintain desirable uniformity in design and quality. Some articles which might be considered in this connection are the following: clay tobacco jars, with covers; desk trays; powder jars; utility kitchen articles, such as waste fat jars with covers, spice sets; refrigerator food containers; butter dishes; preserve jars; honey jars; artistic ash trays; cigarette boxes with covers, etc.

7. Tanning and Leather Work. There is need for improvement in the tanning of hides as practiced by a few people on the reservation. It might be feasible to establish a tannery on the reservation for the centralized tanning of deer skins, elk skins, cowhides, etc., and for the better care and handling of furs. The leather which might thus be made available would be sufficient to supply the needs of a worthwhile leatherworks industry, both in the homes and in a centralized leather-crafts enterprise. The cowhides might profitably be utilized in the making of billfolds, belts, brief cases, etc.

