THE MERIAM REPORT AND THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWAS

IN 1926 COMMISSIONER WORK ASKED THAT A STUDY BE MADE ON THE CONDITIONS OF INDIANS IN THE UNITED STATES. THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTE GATHERED A TEAM OF EXPERTS IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH ECONOMICS, ETC.

WHAT THE REPORT SHOWED, GENERALLY, WAS THAT INDIANS HAD NOT GAINED MATERIALLY FROM THE ALLOTMENT ACT NOR HAD THEY ADVANCED SOCIALLY AS INDIVIDUALS.

IN 1928 INDIANS ON THE SIX RESERVATIONS HAD AN ANNUAL INCOME OF $233.00 ON THE AVERAGE, INCLUDING TRIBAL AND INDIVIDUAL HOLDINGS. THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 12,600 CHIPPEWAS ON THE SIX ALLOTTED RESERVATIONS.

NATIONWIDE OF THE 188,363 INDIANS SURVEYED, 97.8% OF THEM HAD INDIVIDUAL INCOMES OF LESS THAT $200.00 A YEAR. OVERALL THERE WERE NINE RESERVATIONS WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL INCOME WAS $50.00 OR LESS PER YEAR. THE HIGHEST INCOME WAS AMONG THE OSAGES OF $19,119 AND THE LOWEST WAS AMONG THE INDIANS OF THE CARSON JURISDICTION IN THE SOUTHWEST. THEIR INDIVIDUAL INCOME WAS $15.00 PER YEAR.

THE REPORT ALSO SHOWED THAT AMONG THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA WILD RICE, HUNTING, FISHING, TRAPPING, GATHERING MAPLE SUGAR, AND DRIED BERRIES CONSTITUTED A LARGE PORTION OF THE INDIANS DIET. THE HOMES WHERE THERE WAS AN ACCUMULATION OF FOOD WERE THE EXCEPTION. MANY INDIANS BARELY SUBSISTED.

HEALTH AMONG THE CHIPPEWAS WAS BAD. DUE TO ISOLATION AND POOR DIET ON THE ONE HAD, AND LACK OF STANDARDS AMONG THE INDIAN HEALTH OFFICIALS.

"THE STATE SUPPORTED PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES AMONG THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA INDIANS ARE MAINTAINED ON HIGHER STANDARDS THAN THOSE OF THE INDIAN OFFICE. THE WORK AMONG THE INDIANS ON MOST RESERVATIONS INVOLVES INEVITABLE HARDSHIPS BECAUSE DISTANCES ARE LONG, ROADS ROUGH, WEATHER CONDITIONS SEVERE, AND THE DEMANDS ON NURSES TIME NEVER ENDING. IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO BUILD UP AND MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE FORCE UNLESS THE INDIAN OFFICE CAN OFFER SALARIES AND LIVING CONDITIONS APPROXIMATE TO THOSE FOUND ELSEWHERE."

NEARLY EVERY TREATY, LAW OR REPORT IN THE CONGRESS HAD WORKED TO EITHER TAKE WHAT THE INDIANS HAD OR TO BENEFIT OTHERS.

THEY WERE POOR AND HAD BEEN POOR, IN RELATION TO THEIR NEIGHBORS, FOR MANY YEARS. WHENEVER A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL CAME TO THE INDIANS IT WAS TO HELP.

UNTIL LATE IN THE 1920'S MANY PEOPLE MAINTAINED THAT THE IMPOVERISHED ECONOMIC LIFESTYLE INDIANS LED, THE IDLENESS AND OFTTIMES DRUNKENNESS, WAS ENTIRELY OF THE INDIANS DOING. THERE WERE SOME WHO MAINTAINED THAT THE INDIANS PREFERRED THIS TYPE OF LIFE TO THAT OF INDIANS MORE AFFLUENT WHITE NEIGHBOR.

IN THE LATE 1920'S THE GREAT DEPRESSION HIT AMERICA AND WITHIN A FEW YEARS MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WERE OUT OF WORK AND APPROACHING A LIFESTYLE AKIN TO THEIR INDIAN NEIGHBORS. P.W. GRADY, CHAIRMAN OF THE INDIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE FOR MINNESOTA, WROTE TO T.J. FAIRBANKS IN 1940 THAT THE "...WRETCHEDNESS OF THE (LATER) 1920'S, DUE IN CONSIDERABLE MEASURE TO THE FACT THAT THE DEPRESSION REDUCED THE WHITES, IN GREAT NUMBERS TO THE PITIABLE STATUS THAT HAD BEEN THE NORM AMONG THE REDS." FUTURE COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS JOHN COLLIER WAS THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL INDIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE.

THERE WAS A FEELING AMONG THESE REFORMERS THAT PERHAPS ONE COULD LEARN SOMETHING FROM THE INDIANS AFTER ALL. THEY HAD SURVIVED IN THE AMERICAS BEFORE THE FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC.

AND HAD MANAGED TO GET A LIVING FROM THE LAND WITHOUT WRESTLING WITH IT.

BECAUSE OF LIMITED FUNDS IN THE EARLY 1920'S VERY FEW CHIPPEWAS HAD MIGRATED TO THE TWIN CITIES. MERRIAM FOUND OUT THAT THERE WERE ONLY 94 CHIPPEWAS IN MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL IN 1928 AND ONLY SIX IN DULUTH. COLLIER'S GROUP COULD SEE THAT INDIANS WERE NOT "MAKING IT" AS CITY WORKERS EITHER. HIS IDEAS OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT DIDN'T INCLUDE THE CONCEPT OF INDIANS IN THE CITIES. THE REPORT FOUND, GENERALLY, THAT:

"THE OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INDIANS IN THIS GROUP OF CITIES IS SOME WHAT SIMILAR TO THAT OF NEW GROUP OF FOREIGN IMMIGRANTS IN ANY OF THE LARGE CITIES OF AMERICA. MANY INDIANS, PARTICULARLY FULL-BLOODS, ARE "ALIEN" TO THE WHITE CIVILIZATION OF THEIR NATIVE LAND, AND HENCE ARE ON THE LOWEST RUNG OF THE INDUSTRIAL LADDER WHEN THEY FIRST MOVE TO THE CITY."

THERE WERE SOME, HOWEVER, WHO HAD ADJUSTED VERY WELL. THE INVESTIGATORS REPORTED THAT, "SOME OF THE SO-CALLED INDIANS (LIVING IN MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL) WERE FOUND TO BE PERSONS GENERALLY BELIEVED TO BE WHITE, WHO WERE LIVING IN A TYPE OF HOME THAT FAIRLY PROSPEROUS YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OR BUSINESS FOLD GENERALLY ENJOY."

A SHORT NOTE CONCERNING INDIAN EDUCATION IN 1939

WILLIAM ANYWAUSH, REPRESENTATIVE FROM WHITE EARTH VILLAGE, IN 1938 COMPLAINED ABOUT THE LACK IN NOT ONLY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR CHIPPEWA YOUTH BUT THE LACK OF CONCERN ON THE PART OF BOTH THE INDIAN AND THE TRIBE ITSELF.

"WHEN WE GET TO RUN OUR OWN AFFAIRS, I KNOW IT WILL BE A GOOD THING. WE GOT BOYS IN SCHOOL, YOUNG PEOPLE, GETTING WELL EDUCATED, STILL I AM SORRY TO SAY THEY ARE LEFT IN THE BUSHES. THEY GO TO SCHOOL, BUT WHEN THEY GET OUT THEY HAVE NO PLACE TO GO, THEY GOT NO CHANCE, AND THAT IS WHY I SAY THEY GET LEFT IN THE BUSHES. ALTHOUGH I WENT AROUND TO SEE WHAT I COULD DO FOR THEM, STILL THEY GOT NO CHANCE."

INDIAN SCHOOLS SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN 1939 WAS $250.00. INDIAN SCHOOLS SUPPORT FOR DEAF, DUMB, AND BLIND EDUCATION FOR INDIANS WAS $1,500.00.

ONE PART OF THE PROBLEM WAS THAT THE MONEY WAS LOANED TO STUDENTS. COMING OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL INTO THE RESERVATION ECONOMY WASN'T A PERIOD USUALLY TO BE ANTICIPATED WITH PLEASURE. ARTHUR FOSTER, US'S SOCIAL WORKER, WROTE TO PRESIDENT BROKER THAT, "OUR BOYS AND GIRLS ARE OUT OF SCHOOLS, 90% OF THEM, AR SIXTEEN, UNOCCUPIED, PENNILESS, AND IN MANY CASES GETTING INTO DIFFICULTIES." SOME PEOPLE MAINTAINED THAT INDIANS SIMPLY WOULD RATHER STEAL AND LOAF AT THAT AGE. IN RESOLUTION 8, AT THE JANUARY 9, 1939 T.E.C. MEETING THE PROBLEM WAS STATED "SOCIAL SURVEYS INDICATE THAT ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES MAKING FOR INCREASED DELINQUENCY AMONG THE INDIAN YOUTH OCCUR MORE FREQUENTLY AT THE AGE LEVEL WHEN COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS TERMINATED, OR SIXTEEN YEARS." YOUNG PEOPLE, AT SIXTEEN YEARS, ARE TWO YEARS AWAY FROM QUALIFYING FOR FEDERAL WORK PROJECTS.

LOANS FOR EDUCATION WENT FOR THE MOST PART TO INDIAN STUDENTS ENTERING VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL PURSUITS RATHER THAT HIGHER EDUCATION.

IN 1937 THE T.E.C. APPROVED $ 15,000 TO BE USED TO EDUCATE INDIAN GIRLS AT THE ST. BENEDICT MISSION SCHOOL AT WHITE EARTH OPERATED BY THE CATHOLIC MISSIONS. 120 GIRLS ENROLLED.

EARLY ORGANIZERS WANTED TO ESTABLISH SEPARATE INDIAN SCHOOLS SUPPORTED BY THE TRIBE FOR THE TRIBE'S BENEFIT. EDWARD RODGERS, PAST PRESIDENT OF THE M.C.T., WROTE TO BROKER THAT SCHOOLS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED "WHERE PREJUDICE EXISTS AGAINST INDIAN PUPILS, STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO REMOVE SUCH INDIANS FROM SUCH COMMUNITIES AND PLACE THE CHILDREN IN OTHER SCHOOLS. WITH THIS END IN VIEW, IT IS MY OPINION THAT IN EACH INDIAN COMMUNITY A SCHOOL SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE CARING OF SUCH INDIAN CHILDREN." ARTHUR BEAULIEU WROTE TO PRESIDENT BROKER IN 1935 THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT "WILL NECESSITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS TO TRAIN OUR INDIAN BOYS AND GIRLS TO MODERN AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS SO THAT THEY CAN MOVE ALONG MORE PROGRESSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL PURSUITS AND BE IN A POSITION TO TRAIN OTHERS.

(MIKE PETER BURRIS, PERSONAL NOTES--TRANSCRIBED)

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RESERVATION GOVERNMENT CONTINUED:

POWERS:

- NEGOTIATES WITH GOVERNMENT
- SOME DISPUTES

INDIAN AGENT GOVERNMENT:

- PROVIDES INCOME & RATIONS (TREATY PAYMENTS)
- DISCONTINUED FARMING
- OVERSAW SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT- FORCIBLE ATTENDANCE AT BOARDING SCHOOLS
- OVERSAW POLICE (INDIAN)
- OVERSAW INDIAN COURTS
  - LESSER OFFENSES
  - INDIAN JUDGES
- CONTROLLED LAND
- HEALTH PROGRAMS
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- FAMILY WELFARE

- IF YOU WANTED SOMETHING, YOU WENT TO THE AGENT.

- THE GOVERNMENTS PHILOSOPHY WAS THAT THE INDIANS WERE CHILDREN

- CHIEF'S WERE EITHER USED OR IGNORED.
  - HOLE IN THE DAY, WAS USED WELL ($$)
  - SITTING BULL WAS IGNORED

- COUNCIL BUSINESS 1884
  - WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE ALLOTMENTS.
  - RED LAKE SAID NO.
  - WE MUST HAVE ___?___ TO GIVE TO OUR ___?___ ___?___ ___?___

(MIKE PETER BURRIS, PERSONAL NOTES--TRANSCRIBED)

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I.R.A.

THE FALL

1. TO HOLD ?
2. EXTENDS TRUST
3. RESTORE SURPLUS LANDS.
4. PROHIBITS PROMISE OF INDIAN LAND.
5. ? OF INDIAN LAND.
6. ?
7. ADD ? ? ?
8. ? DEALS.
9. APPROPRIATIONS ? OF THESE GROUPS.
10. ? ? ?
11. DO ? LOANS.
12. CIVIL SERVICE.

13-15. SPECIFIC TRIBES.

16-17. TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

18. MAJORITY VOTE.
19. DEF. (DEFEATED OR DEFENDED) ? ?

(MIKE PETER BURRIS, PERSONAL NOTES--TRANSCRIBED)

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R.L. (RED LAKE)

NEEDLESS TO SAY NOT ALL INDIANS WERE FOR WHEELER/HOWARD.

73 TRIBES VOTED NOT TO ACCEPT. ---- R.L. (RED LAKE)

-WHICH MAN'S GOVERNMENT?
-BUREAU PERSONNEL:
- MUNNELL
- BROKER

- TRIBES HAD TO VOTE AGAIN
- NO VOTE - INCLUSION
- F.D.L.-30% TURN OUT
- B.I.A.-COUNTED F.D.L.RES.
- ALTHOUGH MOST DIDN'T VOTE MAJORITY OF VOTERS: WERE AGAINST

CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL:

- RED LAKE RESIGNED 1918
- TIMBER MONEY-
- WHITE EARTH GANG.

SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE PRESENT FORM OF TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

APRIL 1933	QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO SUPERINTENDENTS SURVEYING CONDITIONS ON THE RESERVATIONS IN MINNESOTA.
JANUARY 1934	LOCAL MEETINGS TO INFORM POPULACE OF THE COMING ELECTION TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE I.R.A. FOR THE INDIANS IN THE JURISDICTION. THE FIRST MEETING FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION WAS HELD IN HAYWARD, WISCONSIN.
OCTOBER 29, 1934	ELECTION TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE I.R.A.
JUNE 2, 1935	NOTICE TO ELECT DELEGATES FOR PURPOSE OF FORMING A CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL.
JUNE 27	62 DELEGATES MEET IN CASS LAKE FOR THE FIRST TIME.
NOVEMBER 6	J.J. MUNNELL, INDIAN OFFICE EMPLOYEE AND DELEGATE, AUTHORS CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFT SUBMITTED TO THE INDIAN OFFICE.
MAY 23, 1936	COLLIER SIGNS ORDER CALLING FOR ELECTION ON THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.
JUNE 20	CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS RATIFIED.
JULY 24	CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.
OCTOBER 10	FIRST OFFICIAL DELEGATES MEETING HELD IN CASS LAKE.
NOVEMBER 13, 1937	CORPORATE CHARTER ELECTION FOR MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE.
FEBRUARY 22, 1939	ELECTION OF SIX RESERVATIONS FOR OR AGAINST SUB-CHARTERS.

PRIOR TO OFFERING THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT TO THE CHIPPEWAS IN MINNESOTA JOHN COLLIER SENT OUT A FORM TO THE AGENCY SUPERINTENDENTS ASKING THEM TO LIST CONDITIONS IN THEIR JURISDICTIONS. IN RED LAKE, RAYMOND BITNEY REPORTED THAT THE RED LAKE GENERAL COUNCIL HAD BEEN IN OPERATION FOR THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS BASED UPON THE HEREDITARY CHIEFTAINSHIP SYSTEM. WHEN ASKED IF WOMEN WERE ACTIVE IN TRIBAL AFFAIRS BITNEY WROTE THAT "THE CHIEFS DO NOT APPOINT WOMEN AS MEMBERS OF THEIR COUNCIL." THERE WAS, IN RED LAKE, A BIT OF CARRY OVER, AT LEAST MORE THAT THE OTHER CHIPPEWAS, OF THE TRADITIONAL CHIPPEWA SOCIO-POLITICAL MODEL OF THE PREVIOUS CENTURY.

THERE WAS ANOTHER GROUP ON RED LAKE WHICH THE DEPARTMENT DIDN'T RECOGNIZE COMPOSED OF YOUNG AND MIXED BLOOD INDIANS WHO FAVORED ALLOTMENT OF THE RED LAKE RESERVATION. THIS GROUP WAS FORMED OUT OF THE W.P.A. PROJECTS ON AND ADJACENT TO RED LAKE.

IN COMPARISON THE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA FACED WERE TREMENDOUS. THE ALLOTMENT ACT HAD EFFECTIVELY DESTROYED THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM. J.S. MONKS CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA AGENCY SUPERINTENDENT REPORTED THAT, "HEREDITARY CHIEFS ARE NOT NOW RECOGNIZED BY THE INDIANS. SUCH CHIEFS WERE RECOGNIZED IN EARLY HISTORY HAD CONTROL OF THEIR TRIBES AND CONDUCTED THEIR AFFAIRS, OFTEN TO THE EXTENT OF DESIGNATING WHO SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT BECOME A MEMBER OF THEIR TRIBES." AMONG OTHER DEVELOPMENTS WOMEN HAD BEEN DISENFRANCHISED. THEY TOOK PART IN TRIBAL BUSINESS MATTERS, THEY VOTED AND HELD OFFICE.

THERE IS NO TRIBAL ORGANIZATION OF THE CHIPPEWAS IN MINNESOTA, EITHER AS A TRIBAL COUNCIL OR A BUSINESS COMMITTEE, IN THE SENSE THAT IT IS THE RECOGNIZED REPRESENTATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE ENTIRE TRIBE." REPORTED MONKS. IN FACT THERE WERE VERY FEW RESERVATIONS THAT HAD ORGANIZATION AT ALL. "THE COUNCILS OF THE LEECH LAKE AND FOND DU LAC RESERVATIONS, MIGHT BE ASSUMED TO REPRESENT THEIR ENTIRE RESERVATIONS BUT NOT THE ENTIRE JURISDICTION OR TRIBE... IT MUST BE KEPT IN MIND THAT COUNCILS ARE NOT ORGANIZED WITH DEPARTMENTAL SUPERVISION." THIS STATEMENT WAS WRITTEN IN 1933. BY 1936 THE SIX RESERVATIONS WERE TO HAVE A CONSTITUTION RATIFIED, A SYSTEM OF DELEGATES BASED ON REPRESENTATION, AND A "TRIBAL" SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT BASED ON A TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE HERE THAT SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE T.E.C. IT HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE 1934 UNTIL THE PRESENT. IT HAS ALWAYS HAD TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH RESERVATION.

IN SHORT HERE IS THE CONDITION OF THE VARIOUS RESERVATIONS PRIOR TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT:

LEECH LAKE

"THIS LOCAL COUNCIL IS VERY WELL ORGANIZED, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LOCAL LEECH LAKE BAND AND VERY ACTIVE AND INTERESTED IN TRIBAL AFFAIRS. AS A WHOLE THERE IS FAIR SATISFACTION (ON THE PART OF THE BANDS ABOUT THE COUNCIL'S ACTIONS.)

GRAND PORTAGE

"NO ORGANIZATION OF ANY KIND EXISTS ON THIS RESERVATION."

NETT LAKE

"REPRESENTS ENTIRE RESERVATION LOOSELY RUN, NO CONSTITUTION, NO PROPER NOTICE FOR MEMBERS OR SET TIME FOR MEETINGS NOR ANY REGULAR MEETINGS."

FOND DU LAC

"THIS IS NOT A RECOGNIZED COUNCIL OF THE DEPARTMENT. IT IS A VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION CREATED BY THE INDIANS WITHOUT AUTHORITY BY THE DEPARTMENT. CRITICISMS ARE RAMPANT (CONCERNING COUNCIL ACTIONS) AROUSED BY FAILURE OF CERTAIN INDIANS TO RECOGNIZE MAJORITY RULE."

WHITE EARTH

"THERE WAS A WELL ORGANIZED GROUP KNOWN AS THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA ASSOCIATION OPERATING IN THE PONSFORD AREA. THEIR OBJECT IN ORGANIZING WAS TO "MAINLY COOPERATE WITH THE INDIAN OFFICE OR CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMS." THEY, HOWEVER, WERE NOT A TRIBAL ORGANIZATION NOR DID THEY ASSUME TO PRETEND ANY AUTHORITY." THIS GROUP WAS SMALL, COMPOSED OF STUDENTS 18 AND OVER.

ON THESE FIVE RESERVATIONS OVERALL THERE WAS NO COMPENSATION PAID TO OFFICERS, NO SPECIAL TIME FOR MEETINGS, GENERALLY THEY ARE CALLED, ASSEMBLED, AND ELECTED BY THOSE PEOPLE ATTENDING THE MEETING.

ADMINISTRATIVELY, THE MILLE LAC RESERVATION DID NOT EXIST IN 1933.

WHEN ONE TALKS OF THE LEECH LAKE RESERVATION ONE AT THIS POINT DOES NOT SPEAK OF THE LEECH LAKE BAND AS WELL. IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL BANDS WITHIN THE RESERVATION BOUNDARIES. IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE ADVENT OF THE GRANTING OF THE SUB-CHARTERS IN 1937 THAT THERE APPEARED A WHITE EARTH "BAND" OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS REPRESENTING THE ENTIRE RESERVATION. WE MAY SEE HERE THAT CHIEFTAINSHIP FOR THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA HAS BEEN TWICE BURIED. ONCE BY THE ALLOTMENT ACT AND ONCE AGAIN BY THE REDEFINITION OF "BAND".

IT IS INDEED CURIOUS THAT MONKS WOULD REFER TO THE FORMER CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS.

"THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHIPPEWAS IN MINNESOTA WERE STRONG, WELL ORGANIZED TRIBAL COUNCIL HAD EXISTED FOR MANY YEARS BUT WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS HAVE CEASED ACTIVE WORK AND DISBANDED WHEN THE INTELLIGENT AND PROGRESSIVE MEMBERS OF THE TRIBE CEASED ACTIVE PART."

THIS STATEMENT IS QUITE CONTRARY TO THE FACTS. THE C.G.C. DIED FOR TWO REASONS: 1) IT HAD SUPPORTED ALLOTMENT AND THE FEE PATENTS (OR SALE OF SAME) HAD ENDED AND 2) RED LAKE HAD WITHDRAWN ALONG WITH A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF DELEGATES FROM THE OTHER RESERVATIONS AND THE C.G.C. COULD NO LONGER MAINTAIN THE PRETENSE OF A TRIBAL ORGANIZATION WITHOUT LOCAL SUPPORT.

LOSS OF LAND WAS THE CAUSE OF TRIBAL DISORGANIZATION. IT WAS THE DIRECT CAUSE OF THE BREAKDOWN OF TRADITIONAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AMONG THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA. AND WITH A PAGAN RELIGION BASED ON A BELIEF IN THE SACRED EARTH IT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISINTEREST BY INDIANS IN NATIVE RELIGION.

IN FEBRUARY 1934 SUPERINTENDENT BURNS REPORTED TO COLLIER THAT "AT WHITE EARTH, WHERE OVER 8,000 FEE PATENTS WERE ISSUED ONLY ABOUT 100 STILL HAVE THEIR LANDS." IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT ALL CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA HAD ALLOTMENT, OR AT LEAST THE MAJORITY OF ALLOTMENTS ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION.

BECAUSE OF THE CHICANERY ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY THE PREVIOUS TRIBAL ORGANIZATION THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

EARLY ORGANIZING PROBLEMS IN BRINGING THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT TO THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT NEED TO BE STRESSED BEFORE WE PROCEED, A FEW THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN READING THIS ACCOUNT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT. ONE IS THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH TRIBAL GOVERNMENT EMERGED FROM ITS HUMBLE BEGINNINGS SHOWN IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION. IN THE SPAN OF FOUR YEARS THE INDIAN OFFICE BEGAN WITH PRACTICALLY NO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BUILT A TRIBAL ORGANIZATION TO REPRESENT THEM. THE SECOND THING TO KEEP IN MINK IS THAT THE TRIBAL ORGANIZATION WAS BUILT FROM THE APEX DOWNWARD. FIRST THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAS ORGANIZED THEN THE RESERVATIONS WERE ORGANIZED INDIVIDUALLY.

IT IS CURIOUS THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE ISN'T ELECTED BY POPULAR VOTE IN A SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION SUPPOSEDLY BASED ON DEMOCRATIC MODELS. NONE OF OUR TRIBAL OFFICIALS WHO HOLD POSITIONS ON THE TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE GOT THOSE POSITIONS BECAUSE THE PEOPLE ELECTED THEM TO THOSE OFFICES.

IT MUST ALSO BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THE WORDS TRIBE, BAND, AND RESERVATION DO NOT CONFORM TO ANY SOCIAL DEFINITION. AS THEY ARE USED IN THIS REPORT THEY ARE ADMINISTRATIVE DEFINITIONS DESIGNATING AND ORGANIZED GROUP OF INDIANS RESIDING ON DESIGNATED TRACTS OF LAND. ONE DOES NOT SPEAK OF A TRIBAL ORGANIZATION TECHNICALLY, ONE SPEAKS OF A TRIBAL CORPORATION.

ORGANIZATION PROBLEM NUMBER ONE: HOW THE SIX RESERVATIONS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER TO FORM THE M.C.T.

IN THE BEGINNING, AS THE SAYING GOES, THERE WAS A QUESTION. COULD THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS RESIDING ON THE SIX RESERVATIONS OUTSIDE OF RED LAKE ORGANIZE AS A "TRIBE" UNDER THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT AND DID THEY DESIRE TO?

THE LANGUAGE OF THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT SEEMS TO DEFINITELY EXCLUDE INDIANS LIVING ON SEPARATE RESERVATIONS TO ORGANIZE A "TRIAL" GOVERNMENT. SECTION 16 SAYS:

"ANY INDIAN TRIBE, OR TRIBES RESIDING ON THE SAME RESERVATION, SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE FOR ITS COMMON WELFARE."

MINNESOTA REPRESENTATIVE HAROLD KNUTSON MET WITH ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ZIMMERMAN REQUESTING INFORMATION ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHIPPEWAS IN HIS STATE. ZIMMERMAN WROTE BACK TO HIM ABOUT THE AFOREMENTIONED QUESTION:

> "SEVERAL DAYS AGO, YOU TALKED WITH ME ON THE TELEPHONE ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF ORGANIZING ALL THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS UNDER A COMMON CONSTITUTION. IN THIS CONNECTION, I AM SENDING YOU A COPY OF A LETTER TO ACTING SUPERINTENDENT MONKS WHICH MAKES IT CLEAR THAT UNDER THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO ORGANIZE THE CHIPPEWAS ON EACH RESERVATION. I CAN SEE NO REASON WHY THE CHIPPEWAS SHOULD NOT ORGANIZE A GENERAL FEDERATION OR GENERAL COUNCIL, PERHAPS MADE UP OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH RESERVATION."

COMMISSIONER COLLIER IN JUNE 22, 1933 VOICED A SIMILAR OPINION TO THE PONSFORD DELEGATE FRANK CLARK:

> "SINCE THE CHIPPEWAS OF MINNESOTA DO NOT RESIDE ON THE SAME RESERVATION BUT ON SEVERAL RESERVATIONS, IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE SEVERAL BANDS WILL HAVE TO ORGANIZE INDIVIDUALLY."

THAT WOULD SEEM TO END THE QUESTION OF ORGANIZATION. WRONG. AS SOON AS THIS OPINION WAS VOICED AMONG THE INDIAN OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, OPPOSITION WAS HEARD. TECHNICALLY, FROM A STRICTLY ORGANIZATIONAL STANDPOINT DRAFTING CONSTITUTIONS, RUNNING ELECTIONS, ESTABLISHING COOPERATIVES, RUNNING REHABILITATION PROJECTS AND PROVIDING EXPENSES FOR VISITING TRIBAL OFFICIALS COULD MEAN A TERRIFIC AMOUNT OF DUPLICATION OF DEALING WITH INDIVIDUAL RESERVATIONS. THERE WAS ALSO THE PROBLEM OF DIVIDING TRIBAL ASSETS SHOULD THE RESERVATIONS ORGANIZE INDIVIDUALLY. SO FROM THE INDIAN OFFICE'S STANDPOINT THEY COULD ONLY SEE CONFUSION AHEAD OF THEM.

BESIDES ON SOME RESERVATIONS LIKE GRAND PORTAGE WHERE NEARLY THE ENTIRE RESERVATION HAD TO BE BOUGHT WITH LAND ACQUISITION FUNDS AND WHERE THEY HAD NO LOCAL ORGANIZATION GRANTING A CHARTER WOULD SEEM FUTILE SINCE MANY OF THE INDIAN OFFICE'S PROJECTS WERE DESIGNED FOR A LANDED GROUP. ONE HAD TO HAVE LANDS TO BUILD HOUSES ON FOR REHABILITATION, ONE HAD TO HAVE LANDS TO USE THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION MONEY AND AN ORGANIZATION THAT COULD TAKE LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOANS. ONLY A FEW OF THE RESERVATIONS HAD AN ADEQUATE LAND BASE OR POLITICAL ORGANIZATION TO APPLY FOR A CHARTER.

IRONICALLY ENOUGH THE VERY THING THAT FORCED THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA FROM THEIR BROTHERS THE RED LAKE CHIPPEWA WAS TO PROVIDE A MEANS TO THE INDIAN OFFICE TO ORGANIZE THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA AS A "TRIBE" WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT. ON THE SURFACE IT WOULD SEEM THAT ONLY HARRY HOUDINI COULD ESCAPE THE PLAIN LANGUAGE OF THE ACT.

THE TWO INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE OFFICES THINKING WERE JACOB MUNNELL AND EDWARD RODGERS. JACOB MUNNELL WAS BOTH AN INDIAN OFFICE BUREAUCRAT AND DELEGATE TO HIS TRIBE. COMING FROM THE LEECH LAKE RESERVATION MUMMELL WORKED HIS WAY UP THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE INDIAN SERVICE TO A POSITION OF AUTHORITY BY THE TIME THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION WAS TO BE IMPLEMENTED. HE WAS ALSO THE PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF THE TRIBAL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS. EDWARD RODGERS WAS THE CASS COUNTY ATTORNEY. A POSITION HE HELD SINCE 1912. HE HAD SERVED ON COMMITTEES IN THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL PRIOR TO 1920.

THESE TWO INDIVIDUALS WERE WELL INFORMED ABOUT RESERVATION PROBLEMS ENUMERATED ABOVE. THEY REALIZED THAT IF THE RESERVATIONS ORGANIZED INDIVIDUALLY IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE A CENTRAL TRIBAL GOVERNMENT COULD BE ESTABLISHED. MUNNELL WAS PART OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL TEAM FORMED BY SUPERINTENDENT BURNS TO EDUCATE THE INDIANS ABOUT I.R.A. IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT PREVIOUSLY LOCAL INDIANS DISTRUSTED THE IDEA OF FORMING AN INTRA-RESERVATION COUNCIL BECAUSE WHITE EARTH WOULD DOMINATE IT THE SAME WAY THEY DID THE LAST ONE OR SO THEY THOUGHT. MARGARET FISERON OCTOBER 3, 1935 SENT A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO COLLIER ABOUT TRIBAL ORGANIZATION. IN THE FIRST PART FISHERON SAYS THIS IS "... THE FIRST TIME THE CHIPPEWAS HAVE BEEN WILLING TO PULL TOGETHER AND ALONG COMES THE OFFICE AND SAYS NO, ORGANIZE AS RESERVATIONS. I CANNOT EMPHASIZE TOO STRONGLY WHAT A MISTAKE I THINK THAT IS." FURTHER ALONG IN HER REPORT SHE EMPHASIZES THE POTENTIALITIES FOR USE OF THE CHIPPEWA IN MINNESOTA FUND INTER-RESERVATIONALLY AND THE COMPLICATIONS OF DIVIDING THE FUNDS. APPARENTLY AIDED BY THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM. "...IT HAS BECOME FINALLY FIXED IN THEIR MINDS THAT THIS (FUND) <u>IS TRIBAL</u> AND NO SINGLE RESERVATION IS ENTITLED TO ANY OF THAT MONEY FOR ITSELF. THAT KEEPS THE TRIBAL UNITY CONCRETELY BEFORE THEM."

"UNDER THAT TREATY (I.E. ALLOTMENT ACT) WE WERE RECOGNIZED AS COMPRISING ONE TRIBE AND TREATED AS SUCH BY THE UNITED STATES. WE WERE JOINTLY INTERESTED IN LANDS AND OTHER TRIBAL PROPERTY ACQUIRED BY OUR JOINT EFFORTS AND WE HAVE BEEN TREATED AS ONE NATION SINCE THAT TIME."

THE DELEGATES HAD APPROVED OF THE IDEA OF FORMING COLLECTIVELY IN A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BASED NOT UPON RESERVATIONS BUT COMMUNITIES. IN THE FIRST CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS THE T.E.C. WAS TO BE ELECTED BY A MEETING OF TRIBAL DELEGATES WHO REPRESENTED THE COMMUNITIES OF THE SEVERAL RESERVATIONS. THESE DELEGATES SELECTED AMONG THEMSELVES BY OPEN VOTE TWO COMMITTEE MEN TO THE T.E.C. THE CONCEPT OF RESERVATIONAL REPRESENTATION HAD NO BEEN ALLOWED TO FULLY SURFACE. IN FURTHERING THEIR ARGUMENT RODGERS AND MUNNELL POINTED OUT THAT:

"...WE ARE NOT RESIDENTS OF ANY ONE RESERVATION. THAT WE HAVE NO ORGANIZED BAND, AND THAT UNDER THIS REORGANIZATION ACT WE CANNOT INCORPORATE SEPARATELY WE DECIDED THAT THE CHIPPEWAS OF MINNESOTA SHOULD BE INCORPORATED UNDER ONE ORGANIZATION AND WE TRUST THAT YOU WILL APPROVE OF THE ACTION TAKEN."

BEFORE PROCEEDING ON TO THE ALLOTMENT ACT AND HOW IT WAS USED TO ORGANIZE THE RESERVATIONS INTO A "TRIBE" A LITTLE DIGRESSION IS NEEDED.

RESIDENCE OF A TRIBAL MEMBER ON A RESERVATION WAS A BUILDING BLOCK MUNNELL AND RODGERS USED TO SUPPORT THEIR CONTENTION. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS HAD CHANGED DRAMATICALLY SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF I.R.A. THE CHIPPEWA HAD TO VOTE ACCORDING TO RESERVATION USING THE ABSENTEE BALLOT IF THEY WERE VOTING AWAY FROM THERE RESERVATION. IN VOTING TO SEND DELEGATES TO FORM A CONSTITUTION THE INDIAN OFFICE MADE A REGULATION TO GOVERN INDIAN PARTICIPATION IN THEIR SELECTION.

"...WITHIN THE LEECH LAKE RESERVATION, THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER OF INDIANS RESIDING IN SAID VILLAGE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THIS RESERVATION BUT ARE ENROLLED ON OTHER RESERVATIONS OF CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM THIS VILLAGE. THEY SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTION OF DELEGATES IN THIS VILLAGE."

THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE I.R.A. DEFINITION OF INDIAN IN SECTION 19.

"THE TERM "INDIAN" AS USED IN THIS ACT SHALL INCLUDE ALL PERSONS OF INDIAN DESCENT WHO ARE MEMBERS OF ANY RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBE NOW UNDER FEDERAL JURISDICTION, AND ALL PERSONS WHO ARE DESCENDANTS OF SUCH MEMBERS WHO WERE, ON JUNE 1, 1934 RESIDING WITHIN THE PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF ANY INDIAN RESERVATION."

JOHN COLLIER SAID THAT "THE OBJECT OF THIS DEFINITION IS TO INCLUDE ALL INDIAN PERSONS WHO, BY REASON OF RESIDENCE, ARE DEFINITELY MEMBERS OF INDIAN GROUPS, AS WELL AS PERSONS WHO ARE INDIANS BY DEGREE OF BLOOD." WHAT THIS MEANS IS THAT THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT WAS BASED ON RECOGNIZING INDIAN COMMUNITIES AS THE FOUNDATION OF INDIAN LIFE. THE MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY ARE THE ONES WHO DETERMINE WHO IS AND WHO ISN'T INDIAN AND NOT OUTDATED BAND ROLLS WHOSE DESCENDANTS MAY OR MAY NOT IDENTIFY AS INDIANS.

WE SEE HERE AT ONCE THE APPEAL MUNNELL'S CONSTITUTION HAD FOR THE WASHINGTON OFFICE. INCIDENTALLY THE MUNNELL CONSTITUTION DEFINED A TRIBAL MEMBER AS...

> "ALL OF THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS DULY REGISTERED ON THE APPROVED ROLLS OF ANY OF THE ABOVE NAMED RESERVATIONS OR BANDS OF INDIANS."

THE INDIAN OFFICE AT THIS POINT, HAD A CHANCE TO SAVE ITSELF A LOT OF WORK IF THE CHIPPEWA ORGANIZED INTO A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND IT COULD FOCUS THE INDIANS ATTENTION ON THEIR COMMUNITIES.

THE MUNNELL DRAFT OF THE CONSTITUTION EMBODIED THIS CONCEPT OF A "TRIBE" COVERING SEVERAL RESERVATIONS. NOW ALTHOUGH THIS IDEA WAS APPROVED BY THE DELEGATES THEY STILL DIDN'T WANT THE POWER OF THE "TRIBE" CHANNELED INTO THIS ORGANIZATION. IN A MEMORANDUM FROM ZIMMERMAN TO BURNS ON MARCH 1936 HE SAID THAT:

> "WE UNDERSTAND FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES WHO MET WITH THE TRIBAL DELEGATES THAT THE TRIBE DOES NOT WISH TO GIVE THE TRIBAL ORGANIZATION POWER TO CONTROL THE LOCAL RESERVATION OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND WISHES TO LEAVE THESE LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FREE TO OPERATE IN AN INDEPENDENT WAY AS THEY HAVE BEEN DOING IN THE PAST. THIS IS ENTIRELY ACCEPTABLE TO THIS OFFICE, BUT WE ADVISE THE INCLUSION OF A STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT IN THE CONSTITUTION TO PREVENT CONTROVERSY IN THE FUTURE. SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD CARRY MUCH ASSURANCE TO THE RED LAKE RESERVATION IN THE EVENT THEY DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRIBAL ORGANIZATION."

THERE WAS QUITE A NUMBER OF INDIANS RESIDING ON RESERVATIONS THEY WEREN'T BORN ON AS EVIDENCED IN CHART #8 IN THE BACK OF THIS REPORT. THE INDIAN OFFICE REGULATION WAS NEEDED OF THOSE INDIANS WERE TO BE GIVEN THEIR SAY IN THE FORMATION OF THE TRIBAL GOVERNMENT. THE DELEGATES MEETING WAS HELD TO DETERMINE THE TYPE OF ORGANIZATION DEEMED MOST DESIRABLE TO THE INDIANS. AS IT TURNED OUT THE REGULATION WAS TO PROVE TO BE THE BASIS FOR DETERMINING FUTURE RESIDENCE ON RESERVATIONS. IT WAS PERHAPS WELL SUITED TO THE TIMES SINCE EACH MEMBER OF THE "TRIBE" WORKED AND VOTED FOR THE COMMON GOOD BUT LATER WITH THE FORMATION OF THE SUB-CHARTERS, WHERE THE THEME WAS LOCAL BUSINESS, FRICTION DEVELOPED BETWEEN LOCAL MEMBERS OF THE RESERVATION BANDS AND THOSE WHO HAD COME FROM AFAR.

BACK TO THE ALLOTMENT ACT. AFTER COLLIER RECEIVED THE RODGERS-MUNNELL LETTER AND THE MINUTES OF THE DELEGATES MEETING HE SUBMITTED THE QUESTION TO THE ACTING SOLICITOR WHETHER OR NOT THE CHIPPEWAS COULD ORGANIZE UNDER THE I.R.A. AS THE DELEGATES WANTED OR WHETHER THEY WOULD HAVE TO ORGANIZE THEIR RESERVATIONS INDIVIDUALLY. IN OPENING HIS REMARKS IN THE AUGUST 27, 1935 MEMORANDUM HE NOTED THAT, "THERE IS NO QUESTION, I THINK, BUT THAT THE ENTIRE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE MAY ORGANIZE UNDER A SINGLE CONSTITUTION AND CHARTER." HE CITED AND OPINION DATED NOVEMBER 7, 1934:

"IN MY OPINION THE WHEELER-HOWARD ACT PERMITS THE ORGANIZATION OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

(a) A BAND OR TRIBE OF INDIANS WHICH HAS ONLY A PARTIAL INTEREST IN THE LANDS OF A SINGLE RESERVATION.
(b) A BAND OR TRIBE WHICH HAS RIGHTS COEXTENSIVE WITH A SINGLE RESERVATION.
(c) A GROUP OF INDIANS RESIDING ON A SINGLE RESERVATION, WHO MAY BE RECOGNIZED AS A "TRIBE" FOR PURPOSES OF THE WHEELER-HOWARD ACT REGARDLESS OF THEIR FORMER AFFILIATIONS.
(d) A TRIBE WHOSE MEMBERS ARE SCATTERED OVER TWO OR MORE RESERVATIONS IN WHICH THEY HAVE PROPERTY RIGHTS AS MEMBERS OF SUCH TRIBE.

SINCE THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS HAD THE "CHIPPEWA IN MINNESOTA FUND" THEY DID HAVE PROPERTY RIGHTS TOGETHER. ANOTHER QUESTION WAS WHETHER OR NOT THE CHIPPEWA TRIBE IN MINNESOTA STILL EXISTED OR NOT SINCE THEY HAD BROKEN OFF WITH RED LAKE AND HAD CEASED TO FUNCTION AS A UNIT. THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT HELD IN SOLICITOR'S OPINIONS M. 27381, APPROVED AUGUST 13, 1934 THEY EXISTED.

THE ACTING SOLICITOR WAS FACED WITH A MORE COMPLEX PROBLEM:

"APPARENTLY IT IS THE DESIRE OF THE INDIANS CONCERNED TO ORGANIZE NEITHER AS SEPARATE BANDS OR RESERVATIONS NOR A AN ENTIRE TRIBE, BUT RATHER TO INCLUDE IN THE GENERAL ORGANIZATION ALL THE BANDS OF MINNESOTA CHIPPEWAS OTHER THAN RED LAKE BAND."

NOW THE UNITED STATES HAS RECOGNIZED RED LAKE AS A BAND INDEPENDENT OF THE REST OF THE CHIPPEWAS IN MINNESOTA. IN THE COURT CASE IN WHICH RED LAKE WAS SUED BY THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL IN AN EFFORT TO PARTITION RED LAKE'S ASSETS (THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MINNESOTA VS. UNITED STATES, THE RED LAKE BAND OF INDIANS OF MINNESOTA, INTERVENERS, NO. H-76, DECIDED JANUARY 14, 1935) THE COURT HELD THEY HAD SOLE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR RESERVATION AND ITS ASSETS.

THE SECOND MAJOR REASON FOR THE INDIANS OF THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA AGENCY TO BASE THEIR CLAIM WAS THE ALLOTMENT ACT (ACT OF JANUARY 14, 1889 25 STAT. 642).