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REPORT  
of the  
MINNESOTA INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION



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Minnesota Indian Affairs Commission  
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55155



State of Minnesota  
**INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

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117 University Avenue  
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November 26, 1974

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Speaker of the House  
State of Minnesota  
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St. Paul, Minnesota

Honorable Alec G. Olson  
President of the Senate  
State of Minnesota  
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St. Paul, Minnesota

Gentlemen:

Pursuant with Session Laws of 1965, Chapter 888, Section 8, Subdivision 5, the Indian Affairs Commission respectfully submits the following report to the Governor and to the Members of the Minnesota State Legislature.

As you are well aware, the MIAC was beset with numerous internal and external problems which nearly resulted in its collapse; however, we have successfully negotiated the difficulties and accept the challenge for the future.

It is my hopes and aspirations that both the Executive and Legislative Branch of Government will seriously consider acting upon the recommendations which are identified in this report.

In conclusion, this report remains valuable as a resource because, in a time of social distrust and unrest, understanding of the differences that separate people must be sought. It is my hope that this report will, in some degree, provide some of that understanding.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mrs. Vernell Wabasha*  
Mrs. Vernell Wabasha  
Acting Chairperson

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT

Prior to the creation of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Commission in 1963, the special problems of Minnesota's Native American population was a matter of concern to elected public officials. Most observers trace much of this interest back to the administration of Governor Luther Youngdahl (1947-51). He was solely responsible for advocating and initiating a meeting of state governors for the purpose of discussing the needs of Native Americans within their states. A primary result of that meeting was the creation of the Governors' Interstate Indian Council. This Council was the forerunner of the state Indian Affairs Commissions. Minnesota, according to available research, was the first state to establish such an agency by act of the Legislature. Following the leadership and intuitiveness of Minnesota, other states proceeded to enact legislation (using the Minnesota statutes as a model in most cases) to create their own commissions.

In this report we attempt to set forth a rationale for the Minnesota Indian Affairs Commission, hereafter called the MIAC. It originally was charged with the responsibility of identifying problems by conducting and fostering research so that upon recommendation to the Legislature, remedial legislation could be enacted to rectify identified problem areas when possible.

Primarily, the MIAC is responsible for investigating matters in the area of employment, education, housing, health and welfare, civil and human rights and law and order. These areas are covered as individual topics in this report.

## Creation of Commission

### INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

3.922 INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION. Subdivision 1. Creation, membership. There is created a state commission on Indian Affairs to consist of the following members: The governor or a member of his official staff designated by him, the commissioner of education, the commissioner of public welfare, the commissioner<sup>es</sup> of natural resources, the commissioner of human rights, and the commissioner of economic development, who shall be ex officio members thereof, but each may designate a member of his staff to serve in his place; the chairman of the Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, Nett Lake and White Earth reservation business committee, each of whom shall be an ex officio member thereof if their reservation is not represented by a voting member, but each may designate another member of their committee or another person of special qualifications by unanimous vote of their reservation business committee, to serve in his place; eight persons who are of at least one-fourth Indian ancestry, one of whom shall be a member of the Red Lake band of Chippewa Indians, two of whom shall be members of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, with one to be elected to represent the Fond du Lac, Nett Lake, and Grand Portage reservations and the other to be selected to represent the Mille Lacs, White Earth, and Leech Lake Reservations, one of who shall be a member of Sioux Indian tribes, one of whom shall be a resident of the city of Duluth, one a resident of the city of St. Paul, and two residents of the city of Minneapolis, all such eight members shall be appointed by the respective Indian groups which they represent and shall be subject to removal by such appointing group; three members of the state house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, three members of the state senate appointed by the committee on committees of the senate.

Commission members appointed to represent the state house of representatives and the state senate: shall no longer serve on the commission at such time as they are no longer members of the bodies which they represent, and upon such circumstances, their offices shall be vacant. Ex officio members or their designees on the commission shall not be voting members of the commission.

The duties of the commission as explicitly defined are as follows:

Subd. 6. Duties. The commission shall have as its primary duty to acquire information in the fields of employment and housing, civil rights, education, health and welfare, and law and order so that:

(a) Through its reports and recommendations adequate legislation may be enacted when it is required;

(b) Plans and programs may be worked out with Indian people who need assistance in finding employment, acquiring education, improving housing, getting medical care, developing natural resources and generally in becoming self-sufficient.

Further duties of the commission shall be:

(a) To provide information for and direction to a program designed to assist our Indian citizens to assume all the rights, privileges, and duties of full citizenship;

(b) To coordinate and cooperate with the many governmental and private agencies providing services to Indian people on the local, state, and national level;

(c) To help implement the findings of various private and governmental studies dealing with Indian needs in Minnesota.



## MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA RESERVATION

Following are brief descriptions of the six reservations of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe:

### White Earth Reservation

The White Earth Reservation is located in northeastern Minnesota in Becker, Mahnomen and Clearwater Counties. The reservation is approximately 60 miles southwest of Bemidji, Minnesota. The White Earth Reservation was established in 1867 by a treaty with the U.S. Government. Much of the land was passed from Indian ownership until today there remains 27,560 acres of Indian land. Of this amount, 25,567 acres are tribal land and 1,993 acres are individual Indian allotted land. There are also 28,555 acres of U.S. Government land which was purchased for the use of the Indians. There are approximately 2,048 Indian people residing within the reservation boundaries. The main Indian communities are Ponsford, White Earth, Naytahwaush and Rice Lake. Timber work, construction, and seasonal farm labor are the main source of employment. The United States Indian Health Service operates a Health Clinic in the Community of White Earth. The Reservation Business Committee is very active in attempting to develop industry on the reservation.

### Mille Lacs Reservation

The Mille Lacs Lake Reservation is located in east central Minnesota, in Aitkin, Mille Lacs, and Pine counties. The Mille Lacs Reservations was established in 1855 by a treaty with the U. S. Government. Most of the Indian land has passed from Indian ownership. There remains today a total of 3,600 acres of Indian land of which 3,532 acres are

tribal land and 68 acres are individual Indian allotments. The estimated population of the reservation is 800. The major Indian community is at Vineland where most of the Indian people are in the low income bracket because of chronic unemployment. Some of the members do supplement their income in woods work and gathering of wild rice and maple sap. A few of the members also sell their native arts and crafts such as birchbark canoes, drums, bird houses, etc. There is a very active Community Action Program which provides many needed services. One of the finest Indian museums in the state is located there and is available for visiting during the summer months.

#### Leech Lake Reservation

The Leech Lake Reservation is located in north central Minnesota in the heart of the lake country. It is located largely in Beltrami, Cass, and Itasca counties. The Leech Lake Reservation was established in 1855 by a treaty with the United States Government. Within the reservation boundaries there remains today a total of 27,762 acres of Indian land. Of this amount, 14,069 acres represent tribal land and 12,693 acres represent individual Indian allotments. Most of the balance of the land within the reservation boundaries is within the Chippewa National Forest. There are many lakes throughout the reservation, the largest of which are Leech Lake, Cass Lake, and Lake Winnepigoshish. Timber work and construction make up the major part of the livelihood for the area residents. The Indian people also derive some income from the harvest of wild rice, blueberries and maple sap. The Indian population within the reservation is estimated at 2,800. The major Indian communities are Cass Lake, Squaw Lake, Bena, Ball Club, Inger, Deer River, Federal Dam and Onigum. The U.S. Indian Health Service operates an Indian hospital at Cass Lake. There is also a

Community Action Program which offers needed services to the reservation. The Reservation Business Committee is continually striving for development of industry and have now completed a large modern camping ground and marina complex at Onigum Point in Leech Lake. They have developed wild rice paddies. Through their efforts they have established a Tribally owned "Mini-Mart" that is owned and operated by the Indian people of the community.

#### Bois Forte (Nett Lake) Reservation

The Bois Forte Reservation is located in northeast Minnesota, approximately 40 miles south of the Canadian border in Koochiching and St. Louis counties. The Bois Forte Reservation was established in 1866 by a treaty with the United States Government. Some of the land has passed from Indian ownership. There remains today a total of 41,778 acres of Indian land within the reservation boundaries. Of this amount, 30,034 acres are tribal land and 11,774 acres are individual Indian allotments. Included in the tribal land is 1,060 acres located on Vermilion Lake, about ten miles southeast of Tower. The reservation is located in sparsely populated regions. There are approximately 600 members of the reservation living on or around the village of Nett Lake and about 80 on the Indian land at Vermilion Lake near Tower. The 1,060 acres at Vermilion Lake was set aside as the Vermilion Lake Reservation by Executive Order on December 20, 1881. This small tract is part of the Bois Forte Reservation. Because of the lack of employment on the reservation, many of the Indians must seek employment elsewhere. There is a active Community Action Program, offering many services. The Reservation

Business Committee has developed a tract of land for commercial rice paddies.

#### Grand Portage Reservation

The Grand Portage Reservation is located in the extreme north-east corner of Minnesota, approximately 150 miles northeast of Duluth, in Cook County. The Grand Portage Reservation was established in 1854 by a treaty with the United States Government. Some of the land has passed from Indian ownership. There are today 44,673 acres of land belonging to the Grand Portage Reservation, 12,353 acres of Band land. The estimated population of the Reservation is 250, which is concentrated in and near the village of Grand Portage. The people receive their income from timber work, trapping, and construction work in other areas. Also, some of them obtain part of their income by hunting and fishing, and through guide work. The reservation is located in one of the most scenic settings on the Lake Superior shoreline. The Grand Portage National Monument was established by Congress and is in the process of development. There is a Community Action Program which is quite active and offers much needed services.

#### Fond du Lac Reservation

The Fond du Lac Reservation is located near Cloquet, Minnesota, approximately 15 miles west of Duluth, in St. Louis and Carlton Counties. Much of the land within the reservation boundaries has passed from Indian ownership. There remains today, approximately 21,000 acres of Indian land. Of this total, 4,000 acres represent tribal land and 17,000 acres, is classed as forest land. The balance is classed as agriculture and other types. There are a few lakes and streams on the

reservation. The population of the reservation is estimated at 700. The Indian people reside primarily in and near the communities of Cloquet and Sawyer. There is employment available at forest product plants in Cloquet.

#### Red Lake Reservation

The Red Lake Indian Reservation is unique among Minnesota Chippewa reservations because it was never ceded by treaty to the United States. The Red Lake Band was the first group to organize in Minnesota under a written constitution. This was done in 1918 when a General Council was established as the governing body. Unlike the other Chippewa bands, the Red Lake Band did not accept the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Red Lake is a closed reservation and therefore was not open to homestead entries and the land has not been allotted to individual Indians. The entire area remains in tribal ownership.

The Red Lake Indian Reservation is located in north central Minnesota in Beltrami and Clearwater Counties. It consists of 564,409 tribally owned acres of land. The band also owns scattered tracts of land extending up to the Canadian border and includes some of the Northwest Angle amounting to over 157,000 additional acres. The total area is about the size of Rhode Island. The land encloses Lower Red Lake and part of Upper Red Lake. This vast body of water is the third largest fresh water lake within the boundaries of the United States. All of the land is held in trust by the United States Government. Individual members may apply for land use permits for homesites and agricultural purposes. A 1964 study showed 4,663 members on the rolls and over 3,000 people living on the reservation. The majority of the people live in the villages of Red Lake, Redby and Ponemah.

The economy of the reservation is based on the utilization of the vast timber holdings of the band and the manufacture of the timber into usable wood products. The band owns and operates a large sawmill in the village of Redby. This sawmill first began operation in the late 19th century and recently a new electric automated mill was built to handle all of the types of timber and to facilitate industries to locate on the reservation.

The Red Lake Fisheries Association has been in operation for over 30 years. This industry produces fish that are sent elsewhere for processing and is managed on a sustained yield basis which is expected to be important to the economy of Red Lake for years to come.

The Band has reclaimed over 9,000 acres of wasteland which is now suitable for the propagation of wild rice, trapping, and duck hunting. State and Federal programs have established an arts and crafts training course and a store building is now set up as an outlet for the finished products. The Indians of Red Lake are locally governed by an eleven man Tribal Council elected to four year terms of office. The Tribal Council is the legislative body of the band and operates under a constitution and By-laws approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Community Action Program, the Public Health Service Hospital, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the reservation's public school system furnish employment to many people at Red Lake.

Since the Red Lake Reservation is in tribal ownership, the land is totally exempt from state and county jurisdiction. The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians have their own tribal court, their own police force to enforce law and order on the reservation.

## MINNESOTA SIOUX RESERVATIONS

### Lower Sioux Reservation

The Lower Sioux Reservation is located two miles south of Morton, Minnesota, abutting the Minnesota River in Redwood County. This reservation came into being during the period 1887 to 1893 when Congress appropriated funds to purchase lands for the landless Minnesota Sioux. The land purchased during this period can only be assigned to those Mdewakanton Sioux who were residing in Minnesota on May 20, 1866, and their descendants. The land originally purchased amounted to 623 acres. The reservation was organized under the provisions of the Act, and additional 1120 acres of land was purchased.

The governing body is called the "Community Council of the Lower Sioux Indian Reservation" composed of five members who are elected by qualified voters of the community. Committeemen are elected for a term of two years and they elect a President, Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and an Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

Approximately 1500 acres of the Tribal land is cleared as agricultural land and the balance is timber, brush, and other types. The land is never allotted to individual members but is assigned for homesites. The resident Indian population is around 100. Some families retain original assignments of farm land and receive a crop share rental from the farming of their assignments.

There is no employment available immediately adjacent to the reservation. The members seek employment nearby in Redwood Falls and other areas. They are eligible for and receive the same services from public and private agencies as do other citizens of the area.

## Upper Sioux Reservation

The Upper Sioux Reservation is located two miles south of Granite Falls on the Minnesota River in Yellow Medicine County. The Upper Sioux Community came into being about the same time as the other Minnesota Sioux Communities.

Land purchases amounting to 746 acres were made in 1938 but the Upper Sioux Community did not complete organization under the Indian Reorganization Act. Factionalism reigned supreme and this internal dissension prevented the consummation of the plan. The Bureau of Indian Affairs dropped the matter and a Board of Trustees was set up chiefly to advise the Agency Superintendent on the use of rehabilitation funds. This group operates under a document entitled "Provisions for Governing the Upper Sioux Community". The governing body is known as the Upper Sioux Community Board of Trustees. The Board consists of five members elected every four years. They represent the community negotiating with Federal, State and local governments. The provisions for governing are pretty much in line with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Lower Sioux and Prairie Island groups.

All but about seventy acres of this land is cleared as farm land with only a few acres under Community control. Most of the land is under individual assignment to members of the Community. There are approximately seventy members residing on the reservation.

There is very little employment on the reservation and members must seek employment elsewhere.

## Prairie Island Reservation

The Prairie Island Reservation is located in Goodhue County on the west bank of the Mississippi River some fourteen miles north of Red Wing Minnesota. The Prairie Island Indians are mainly members of the Mdewak-



kanton Band and are descendants of the Santee Sioux Indians who remained in Minnesota at the time of the removal of the main band to Nebraska after the Sioux uprising or who had subsequently returned. Lands were purchased for them in 1891 amounting to 120 acres at Prairie Island and were stipulated to be used for the landless Mdewakanton Sioux residing in Minnesota on May 20, 1866 , and their descendants.

Under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 an additional 414 acres were purchased for other Indian residents whose names appeared on the Minnesota Sioux rolls. Under the same act the reservation was organized and they have a Constitution and Bylaws approved on July 20, 1936. They also have a Corporate Charter ratified by members on July 23, 1937.

The governing body is called the Community Council of the Prairie Island Indian reservation and is comprised of five members elected for two years.

All but about twenty acres of the 534 acres under their jurisdiction is cleared as farm land. The land is assigned to eligible members for homesites only, and the balance is leased for tribal income with leasing preference going to members of the reservation. Generally, those who work are employed in Hastings, Red Wing, or the Twin Cities.

#### Shakopee-Mdewakanton Reservation

The Shakopee-Mdewakanton Reservation has been known as the Prior Lake Reservation until their organization under the Indian Reorganization Act on November 28, 1969. This area, consisting of 258 acres, is located between Shakopee and Prior Lake, Minnesota.

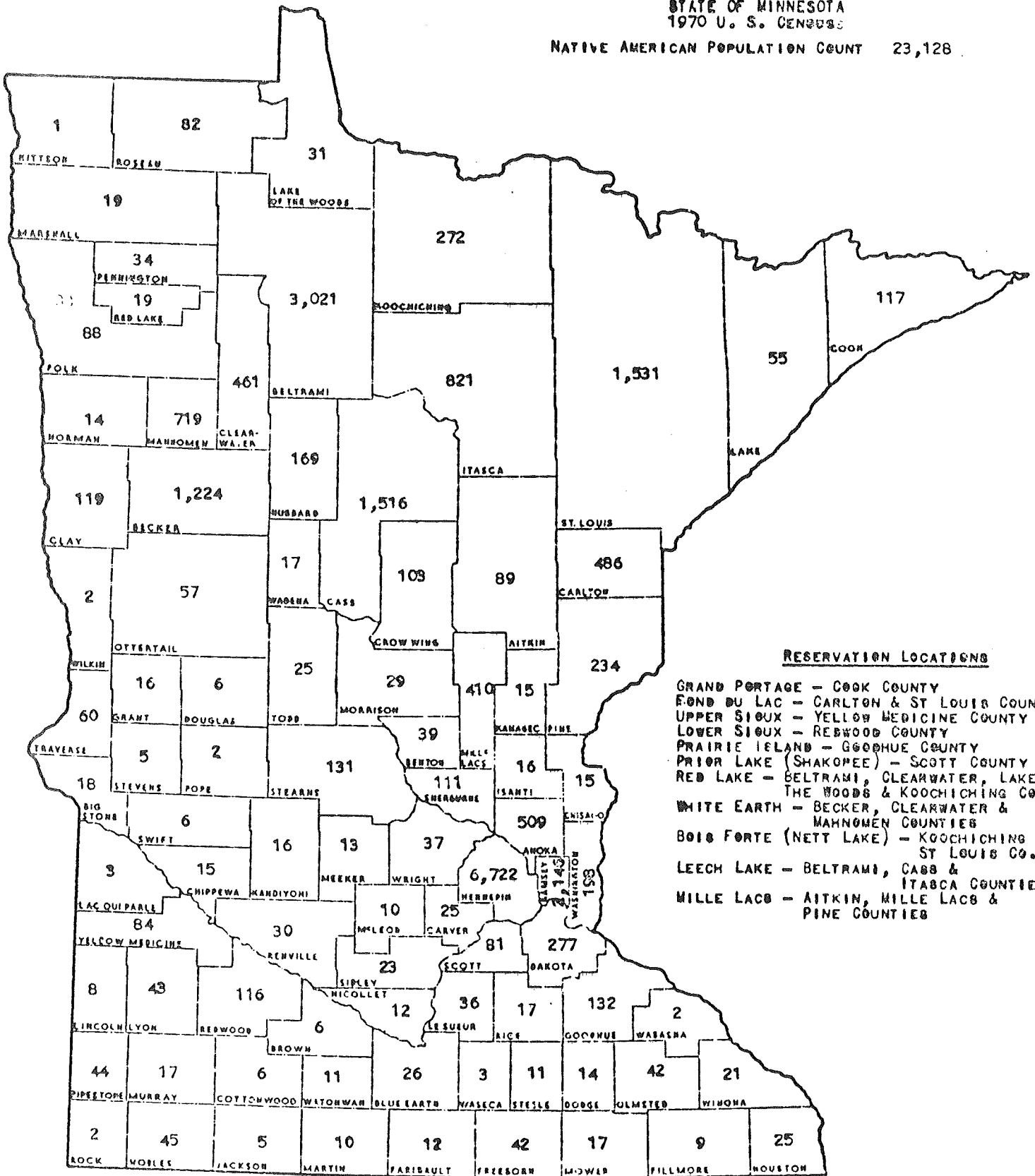
Its history parallels that of the other Minnesota Sioux as to origin-ation and settlement.

The governing body is called the Shakopee-Mdewakanton Sioux General

Council composed of all persons qualified to vote in community elections. There is also a Business Council consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary-Treasurer, which performs duties authorized by the General Council. Office is held for four years and selected by popular vote under election procedures prescribed by the General Council.

Approximately 175 acres are cleared as agricultural land and the balance is in timber, brush and other types. The resident population now is about 100, but there will undoubtedly be a decided increase due to the program of issuing land assignments to eligible members for homesites. This area is located very close to the large employment centers bordering the Twin Cities and is an ideal location for a home.

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
 1970 U. S. CENSUS  
 NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION COUNT 23,128



RESERVATION LOCATIONS

- GRAND PORTAGE - COOK COUNTY
- FOND DU LAC - CARLTON & ST LOUIS COUNTIES
- UPPER SIOUX - YELLOW MEDICINE COUNTY
- LOWER SIOUX - REDWOOD COUNTY
- PRAIRIE ISLAND - GOODHUE COUNTY
- PRIOR LAKE (SHAKOPEE) - SCOTT COUNTY
- RED LAKE - BELTRAMI, CLEARWATER, LAKE OF THE WOODS & KOOCHICHING CO.
- WHITE EARTH - BECKER, CLEARWATER & MAHANOMEN COUNTIES
- BOIS FORTÉ (NETT LAKE) - KOOCHICHING & ST LOUIS CO.
- LEECH LAKE - BELTRAMI, CASS & ITABCA COUNTIES
- MILLE LACS - AITKIN, MILLE LACS & PINE COUNTIES

Minnesota Department of Health  
Statistics

Natural Increase, Minnesota Indians, 1950-1970

Year	N Births (A)	N Deaths (B)	Natural Increase (C)	Population (Census Figures) (D)	Natural Increase Rate Per 1,000 Population
Total	15,547	3,052	12,495		
1950	599	127	472	12,533	37.7
1951	592	151	441		
1952	598	132	466		
1953	579	132	447		
1954	651	120	531		
1955	684	134	550		
1956	633	134	499		
1957	708	157	551		
1958	682	142	540		
1959	828	143	685		
1960	820	141	679	15,496	43.8
1961	808	151	657		
1962	833	140	693		
1963	824	135	689		
1964	865	130	735		
1965	842	131	711		
1966	804	160	644		
1967	767	174	593		
1968	768	187	581		
1969	831	161	670		
1970	831	170	661	23,128	28.6

Based on the above data, it is possible to validly increase the population figure 18-22% at this point of time. Therefore, for purposes of this report we project 28,000 as a more representative figure and it too may be a conservative estimate.

## Commission Activities

(from Oct. 1, 1973)

Since its last report, the agency became involved in serious internal problems which were difficult to surmount and almost led to the collapse of MIAC operations. These problems first came to light in November, 1972, when the office of the attorney general, acting on a report of the Public Examiner, initiated an investigation of the activities of the previous administration. During the period of the investigation (Nov. 1972 - May 1973), many of the duties of the MIAC were neglected because of a suspension.

(These remarks are not a reflection on the performance of other staff members. Indeed, had it not been for the **dedication and determination** of an able staff member and certain commission members, the agency likely would have been totally inoperative during this time.)

The difficulties and investigation came to a climax in the spring of 1973 when the commission accepted the resignation of the executive director effective June 1, 1973.

The MIAC operated with a skelton staff until the current executive director was able to assume his duties in October, 1973. Because of these internal problems, the first order of business was to establish credibility for the agency and this has been an on-going process. Although this has not been an easy task, the commission and its staff accept the challenge. It appears that this agency has some credibility with other state agencies and political sub-divisions, but we have not been able to establish support with all Indian constituents (most notably with the Tribal Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe).

The reasons are varied and complex without a single solution, but we remain dedicated to achieve a cooperative relationship with the Tribal Executive Committee.

During the past year the MIAC has held seven meetings at various locations so that as wide a representation as possible could be present to discuss needs and desires. These meetings were conducted at Bemidji (2 meetings), Duluth (2 meetings) and St. Paul (3 meetings). The results of these meetings were specific request to render an array of assistance which was in most cases followed up and accomplished.

In January, 1973, prior to the convening of the Legislative session, the MIAC along with a number of other organizations co-sponsored a Native American Legislative Conference. This endeavor was the first of its kind in Minnesota. In attendance were approximately 150 Indians people from throughout the state. The result of this conference was the enactment of three legislative bills. An analysis leads us to believe (co-sponsoring groups) that the conference was indeed a success; however, elected official participation was not nearly as great as anticipated. The lack of participation caused observers to question the concern of these officials toward our first Minnesotans. In fact every socio-economic measuring scale indicate this population is at the bottom rung of the ladder and remedial legislation is indeed necessary to correct the many injustices which prohibit these people from obtaining equal opportunities for advancement.

According to past demands, this agency was responsible for providing a weekly average of eighteen (18) referrals to other service-providing agencies. Also, the MIAC assumed the role of advocate in follow-up activities to the original request to assure that the recipient's need was met.

These referrals have been to: County Welfare Agencies, Department of Human Rights, Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, Educational Institutions and other Indian Organizations.

During the academic year, the MIAC receives a weekly average of six (6) requests from students, teachers and social interest groups for information about Minnesota's Indians. These requests come from within the state and also from across the country. And, as a state agency, we believe it necessary to respond to all correspondance.

The Executive Director has participated in approximately forty (40) official meetings on behalf of the MIAC constituency with federal, state and local agency personnel during the past year. We think that perhaps all of these meetings were productive as the needs and desires of the Native American were made known. The results of these meetings will not be immediate alleviation of all problem areas; however, the proceedings will provide decision-makers with a course of action to correct some of the discrepancies.

A significant part of the staff's time and effort has been consumed by crisis intervention activities. Possibly these actions have averted over-reaction on the part of principals involved and facilitated peaceful negotiation of objectives.

In addition to the day-to-day duties, the staff has developed two proposals-among others-for federal grants.

The funded grants are:

- 1) An epidemiology study into the incidence and prevalence of alcohol abuse and/or alcoholism on a state-wide basis over a given point or period among the state's Indian population. It will also facilitate a crude assessment of poly-drug abuse. The grant was made available by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism of H.E.W.
- 2) As prime sponsors with the Urban American Indian Center of Minneapolis for a job training and re-training program for un-employed Indian people. The award stems from the Department of Labor Title III of the CETA Act of 1973.

## HEALTH

### Introduction

One of the most shocking and significant facts in the area of Indian health in Minnesota is that Indians die much younger than the population as a whole. Minnesota Indian deaths occur before age 65 among 75 per cent of the Indian population in 1970, according to the Minneapolis Indian Health Board. Among the general population, 69 per cent of all deaths occur after age 65.

It follows then that Indian health in Minnesota is much poorer than that of the general population.

This despite the fact that Minnesota was among the first states to indicate an active interest in Indian health and take action. Minnesota exerted pressure on the U.S. Public Health Service in 1911 to conduct a house-to-house survey of the Indian population to locate cases of tuberculosis and a contagious eye disease which was prevalent at the time. A federal TB sanitarium was built in Minnesota in 1924. And the State Health Department conducted surveys of Indians during the wild rice harvest of 1929, 1930 and 1931 to determine incidence of disease. During these checks, nearly 25 per cent of the 4,670 Indian people surveyed were found to be TB.

In recent years, Indian Health Advisory Committees have been developed in urban areas, the State Welfare Department has implemented legislation to establish an Indian desk to work on alcoholism and the Legislature has provided funding to implement a mobile health unit to travel on and near Minnesota reservations.

But Indian health services in Minnesota need improvement. Again,



Indian cultural differences must be recognized. Outreach and education through trained Indian personnel is needed and residency restrictions for migrant Indians should be lifted.

Preventive care, nutrition education and improved housing - as it pertains to health - are in need of further attention.

Distribution of Minnesota Indian Deaths by Cause

Cause of Death	1968-70	1964-67	1959-63	All Races 1970
Accidents	23.2%	20.7%	20.1%	6.3%
Heart Diseases	19.7	23.2	22.8	37.6
Cancer	7.9	7.2	8.4	18.1
Cerebravascular Diseases (e.g. Stroke)	7.1	5.7	7.2	12.7
Influenza and Pneumonia	5.8	7.6	7.6	3.2
Cirrhosis of the Liver	5.4	3.9	2.1	1.1
Certain Diseases of Early Infancy	5.2	4.7	6.5	2.2
Diabetes Mellitus	4.6	3.7	1.4	1.8
All Other Causes	21.0	23.3	23.9	17.0
<hr/>				
Total	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Number of deaths	518	595	710	33,919

Age at Death, by Race  
(Minnesota Residents)

Age at Death	Indians 1970	Indians 1968-69	All Races 1969
0-64	75%	64%	31%
65+	25%	36%	69%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Number of Deaths	170	348	33,791

\* The data are supplied by the courtesy of the Minneapolis Indian Health Board.

The Leading caused of Indian death over the 12-year period 1959-1970. The major findings are as follows:

- a. Relatively few Indians die of the "diseases of old age." Heart disease, cancer, stroke accounted for only 35% of 1968-70 Indian deaths but fully 68% of white deaths. This finding is due in part to the fact that most Indian deaths occur at younger ages
- b. Causes of death which may contain a large component of alcohol-relatedness (accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, diabetes) have shown a substantial increase in relative importance. These three causes accounted for 24% of Indian deaths in 1959-63 and 33% in 1968-70 ( $\frac{23\%}{24\%} = 1.38$ ).

Recommendations:

1. Provide monies to implement a state wide comprehensive health needs assessment study to determine the exact nature of unmet health needs.

2. Provide monies to establish mobile health units to periodically visit reservation areas - especially the smaller reservations which have no clinics.
3. Provide monies to establish a Native American primary treatment unit for chemical dependency afflicted people; the majority of the staff should be of Indian descent.
4. Provide monies to correct dental caries for school aged children and designate a unit of government to administer project.
5. Provide special funds for those health care institutions which desire to employ Native American outreach workers for Indian people to assure that their needs are more adequately met.
6. Provide monies for preventive medicine activities both within urban and reservation settings.

## HOUSING

Minnesota has no state laws dealing specifically with housing for the Native American population of the state. The most impressive gains in housing have occurred on reservations, thanks to federal programs and the leadership displayed by reservation housing authorities appointed by governing RBCs.

In urban areas, public housing is technically available to Indian residents, but the shortage of such accommodations has resulted in long waiting lists and the great majority of urban Indians are forced into substandard housing in the cities.

### Reservations

The Federal Housing Act of 1937 did not have an affect on reservation housing until 10 years ago. Since that time, Federal projects have sprung up slowly on reservations, replacing the tar paper shacks which long symbolized reservation housing in Minnesota. BIA projections in 1970 call for 95 per cent of the Indian population to be in adequate housing by 1976, and the BIA timetable remains on schedule.

Public housing projects on reservations make homes available on both a rental and ownership basis. Public housing has been constructed on Red Lake, Nett Lake, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake and White Earth Reservations.

The BIA area office supplied the current data for prevailing conditions on the eleven (11) federally recognized reservations.

Four Sioux Communities:

Existing units	Standard	Substandard	replacement	renovation
90	77	13	6	7
Replacement Families without homes		6		
Total units needed		<u>5</u>		
		11		

Red Lake:

Existing units	Standard	Substandard	replacement	renovation
593	454	139	43	96
Replacement		139		
Families without homes		<u>117</u>		
Total units needed		256		

Minnesota Chippewa Tribe:

Existing units	Standard	Substandard	replacement	renovation
1231	546	689	520	169
Replacement		516		
Families without homes		<u>52</u>		
Total units needed		568		

Accordingly, at a minimum there is an urgent need for 835 housing units for reservation Indians. It should be noted that while housing assistance through BIA is available, budget limitations have resulted in the above-mentioned housing lag.

Urban

Urban Indians traditionally have expressed a dislike for multi-family accommodations, but despite this attitude, the percentage of occupancy of "projects" by Indian families has increased in recent years. In 1968, the Minneapolis League of Women Voters reported 1 per cent occupancy of public housing by Indians, and the 1974 estimate from the Housing and Redevelopment Authority is 10 per cent, much of that concentrated in the old South High development in the Model City area.

Precise figures for urban Native American housing conditions are not available. Seemingly this population would be in worse shape than its

counterpart on reservations as housing assistance is nil from the BIA. The Community Health and Welfare Council of Hennepin reports "there are more relatives living in Indian homes, including uncles, aunts and grandparents, than in non-Indian homes. Most Indian families tend to reside in multiple family dwellings than do non-Indian families." Also, the same report indicates approximately 75% of the Indian families do not own their own homes.

Recommendations:

1. The State Legislature amend the Minnesota Housing Financing Agency Bonding Authority Expanded Act so that the criteria for eligibility is more available for Native American participation.
2. The Governor and Legislators be advocates and supporters of HUD's previous commitment to provide a specific number (7500) for housing units for Native Americans across the country and Minnesota receive a proportional number of dwellings.

## EDUCATION

### Introduction

Minnesota has faced the unique problems in providing education to Indians, and in some areas made adequate advances in overcoming Native Americans' awareness that existing schooling destructs Indian identity and is the spark which ignites employment and social problems which often follow.

Since the 14th century schools have been used to "civilize" Indians, and that pattern was followed in Minnesota's early days. Education was aimed at eradicating all traces of Indian culture, and only in recent years have attempts been made to give Indian culture its proper--and vital--place in educating Native Americans.

Minnesota has provided leadership by being the first among the states to provide an Indian director for Indian education; an advisory committee composed exclusively of Indians to work with the State Department of Education and urban school districts; Upward Bound programs in city junior high schools; tutoring for younger Indian children in Minneapolis; a Department of Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota.

In addition, state colleges and private institutions of higher learning in Minnesota are focusing special attention on Indian culture, and in many cases working at recruiting Indians into degree programs.

Despite these activities, the drop-out rate remains extraordinarily high with estimates ranging up to 80 per cent, however, a possible estimate of 35-40% would be a more reflective figure for the state as a whole. Accordingly, the 35-40% figure is still markedly twice the all race rate.

Recommendations:

1. The Legislature appropriate the full amount requested by the Indian Education Committee for Indian scholarships and also appropriate necessary funds for administrative support.
2. Amend the current statute which govern the procedures for election of school board members so that in districts where a substantial number of Indians attend - an Indian will be a bona-fide member of that policy making board.
3. The Legislation appropriate funds and enact legislation to provide bi-cultural, bi-lingual education programs for Native American children, recognizing that the unique and severe conditions many Indian children live under require special provisions to enable them to receive an education.



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

### Introducation

"I love a people who have always made me welcome to the best they had.  
I love a people who are honest without laws, who have not jails or poor houses.  
I love a people who keep the Commandments without ever having read them or  
heard them preached from a pulpit....  
I love a people who live and keep what they have without locks and keys."

George Catlin, published in 1869.

American Artist Catlin was only one of many white men who were amazed by the workings of old Indian codes of conduct in minimizing violations. Social codes embracing ostracism and shame acted as powerful deterrents to deviant behavior among the many tribes before the European culture had its impact. Even as Indians were exposed to the expanding justice system in frontier days, white men were shocked to see Indians accused of a violation of the new code ride for miles -- all alone -- to appear in the white man's court and face his sentence.

But as the Indian culture was erode and Native Americans were herded onto reservations, the old Indian codes gave way to the completely foreign Anglo-Saxon system of criminal justice. They found that the law and justice did not always work the same for all man; and it is a lesson Native Americans are learning yet today.

There is great disproportion between the number of Indians who are imprisoned in Minnesota and the number in the population as a whole. And after release, Indian inmates have had much higher rates of ricidivism than non-Indian offenders who are freed.

Significant steps have been made in the state aimed at altering these statistics. Sensitivity training has been made available for police, prosecutors and judges in many areas, and more Indians have become

involved and employed in court and correctional services. Also, the Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control, as the designated agency to implement and monitor LEAA projects are currently providing a substantial amount of monies for prevention strategies, provide legal assistance to those in need and community correctional facilities (half-way houses) plus an innovative project at a workhouse.

However, much more remains to be done. Some experts in the field recognize that improvements in the police and court systems will help together with greater awareness by Indian people. But they say that the number of Indians who run afoul of the law and wind up behind bars will lesson only when Indian education, housing and employment make significant advances.

According to the Senate Subcommittee on Adult Corrections report of January 1974, 19% of the inmates at Shakopee are of Native American descent, 10% of those at the St. Cloud Reformatory are Native American and 7% of those at the Stillwater penitentiary are Native American. These data fluctuate 7 - 20% over any given point of time. Proportionately the Native American is markedly over-represented in these facilities since he represents less than .1% of the total state population.

Recommendations:

1. Provide funds to Reservation Tribal Councils for purposes of hiring local law enforcement officers to enforce and prevent crime in their respective areas. These officers could be trained and be employed out of County Sheriff Departments.
2. Provide funds for a cultural enrichment program at the various penal institutions.

3. Provide funds to establish legal aid assistance programs for those who are dissatisfied with Public Defender offices.
4. Provide funds to establish community based correctional facilities, such as the Anishinabe Longhouse.
5. Provide funds for human relation training seminars and compel all institutional personnel to attend.

## EMPLOYMENT

### Introduction

Minnesota Indians have the highest unemployment rate of any group in the state although employers who do have Indians on their payrolls consider them to be among the most skilled, dedicated and responsible employees.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most significant gains in the area of Indian employment, are easing of entry level requirements and creativity in tailoring job descriptions. However, the percentage of employable Indians in the general population who are unemployed greatly over-shadows other ethnic groups.

Indians looking for employment can turn to the employment assistance office of the BIA, Minnesota Department of Manpower Services, and federally funded poverty employment programs for help. In addition the National Alliance of Businessmen (NAB) has an active program underway aimed at making employers more aware of the need for minority jobs in private business.

Because of the lack of job opportunities on and near reservations, coupled with prejudice despite existing civil rights legislation--unemployment on reservations is shockingly high, exceeding 50 per cent in some cases.

Although race is not indicated in urban unemployment statistics, Indian officials in metropolitan areas contend that the unemployment rate among urban Indians is possibly upward of 25%.

1. Woods and Harkins. Indians in St. Paul.

Recommendations:

1. The State of Minnesota through its Affirmative Action Program - initiate a visible recruitment campaign to secure employment opportunities for Native Americans in governmental agencies.
2. The State of Minnesota establish an "Indian Desk" within the State Department of Manpower Services.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction

Minnesota's reservations present a vast mostly untapped potential for industrial development, and many observers believe that such development will go a long way toward solving many of the other problems which plague the Native Americans.

Although some advances have been made in recent years, the reservations remain far behind neighboring communities in terms of industrial and economic development. However, notable gains in economic development have been made at Red Lake and Leech Lake.

The State of Minnesota has indicated a concern for economic development on reservations, but its specific role has been limited to coordination and referral.

The shortage of seed money in financing reservation business projects is one of the main drawbacks in making significant advances in economic development. Proposals for state funds for seed money have not received serious consideration, and the federal government and exceptionally tight private money remains the only source for financing such developments.

Tribal leaders also have complained that the state has not provided adequate roads in reservation areas, causing a further deterrent in attracting business.

### Recommendations:

1. The State of Minnesota should seriously consider amending M.S. 362.40 to establish a revolving fund whereby Native American entrepreneurs could secure initial start-up monies for private business ventures in a less complicated way. A modest sum would adequately cover yearly

loan packages and eventually it will become self-supporting.

2. The State of Minnesota enact a labeling bill to distinguish between patty rice and natural wild rice.
3. The State of Minnesota amend the statute governing regional economic councils so an Indian is seated as a bona-fide member in those regions where a significant Native American population reside.

## HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

### Introduction:

"...be it enacted that the public policy of this state is to secure for individuals in this state, freedom from descrimination because of race, color, creed, religion, or national origin, in connection with employment, housing, and real property, public accomodation, public services and employment." excerpted from Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363.

Despite the state human rights law and similar local ordinances forbiding descrimination, the Native Americans of Minnesota are often victims of prejudice in every area of life including all those specified in the law.

Misconceptions about Indians have existed for years and have been kept alive through sterotypes in movies, televisions, advertising even text books used in schools. Hence, a simple misconception, unlike pre-  
judice, can indeed be changed; however, a prejudice is resistant to all evidence that would unseat it.

Although advances have been made in removing school books describing and depicting Indians as "savages," the lack of sensitivity by some teachers, enforced by the false image generated by the entertainment media, still fosters misconceptions and ignorance and the prejudice which too often follows.

Prejudice toward Indians is more subtle in urban areas than near reservations, according to some Indians. But it exists. It exists in landlords who have suddenly rented dwellings when a prospective Indian tenant appears. It exists in employers who have filled job openings when an Indian applicant shows up. It exists in employers who pass over Indian employees for promotion because of lack of qualifications. It exists as slow service in restaurants and suddenly filled vacancies in hotel and motel rooms.



In near-reservation areas, non-Indian residents insist that there is no prejudice. But Indians dispute that claim.

Indians are becoming slightly more vocal in bringing complaints of discrimination before the proper authorities, but Indians must be made aware of the channels available to them as needed. Just as more sensitivity training for entertainment media, educators, lawmen, social workers, and other influence formers is called for.

Recommendations:

1. The State of Minnesota assign a full-time attorney from the Attorney General's staff to the Indian Affairs Commission.
2. The State of Minnesota recognize the exclusivity of reservations as it pertains to hunting, fishing and the gathering of wild rice within reservation boundaries.
3. The State of Minnesota recognize the sovereignty of tribal government.
4. The State of Minnesota develop a policy statement explicitly defining the responsibilities of state government toward Indian people to facilitate guidelines for state agencies to follow in conducting state business.

## Introduction

No other group in Minnesota is as poor and dependent as the state's Native Americans.

Ever since the time the federal government placed Indians on reservations, they have had to depend on government for their support. For years there has been conflict over who should provide welfare for Indians. Counties are in dispute over who is going to pay welfare bills for Indian families, contributing substantially to the feeling of hopelessness which prevails among Indians.

The welfare problem is well stated in "Indians in Minnesota," published in 1971 by the League of Women Voters:

"Not only does poverty tear families apart; not only does mobility interrupt assistance to Indians; it is the Indian feeling of the futility of seeking government help that confounds welfare services to Indians. While counties bicker over who is going to pay the bills, Indians give up. Their misery grows, families disintegrate, children are placed in damaging situations, and the cycle goes on.

Until agencies gear themselves to Indian needs through Indian outreach, through elimination of red tape and residency requirements, through sensitivity to Indian culture, through Indian staff, the cost of Indian services will continue to rise, but their effectiveness will not.

Before those Indians who are dependent can break the pattern, they must have not only jobs, decent housing, better health, schooling--they must have self-confidence and hope."

The Community Health and Welfare Council of Hennepin County, Inc., feasibility study report indicates:

1. The average non-Indian family in Hennepin County had a annual income of nearly twice that of the average Indian family - \$11,805 for the former and \$6,618 for the latter.
2. Comparatively, of all families in Hennepin County, 5.3% are below the

official poverty level whereby 29.7% Native American families for the same county are below the official poverty level.

3. Of all children in Hennepin County, 90% reside with both parents while only 58% of the Indian children reside with both parents.
4. Of those families identified as living in poverty, 47.6% have female heads and of the Indian families living in poverty, 72% have female heads.

Recommendations:

1. The State of Minnesota clarify the policies and responsibilities of County Welfare Agencies as it relates to Indian recipients.
2. Since emergency needs such as food, shelter and clothing are of highest priorities a special fund should be made available for tribal councils and specific urban Indian organizations to disburse for those in need.

## TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS

### Introduction

While a tribe is a social group, it goes beyond that definition in other areas affecting Indian life. A tribe is a body politic with a right to self-rule in matters affecting the tribe. The federal government has recognized this right since the founding of the U.S., although powers have been limited or eliminated by federal law.

In Minnesota the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians became the first group to adopt a constitution in 1918. The Red Lake tribal council is composed of eight elected representatives from districts on the reservation and three elected officers. Unlike other Minnesota reservations, Red Lake has its own legal code, enforcement and courts.

Minnesota's other six Chippewa Reservations (Leech Lake, White Earth, Nett Lake, Fond du Lac, Mille Lacs and Grand Portage) organized together in 1936 as a confederation. Its governing body is the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) composed of two members from each Reservation Business Committee (RBC). RBCs on the reservations consist of five members elected by enrolled members of the reservation.

The state's four Sioux communities are Prairie Island, Lower Sioux at Morton, Shakopee-Mdewakanton and the Upper Sioux at Granite Falls. Each is governed by a community council of five members.

### Recommendations:

1. The State of Minnesota recommend to Congress that Public Law 280 be amended or terminated and if not possible, the State Legislature define the limits of PL 280.
2. The State of Minnesota negotiate directly with Tribal leaders in areas of concern.
3. The State of Minnesota fully recognize the legal status of tribal government.

A RESPONSE TO A QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO ALL GOVERNORS CONCERNING STATE INDIAN AFFAIRS

Explanation on page 46 for categories I - IV

STATE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Alabama	2,514	2,443	none	none	n/a	n/a
Alaska	51,528	No response				
Arizona	95,812	No response				
Arkansas	2,041		none	none	n/a	n/a
California	91,018	100,000	44**, 35*	none	n/a	97,500 * & ** annually
Colorado	8,836		2*	none	n/a	n/a
Connecticut	2,322		4*	Council on Indian Affairs	none	5,000 * annually
Delaware	656	No response				
Florida	6,719		2**	Governor's Council on Indian Affairs	3	100,000 ** annually
Georgia	2,455	2,236	none	none	n/a	n/a
Hawaii	1,126		none	none	n/a	n/a

Response to Questionnaire

STATE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Idaho	6,687	No response				
Illinois	11,413		none	Task Force	n/a	n/a
Indiana	3,887		none	Task Force	n/a	n/a
Iowa	2,992		1*	Co-op Work Sessions	n/a	n/a
Kansas	8,672	No response				
Kentucky	1,599	No response				
Louisiana	5,366	No response				
Maine	2,195	4,000	3*	Department of Indian Affairs	29	annually 800,000 *
Maryland				Commission on Afro-Amer. & Ind. History & Culture	4	annually 70-90,000 *
Massachusetts	4,475	10,000	1*	Commission	to be determined	to be determined
Michigan	16,854	30,000	1*, 4**	Commission	7	151,000 * annually
Minnesota	23,128		11**	Commission	4	

Response to Questionnaire

STATE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Mississippi	4,113		1**	Governor Staff Liaison	n/a	n/a
Missouri	5,405		none	none	n/a	n/a
Montana	27,130	36,000	7**	Coordinator Indian Affairs	2	annually 42,500 **
Nebraska	6,624	15,000	3**	Commission	4	annually 51,450 **
Nevada	7,933	9,599	24**	Commission	3	annually 54,000 **
New Hampshire	361		none	none	n/a	n/a
New Jersey	4,706	No response				
New Mexico	72,788	No response				
New York	28,330		6*, 6**	Interdepartmental Committee on Indian Affairs	1	n/a
North Carolina	47,724		1**, 5*	Commission	8	annually 98,000 ** & *
North Dakota	14,369	16,000	4**	Commission	2	53,200 **
Ohio	6,654		none	none	n/a	n/a

Response to Questionnaire

STATE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Oklahoma	97,731	100,000	34	Commission	10	50,000 ** 90,000 *
Oregon	13,510	26,000	3**	none	n/a	n/a
Pennsylvania	5,533	5,550	none	Task Force	n/a	n/a
Rhode Island	1,390	No response				
South Carolina	2,241	No response				
South Dakota	32,365	43,000	9**	Commission	7	annually 206,517 ** 176,000 *
Tennessee	2,376	2,276	none	none	n/a	n/a
Texas	18,132	19,000	2*	Commission	n/a	annually 350-700,000 *
Utah	11,273	14,000	4**, 1*	Division of Indian Affairs	4	Oil Royalty 850,000 45,000 * annually n/a
Vermont	1,229		none	none	n/a	n/a
Virginia	4,904	No response				
Washington	33,386	32,000	22**	Governor's Off. Indian Affairs	7	103,000 *



Response to Questionnaire

STATE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
West Virginia	808	800	none	none	n/a	n/a
Wisconsin	18,924	27,000	7**	Project Native American	n/a	20,000 BIA 5,000 *
Wyoming	4,980	No response				
D. C.	956	No response				

Explanation of Categories

- I Native American population according to 1970 Census data as reported by the U. S. Census Office
- II As reported by States that responded
- III State and Federal Reservation, State \*, Federal \*\*.
- IV State Commission or Advisory Board
- V Number of full-time employees
- VI Appropriations State \*, Federal \*\*.

UNITED STATES

835,322 Actual 1970 Census data as reported by U. S. Census office.

504,122 As reported by those states that responded.