A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT AMONG MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ALLOTMENT ACT IN MINNESOTA AND THE NATION.....2

THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL.....II

THE MERRIAM REPORT AND MINNESOTA CHIPPEWAS.....23

A. CHIPPEWAS IN THE CITIES.....25

B. CONCERNING INDIAN EDUCATION IN 1939.....26

SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE PRESENT FORM OF TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.....28

ORGANIZING PROBLEMS IN BRINGING THE INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT TO THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA.....33

1. ORGANIZATION PROBLEM NUMBER ONE: HOW THE SIX RESERVATIONS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER.....34

2. ORGANIZATION PROBLEM NUMBER TWO: REPRESENTATION AMONG MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA.....42

A. TRIBAL DELEGATES.....42

B. SUB-CHARTERS.....48

CHARTS.....52 - 60

PREFACE

THIS REPORT BEGINS AT APPROXIMATELY 1880 AND ENDS IN 1939. THE THREE SOURCES, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, ARE THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.; THE BIA AREA OFFICE IN BEMIDJI, MN.; AND THE OLD DOCUMENTS FILE IN THE TRI-CAP OFFICES IN CASS LAKE. THE MATERIAL HAVING TO DO WITH COLLIER, ZIMMERMAN, PHINNEY, AND THEIR STAFF PLUS ALL VERBATIM NOTES OF MEETINGS ARE FROM THE ARCHIVES; THE REMAINDER OF THE MINUTES ARE FROM BEMIDJI; AND THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TRIBAL OFFICIALS ALONG WITH QUOTES BY LOCAL PEOPLE ARE FROM CASS LAKE.

QUOTES USED HEREIN WERE TAKEN, FOR THE MOST PART, INTACT FROM THE MATERIAL AND PAINS WERE TAKEN TO RELATE THEM IN CONTEXT. I AM SUBMITTING WITH THE REPORT THE ORIGINAL SOURCES ALONG WITH MY PERSONAL NOTES SHOULD THERE BE ANY QUESTIONS NEEDING CLARIFICATION THAT ARE NOT FULLY ILLUMINATED IN THE TEXT.

THERE IS STILL WORK TO BE DONE ON THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL SECTION OF THIS REPORT. DUE TO THE TIME LIMIT AT THE ARCHIVES ONLY 3 OR 4 DOCUMENTS WERE USED FOR THIS SECTION.

THIS REPORT IS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

Michael Peter Burris
Cass Lake, Minnesota
JUNE 1976

"YOU SHALL NOW BECOME A MENTOR OF YOUR PEOPLE. THE THICKNESS OF YOUR SKIN SHALL BE SEVEN SPANS --- WHICH IS TO SAY YOU WILL BE PROOF AGAINST ANGER, OFFENSIVE ACTIONS AND CRITICISM. YOUR HEART SHALL BE FILLED WITH PEACE AND GOOD WILL AND YOUR MIND FILLED WITH A YEARNING FOR THE WELFARE OF YOUR PEOPLE --- WITH ENDLESS PATIENCE YOU SHALL CARRY OUT YOUR DUTY AND YOUR FIRMNESS SHALL BE TEMPERED WITH THE TENDERNESS FOR YOUR PEOPLE. NEITHER ANGER NOR FURY SHALL FIND LODGMENT IN YOUR MIND AND ALL YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS SHALL BE MARKED WITH CALM DELIBERATION. IN ALL YOUR DELIBERATIONS --- IN YOUR EFFORTS AT LAWMAKING, IN ALL YOUR OFFICIAL ACTS, SELF-INTEREST SHALL BE CAST INTO OBLIVION. CAST NOT OVER YOUR SHOULDER BEHIND YOU THE WARNINGS OF THE NEPHEWS AND NIECES SHOULD THEY CHIDE YOU FOR ANY ERROR OR WRONG YOU MAY DO, BUT RETURN TO THE WAY OF THE GREAT LAW WHICH IS JUST AND RIGHT. LOOK AND LISTEN FOR THE WELFARE OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE AND HAVE ALWAYS IN VIEW NOT ONLY THE PRESENT BUT ALSO THE COMING GENERATIONS, EVEN THOSE FACES NOT YET BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE GROUND --- THE UNBORN OF THE FUTURE NATION."

--- CONSTITUTION OF THE FIVE NATIONS
SECTION TWENTY-EIGHT
ADOPTED 1390

THE ALLOTMENT ACT IN MINNESOTA AND THE NATION

PRIOR TO THE ALLOTMENT ACT INDIANS OF THE RESERVATIONS WERE GENERALLY LIVING IN ISOLATED COMMUNITIES. THE LARGEST CONCENTRATIONS OF POPULATIONS BEING ESTABLISHED AROUND THE AGENCIES, TRADING POSTS, AND WHAT FEW AREAS OF BUSINESS NORTHERN MINNESOTA HAD TO OFFER

INDIANS COULD NOT ACQUIRE LIQUOR NOR COULD THEY FREQUENT AREAS THAT SOLD LIQUOR. IN FACT, IT WAS A FEDERAL OFFENSE TO SELL LIQUOR TO THE INDIANS. MOST SCHOOLING THAT INDIANS RECEIVED WERE FROM THE CHURCHES THAT ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN THE SMALL TOWNS. INDIANS WERE ENTIRELY OUTSIDE THE STATUS QUO; ENTIRELY OUT OF THE MAINSTREAM OF AMERICAN LIFE. IN GENERAL, THEY WERE PROVINCIAL, POOR ILLITERATE, WITH LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT. AND IN MANY CASES THEY COULDN'T HAVE CARED LESS. EVEN INTO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY THERE WERE SOME INDIANS ON THE MORE ISOLATED PARTS OF THE RESERVATION WHO HAD NEVER SEEN A WHITE MAN. IN ONIGUM INTO THE 1930'S ACCORDING TO INDIAN OFFICIALS, SOMETHING OVER HALF OF THE POPULATION COULDN'T COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY IN THE ENGLISH TONGUE. FOR THE MOST PART, THEY WERE ORGANIZED INTO TIGHT FAMILY GROUPS WHICH LIVED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO ONE ANOTHER. THEY DID LITTLE TRAVEL AND WERE DEPENDENT ON THEIR AGENT FOR RATIONS TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR DIET OF GAME AND FISH.

BEFORE THEY WERE CONFINED TO THE RESERVATIONS, THEY DID MOST OF THEIR TRADING WITH THE POSTS IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA TRADING PELTS AND OTHER GOODS FOR FOOD, CLOTH, ETC.

IN THE EARLY DAYS, AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RESERVATIONS, SIOUX FROM THE DAKOTAS USED TO VISIT WITH THE INDIANS LIVING IN THE NORTHWESTERN PART OF MINNESOTA. GEORGE SELKIRK, DELEGATE IN THE DAYS BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS, TOLD INDIAN OFFICE OFFICIALS ABOUT SEEING SIOUX AND CHIPPEWA DANCING TOGETHER EACH YEAR ON WHITE EARTH. SELKIRK REPORTED THIS IN 1934. IF SOMEONE COULD HAVE TOLD THE INDIANS THEN WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IN THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED IT.

INDIANS HAVE HAD TO ADJUST IN THE SPAN OF A FEW DECADES AS FEW PEOPLES HAVE HAD TO IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. THIS STATEMENT NEEDS QUALIFICATION. THEY HAVE ADAPTED SUCCESSFULLY. SINCE THE FIRST CONTACT WITH THE "HAIRY MEN" FORM THE SEA THE INDIANS HAVE HAD TO ADJUST OR DIE. OBVIOUSLY INDIANS HAVE LONG SINCE LOST ANY MILITARY CAPABILITIES. THE OVER-RIDING QUESTION HAS BEEN THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY WOULD ADJUST TO THEIR CONQUEROR'S EDICTS.

HEREDITARY CHIEFS FORM THE SEPARATE BANDS USED TO GOVERN COUNCIL MEETING. AND AFTER, FOR INSTANCE, THE WINNIBIGOSHIS, LEECH LAKE, AND CASS LAKE PILLAGERS WERE SETTLED ON THE SAME RESERVATION, THE HEAD MEN BEGAN TO LOSE THEIR POWER. THE BANDS INTERMARRIED TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT BY THE TURN OF THE CENTURY THEY WERE CONSIDERED, AS THEY ARE TODAY, AS ONE BAND. ORIGINALLY THERE WERE THREE RESERVATION ON TRACTS OF LAND ON WHAT IS NOW THE LEECH LAKE RESERVATION; BUT AFTER A TIME, THE INDIANS' BAND LOYALTY BEGAN TO WANE. THE INDIAN OFFICE CONSIDERED THEM ALL LEECH LAKERS. A SIMILAR TREND OCCURRED ON THE OTHER RESERVATIONS. IN THE MID 1830'S THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY HALF A DOZEN RESERVATIONS IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA.

THE CHIPPEWA HAD BEEN TRADING WITH THE "AMERICANS" WELL BEFORE THEY WERE CONFINED TO RESERVATIONS. BUT THE REAL PERIOD OF EXPOSURE CAME WITH THE TIMBER BOOM IN MINNESOTA. OUTSIDE THE RESERVATION BOUNDARIES SINCE THE CIVIL WAR MINNESOTANS HAD BEEN LOGGING, BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL THE OPENING OF THE RESERVATIONS THAT THE BIGGEST PERIOD OF MIGRATION STARTED. LUMBER COMPANIES BOUGHT LARGE TRACTS OF WOODED AREAS IN THE GOVERNMENT "SURPLUS" LAND SALES FOLLOWING THE GENERAL ALLOTMENT ACT OF 1887.

THE ALLOTMENT, OR DAWES, ACT WAS BROUGHT TO THE CHIPPEWAS AS A MEANS TO ENTER "THE AMERICAN LIFE." PROFESSOR MILLER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA IN A NEW INTRODUCTION TO THE MERRIAM REPORT OUTLINED THE MORAL JUSTIFICATION TO ALLOTMENT IN SEVERALTY:

> "MEANWHILE THE DOMINANT SOCIETY, AS REPRESENTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, WAS IN THE PROCESS OF DECIDING THAT THE SOLUTION TO THE INDIAN PROBLEM WAS ASSIMILATION, REGARDLESS OF THE DESIRES OF THE INDIANS. THE ASSUMPTION WAS THAT INDIANS COULD NOT MAINTAIN A VIABLE WAY OF LIFE AS INDEPENDENT GROUPS ON RESERVATIONS, AND THAT RESERVATIONS WERE ONLY TEMPORARY REFUGES ON THE WAY TO COMPLETE ASSIMILATION. A MOVEMENT TO PROMOTE RAPID ASSIMILATION WAS VIEWED BY MANY OF ITS SUPPORTERS AS THE ONLY HUMANITARIAN ALTERNATIVE TO COMPLETE EXTERMINATION OF THE INDIANS."

THE SINE QUA NON OF ALLOTMENT WAS THE THEORY THAT IF ONE COULD CHANGE THE ECONOMIC BASE OF A PEOPLE A SALUTARY CULTURAL MODEL WOULD EMERGE PATTERNED AFTER WHITE SOCIETY. AFTER ALL, IF AN INDIAN ADOPTED A MORE CIVILIZED WAY OF LIFE, WHAT NEED HE FOR LARGE AREA OF LAND? IN HIS TYPICAL TERSE STYLE, MILLER ADDED, "AFTER ALL, SLAVERY HAD BEEN ABOLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES ABOUT FIFTEEN YEARS BEFORE, BUT NO ONE WAS URGING THE ASSIMILATION OF THE FORMER SLAVES."

THE DAWES ACT, TO USE A CLICHE, HAD FAR REACHING EFFECTS. WITHIN FORTY-FIVE YEARS THE LAND BASE ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS HAD FALLEN FROM 138,000,000 TO 48,000,000 IN 1934. AT FIRST THERE WERE VERY STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THE TYPE OF INDIAN TO GET CONTROL OF AN ALLOTMENT. A COMPETENCY COMMISSION WAS DETAILED TO TEST APPLICANTS AS TO THEIR ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN WHITE SOCIETY, I.E., HANDLE MONEY, SPEAK ENGLISH, ETC. IN 1917 THE GOVERNMENT RELAXED ITS REQUIREMENTS AND TWICE AS MANY PATENTS FOR INDIANS WERE ISSUED IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. COMMISSIONER HUBERT WORK FOUND OUT THAT A MAJORITY OF THE INDIANS WHO RECEIVED THEIR ALLOTMENTS QUICKLY DISPOSED OF THEM. ONE SUCH INDIAN ATTENDED AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR I.R.A. IN WISCONSIN AND TOLD ABOUT HIS PATENT:

> "I REALLY HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK HERE, BUT I SPEAK TO WARN OTHERS. I GOT A FREE PATENT, AND I SOLD THE LAND AND BOUGHT AN AUTOMOBILE. I WRECKED THE AUTOMOBILE, AND NOW I HAVE NOTHING BUT THE PANTS I STAND IN."

IN MINNESOTA EVERY RESERVATION BUT RED LAKE VOTED TO ACCEPT THE DAWES ACT. INDIANS WERE OFFERED TRACTS OF EIGHTY ACRES ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION. ALLOTMENT WAS MANDATORY, THAT IS TO SAY THAT EVERYONE EITHER REQUESTED AN ALLOTMENT OR HE WAS ASSIGNED ONE. IT IS OBVIOUS JUDGING BY THE CORRECT DISTRIBUTION OF INDIANS ON THE SIX RESERVATIONS THAT VERY FEW MOVED TO WHITE EARTH AND TOOK UP THE PLOW. THE LAND LEFT OVER FROM "SURPLUS" LAND WAS SOLD BY THE GOVERNMENT AT A FLAT RATE TO ANYONE WHO MADE AN APPLICATION. THE PLAN WAS TO MOVE ALL THE INDIANS TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MINNESOTA AND OPEN UP THE MIDDLE FOR SETTLEMENT AND BUSINESS. OF COURSE THE LAND ON LEECH LAKE AND GRAND PORTAGE

WAS USELESS FOR FARMING OR GRAZING FARM ANIMALS BUT AT THE TIME IT WAS AMONG THE RICHEST AREAS LEFT IN THE UNITED STATES FOR LOGGING. THE ALLOTMENT ACT WANTED TO MAKE INDIANS FARMERS AND THIS IN TURN WOULD MAKE THEM JUST LIKE OTHER AMERICANS. APPARENTLY LOGGING AS A MENTOR OF CIVILIZATION WAS ASSIGNED A LESSER ROLE.

THESE "SURPLUS" LANDS WERE SOLD AND THE MONEY DEPOSITED IN THE U.S. TREASURY IN A COMMON FUND FOR ALL CHIPPEWAS. KEEPING IN MIND THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE CHIPPEWA ALLOTMENTS WERE HAD ON WHITE EARTH BY 1932, MORE THAN 50% OF THE LAND ORIGINALLY ALLOTTED REMAINED IN INDIAN OWNERSHIP ON THE OTHER RESERVATIONS. NATHAN MARGOLD, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT SOLICITOR, TOLD COLLIER IN OCTOBER 1935 THAT "...THERE REMAIN ON THE RESERVATIONS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA AGENCY NEARLY 12,000 ACRES OF UNALLOTTED LAND." WHITE EARTH WAS NOT SO LUCKY, BY 1935 LESS THAN 4% OF THE LAND ORIGINALLY ALLOTTED REMAINED IN INDIAN OWNERSHIP.

IN SOME AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES, PARTICULARLY IN THE WESTERN STATES, THE LOSS OF "SURPLUS" LAND WAS NEARLY ABSOLUTE.

IN 1941 RED LAKE SUPERINTENDENT BITNEY WAS TO BRIEF COLLIER ABOUT THE STRUGGLES GOING ON DURING ALLOTMENT:

"THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS WAS ORIGINALLY ORGANIZED TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE RED LAKE INDIANS AND TO FIGHT THE ALLOTMENT IN SEVERALTY OF TRIBAL LANDS ON THE RED LAKE INDIAN RESERVATION. THE YOUNGER INDIANS ALL WANTED ALLOTMENTS; SOME OF THEM STILL WANT ALLOTMENTS... THERE WAS A RATHER BITTER FIGHT BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS AND THAT BITTERNESS HAS NOT DIED DOWN."

IT WAS BECOMING CLEAR TO SOME GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, LIKE COMMISSIONER WORK, THAT ASSIMILATION WAS NOT OCCURRING QUITE AS RAPIDLY AS INDIAN LAND WAS DISAPPEARING. EIGHT YEARS LATER NEW COMMISSIONER COLLIER WAS TO TELL A SENATE COMMITTEE:

> "TWO THIRDS OF THE INDIANS IN TWO THIRDS OF THE INDIAN COUNTRY FOR MANY YEARS HAVE BEEN DRIFTING TOWARD COMPLETE IMPOVERISHMENT.
>
> WHILE BEING STRIPPED OF THEIR PROPERTY, THESE SAME INDIANS CUMULATIVELY HAVE BEEN DISORGANIZED AS GROUPS AND PUSHED TO A LOWER SOCIAL LEVEL AS INDIVIDUALS.
>
> DURING THIS TIME, WHEN INDIAN WEALTH HAS BEEN SHRINKING AND INDIAN LIFE HAS BEEN DIMINISHING, THE COSTS OF INDIAN ADMINISTRATION IN THE IDENTICAL AREAS HAVE BEEN INCREASING."

IT IS QUITE APPARENT THAT THE ONLY THING INDIANS WERE BEING EMANCIPATED FROM WAS THEIR LAND AND NOT THEIR LACK OF "CULTURE" NOR THE MANNERS OF CIVILIZED MEN.

MUCH OF THE LAND LEFT TO LIVING ALLOTTEES HAD BEEN LEASED TO WHITES. AND BECAUSE MOST INDIANS AT THE TIME DID NOT MAKE WILLS, MOST LANDS WERE THROWN INTO HEIRSHIP CASES. IF THE LAND WASN'T SOLD IN A FEW GENERATIONS THERE MAY BE HUNDREDS OF DESCENDANTS INVOLVING EXPENSIVE ADJUSTMENTS.

> "UPON THE ALLOTTEE'S DEATH, IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO PARTITION THE LAND EQUALLY AMONG HEIRS OR TO SELL IT, AND IN THE INTERIM IT HAS BEEN LEASED."

BY 1939 ON THE GRAND PORTAGE RESERVATION, AMONG THOSE INDIANS STILL IN POSSESSION OF ALLOTMENTS, ONLY 10% WERE LIVING, THE OTHER 90% TIED UP IN HEIRSHIP. ON LEECH LAKE, 12% WERE LIVING; FOND DU LAC 33% WERE LIVING; ON WHITE EARTH 33% WERE LIVING; NETT LAKE 22% WERE LIVING; AND ON THE MILLE LAC RESERVATION 86% WERE LIVING.

IN 1926 MILLE LAC WAS GIVEN ALLOTMENTS FROM THE CONGRESS. IT HAD VIOLATED THE TRUST CREATED IN 1889 AND DEPOSITED THE CEDED LANDS UNDER THE GENERAL LAND LAWS. CONGRESS THEN AUTHORIZED $40,000 TO BUY LAND FOR "HOMELESS NON-REMOVAL MILLE LAC INDIANS WHO HAVE NOT HERETOFORE RECEIVED ALLOTMENTS," HOLDING THE LAND IN TRUST.

THE IDEA OF ASSIMILATION WAS HARDLY HEARD DURING THE NEXT FOUR DECADES, THE CHIMERA OF THE REFORMERS. AMID THE DIN AND CRY OF THE AUCTIONEER, ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND INDIANS HAD LOST THEIR LAND.

COMMISSIONER COLLIER MADE NO BONES ABOUT THE ALLOTMENT ACT. HE CONSIDERED IT MORAL INJUSTICE. DURING A SENATE HEARING IN 1934 HE BACKED UP HIS CLAIM WITH FACTS:

> "THROUGH THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM, MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THE LAND VALUE BELONGING TO ALL THE INDIANS IN 1867 HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM; MORE THAT 85 PERCENT OF THE LAND OF ALL THE ALLOTTED INDIANS HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY.
>
> AND THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM, WORKING DOWN THROUGH THE PARTITIONMENT OR SALE OF THE LAND OF DECEASED ALLOTTEES, MATHEMATICALLY INSURES AND PRACTICALLY REQUIRES THAT THE REMAINING INDIAN ALLOTTED LANDS SHALL PASS TO WHITES. THE ALLOTMENT ACT CONTEMPLATES TOTAL LANDLESSNESS FOR THE INDIANS OF THE THIRD GENERATION OF EACH ALLOTTED TRIBE."

ORIGINALLY THERE WAS A TWENTY FIVE YEAR WAITING PERIOD BUT THE CLAPP AND NELSON ACTS SPEEDED UP THE PROCESS AS WELL AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE EDICT IN 1917.

TO COLLIER THESE WERE SURE INDICATORS THAT THE ACT HAD AT ITS ROOT NO HUMANITARIAN INTENT. HE WROTE LATER IN A LETTER THAT HE CONSIDERED IT "...CRIMINALLY FOOLISH TO ASSIGN LAND TO PEOPLE WHO WOULD NOT USE IT. OR TO PEOPLE WHO WOULD TRY TO MAKE AN EASY LIVING OUT OF LEASING IT TO A WHITE MAN AND MAKE NO PRODUCTIVE USE OF IT THEMSELVES."

OF COURSE THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE WHO SINCERELY BELIEVED THAT THE ALLOTMENT ACT WAS GOOD FOR THE INDIANS. IN A LETTER TO THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA, TRIBAL ATTORNEY HOUGAN SPOKE ABOUT THE FEARS MANY YOUNG INDIANS FELT WHEN THE I.R.A. WAS PASSED. HE SAID, "MANY OF THE YOUNGER INDIANS WERE FEARFUL LEST THE READ TO ASSIMILATION WOULD BE BLOCKED TO THEM -- A LIFE THAT SEEMED DESIGNED TO DEPRIVE THEM OF THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE WAY OF LIFE OPEN TO ALL AMERICAN YOUTH."

GEORGE SELKIRK AT A MEETING IN NETT LAKE SAW THE 1887 ACT FROM ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE: "THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM, WHILE IT WAS A FAILURE, THE INTENTION (TO GIVE INDIANS RESPONSIBILITY) WAS RIGHT." BUT HE WAS VERY CRITICAL ABOUT THE METHODS AND IDEAS USED TO CARRY OUT THE SCHEME. "THE CHOICE TIMBER LANDS WERE ALLOTTED TO A VERY FEW INDIANS. THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM IN THE BEGINNING WAS INTENDED TO GIVE THE INDIANS A START IN AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS, BUT THEY FOUND OUT THEY COULD NOT MAKE FARMERS OUT OF INDIANS." HE ENDED HIS SPEECH ABOUT ALLOTMENT WITH THIS REMARK: "IT TOOK A HUNDRED YEARS TO DEVELOP AND EDUCATE THE WHITE MAN. THEY EXPECT THE INDIAN TO BECOME A FARMER AND WORK A YEAR AND BECOME A SUCCESS."

BY JUST LETTING THE LAND SET AND NOT ALLOTTING WOULD HAVE BEEN AN AID TO THE CHIPPEWAS IN THE FUTURE. DR. RIE CLOUD, INDIAN OFFICE OFFICIAL, COMPLAINED TO A T.E.C. MEETING IN 1938 THAT "WE HAVE LOST SO MUCH LAND THAT UNLESS WE GET SOME MORE LAND BACK IT IS GOING TO BE VERY DIFFICULT TO SETTLE A GREAT MANY OF OUR OTHER PROBLEMS."

ON JULY 1, 1922 THE INDIAN OFFICE DECIDED TO ABOLISH THE WHITE EARTH AND LEECH LAKE AGENCIES AND CONSOLIDATE THEM IN THE TOWNSHIP OF CASS LAKE UNDER THE TITLE OF THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA AGENCY. THE NEW AGENCY WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE ALLOTTED RESERVATIONS IN THE STATE.

THE BECKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PROTESTED THE MOVE. "...IF SUCH A MOVEMENT ACTUALLY MATERIALIZES INTO ACTUAL FACT IT WILL NATURALLY LEAVE TO THE MERCY OF THE PUBLIC A LARGE NUMBER OF OLD AND INDIGENT PEOPLE."

FELIX COHEN ONCE WROTE THAT "...THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM WAS INCAPABLE OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OF THE INDIANS." APPARENTLY IT DIDN'T CONTRIBUTE, IN THE EYES OF THE COUNTY OFFICIAL TO BECKER COUNTY EITHER.

ALTHOUGH THERE WAS TIMES OF BITTER OPPOSITION TO THE ACT, IT WAS ADOPTED IN THE MAJORITY OF INDIAN COUNTRY. IT WOULD NOT BE UNTIL COMMISSIONER WORK INSTITUTED THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTE TO MAKE THE FAMOUS MERRIAM REPORT FOR HIM DID ANYTHING CHANGE.

DURING THE YEARS UNTIL THE ADOPTION OF THE I.R.A. THERE WAS OPPOSITION TO THE ALLOTMENT ACT. IT WASN'T MORE THAN A YEAR SINCE THE ACT WAS IN FORCE THAT COMMISSIONER OVERLY REPORTED THAT:

> "CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION TO THE ALLOTMENT POLICY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED FROM TWO SOURCES. THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE WISDOM OF TRIBAL OWNERSHIP, AND IN THE POLICY OF CONTINUING THE INDIAN IN HIS ABORIGINAL CUSTOMS, HABITS, AND INDEPENDENCE. OPPOSE IT BECAUSE IT WILL EVENTUALLY DISSOLVE HIS TRIBAL RELATIONS AND CAUSE HIS ABSORPTION INTO THE BODY POLITIC."

THE OTHER SOURCE OF OPPOSITION WERE THOSE WHO FELT THAT THE ACT DIDN'T "EMANCIPATE" THE INDIAN AND HIS LAND QUICKLY ENOUGH. FINALLY, THE SECOND GROUP WON OUT AND WITHIN FIFTY YEARS 90,000,000 ACRES OF INDIAN LAND HAD LEFT INDIAN CONTROL.

A. THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL (C.G.C.)

"THERE EXISTS TODAY QUITE AN AMOUNT OF (ILL) FEELINGS BETWEEN RED LAKE INDIANS AND OTHER CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MINNESOTA AND THIS FEELING OF DISTRUST WILL NEVER BE DISPELLED."

IN DECEMBER 1935 SUPERINTENDENT R.H. BITNEY OF RED LAKE SENT THIS REPORT TO JOHN COLLIER WHEN ASKED WHAT HIS VIEWS WERE ABOUT HAVING RED LAKE JOIN THE OTHER RESERVATIONS IN A GENERAL COUNCIL UNDER THE I.R.A. HOW DID THIS FEELING OF ANIMOSITY DEVELOP WHAT FORCES ACTED TO MAKE A MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE WITHOUT THE RED LAKE INDIANS? THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL.

FOLLOWING THE DAWES ACT IN MAY OF 1913 THIS COUNCIL WAS FORMED TO ACT AS A MEDIUM BETWEEN THE VARIOUS CHIPPEWA AND THEIR MONEY IN THE "CHIPPEWA IN MINNESOTA FUND." SINCE THIS MONEY WAS HELD JOINTLY BY ALL CHIPPEWAS "EACH LITTLE COUNCIL HAD TO GET THE CONSENT OF ALL THE REST, SINCE THEY ARE ONE TRIBE, WITH ONE TRIBAL FUND IN ORDER TO SPEND THE MONEY." SINCE MANY INDIANS FROM THE OTHER RESERVATIONS WERE TAKING ALLOTMENTS ON WHITE EARTH IT WAS THOUGHT BEST AT THE TIME TO FORM A COUNCIL BASED ON POPULATION INSTEAD OF REPRESENTATION ACCORDING TO RESERVATION. IN NOVEMBER OF 1935 COLLIER'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL TEAM REPORTED THAT "REPRESENTATION IN THE FORMER COUNCIL WAS ON A POPULATION BASIS, THUS PERMITTING ONE RESERVATION TO DOMINATE OVER THE OTHERS." THAT RESERVATION WAS WHITE EARTH.

MIXED BLOOD VERSUS FULL-BLOOD INDIANS

MIXED BLOOD INDIANS WERE, GENERALLY, THOSE INDIANS WHO HAD ADAPTED TO THE WHITE MAN'S WORLD. HE KNEW ENGLISH OR AT LEAST

HAD A WORKING VOCABULARY. HE UNDERSTOOD MONEY MATTERS, I.E., CREDIT, BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS, ETC. IN SHORT, HE WAS WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED A "COMPETENT" INDIAN. THIS TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL GENERALLY HAD FEW TRIBAL LOYALTIES.

FOLLOWING THE PASSAGE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAWES ACT, THESE INDIVIDUALS ON THE RESERVATIONS IN MINNESOTA WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO RECEIVE THEIR EIGHTY ACRES. LATER ON THEY WOULD, AS A GROUP, BACK THE NELSON AND CLAPP ACTS TO SPEED UP THE ALLOTMENT PROCESS. ON SOME RESERVATIONS, THERE WAS MORE FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THE NON-INDIAN POPULATION AND INTERMARRIAGE. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY THE CASE ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION, WHICH FOR MANY YEARS HAD BEEN THE HOME OF THE WHITE EARTH AGENCY WHICH DISTRIBUTED RATIONS AND VARIOUS OTHER SERVICES TO THE INDIANS IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA.

THIS GROUP WAS STRONG ENOUGH ON MOST RESERVATIONS TO FORCE ACCEPTANCE OF THE ALLOTMENT ACT. AND THE ONLY RESERVATION THAT HAD SUCCEEDED IN STOPPING THIS TREND WAS RED LAKE. BECAUSE OF ITS GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION THERE WAS VERY LITTLE CONTACT AMONG ITS POPULATION WITH THE INFLUENCE OF WHITE PEOPLE AND THUS LITTLE INTERMARRIAGE. COLLIER'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL TEAM REPORTED THAT "THE RED LAKE PEOPLE HAVE MORE. INDIAN BLOOD AND WOULD WISH TO DRAW THE MIXED BLOOD LINE AT A HIGHER RATIO THAN THE REST... WHEREAS THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWA MIGHT DRAW THE LINE SOMEWHERE AROUND A SIXTEENTH OR A THIRTY SECOND, THE RED LAKE INDIANS WOULD DESIRE AN EIGHTH OR A QUARTER."

UP UNTIL THE PASSAGE OF THE WHEELER-HOWARD ACT THIS "BLOOD" CONFLICT HAD BEEN A SOURCE OF DISCONTENT ON MOST RESERVATIONS BUT MOST PARTICULARLY ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION DUE MAINLY

TO THE COHESION AND EXPLOITATION SAID TO BE ENGINEERED BY LOCAL WHITE BUSINESS MEN AND MIXED-BLOODS.

IN JANUARY 1932 AT CASS LAKE THE PILLAGER BAND MET TO DEBATE ON WHETHER TO OPT FOR A PER CAPITA PAYMENT OR TO SPEND SOME OF THE MONEY ON INDIAN SCHOOLING. WILLIAM MORRELL, AN EDUCATED INDIAN WHO HAD RETURNED TO LEECH LAKE, ARGUED FOR THE PER CAPITA PAYMENT AND GEORGE CLOUD, A LONG-TIME RESIDENT, ARGUED FOR THE LATTER.

WILLIAM MORRELL: FRIENDS, I WANT TO ANSWER GEORGE CLOUD. HE SPEAKS WELL, BUT I TAKE PITY ON HIM AS HE IS NOT EDUCATED... THE WAY THIS MONEY IS TO BE SPENT IS PLAINLY STATED IN THE BILL. THE MONEY IS GOING TO BE USED FOR SCHOOLS AND NOT TO BE PAID TO THE INDIANS. (PROPOSED BILL.)

IN A FEW MINUTES GEORGE CLOUD ROSE AND ANSWERED MORRELL'S ARGUMENTS:

GEORGE CLOUD: MR. MORRELL DOES NOT FAVOR ANY OF THE MONEY TO BE USED FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE SCHOOLS. HE EVIDENTLY WANTS THE CHILDREN TO REMAIN IGNORANT.

SINCE MANY INDIANS HAD EITHER A LIMITED VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH OR NONE AT ALL OFTTIMES THE EDUCATED INDIANS HELD THE FLOOR WHEN THE INDIANS MET WITH THE INDIAN OFFICE AND OTHER OFFICIALS. ON LEECH LAKE AS LATE AS 1939 A SOURCE OF COMPLAINT AMONG THE INDIANS VISITING THE TRIBAL COUNCIL WAS THAT THEIR SPEECHES IN THE INDIAN LANGUAGE WERE NEVER PART OF THE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS. USUALLY AN INTERPRETER WAS REQUESTED FROM THE AUDIENCE BUT THERE WAS NO FUNDS UNTIL LATER TO PAY THEM WITH. GEORGE CLOUD AMONG OTHERS FREQUENTLY REQUESTED THE TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT THEIR MEETINGS IN THE CHIPPEWA LANGUAGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE INDIANS PERHAPS BECAUSE HE THOUGHT THAT SINCE THE INDIAN OFFICE OFFICIALS KNEW ONLY ENGLISH THAT THE MEETINGS WERE CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPRESSING THEM.

IN JUNE OF 1934 FRANK SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE WHITE EARTH FULL-BLOOD COUNCIL, WROTE TO COLLIER COMPLAINING ABOUT THE LACK OF COMMUNAL RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF MIXED BLOODS. THERE WAS A RUMOR AT THAT TIME THAT THE MIXED BLOODS WERE PLANNING TO FORM A COUNCIL AT PONSFORD.

"...WE CANNOT SEE HOW YOUNG CARELESS MIXED BLOODS, WHO CARE NOTHING FOR THE WELFARE OF OLDER INDIANS CAN ASSUME CHARGE AND ORGANIZE A COUNCIL TO REPRESENT THE PINE POINT DISTRICT. IF THEY WANT TO ESTABLISH A COUNCIL LET THEM COVER ONLY THE MIXED BLOODS."

IN JULY 1917 IN BEMIDJI A RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED THAT "...PROVIDES FOR THE ENROLLMENT, IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW, OF CHILDREN BORN OF A WHITE FATHER AND AN INDIAN MOTHER OFF THE RESERVATION" IN AN APPARENT ATTEMPT BY THE MIXED BLOOD FACTION TO ENFRANCHISE THE MIXED BLOODS, EXCLUDED BY THE DAWES ACT, FROM RECEIVING ANY BENEFITS.

IN THAT SAME YEAR PETER GRAVES, REPRESENTING THE RED LAKE BAND, WAS TO CALL FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THOSE MIXED BLOODS FORM THE TRIBAL ROLLS THAT THE INDIANS FELT SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS "COMPETENT WHITE MEN." THE WAS REFERRING TO THE MIXED BLOODS FROM THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION IN PARTICULAR WHOM HE DID NOT CONSIDER INDIANS BECAUSE OF THEIR LACK OF INDIAN "BLOOD" AND THEIR LACK OF RESPONSIBILITY TO THOSE WHOM THEY REPRESENT.

DR. MARGARET FISHER, FIELD ANTHROPOLOGIST, REPORTED ON THE WHITE EARTH MIXED BLOODS TO COLLIER IN AUGUST OF 1935.

"THE TREATY GIVES (DAWES ACT) A PER CAPITA SHARE TO ALL DESCENDANTS IF ENROLLED, AND A CHILD WITH HALF A DROP OF INDIAN BLOOD IS ENROLLED SO LONG AS IT WAS BORN ON THE RESERVATION. THERE ARE PLENTY OF ENROLLED "INDIANS" THAT EVEN HITLER WOULD ACCEPT AS NORDICS! THE WHITE EARTH SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE REALLY SOMETHING TO SEE--MANY OF THEM EVEN BLONDER THAN YOU--AND ALL ENROLLED. BUT THEY HAVE A LEGAL SHARE IN THE TRIBAL FUND. IT WOULD BE FINE, I BELIEVE, IF SOME OF THEM COULD ONLY BE PAID OFF AND FORGOTTEN ABOUT, BUT THE LEGAL COMPLICATIONS OF THAT MIGHT PROVE INSURMOUNTABLE."

IN THE SUMMER OF 1918 E.B. LINNEN, CHIEF INSPECTOR, AND C.L. ELLIS, SPECIAL SUPERVISOR, WERE ASKED TO DRAW UP A REPORT "SHOWING BASIS FOR PRESENT ILL FEELING AND DISSENTION BETWEEN CERTAIN GROUPS

OF RED LAKE INDIANS." THE REPORT WAS ENTITLED

"GENERAL REPORT OF AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHIPPEWA RESERVATIONS IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA." IN APRIL OF THAT YEAR THE RED LAKE BAND ADOPTED AN ORGANIZATION OF THEIR OWN AFTER, IN JULY, SENDING A RESOLUTION TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

"...HAVING MORE CONFIDENCE FOR JUSTICE AND FAIR PAY FROM THE GOVERNMENT THAN THEY SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR COUNCIL, WHICH IS CONTROLLED BY MEN WHO ARE FULLY COMPETENT AS WHITE MEN, AND WHO IGNORE THE REAL CONDITIONS OF LESSER COMPETENT INDIANS OF THE DIFFERENT BANDS... AND WHO HAVE ASSUMED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE RED LAKE BAND BY ATTEMPTING TO HAVE CONGRESS ENACT LAWS INCONSISTENT TO PRESENT LAWS ENJOYED BY THE RED LAKE BAND."

IN THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL RED LAKE HAD VERY FEW REPRESENTATIVES BECAUSE OF THEIR SMALL POPULATION. (APPROXIMATELY ONE-SEVENTH OF THE ENTIRE TRIBE) AND COULD BE OUTVOTED ON MATTERS AFFECTING THEIR RESERVATION AND THE GENERAL CHIPPEWA FUND.

SEVENTEEN YEARS LATER BITNEY WOULD REPORT TO COLLIER THAT:

"GOING BACK OVER THE HISTORY OF THE CHIPPEWAS IN MINNESOTA IT WOULD BE FOUND THAT THE RED LAKE INDIANS, PARTICULARLY THE OLD, FULL-BLOOD ELEMENT HAVE BITTERLY FOUGHT ANY ATTEMPT TO ALLOT THEIR RESERVATION AS THEY FELT THAT THE HOLDINGS SHOULD BE HELD IN COMMON. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE VARIOUS TREATIES PARTICULARLY THE RICE TREATY OF 1889. AFTER THE CLAPP AND THE NELSON ACTS WERE PASSED IN MINNESOTA AND THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION LOOTED, A VERY SERIOUS ATTEMPT WAS MADE BY THE MIXED BLOOD INDIANS IN MINNESOTA TO ALLOT THE RED LAKE RESERVATION AND DISSIPATE THE PROCEEDS."

IN 1933 AT HAYWARD, WISCONSIN ACCOMPANYING THE RED LAKE CHIEFS PETER GRAVES WAS TO REITERATE THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT ALLOTMENT, "WE MAINTAIN THE BELIEF THAT THE GREATEST EVIL EVER PERPETUATED WAS TO ALLOT LAND IN SEVERALTY."

IN 1924 THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTE STUDY COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE MERRIAM REPORT SHOWED THAT ONLY 3.6 OF THE ALLOTMENTS ON WHITE EARTH WERE INDIAN CONTROLLED. THAT THE RATIO OF INDIAN TO WHITE POPULATION WAS ONE TO TEN IN EVERY COUNTY EXCEPT MAHNOMEN WHERE IT WAS ONE TO FOUR. AND THAT IN MOST OF THE COUNTIES LESS THAN HALF OF THE ORIGINAL ALLOTTEES STILL WERE IN POSSESSION OF THEIR EIGHTY ACRES.

THROUGHOUT THIS TIME THE RED LAKE RESERVATION HAD ALL OF ITS LAND INTACT WITH FORESTS AND LAKES FOR COMMERCIAL FISHING.

THE ALLOTMENT ACT WAS BEGINNING TO ACHIEVE ITS PURPOSE "TO ACCOMPLISH A GRADUAL RATHER THAN AN IMMEDIATE TRANSITION FROM THE TRIBAL RELATIONSHIP AND DEPENDENT WARDSHIP TO FULL EMANCIPATION AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY."

IN AN INFORMATIONAL LETTER THE ACTING SOLICITOR IN 1935 INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH IN HIS REPORT, "ALL OTHER MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA WERE TO BE ALLOTTED ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION AND PROVISION MADE FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL BUT THE RED LAKE INDIANS TO THE WHITE EARTH INDIANS." PERHAPS IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THIS CONFLICT WOULD DEVELOP BETWEEN THOSE WHO HAD CHOSEN TO CONTINUE LIFE IN A COMMUNAL FASHION IN STEAD OF FASHIONING THEIR LIVES AFTER THEIR WHITE NEIGHBORS.

EDWARD ROGERS, CASS COUNTY ATTORNEY, AND FUTURE T.E.C. PRESIDENT SUMMED UP THE FEELING OF THE INDIANS CHOOSING THE OTHER WAY OF LIVING IN A LETTER TO FRANK BROKER. HE EXCHANGED THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE CONSOLIDATED CHIPPEWAS:

"AT FIRST I DEBATED WHETHER OR NOT IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO ESTABLISH COMPACT INDIAN COMMUNITIES. AFTER GIVING THIS CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT I DECIDED AGAINST IT. I THINK OUR SALVATION IS TO KEEP THE INDIANS SCATTERED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE UPON LANDS ASSIGNED THEM. IN THIS WAY THEY WOULD HAVE THE BENEFIT OF THEIR WHITE NEIGHBORS."

RACIAL PREJUDICE BEING WHAT IT IS IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA THIS SEEMS A RATHER NAIVE STATEMENT TO MAKE. LATER IN THE SAME LETTER; HOWEVER, RODGERS ADVOCATED INDIAN SCHOOLS FOR THOSE INDIAN PUPILS WHO CANNOT ADJUST TO THE WHITE CONTROLLED SCHOOLS.

RED LAKE DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE REST OF THE CHIPPEWA BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T CONTROL THEIR MIXED BLOOD CONTINGENT.

IN 1926 CONGRESS PASSED A LOW PERMITTING A SUIT TO BE FILED IN THE COURT OF CLAIMS AT WASHINGTON, D.C. ON BEHALF OF THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MINNESOTA AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. THE SUIT INITIATED BY THE MIXED BLOOD FACTION SOUGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RED LAKE FUNDS. PETER GRAVES APPEARING BEFORE THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE'S T.E.C. SUMMED UP THE CONFLICT.

"...THE RED LAKE HAVE PAID 1/7 PROPORTION OF THE FUNDS FOR LAWYER'S FEES FOR YOU FOLKS TO SUE THE GOVERNMENT AGAINST THEM (I.E. RED LAKE)... OF COURSE THEY DON'T LIKE IT, YOU DON'T BLAME THEM IF THEY HAVE TO PAY YOUR LAWYERS. THEY HAD TO GO AND HIRE LAWYERS THEMSELVES TO DEFEND THEIR SIDE OF THE CASE BUT THEIR LAWYER'S FEES CAME OUT OF THEIR TIMBER FUND AND NOT OUT OF THIS MILLION DOLLAR FUND. (I AM TOLD) THE EXPENSES (FOR LAWYER'S EXPENSES) WAS ABOUT $ 75,000 FOR THE DEFENSE. THAT LAWSUIT (H-76) WAS PENDING FOR 11 YEARS. THE COURT OF CLAIMS FOUND...THAT THE RED LAKE INDIANS WERE ENTITLED TO THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THE RED LAKE RESERVATION WITHOUT GIVING THE REST OF THE INDIANS ANY PART OF THE MONEY."

THE SUIT STEMMING FROM A 1904 LAND SALE ON THE PART OF RED LAKE TO THE UNITED STATES IN WHICH RED LAKE RECEIVED ONE MILLION DOLLARS. IT WAS FINALLY SETTLED ON OCTOBER 14, 1935. "THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES ENTERED AN ORDER DENYING THE PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI IN THE CASE OF THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MINNESOTA VS. UNITED STATES, EL AL, NO. 42. OCTOBER TERM, 1933."

THIS ACTION ON THE PART OF THEIR FELLOW CHIPPEWAS CAUSED MORE THAN ANYTHING THE FEELING OF BITTERNESS ON RED LAKE'S PART. LATER IN 1835 THEY WERE TO PETITION THE OTHER RESERVATIONS TO SEGREGATE THEIR SHARE IN THE TRIBAL ASSETS WHICH HAD DIMINISHED FROM SEVENTEEN MILLION ON 1889 TO $ 600,000 IN 1935.

IT IS PERHAPS APPROPRIATE NOW TO RETURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE CHIPPEWA GENERAL COUNCIL.

UNTIL 1918 JOHN G. MORRISON WAS THE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE C.G.C., OWNER OF THE CHIPPEWA TRADING COMPANY. MORRISON IMMEDIATELY APPOINTED A LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, ACCORDING TO BEN CASWELL, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE MEETING THUS DEPRIVING THE DELEGATES OF PASSING JUDGEMENT ON THE SELECTIONS. CASWELL FURTHER CHARGED MORRISON OF APPOINTING PEOPLE FROM WHITE EARTH WHO WERE MIXED BLOOD FRIENDS OF HIS. CASWELL SAID THAT "THE MAJORITY OF THE INDIANS DO NOT APPROVE OF THE DELEGATES SO SELECTED BY THE PRESIDENT BECAUSE THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE DOES NOT REPRESENT THE WISHES OF THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWAS, AND THEY REPUDIATE THEM ABSOLUTELY FOR ALL THE ACTS THAT THIS LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ASSUME TO BE THE WISHES OF THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWAS."

PETER GRAVES, ORGANIZER OF THE REBEL RED LAKE COUNCIL, GAVE TESTIMONY TO THE INSPECTORS. HE MAINTAINED "THAT THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHIPPEWAS OF MINNESOTA IS CONTROLLED BY A FEW MIXED BLOOD INDIANS OF THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION, WHO ARE AND SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS COMPETENT WHITE MEN." GRAVES FELT THAT MORRISON AND HIS "GANG," WHICH INCLUDED AMONG OTHERS GUS BEAULIEU, BEN L. FAIRBANKS, HEAD OF B.L. FAIRBANKS COMPANY, JOHN CARL, EUGENE WARREN HENRY WARREN, GEORGE BERRY, T.H. BEAULIEU, AND CLEM BEAULIEU, WERE ONLY OUT TO EXPLOIT THE INDIANS. HE ALSO MAINTAINED:

"THAT THESE MIXED BLOODS WHO ARE CLAMORING FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE TREATED INDIVIDUALLY AS THEY REQUEST, BUT NOT TO ALL INDIANS AS THEY REPRESENT.

THAT THE INDIANS SHOULD BE COMPETENT IN THAT OF KNOWING THE VALUE OF LAND FIRST, NOT THE KIND OF COMPETENCY THAT HAS BEEN SHOWN, BY THE SAD EXPERIENCE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE INDIAN ALLOTTEES ON THE WHITE EARTH RESERVATION THE RESULT OF MISREPRESENTATIONS OF INDIANS BY THE MIXED BLOODS, BY WHOM THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES HAS IN THE PAST BEEN PREVAILED UPON TO ENACT LAWS, ONE OF WHICH RESULTED IN A MOST DEPLORABLE CONDITION TO THE WHITE EARTH BAND..."

IN BEMIDJI ON JULY 9, 1918 JAMES L. COFFEY CALLED A REBEL COUNCIL OF THE C.G.C. TO PROTEST ALLEGED ACTIONS BY THE MORRISON LEGISLATIVE AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEES. AMONG OTHER THINGS HE HELD THAT IN 1915 MORRISON "HELD AN ILLEGAL COUNCIL AT WHITE EARTH" AT WHICH TIME MORRISON AND THE MEN CHARGED BY GRAVES PLUS OTHERS WERE TO ACT AS ATTORNEYS "TO PROSECUTE CLAIMS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES, ARISING UNDER OLD TREATIES; THAT THE CONTRACT STIPULATED A COMPENSATION OF 10% TO BE PAID TO THE ATTORNEYS ON ALL SUMS TO BE RECOVERED FROM THE UNITED STATES.

IN DECEMBER 1916 COFFEY WAS APPOINTED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE AND HE FOUND THAT "THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE HAD FORMED A BILL TO BE INTRODUCED ON CONGRESS APPROPRIATING AN AGGREGATE OF ABOUT $ 108,000 TO BE PAID TO GUS BEAULIEU, BEN L. FAIRBANKS, AND OTHERS OUT OF CHIPPEWA TRIBAL FUNDS TO COMPENSATE THEM FOR WORK THEY CLAIMED TO HAVE DONE FOR THE INDIANS IN PROSECUTING THE MILLE LAC CASE."

AT THE NEXT GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING COFFEY BROUGHT THIS MATTER UP TO THE SURPRISE OF THE MEMBERS PRESENT HE SAID. THE RESOLUTION ASKING THE $108,000, HE TESTIFIED, HAD THE SIGNATURES OF JOHN MORRISON AND PAUL BEAULIEU, SECRETARY AFFIXED TO IT. THE RESOLUTION WAS RESCINDED AND THE CLAIM REJECTED. COFFEY FURTHER CHARGED THAT AFTER THE MEETING IN NOVEMBER OF 1917 "AT A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BEN FAIRBANKS PRESENTED A RESOLUTION TO ALLOW HIM $5,000. THE BEAULIEU ESTATE $5,000 AND CERTAIN INDIAN CHIEF OTHER SUMS, AGGREGATING ABOUT $48,000 TO BE PAID OUT OF CHIPPEWA TRIBAL FUND." HE ADDED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE IN WASHINGTON "HAD THE MINUTES OF THAT MEETING FUSED UP TO SHOW THAT THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED, AND THEY TRIED TO HAVE THIS CLAIM PRESENTED IN THE FORM OF A BILL TO CONGRESS, TO WHICH HE OBJECTED."

COFFEY WAS QUESTIONED FURTHER ABOUT THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

"HE STATES THAT SOME OF THE LEGISLATION THEY PROPOSED WOULD AMOUNT TO PRACTICALLY CREATING A RECEIVERSHIP FOR THE ENTIRE ESTATE OF THE CHIPPEWAS OF MINNESOTA, AND THAT THE ONLY BENEFIT ACCRUING WOULD BE TO GIVE THESE MEN WHO HAD CREATED THIS CLAIMS COMMISSION A TUNNEL TO WORK IN TO RECEIVE A COMPENSATION OF 10%.

HE STATES AT ONE OF THE MEETINGS (ATTORNEY) MR. BALLINGER STATED "THAT THIS PROPERTY IS WORTH ANYWHERE FROM $10,000,000 TO $18,000,000, SO THAT THIS 10% WOULD AMOUNT TO $1,000,000 OR MORE TO BE DIVIDED AMONG THE NINE MEMBERS OF THE CLAIMS COMMISSION."

COFFEY WITHDREW HIS NAME FROM THE COMMITTEE AND WENT HOME. THERE WAS CALLED IN APRIL 1918 A GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING AT WHICH TIME THE DELEGATES DISMISSED MORRISON, BEAULIEU, AND THE ENTIRE COMMITTEE THEN IN WASHINGTON.

IN JULY 1918 BOTH MORRISON AND COFFEY'S GROUPS CALLED FOR A MEETING OF THE C.G.C. IN THE SAME TOWN. COFFEY APPARENTLY HIRED CITY HALL FOR HIS MEETING BUT THE MAYOR REFUSED ENTRY AT WHICH TIME COFFEY HIRED ANOTHER MEETING PLACE. MORRISON'S COUNCIL MET IN THE CITY HALL SOMETIME AFTERWARDS.

IN SUMMARIZING COFFEY'S TESTIMONY THE RECORD STATED THAT:

"IN CONCLUSION HE STATES THAT THIS COTERIE OF WHITE EARTH MIXED BLOODS HERETOFORE MENTIONED HAVE BEEN GOING TO WASHINGTON FOR THE LAST TWENTY YEARS OR MORE PRETENDING THAT THEY ARE THE AUTHORIZED DELEGATES OF THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA, LIVING AT THE EXPENSE OF THE TRIBE, WHILE AS A MATTER OF FACT THEY WERE PROSECUTING THE MILLE LAC CASE, AND OTHER MATTERS FOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS UNDER A COMPENSATION PROVIDED BY CONGRESS, AND THAT THE CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MINNESOTA EVERY WINTER IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON PULLING THE WOOL OVER THE EYES OF THE OFFICIALS DOWN THERE WITH THESE FORMS OF PROCEEDINGS THEY HAVE GOTTEN UP IN LOCAL COUNCILS."

COFFEY'S COUNCIL AFFIRMED THE ACTIONS TAKEN AT BALL CLUB IN APRIL.

THE MINUTES OF THE MORRISON COUNCIL WAS COMPRISED MOSTLY OF RESOLUTIONS.

THE FOLLOWING ARE TAKEN FROM THE RECORD OF THE INSPECTORS:

ONE RESOLUTION CALLED FOR THE ABOLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN BUREAU; ONE ASKED FOR A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THREE MEMBERS TO INVESTIGATE THE B.I.A. AND ITS OPERATIONS WITH A VIEW TOWARD "ABOLISHING BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOLS, UNNECESSARY AGENCIES"; ONE RESOLUTION INSTRUCTED THE COUNCIL AND ITS OFFICERS TO DISREGARD THE INVESTIGATION THEN BEING CONDUCTED BY US; ANOTHER APPOINTED WEBSTER BELLANGER ATTORNEY FOR THE TRIBE; "RESOLUTION NO. 16 PROVIDED FOR THE PAYMENT TO WAY-WE-YAY-CUMING $5,000, ETC." IN SHORT IT AFFIRMED COFFEY'S ALLEGATIONS; RESOLUTION NO. 13 SOUGHT TO PROTECT YOUNG INDIANS FROM "VILE OUTRAGES BY MALE EMPLOYEES AND BOYS, AND WHICH SCHOOLS ARE SO CONDUCTED THAT OUR CHILDREN DERIVE NO BENEFITS THEREFROM."

THE NETT LAKE AND RED LAKE DELEGATES LEFT THE MORRISON COUNCIL AND WENT OVER TO THE COFFEY COUNCIL OR AS IT WAS CALLED THEN THE "FULL-BLOODS" COUNCIL. ALSO SOME DELEGATES FROM WHITE EARTH AND LEECH LAKE LEFT MORRISON'S COUNCIL.

FOLLOWING THE TWO COUNCILS THE TWO INVESTIGATIONS VISITED THE LEECH LAKE, NETT LAKE, RED LAKE, AND WHITE EARTH RESERVATIONS AND THE LOCAL COUNCILS "AT VARIOUS POINTS... DENOUNCED THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE AND ITS ACTS, AND STATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE BOUND IN ANY MANNER BY THEM. IT APPEARED THAT THEY WERE ALL SUSPICIOUS OF THE ACTS AND INTEGRITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, AND WERE FEARFUL THAT THEY WOULD DO SOMETHING AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE INDIANS AND THE TRIBE AS A WHOLE."

THE RED LAKE COUNCIL VOTED AFTERWARDS IN FAVOR OF CANCELLATION OF THE LICENSES OF THE CHIPPEWA TRADING COMPANY AND THE B.L. FAIRBANKS COMPANY.

THE MORRISON COUNCIL WAS BELIEVED BY THE FULL-BLOOD COUNCIL TO FAVOR THE ABOLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS SO THAT MONEY IN THE CHIPPEWA FUND COULD NOT BE SPEND AND LEAVE IT FREE FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

THE INVESTIGATORS ENDED THE FIRST SECTION OF THEIR REPORT WITH THIS COMMENT:

"IT IS PERTINENT TO STATE THAT THE PERSONS WHO ARE FOREMOST IN THE FILING OF COMPLAINTS AND CHARGES, ATTEMPTING TO HAVE THE SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES OF THESE CHIPPEWA RESERVATIONS ABOLISHED, AS ALSO THE INDIAN BUREAU, AND ATTEMPTING TO STOP ANY FURTHER USE OF CHIPPEWA FUNDS FOR SUCH PURPOSES, WHICH WOULD THROW THE BURDEN OF EDUCATING ALL THE CHIPPEWA CHILDREN, AND PROPERLY CARING FOR THE INDIGENT, CRIPPLED, BLIND, AND HELPLESS INDIANS ON GRATUITY APPROPRIATIONS BE MADE BY CONGRESS, ARE COMPOSED OF A COTERIE OF MIXED BLOODS PRINCIPALLY FROM THE WHIT EARTH RESERVATION LED BY MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, THE MAJORITY OF WHOM THE INDIANS STATE HAVE NO RIGHTS ON THEIR RESERVATIONS, AND WHO HAVE BEEN WRONGFULLY ENROLLED AND ALLOTTED. THEY VOTED IN SEVERAL COUNCILS TO HAVE STRICKEN FROM THE ROLLS THE NAMES OF 86 PERSONS NAMED IN THE BRIEF FILED IN THE COURT OF CLAIMS OF THE UNITED STATES, DEPARTMENTAL 158".

R.C. BELL, ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, IN CHARGE OF LAND LITIGATION AT WHITE EARTH BELIEVED THAT THE ACTION OF STRIKING THE NAMES SHOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN.

AT THE COFFEY COUNCIL, WHICH HAD 116 DELEGATES FROM VARIOUS RESERVATION AND 67 FROM WHITE EARTH IN ATTENDANCE, IN RESOLUTION NO. 3 ASKED THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STRIKE OUT THE NAMES OF THE 86 PERSON'S NAMES FROM THE CHIPPEWA ROLLS.

FOLLOWING THESE CHARGES AND SPLIT COUNCILS MOST CHIPPEWAS LOST INTEREST IN THE C.C.C. AND THE ORGANIZATION DISAPPEARED.

AFTER THE LAWSUIT THAT ATTEMPTED TO TAKE THEIR MONEY THE RED LAKERS DEVELOPED A PARANOIA ABOUT THEIR HOLDINGS, PERHAPS A VERY HEALTHY AND REALISTIC "PARANOIA". IN 1934 WHEN THEY FIRST HEARD OF A NEW GOVERNMENT ACT TO BENEFIT THE INDIANS THEIR COUNCIL SENT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT TO THE INDIAN OFFICE:

"RESOLUTION #1: WHEREAS, ALL COUNCILMEN...CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS ARE NOT AT THIS TIME, NOR IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE QUALIFIED FOR THE DUTIES OF SELF-GOVERNMENT,

THEREFORE, BE, AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, THAT THIS COUNCIL BELIEVES THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS DO NOT WANT ANY OF THEIR RESERVATIONS LANDS SUB-DIVIDED AMONG THEM THAT THEY BELIEVE THEIR PRESENT STATUS IS THE VERY BEST THAT CAN BE ACCORDED TO REAL INDIANS OF AN INDIAN RESERVATION."

IF IT WERE NOT SUCH A SERIOUS MATTER ONE COULD ALMOST SEE THE SARCASM IN THE FACE OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS A VERY GRIM JOKE. ON THE OTHER HAND WE MAY SEE A PEOPLE WHOSE LEADERS ARE INVITING THE WORLD TO LOOK UPON THEM AS BACKWARD AND IGNORANT IF THAT COULD ENABLE THEM TO HOLD ONTO THEIR RESERVATION.