

Indian young people when they become aware of the conditions of their community; a mood which stays with them all their life.

Let me illustrate this point with the result of a study conducted by Rev. John F. Bryde, superintendent of the Holy Rosary Mission School at Pine Ridge, S. Dak. Father Bryde compared the achievement test results of Indian youngsters with the results in comparable non-Indian groups. He found that the Indian youngsters lagged behind in the early elementary grades, largely because of problems of cultural deprivation in the home and often an inadequate knowledge of the English language. They caught up in the third and fourth grades, but began to lag behind again by the time they reached seventh grade and continued to lag from then on, with the dropout problem setting in relatively soon. Father Bryde attributes this lag at the high school level to the fact that it is at that age that youngsters become aware of the predominant view of their community—that Indians cannot succeed; that they have no future.

To give you another illustration of Indian attitudes: 3 years ago the leaders of the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota took the initiative in creating the first Indian housing authority for the construction of low-rent homes. After news of the new housing program spread throughout the Indian community, a great many people laughed it off as just another Government promise that would be broken. When construction was begun on the first houses, doubt was still expressed by a great many people that the project would ever be finished. When the program was finally finished and the first families moved into the new homes, the questions which were being asked were: "Where is the catch? What is the Government trying to get out of us now?" Soon a rumor spread that the tribe would lose the rest of its land. One of the candidates in an election to the tribal presidency contended that the housing project was "a Trojan horse," that the tribe would now surely have to give up its land in return for the housing assistance.

I am glad to say, though, that the tiny fraction of our Indian population which has obtained housing during the last 2 years has responded well. These families feel that the homes have given them new hope; a new lease on life. They are grateful for the opportunity of providing decent surroundings for their children.

Similarly favorable responses have resulted from other Federal programs, once they had established themselves and have been accepted by the community. One of them is the cattle loan program which was started by the Bureau of Indian Affairs during the thirties. While there have been failures, under that program, there have also been a good number of successes and on many reservations the only Indian families which have achieved economic independence, other than those employed by the Government, are the families of cattlemen who were put into business by the Indian Bureau's loan program.

Another great success was the Civilian Conservation Corps. The so-called CCC-ID projects, which differed somewhat from the regular CCC program and came closer to the programs envisaged by title I, part B, of the bill now before you, helped a great many young Indian people to develop work habits and skills which enabled them to fit better into the pattern of our American economy.

More recently, another successful Federal program has been launched. It is the adult vocational training program, under which young Indian people are given training which makes it possible for them to be placed in jobs; generally off the reservation.

I have now spoken of the programs which have been successful in improving the lot of Indians. I have mentioned these merely to demonstrate that, where improvement programs were initiated, they had good results. But it should be understood that these programs were, and are conducted, on so small a scale as to affect only a fraction of the population in need. Also, each of the aforementioned programs has been a pinpointed program, addressed to one phase of living; such as, housing, or to one group of people; such as, young people with a sufficiently good school record to benefit from an adult vocational training program. Most of the programs have not reached the people who are really down and out, and there are a great number of those in the Indian country, particularly in the so-called full-blood group. The hope is that through new programs, authorized by the Economic Opportunity Act, a substantial impact can be made on the problems of Indian poverty.

You may wonder how my statement, that existing Federal programs for Indian economic improvement are quite small, can be true in the light of the rather substantial appropriations which Congress has been making and continues to make in the field of Indian affairs. What you will find, if you look closely at