

Ojibwa members of her high school graduating class, she is the only one remaining within the territorial limits of the reservation, the others having left because of lack of opportunities at home. Of the better educated who remain, many are employed in Government positions which prohibit political activity. Others, successfully earning a living, profess no inclination to become involved in civic or political activity. The total number of such individuals is limited, although it is by no means true, as one Benedictine missionary put it several years ago, that "only the riff-raff remain."

If the vast majority of the reservation population sees the need for bringing business and industry (i.e., employment opportunity) to the reservation, many recognize that employment opportunities can only exist for those with specialized skills and advanced education. Fewer recognize the "infrastructure" necessary to the establishment of a modern industry, however. In this regard, each of the three major villages is connected to major highways by paved roads, and electric power and telephone lines reach them as well. One of the major problems is, surprisingly, in a land of lakes, lack of water for industrial purposes (as well as, in most communities, for household purposes). Fuel—gas, coal, or oil—must be brought in from considerable distances. The population of western Minnesota and the Dakotas is sparse; large populations as potential consumers of any product are some distance away.

Some, including many of the CAP staff, see a problem in the lack of skills of the Indian population. There are some skills present, and the manpower inventory undertaken by the CAP is presumably measuring this aspect. Most often such skills as they exist are not used, as opportunity is not available. It is true, however, that very many are truly lacking in skills and education and almost all are lacking in motivation to leave the reservation.

Many whites believe that the answer to the economic problems of White Earth lies in termination of Federal responsibility and assimilation of the Indian population in the cities. This is not in fact an answer, as the skilled workers and many others of the Indian reservation have lived elsewhere but prefer the "poverty" of the reservation to life in the white man's cities—after having experienced both. In spite of pressures to leave, the population has remained constant for the past ten years. Of those who have left, almost every one (the researchers could identify no exceptions) would prefer to, and would, return to the reservation if employment were available.

It is not only that the White Earth Ojibwa say that they want to remain; they do so. Even those who have left return at every possible occasion—vacations, sickness of a relative, baptism of a child, the wedding or funeral of a kinsman, hunting season, and so on. Many who live in the Twin Cities return home for the weekends. The city is never "home"; it is a place to work for lack of opportunity at "home." Those residing away when in large numbers tend to form a reservation community in the city, or, if in smaller numbers, to associate with Ojibwa regardless of reservation affiliation. Genuine assimilation is certainly not common. The result of this pseudo-assimilation in practice is the termination of Federal responsibilities. When the Indian moves to the city, he goes to an alien society and culture; the northern rural white moves into a part of his own culture and follows a long tradition of movement.

Articulation of the reasons for desiring to remain or return to the reservation is difficult to obtain, but the significance of kinship and the reservation as a refuge from the pressures of white urban society appear to be important. Frequent reference to the clear air, the lakes, hunting, and fishing, when considered in terms of the derogatory remarks made about the cities—bad air, crowded conditions, strict schedules, monotony of work and impersonality—indicate some of the differences in values between Indians and whites. One might also point to personality differences between Ojibwa, on the one hand, and urban white Americans and non-Ojibwa Indians on the other, as registered in psychological projective and other tests. To ignore such differences in social relations, values and psychology is to invite failure of any project. To say that the Ojibwa should adopt white urban American characteristics ignores the questions of how and why.

A major problem of the White Earth Ojibwa communities is the need to overcome factionalism and to build community solidarity. It is customary to see kin groups and/or factions as obstacles to unified community organization and action, but there has been no attempt to utilize them constructively. Community organization is seen by many of the more sophisticated as a prerequisite to community advancement and successful projects, though a few see it as an end product in