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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

AN INVESTIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS WHICH CHARACTERIZE INDIANS IN THE OKLAHOMA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND A BACKGROUND FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

A DISSERTATION

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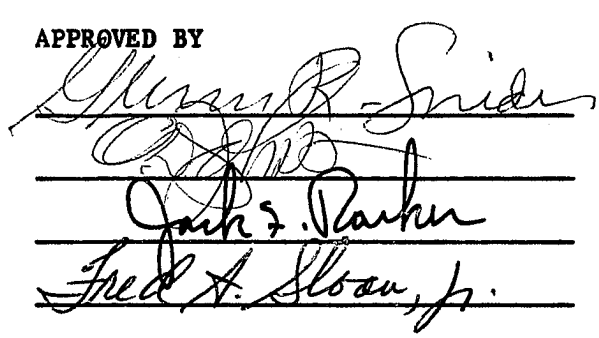
Norman, Oklahoma

1968

AN INVESTIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS WHICH CHARACTERIZE INDIANS IN THE OKLAHOMA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND A BACKGROUND FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

APPROVED BY



DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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AN INVESTIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS WHICH CHARACTERIZE INDIANS IN THE OKLAHOMA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND A BACKGROUND FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

Concern at all levels of government with discrimination against minority groups has, until recently, had but little effect on promoting interest in the plight of the American Indian. Oklahoma, with an Indian population of 65,000[1], is faced with serious educational and social problems arising from the pressures of conflicting cultures to which Indian adults and students alike are subjected. A basis is needed from which educational and social reforms can be effected which will relieve and eventually remove the stigma of isolation and discrimination so commonly practiced against the Indian population.

The present disadvantaged position of a high percentage of Indian pupils and the excessively low holding power of Oklahoma schools for Indian pupils emphasize the need for a thorough investigation of this problem. Oklahoma City has the largest population of Indians of

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[1]U. S. Census of Population, (1960), PC (1) 38B Oklahoma.

any urban community in Oklahoma with a total of 4,355 as compared with Tulsa's Indian population 3,325 and it appears to be an appropriate area for careful study.

Oklahoma is the home of more Indians than any state in the union except Arizona. That a substantial number of these Indians are living in social, economic, and cultural deprivation is an accepted fact. Muriel Wright has identified sixty-seven different Indian tribes known to be currently represented among the Indian tribes of Oklahoma.

The following comments by John F. Kennedy recognize our commitment for those who suffer from ignorance, poverty, and discrimination.

> "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich . . . To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves . . . not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right . . .
> The same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebearers fought are still at issue around the globe . . . We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of the first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans . . . born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage . . . and unwilling to witness or permit the sole undoing of those human rights to which this Nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world."[1]

Though there is a strong humanitarian cause for concern with the present plight of the American Indian, it is far more than an internal domestic problem. Whether our treatment of local minorities is fair, compassionate and just, or otherwise, this treatment does much to

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[1]U.S., Presidnet, 1961-63 (Kennedy). Excerpt from Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1961).

influence opinion in other countries which are always alert for signs and actions which reveal the true spirit and behavior of the American people. The benefits of our tremendously expensive program of aid to other countries which is motivated by political and military reasons as well as humanitarian, and which is expected to help our country gain favor with foreign populations, are sure to be largely nullified if our behavior towards our own minority groups tends to negate the image we are attempting to present.

The inevitability of conflict between early American settlers and the Indians was described by J. P. Kinney.

> "The Indian problem in America has been one of unusual difficulty. A race limited in numbers, yet possessed of a most determined spirit of independence and an almost incomparable resistance to change in habits of thought and conduct, occupied a territory into which there swarmed the most adventurous men from European nations, whose past history had been replete with the examples of daring, heroism and of national conquest. Under such circumstances, frequent clashes between representatives of the races were inevitable."[1]

The above conditions are not completely outdated, even in our time, with large numbers of the Indian population clinging to ancient customs which tend to maintain the separation of these elements of the Indian population and the aggressive citizenry of contemporary American society.

The long history of abuses to which the American Indian has been subjected since his earliest exposure to the European explorers and settlers, and our failure to prepare him for active participation in our modern society must rate as classic examples of failure in the moral,

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[1]J. P. Kinney, A Continent Lost---A Civilization Won, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), pp. 322-323.

social, economic, political, and humanitarian services which we traditionally think of as legitimate concerns of a responsible government.

The repeatedly rejected lower class tends to communicate a sense of frustration, despair, and bitterness to their own children and to each other. In this manner, our society manages to generate what has been referred to as a self-perpetuating "underclass." Interruption of this cycle is of the utmost urgency if sustained relief is to be accomplished. Senator Kennedy places a share of the blame for our present problems with poverty on an obsolete welfare program.

> "We have created a welfare system which aids only a fourth of those who are poor, which forces men to leave their families so that public assistance can be obtained, which has created a dependence on their fellow citizens that is degrading and distasteful to giver and receiver alike. We have created a system of handouts, a second-rate set of social services which damages and demeans its recipients and destroys any semblance of human dignity that they have managed to retain through their adversity."[1]

We should realize, too, in our treatment of the Indian problems that we can never devise a program of recovery for the destitute without involving the Indian himself in the planning phases of the effort. We might best invest the Indian with dignity and responsibility by recognizing his ability and intelligence in expecting him to contribute to the solution of problems with which he is faced. It seems appropriate that we attempt to apply the advice offered by Locke, the Philosopher, "The sooner you treat him as a man, the sooner he will be one." Surely, Indians have been looked after long enough. Attention must be directed toward placing them in such a position that their

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[1]Robert Kennedy, Time, Inc., (May 19, 1967).

welfare can be confidently secured by their own efforts.

The cruel and oppressive treatment of the Indian population by their caucasian neighbors and government during many past generations causes an understandable reluctance on the part of the Indians to submit readily to present proposals for their relief. A brief history of these transgressions will be reviewed in the third chapter of this paper since they do play such an important part in the current attitude, philosophy, and personal and collective ambition of the American Indian.

Our efforts to civilize, Christianize, and socialize primitive populations of other lands may seem a mockery if we are unable to cause natives of our own country to become a functioning integral segment of our society. A land and citizenry so historically famous for sharing its affluence with the needy and even creating the environment for general prosperity throughout the world must find it diddicult to explain that the American Indian, the true aborigine of our country, remains in a state of semi-illiterate poverty.

A basic dispute seems to have persisted for many years as to whether Indians should be encouraged to improve their own ancient ways within the confines of their tribal bodies or to abondon their tribal customs and become fully assimilated members of the ever-encompassing white society. General acceptance of and participation by the Indians in the functions of contemporary American society seems, however, to be essential if their status is to improve.

Establishment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1824 started a dehumanizing paternalism that persisted until 1953 when policy was again changed. The prevailing policy, prior to 1953, whether intended or not,

managed to maintain a good portion of the Indian population in a perpetual state of dependency on the Federal Government. The report of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs headed by Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington charged: "Indians remain at the bottom of the economic ladder, have the highest rate of unemployment, live in the poorest housing, and suffer chronic poverty."[1]

This seems a clear indictment of past programs and policies pursued by the Indian Bureau. A recent Indian Bureau report indicates that almost two billion dollars have been appropriated for the Indian Agency since 1948. The failure to effect acceptance of and participation in the mainstream of American society by substantial numbers of the Indian population by the wise and discriminate use of these appropriations casts further reflections on those responsible for improving the lot of the Indians through the various arms of the agency. It almost seems that sinister plans have been followed to insure the continued need for the many thousands of agency employees by never quite elevating their charges to a position of independence from which they could become active and productive members of our society.

If we are to realize satisfaction in the social and economic adjustment of our Indian population, it is obvious that a new and different approach must be attempted.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this investigation was to analyze selected environmental conditions and school-related problems which characterize

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[1]Ivy Coffee, The Daily Oklahoman, (September 12, 1966), p. 5.

Indians in the Oklahoma City School District, and to develop recommendations for educational programming designed to improve opportunities for Indian pupils.

It was planned to obtain and analyze information concerning the geographical location, economic condition, and educational achievement level of the families of Indian pupils living within the Oklahoma City Public School District. More specifically, it was intended to:

1. Review and present a brief summary of events in the history of the American Indians as background for understanding their current habits and philosophy.
2. Identify the location of the Indian population in Oklahoma City by school attendance area and by location within the attendance area as listed on the 1966 school enrollment and/or 1966 school enumeration.
3. Discover and analyze information relating to economic condition, educational achievement level of the head of the household, and selected cultural factors by means of the personal interview technique.
4. Discover reading achievement level of selected groups of Indian pupils enrolled in the Oklahoma City Public Schools.
5. Study the holding power of Central High School for Indian students and the transient nature of the enrollment of Indian students at selected elementary schools in the Oklahoma City Public Schools.
6. Interview selected Indian leaders who are especially well informed regarding problems of the urban Indian.

7. Develop recommendations for improved educational programs for American Indian students in the Oklahoma City School District based upon analysis of data discovered in the investigation.

Definitions of Terms

Indian or American Indian. -- Any person possessing one-fourth or more blood descent as determined by the state and federal agencies in identification for educational purposes.

Indian Population or American Indian Population. -- Refers to the population of the Continental United States exclusive of Indians in Alaska, Canada, or Mexico. The population referred to may be further restricted by the context of a particular usage.

Educational Achievement of the Head of Household. -- Academic year of public school completed or its equivalent.

Procedures Used in Research and Reporting

The problem was concerned with investigating specifically stated areas relating to the Indian population in the Oklahoma City Public School System. Data were collected from several sources in the course of the investigation. The data gathering design was planned to utilize significant information from student enrollment forms and information from the 1966 School Enumeration in the Oklahoma City Public School District.

The name of the student, his home address, age and school attended, and the name of the parent or head of the household were determined from the 1966 enumeration. A questionnaire form was designed to acquire

information concerning the economic condition, social environment, grade achievement level of the head of the household, and general cultural background; this was used as a basis for personal interviews.

Location of the Indian population by separate school attendance area and by location within the attendance area was presented in pictorial form, based upon addresses furnished from enumeration and enrollment. This geographical placement of the families pinpointed the Indian population within the school district and identified the areas which should ultimately receive most attention.

The personal interview technique was used in interviewing an adequate, randomly selected sample of Indian families from the total Indian population of the district. Administration of the questionnaire by means of a home visit and a personal interview was planned to secure a response from the selected subjects. Selection of households to be visited was made in such a way that every household in the study had an equal chance of being chosen for a home visit. Randomness was achieved by numbering all families and drawing from the total number until the predetermined sample had been selected.[1]

Additional background material for use in this study was collected from personal visitations with individuals, both Indian and non-Indian, who were particularly well informed regarding the problem of the Indian in Oklahoma City. The insights and observations of these people should be helpful in identifying attitudes which might influence behavior of the Indians living within the local community.

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[1]Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), p. 52.

Recommendations for the development of improved educational programs and services for Indian pupils were formulated on the basis of data gathered and analyzed. Recommendations were also made relating to the community and adult education services which might be contributive to improving the set of conditions which characterize the life of the adult Indian in Oklahoma City.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I was designed to establish the need for and to identify the problem of the study. The method of investigation was also described and delimitations established in Chapter I.

Chapter II contains a review of the research and literature pertinent to the problem.

Chapter III offers a summarization of events in American Indian History as background material in an effort to understand the present disadvantaged position of large numbers of Indians in Oklahoma. This material should also serve to explain partially the current attitudes and philosophy which seem to prevail among the Indian people and the present apathy considered by some to be typical of the Indian.

Chapter IV presents an analysis of data collected during the course of the investigation.

Chapter V includes, along with summarization statements, the major findings of the study and recommendations for action based upon an evaluation of the data collected and analyzed in the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Indian Interest in Education

> "Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government, the preservation of liberty, and the happiness of mankind, schools, and the means of education, shall forever be encouraged in this nation."

This statement taken from Article Three of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and included in the constitution of the Cherokees indicates the regard for education held by progressive Indian leaders in the early recorded history of their people. This inherent interest in education tends to magnify our failure to date to foster their interest and use it as a means of spanning the differences in the Indian and white societies.

Numerous references support the desire for formal education among the Five Civilized Tribes. Provisions for governmental assistance in the financing of schools to be established in their newly assigned lands to the west was an influencing factor in bringing about the peaceful removal of many Indians from their original homes east of the Mississippi River.

The Plains Indians in their early exposure to the whites had little opportunity to observe the advantages of schools for their young people. Their way of life provided the training considered important for their youth. The boys learned from experience to hunt

and fight, and the girls learned by doing the tasks which were expected of them. Formal training must have seemed completely impractical to these people.

Intelligence of the early day Indian was established in may ways. Their ability to sustain themselves in the most unproductive environments, such as the frigid central and northern plains and the barren southwestern desert, attests to their remarkable adaptive powers. This unique capacity for adjusting to varying conditions, exemplified by their early existence in every area of this country has, unfortunately, failed to help them realize fully the new American way of life. Capacity of the early Indian for self control and group control is obvious from the self imposed restraints which made it unnecessary for the tribes to police their members or prescribe punishment. Many tribes had a highly organized system of government, not only within their own group, but among neighboring tribes as well. Indians of Iroquois lineage were especially noted for their inter-tribal government. The Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Onandaga, and Oneida tribes comprised what has been referred to as The League of Five Nations.[1] This organization of tribes reportedly dealt with international affairs with domestic tribal affairs being the concern of the individual tribes. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of these activities was their practice of achieving unanimous agreement prior to taking action on topics under discussion.

The desire of the Eastern Indians to learn to read and write was clearly demonstrated by the enthusiastic manner in which they studied

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[1]Claude Herbert Heyer, "American Indian Self Sufficiency: A Study in Human and Natural Resource Development Policy" (Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1966), p. 45.

the new alphabet invented by the Cherokee, Sequoyah, who after devoting about twelve years of his life and being subjected to the ridicule of his family and other tribesmen, was able to develop an alphabet of eighty-five characters which allowed the Cherokees to learn to read and write a language of their own. Though no schools were organized, it is reported the ability to read and write was general even among the most backward of his people within three years of the time Sequoyah first demonstrated his alphabet.[1]

The first school to be established in the area which now makes up the State of Oklahoma was for the purpose of educating Indian youth. This school was established about five miles north of the present town of Maizie in Wagoner County by the United Foreign Missionary Society (Presbyterian Dutch Reformed). Known as Union Mission, it was opened in 1821 to teach youngsters of the Osage Nation.[2]

While most of the people who have had the responsibility for promoting the welfare of our Indian population during the past several generations must have been genuinely interested in doing good, the present state of education among the Indians indicates little success in the capitalization of their long standing interest in formal training for their youth. Padfield and associates very aptly described the position in which we have placed the American Indian in regard to education.

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[1]Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "The Choctaw Academy," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, VI, (December, 1928), p. 453.

[2]Muriel H. Wright, A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), p. 191.

> "From the Indian point of view, the educational experience in Anglo-dominated school systems centered around Anglo, middle-class institutions is one of chronic frustration. The game is not his, the referees are not his, but the laws of the dominant society force him to play. The resulting frustration leaves its mark in the Indian performance records which educators view with increasing alarm. This alarm is manifested in a proliferation of books, articles, and workshops about the 'culturally deprived,' the 'culturally disadvantaged,' and so on. Invariably, our responses to these difficulties, conditioned by Anglo logic systems founded solidly upon mid-Twentieth Century educational propositions, is to erect finer buildings, employ more ingenious teaching devices, and persuade more Indians to expose themselves longer to basically unchanged educational systems. It is, indeed, rare that one sees any formal recognition given to the consideration that it is not Indian performances which are inappropriate but the basic tenants of the school systems seeking to enculturate them."[1]

Unless substantial relief is obtained from this impossible condition, the white planners must shoulder the blame for the low achievement and high dropout rate of Indian students. It is known that for learning to be most effective, special attention should be given to each student, to his ability, his background, and his motivation for learning. Is this admonition not being ignored when an Indian pupil from an Indian culture is placed in an Anglo-oriented classroom and expected to perform and achieve at the same level as his white counterpart?

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[1]Harlan Padfield, Peter Hemingway, and Philip Greenfeld, "A Consensus and Analysis," Journal of American Indian Education, VI, No. 1, (Tempe, Arizona: University of Arizona, October 6, 1966).

Studies Related to Indian Education

Garth conducted some of the most exhaustive tests concerning education of Indian youth. These studies were well recorded and published in various sources. In his comparison of full and mixed-blood Indians, he found that half bloods surpassed the full bloods in intelligence.[1] It was recognized, however, that several sociological and economic factors might have influenced these results. In his study, "The Intelligence and Achievement of Full-Blood Indians," Garth found support for the position that the Indian can be educated in the same manner as any other citizen if the opportunity for learning is present along with other related factors.[2]

Gomberg and Leland identified characteristics of the Indian population for which adjustments must be made in plans for Indian education and for the general advancement of the race.

> "Indians discourage each other from achievement, a successful Indian is distrusted, picked on and ridiculed. The Nixon teachers noticed this in the first grade. A child shows some unusual ability . . . telling stories, drawing pictures for example, and as soon as this talent is noticed by the students or applauded by the teacher, the child will stop. The situation is even more evident at Fort McDermitt school where contact with non-Indian culture and values is more limited than Pyramid Lake. When an Indian child is accepted by non-Indian students, or is successful in his studies, the other Indian students fight with him, ridicule him, and in most cases eventually show him that it does not pay to be outstanding."[3]

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[1]Thomas Garth, "The Results of Some Tests on Full and Mixed Blood Indians," Journal of Applied Psychology, (1921), pp. 359-372.

[2]Thomas Garth, "The Intelligence and Achievement of Full-Blood Indians," Journal of Applied Psychology, XII, (December, 1953), pp. 511-516.

[3]William Gomberg and Joy Leland, "We Need to be Shown," A Study of the Talents, Work Potential, and Aspirations of the Pyramid Lake Indians, (Mimeographed, 1962), p. 113.

The above tendencies in Indian children were recognized by Cameron in his, "Problems of Oklahoma Youth from Traditional Indian Homes."[1] The same characteristics were also described by Poweshiek in an interview reported in Chapter IV.

In a study by Bonnie L. Crump involving 250 full-blood Indian students, the median IQ for the group was found to be ninety-one on the Stanford Binet Test as compared to the median of 104 on 4,874 white children in the Oklahoma City Schools.[2] Again, the influence of environmental factors probably accounted for some of this discrepancy, since Indian youngsters have tended to score higher on IQ tests as they spend more time in school. Even though the white children held a thirteen point advantage in this comparison, several Indian students in the very superior and near genius classes were identified. The median score of ninety-one for the Indian children was certainly in a range of comfortable acceptability in assuring all concerned that the Indian child is able to benefit from a public school program.

Rupiper's study showed that Indian children differed from white children as measured by achievement test results and that the smaller the proportion of full-blooded and non-English speaking children in a specific group of Indian children, the higher the group achieved.[3]

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[1]Harold Cameron, "Problems of Oklahoma Youth from Traditional Indian Homes," The Oklahoma Teacher, (September, 1966), p. 29.

[2]Bonnie Lela Crump, The Educability of Indian Children in Reservation Schools, (Durant, Oklahoma: Southeastern State Teachers College, 1932), p. 16.

[3]Omer J. Rupiper, "Multiple Factor Analysis of Academic Achievement: A Comparative Study of Full-Blooded Indian and White Children," Journal of Experimental Education, XXVIII, No. 3, (1960), p. 178.

It was recognized again, however, that these differences in educational achievement depended on differences in experiential, environmental, and cultural factors and not necessarily on innate ability alone. This finding did tend to support Garth's study which found that half-bloods surpass the full-bloods in intelligence.

The lack of an adequate student record, systematically kept, accounts for the failure of many counselors to be effective in their guidance activities among Indian students, according to Hinckley. In his study, "The Need for Student Records in Counseling Navaho Students," he found a complete lack of systematic record keeping which in turn handicaps subsequent counselors of Indian pupils.[1] The transient nature of so many Indian families places special importance on a somewhat standardized cumulative folder which might serve a succession of schools and/or counselors. Hinckley reported that it is not unusual for Indian children to enroll in many schools during a relatively short school career.

The frustrating experiences of Indian children in public schools were identified by Sintz in his study, "Problems of Classroom Adjustment of Indian Children in Public Schools in the Southwest."[2] The cultural and language barrier must be dealt with before any concentrated approach is made to the traditionally taught disciplines. The extreme variance

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[1]Edward Charles Hinckley, "The Need for Student Records in Counseling Navaho Students," Journal of American Indian Education, II, No. 3, (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, May, 1962), p. 3.

[2]M. V. Sintz, "Problems of Classroom Adjustment of Indian Children in Public Schools in the Southwest," Science Education, XLVI, (April, 1962), pp. 261-268.

in the culture of the Indian child and his white counterpart imposes a transition of baffling magnitude upon the Indian child. This adjustment is almost sure to require an extended period of time.

One of the most prolific writers on problems of educational significance is Robert J. Havighurst. Though he is best recognized for his work with superior students, he has also made significant contributions in the area of educating the disadvantaged child. Havighurst noted the cultural problems involved in educating the Indian-oriented child:

> "The culture of the Indian child equips him well or poorly for education in American schools, depending on how well his culture matches that of the American society which surrounds him. When his culture is quite different from that of the surrounding white community, the Indian child may be expected to do rather poorly in schools that are run according to white standards."[1]

The findings of Jones in his, "Notes on Indian Education" suggest that cultural factors have greater influence on the learning process than individual ability.[2]

Support for the strong influences of the home on the future of the child was provided by one of the major conclusions from the Coleman-Campbell study. This report indicates that the largest portion of variation in achievement of students who attend different schools is not due to differences in the school's programs, instructional staff, etc., but rather is a consequence of variations in the family background

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[1]Robert J. Havighurst, "Education Among American Indians: Individual and Cultural Aspects," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCCIX, (May, 1957), p. 107.

[2]Charles F. Jones, "Notes on Indian Education," Journal of Educational Sociology, XXVII, (September, 1953), p. 22.

of children when they enter the school in the first place.[1]

Can it be denied that our present system of education is essentially designed for the high-ability, college-bound, middle-class, Anglo student. While many varied methods of subterfuge attempt to belie this situation, these efforts seem only to reinforce the fact that up to this time we have been mainly unsuccessful in assisting the environmentally deprived student to compete equally in our educational system.

In our determination to offer all children the same program with the same school experiences for each child, we appear to be failing to assist the deprived child in overcoming the educational handicaps with which he enters school. Unless provision is made for compensating for this early start toward failure, low standards of achievement from these children should be expected. And, this early failure and disappointment is sure to affect negatively the future attitude and self-esteem of these children.

Wax also recognized the challenge of the acculturation process in his study, "American Indian Education as a Cultural Transaction." He expressed the value of understanding the pressures in tradition and heritage and their influence on present day attitudes in learning and education.[2]

The findings of Martin Deutsch lend support for the position that

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[1]James S. Coleman and Ernest Q. Campbell, Equality of Educational Opportunity, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, OE-38001, 1966), p. 296.

[2]Murray Wax, "American Indian Education as a Cultural Transaction," The Teacher's College Record, LXIV, (1963), pp. 693-704.

disadvantaged homelife leads to disadvantaged school experiences. His findings are summarized in the following statement.

> "The thesis here is that the lower class child enters the school situation so poorly prepared to produce what the school demands that initial failures are almost inevitable, and the school experience becomes negatively rather than postively reinforced. Thus, the child's experience in school does nothing to counteract the invidious influence to which he is exposed in his slum, and sometimes segregated, neighborhoods.
> We know that it is difficult for all peoples to span cultural discontinuities, and yet, we make little, if any, effort to prepare administrative personnel or teachers and guidance staff to assist the child in this transition from one cultural context to another. This transition must have serious psychological consequences for the child, and probably plays a major role in influencing his later perceptions of other social institutions as he is introduced to them.
> The frustration inherent in not understanding, not succeeding, and not being stimulated in the school . . . although being regulated by it, creates a basis for the further development of negative self-images and low evaluations of individual competencies. No matter how the parents aspire to a higher achievement level for their child, their lack of knowledge as to the operational implementation, combined with the child's early failure experiences in the school, can so effectively attenuate confidence in his ability ever to handle competently, challenge in the academic area, that the child loses all motivation."[1]

These observations are endorsed almost universally by those who have studied the implications for school experiences of the under-priviledged. Recognition of this inherent condition provides the impetus for increased involvement in the pre-school experiences of the disadvantaged child.

The University of California School of Public Health supported a study directed by Mice who investigated the health problem of our

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[1]Martin Deutsch, "The Disadvantaged Child and the Learning Process," Education in Depressed Areas, ed. A. Harry Passow, (New York: Teacher's College Press, Columbia University, 1962), pp. 162-164-177.

Indian population. According to this report, the level of Indian health is at a point where the non-Indian population was twenty to thirty years ago.[1] The report also pointed out the seriousness of the problem and warned that if the long range goal of raising the level to that of the non-Indian population is to be achieved, the present and future generations of Indian children and youth who are in our schools today will have to be prepared more effectively for healthful living.[2]

The following suggestions were made by Mice for improving the health level of Indians through the school system:

> "Children and youth should leave school with an understanding of human physical, mental, and emotional development. They should have an appreciation of personal health, which includes a knowledge of anatomy and physiology, nutrition, first aid and safety, stimulants and narcotics, periodical medical and dental care, and family life. They should also have an understanding of community health programs and problems, and the health resources available to them as citizens of the community.
> Every school child and youth deserves to benefit from an adequate school health program. This includes a program of effective instruction at all grade levels, whether formal or informal; school health medical services, to provide him with health and medical supervision throughout his school years; and a safe and sanitary school health environment.
> If the role of the Indian is to have greater meaning in the planning and development of public health programs among Indian peoples, more Indians will have to be motivated and trained for the varied professional medical and para-medical positions which are available, career-wise. This involves both the creating of the opportunity to learn about the various health careers, as well as the necessary academic preparation at the

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[1]Paul R. Mice, "Some Implications of the Navaho Health Education Project for Indian Education," Journal of American Indian Education, II, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, January, 1963), p. 22.

[2]Ibid., p. 23.

> secondary level for admittance into the collegiate level program desired."[1]

On the basis of reports made by the United States Public Health Service, there can be no doubt that Indian health needs far exceed those of the general population. These reports indicated that the present birth rate for Indians was almost twice that of the birth rate for all races. The average birth rate of each 1000 population in 1960 was 42.2 for Indians and 23.7 for all races in the United States. The average life span for Indians was forty-one years and 62.3 for all races. The infant death rate was forty-seven for Indians compared to 25.7 for the general population.[2]

The Indian death rate from tuberculosis was almost four times the rate for the general population in America with 21.5 Indians of each 100,000 dying each year from the disease compared to 5.9 from all races. The death rate from influenza and pneumonia for Indians was about two times the rate for the general population.[3] The fact that these infectious diseases are curable with proper attention further attests to the deprived health conditions of our Indian population.

To understand the national scope of economic and health problems facing the American Indian, we have only to refer to remarks made by

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[1]Paul R. Mice, "Some Implications of the Navaho Health Education Project for Indian Education," Journal of American Indian Education, II, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, January, 1963), p. 22.

[2]U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, The Indian Health Program of the U. S. Public Health Service, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 16-19.

[3]Ibid.

Senator Mondale of Minnesota in his response to Senator Harris' address, Chapter II.

> "The Indian population of my state, Minnesota, is 15,793 according to the 1960 census. Of these, 10,259 were receiving public assistance in 1964, approximately two-thirds of the total population. And this number on welfare has been rising, going up by 11.3 percent since 1960.
> And when we look at the income figures we can see why. Indians in Minnesota live with an average family income of under $1,000 a year, less than one-third of what we have set as the minimum poverty level in America. The unemployment rate for Indians in Minnesota and Wisconsin is 55 percent, according to the last completed figures of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
> Or, if we consider housing, we find that of the approximately 2,500 Indian families in Minnesota, 2,250 or 90 percent live in substandard housing.
> I have seen actual health history cards prepared and kept by our U. S. Public Health Service on Minnesota Indian reservations. These cards would shock the average American with what they reveal about the repeated and costly health care required for American Indians in Minnesota and elsewhere, simply because of the dilapidated and unsanitary housing in which they live."[1]

The economic power and personal ambition of these people must be elevated to a level which will afford a decent home environment for the benefit of these adults, their descendants, and the community.

Problems related to Indian health have long been neglected or given inadequate attention. According to James R. Shaw of the United States Health Service, in 1950 the average age at death for American Indians was 36 years compared with 61 years for non-Indian Americans.

In Oklahoma, it was estimated in 1955 that the tuberculosis rate among Indians was seven times the national average, and the infant

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[1]Senator Mondale, Minnesota, (Congressional Record-Senate, April 21, 1966), p. 8315.

mortality rate was ten times that of non-Indian people of the state.[1]

Inaccessability of many Indian homes in remote areas adds to the problem of providing modern health service to these people; however, the lack of sanitation facilities and ignorance probably accounts for the high incidence of sickness and death among Indians in the city slums, as well as in the isolated homes of the rural Indian. Alcohol has been considered a menace to the health and well being of Indians almost from the time that it was first introduced to them. The charge that Indians are more easily affected by alcohol than non-Indians has no support except for the fact that alcohol does have greater effect on a hungry or undernourished person. The alcohol consuming Indian is more likely than his white counterpart to be hungry or undernourished during the course of his drinking, and if this is the case, then alcohol will have greater adverse effect on the Indian. In any case, alcohol aggravates the health problem and adds to the economic woes of the poor Indian family. Among the Indians, as well as whites, alcohol seems to pose the greatest problem to those who can least afford it, always with the resulting harm to innocent members of the family.

Complicating factors in the education and growing up process of Indian students were recently identified by Cameron.[2] Cameron explained that for the first six years in the life of a child in an

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[1]Claude Herbert Heyer, Economic Analysis of Recent Federal Policy and Legislation Affecting United States Indians, (Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1958), p. 63.

[2]Harold Cameron, "Problems of Oklahoma Youth from Traditional Indian Homes," The Oklahoma Teacher, (September, 1966), pp. 28-29-43-44.

Indian home he is taught to be an Indian and after this time, he is placed in a non-Indian school and expected to progress at a rate comparable to the non-Indian student whose background gives him a decided advantage. After repeated exposure to these conflicting cultures, the Indian child is likely to feel insecure and confused as to his place in such a society.

According to Cameron, one Western Oklahoma school system with approximately one-fourth of its 400 student enrollment Indian had only eleven Indians graduate from the school in the last forty years. Another school with thirty-three percent of its students Indians reported that approximately eighty percent of all absences and dropouts were Indian students. These Indian students usually do not take part in school activities and the few who do are often subjected to the ridicule and harassment of other non participating Indian students.[1]

Law enforcement agencies in communities where Indians reside report a much greater proportionate number of their juvenile referrals from the Indian population. One county with an Indian population of 10.8 percent reported that 52 percent of the juveniles who came before the judge were Indian. In another community, 77 percent of the juveniles who came before the county judge were Indian, in spite of the fact that only 1.9 percent of the county population was Indian. In still another county with a population of 7.8 percent Indians, 96

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[1]Harold Cameron, "Problems of Oklahoma Youth from Traditional Indian Homes," The Oklahoma Teacher, (September, 1966), p. 29.

percent (45 of 47) of the juveniles who came before the county judge were Indian.[1]

One of the greatest problems facing the American Indian today, according to Forbes, is the lack of trained leadership. Numerous Indian groups, from the Atlantic coast to Alaska, are composed almost entirely of people who lack prerequisite educational skills for meeting the challenges posed by poverty, poor organization, rapid social change, and a sometimes indifferent Anglo-American community.[2]

He also pointed out that some tribal groups do not have a single college trained member. Many others lack people trained in such essential skills as teaching, medicine, law, social work, marketing, economics, and agriculture. Where a group may possess a few college trained persons, it is possible that these individuals received their education in an Anglo-oriented institution which ill prepared them for leadership among their own people. They may have, in fact, abandoned their people in favor of living among non-Indians.[3]

In Forbes plea for the establishment of an institution of higher learning which would be both Indian-controlled and Indian-centered, he stated that our present system tends to isolate the most promising young people from their Indian community, thereby, denying the Indian

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[1]Harold Cameron, "Problems of Oklahoma Youth from Traditional Indian Homes," The Oklahoma Teacher, (September, 1966), p. 43.

[2]Jack D. Forbes, "An American Indian University: A Proposal for Survival," Journal of American Indian Education, V, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona: University of Arizona, January, 1966), p. 1.

[3]Ibid., p. 2.

people the leadership of their most capable youth. Our practice of encouraging the most able students to leave their communities and prepare for participation in the white society can at best offer relief only to the few. An Indian-oriented nationwide campus might open the way for social and economic progress for great numbers of the Indian population without weakening their highly regarded heritage. Our demand that the Indians give up the rich culture and Indian community activities which they seem to value so greatly and accept the Anglican practices may be the most discomforting thing they could be asked to do.

Wilson, a Sioux Indian, employed by the Office of Economics Opportunity suggested that we develop a plan of deliberate conditioning for specific acculturation purposes. This plan, he advised, should include - first, what the dominant Anglican culture expects of the Indian; second, the plan to effect the desired changes; and third, to implement the plan by proceeding without hesitation to shape the behaviors in such a manner that the kind of citizen we want will be produced.[1] This attitude fails to allow for the highly valued customs and traditions of the Indian culture. It makes no allowance for taking the best of the two cultures and making them compatible in the new image of the Indian. By joining the best in Indian culture to contemporary life, our Indian population should discover a new level of pride in its own heritage.

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[1]James J. Wilson, "Social Reconstruction and Indian Reservation Cultures," Journal of American Indian Education, V, No. 1, (Tempe, Arizona: University of Arizona, October, 1965).

Contemporary Interest in Indian Affairs

Current interest in economic, social, cultural, and educational problems of our Indian population is perhaps greater than at any time since the Indian ceased to be a physical threat. This concern is noted at all levels. Individuals and groups at the local level, as well as national leaders, are working to improve conditions. A greater awareness of the disadvantaged position of many Indian families is an immediate result of this concern.

Dr. John W. Gardner, United States Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, in an address to participants of an "Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity" conference on Saturday, October 15, 1966, at the University of Oklahoma, affirmed the national interest by advising those present:

> "For the first time we have taken a long, hard look at poverty. We have taken an honest look at racial discrimination, social isolation, social deprivation, and the consequences of these types of acts. When people have been subjected to these extremes, we must do more than give them an opportunity to learn. They need not only instruction, but confidence . . . not only books, but motivation. They need to be able to hope."[1]

For those who may foster the assumption that we can ignore poverty, ignorance, and discrimination among any segment of our population, Sargent Shriver refers to a quotation by George Bernard Shaw in dispelling this stand.

> "We tolerate poverty as if it were either a wholesome tonic for lazy people or else a virtue to be embraced as St. Francis embraced it.

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[1] The Sunday Oklahoman, (October 16, 1966), p. 11.

> If a man is indolent, let him be poor. If he is addicted to the fine arts or to pure science instead of to trade and finance, let him be poor. If he chooses to spend his urban eighteen shillings a week or his agricultural thirteen shillings a week on beer and his family instead of saving it up for his old age, let him be poor. Let nothing be done for the 'undeserving': let him be poor . . .
> Now what does this Let Him Be Poor mean? It means let him be weak. Let him be ignorant. Let him become a nucleus of disease. Let him be a standing exhibition and example of ugliness and dirt. Let him have rickety children . . . Let his habitations turn our cities into poisonous congeries of slums . . . Let the undeserving become still less deserving."[1]

It has become increasingly obvious that poverty, with its related social ills is a threat to the economic and social health of any community in which it exists. That poverty tends to perpetuate itself has been confirmed in many studies. "A poor individual or family has a high probability of staying poor. Low incomes carry with them high risks of illness; limitations on mobility; and limited access to education, information and training."[2]

Shriver also identified the position of the American Indian as he related the advice offered him by an Indian member of his staff. This staff member asked that changes be made.

> "I would like to see the day when an Indian could walk into a bank to ask for a loan without knowing that he would be laughed at.
> I would like to see the day when an Indian could withdraw $10 of his own money from his own bank account to 'honor his friends' without having to

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[1]Sargent Shriver, Poverty, (Copyright, 1965, by Americana Corporation), p. 3.

[2]Ibid., p. 5.

> lie to the government official that he needed the money for shoes or food.
> I would like to see the day when people stopped doing things for Indians and to Indians, and act as if they really believed that Indians could do things for themselves.
> I would like to see the day when an Indian could make a living on a reservation . . . when there were jobs on a reservation that would not make the Indian have to choose between his people and his financial independence.
> I would like to see the day when what Indians call the 'hold check' practice is ended; when Indians do not have to sign blank checks and run the risk of criminal prosecution in order to get groceries; when they do not have to pay jacked-up-prices in order to secure credit.
> And I would like to see the day when Indians are not given scrip at the local gas station or trading post or grocery store but instead get hard U. S. currency (like the Indian nickel).
> I would like to see the day when Indians can drill for water on their own land, instead of being told that the white man is protecting the Indian 'for his own good.'
> And I would like to see the day when the tribal council has a real say in the makeup of a tribal budget . . . not just approval after the fact, not just the right to come begging for this or that . . . but the right to say: 'This is my money, this is my heritage, this is my land . . . I have now come of age.'"[1]

While these comments were intended specifically for Indians of the Sioux Nation, they offered very timely advice to all who concern themselves with problems related to Indian progress.

Limited education and poverty seem almost inseparable as we find the majority of poor families headed by individuals with little formal training. President Johnson reaffirmed our national policy in regard to combating poverty in our country. The following comments were taken from his Message on Poverty to Congress, March 16, 1964:

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[1]Taken from Speech by Sargent Shriver to the National Congress of American Indians, November 5, 1965, in Scottsdale, Arizona, Journal of American Indian Education, V, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona: University of Arizona, January, 1966), pp. 8-9.

> ". . . I have called for a national war on poverty. Our objective: total victory. There are millions of Americans . . . one-fifth of our people . . . who have not shared in the abundance which has been granted to most of us, and to whom the gates of opportunity have been closed. What does this poverty mean to those who endure it: It means a daily struggle to secure the necessities for even a meager existence. It means that the abundance, the comforts, the opportunities they see all around them are beyond their grasp. Worst of all, it means hopelessness for the young."[1]

Underwood in his Investigation of Educational Opportunity for the Indian in Northeastern Oklahoma, revealed the extremely low economic and educational level of the Indian families in that area.[2] While the conditions identified by Underwood were in an isolated corner of the state, it seems safe to assume that many individuals and families from this type background will look for relief in the urban communities. Opportunity may not be improved for these migrants in the industrial community. Their complete lack of salable skills combined with a cultural and language disadvantage may restrict these people to a more uncomfortable existence than the one from which they were seeking relief.

Hoyt envisioned great possibility for economic relief of Indians. According to the general opinion of employers at the time, it was too much to expect most Indians to keep at work regularly or consistently, but if the employer was liberal in granting workers leave to stay home or go home when the urge was upon them and was generally under-

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[1]U.S., President, 1963- (Johnson), Excerpt from Message to Congress, Poverty, (Congressional Record, March 16, 1964).

[2]Jerald Ross Underwood, An Investigation of Educational Opportunity for the Indian in Northeastern Oklahoma (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1966).

standing of Indian home backgrounds, he could ordinarily expect good service. It was pointed out that while Indian children are capable of great effort and are by no means lazy, they, or at least the boys, do not grow up in an atmosphere where steady and regular employment is expected; and we ignorantly assume that they should have work attitudes which have never been developed. With sufficiently intelligent attitudes on our part, a good portion of the difficulties of a good Indian labor force in suitable employment would disappear.[1]

"Within the boundaries of our country exists a people whose needs surpass those of many foreigners who have asked for and received our aid and bounty. These people suffer from illiteracy, from the chains of tradition and from being strangers in their own land."[2] Brodinsky reminds us in this statement of our negligence in facing and resolving one of our most pressing social and economic problems. Our present awareness of the malignant nature and high cost of poverty and illiteracy prompts increasing public demand for action that will remedy this situation which our conscience and the economic health of our government can ill afford.

Myer, Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1952, expressed his dissatisfaction with the present state of Indian education. "There is no doubt in my mind that the Bureau of Indian Affairs should get out of the business of educating Indian children. I am not interested in seeing the Federal Indian Schools transferred to the states merely for the

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[1]Elizabeth E. Hoyt, "Some Light on the Adjustment of Indian Children," Journal of American Indian Education, IV, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona: University of Arizona, January, 1965), p. 27.

[2]B. P. Brodinsky, "Teaching Indian Children," Nations Schools, (December, 1952), pp. 35-38.

sake of transfer itself. Getting Indian children into public schools will prove more advantageous in the long run than educating them in federal institutions because the children will be the spearhead for inducting their Indian parents into modern life."[1] The record of Indian education in public schools, however, tends to negate this contention.

The position taken by Myer seems to be typical of that taken by most authorities charged with improving the economic, social, and educational life of the Indian. They have apparently decided that the greatest hope for the Indian race will come from education in the Anglo-oriented schools, acceptance of the Anglo-established values and total commitment to contemporary white American society. Progress along this route has been quite difficult for the Indian child who is steeped in Indian lore and tribal customs. Are we expecting too much when we attempt to convert these children to more conventional modes with complete disregard for their justifiably proud heritage? Perhaps transition problems for the Indian population would not be so great if they could be made to feel as complete equals to the whites in their Indian setting. This can only come about through the combined efforts of their leaders and subjects and a generous national policy of economic relief designed to elevate their independent spirit along with their economic base.

The American Indian has an able champion in the Honorable Fred R. Harris, U. S. Senator from Oklahoma. Senator Harris recently made a speech to the Senate in which he described conditions, identified

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[1]B. P. Brodinsky, "Teaching Indian Children," Nations Schools, (December, 1952), p. 35.

problems, and made recommendations for the relief of Indians in America. He is acutely aware of the urgency in recognizing the extent of the Indian problem and taking positive means for resolving the conditions which have persisted during the entire history of our dealings with the Indian. He and his part Comanche wife, LaDonna, have led the way in organizing self-help programs designed to assist Oklahoma Indians in assessing their own problems and dealing with them effectively. Excerpts from Senator Harris' address which was delivered to the Senate on April 21, 1966 are reproduced here:

> "In the first place, we ought to stop thinking of it as an Indian problem. It is not an Indian problem; it is a human problem, an American problem. We are probably not going to solve it finally until we no more need a Bureau of Indian Affairs than we do a bureau of Italian affairs or a bureau of Irish affairs.
> This is a long way off, however. We cannot abolish the Bureau of Indian Affairs until it comes much nearer to doing its job, but there is a hint of the solution in that thought. In the meantime, the Bureau must have a new sense of purpose, direction and urgency, and that, fortunately, appears to be in the making, internally.
> It has been much easier for Oklahoma Indians to become a part of the total community in Oklahoma than it has in reservation States, and we have produced Indian humorists, prima ballerinas, U. S. Senator's wives, and business executives.
> But, for every Will Rogers, Maria Tallchief, LaDonna Harris, and W. W. Keeler, there are thousands of Oklahoma Indians who do not even have a chance . . . and, what is worse, will not unless some real changes are made in American thinking.
> What about education? Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with proper pride, reports that approximately 90 percent of school-age Oklahoma Indian children currently attend public schools, a recent study by the University of Oklahoma reveals that the dropout rate among Indian children in public schools is three to four times as high as among non-Indian children. In three eastern Oklahoma counties of high Indian population, the dropout rate among Indian children in public

> schools was recently found to be 70 percent. Whereas, the average American child completes between 11 and 12 grades, the 1960 U. S. census revealed that among Oklahoma Indian children the median number of school years completed was only 8.8.
> The principal of one Oklahoma public high school has indicated that about one-third of his students are Indians, but approximately 80 percent of all student absences and dropouts in his school are Indian. Another western Oklahoma public school district reports that approximately 25 percent of its school enrollment of 400 are Indian, yet only 11 Indians have graduated from that school in the last 40 years.
> What about income? Among Indians living in rural areas in Oklahoma-and we do not have complete figures on urban areas-the median annual income is only $1000 as reported by the 1960 U. S. census. A study completed in a western Oklahoma county recently showed that, whereas the average income for all males in that county was $3,281, the average income for Indian males in that county was half the non-Indian average, or $1,613."[1]

The mood of the Senate, at least several members of the Senate, is evidenced by the reaction of individuals to Senator Harris' speech. Vocal endorsement of his position was expressed by several senators and their comments appear in the Congressional Record of the Senate, April 21, 1966. Among those publicly endorsing Senator Harris' analysis of the Indian problem were Senators Monroney, Simpson, Inouye, Moss, Mondale, Mansfield, McGee, Yarborough, and Montoya. While Senator Harris had identified the state and national scope of the Indian problem, he suggested that our corrective methods must deal with Indians; Indians who are capable individually and collectively in assisting with the solution of problems relating to them. He pointed

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[1]Fred R. Harris, Excerpts from Speech delivered in Senate, (Congressional Record of the Senate, April 21, 1966), pp. 8310-8313.

out that during past years, our policy has been to do things for Indians without soliciting their feelings as to whether this is considered by them to be good and correct for the long range benefit of the Indian.

Robert Lafollette Bennett, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, sees education as the real hope for getting Indian people to realize their opportunities. He noted that about 8,000 Indian students could not enroll in school in 1965 because of lack of facilities and that the dropout rate among Indians is 50 percent compared to a national average of 29 percent. Bennett is striving for maximum Indian economic self-sufficiency, full participation of Indians in American life, and equal citizenship privileges and responsibilities of Indians.[1]

A refreshing exception to the conversion of Indians from the Indian way to the great white way is offered by Forbes, Professor of History at the University of Nevada. He suggested that Indians be trained to lead Indians by educating them in universities which are both Indian-controlled and Indian-centered. This type of institution would allow them to preserve their identity both as Indians and as members of a specific tribe. Forbes refers to the theory which professes that for a group to survive and advance, they must possess a cultural, educational, and intellectual center of their own. The inter-tribal university would serve this function. Above all, it would provide for the training of Indians in large numbers, both old and young, who would return to their communities and assist in leading their people toward a life of social and economic equality with their white

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[1]Ivy Coffey, "The Red Man's Crisis," The Daily Oklahoman, (Tuesday, September 13, 1966), p. 12.

neighbors.[1]

Ivy Coffey, staff writer for The Daily Oklahoman, deserves much credit for stimulating interest of Oklahomans in Indian affairs. In a series of twelve articles appearing in "The Daily Oklahoman," September 11 through September 23, 1966, Coffey reviewed the status of our Indian population in general with special emphasis upon Indians in Oklahoma. She reported that Indians are the nation's fastest growing minority group with their birth rate about twice that of the general population.

Encouragement to move vigorously forward in resolving problems relating to American Indians was voiced by President Johnson at the Swearing-In of Robert L. Bennett as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on April 27, 1966. Johnson reminded his audience of Thomas Jefferson's plea to treat the original inhabitants of our country "with the commiseration that history requires." President Jefferson pointed out over 150 years ago that our European ancestors found the American Indian "occupying a country which left them no desire but to be undisturbed." That desire was thrust aside by history and Thomas Jefferson's pleas were ignored.

President Johnson admonishes us to honor Jefferson's plea after 161 years of neglect. He stated that far too many American Indians live under conditions which make a mockery of our claims to social justice. During the most prosperous period in our nations history, we find Indians on reservations with the lowest standard of living in the

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[1]Jack D. Forbes, "An American Indian University: A Proposal for Survival," Journal of American Indian Education, V, No. 2, (Tempe, Arizona, Arizona State University, January, 1966), pp. 1-2.

entire United States.

President Johnson charged Commissioner Bennett with the responsibility for developing a most comprehensive program. He asked for a program that was sound, realistic, progressive, venturesome, and farsighted that could be written into law by Congress and which would serve to remove the blush of shame that comes to our cheeks when we look at what we have done to the first Americans in this country.

Interest by Oklahomans in Indian problems is reflected by Senate Bill 69 of the 1967 session of the Oklahoma Legislature. This bill created a nine-member Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission charged with promoting unity, purpose, and understanding among the Indian people of the State of Oklahoma and also to serve as liaison between the Indian people, Indian leaders, Indian agencies and the executive and legislative branches of the state.[1] It was also felt that the bill would greatly enhance the housing, education, and job opportunities for Indians. The contributions made by this agency are not yet apparent.

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[1]The Daily Oklahoman, (Wednesday, March 15, 1967).

CHAPTER III

A BACKGROUND FOR UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT INDIAN PROBLEM AND BEHAVIOR

If the current attitudes and behaviors of the American Indian are to be understood, it seems necessary to consider the influences in the past which might account for their present condition.

A common criticism of our time, directed toward the Indian population in general, is that they are without ambition and have little apparent desire for improving their station in life. In reaction to this, it should be remembered that when the early settlers appeared on the North American scene and immediately began to claim land, water, and trees as their own, this was completely foreign to the Indian thinking and way of life. This society, also, is geared to the values established by the whites and these values in the eyes of many Indians may be altogether unworthy of their efforts.

The attitude of the early day Indians toward private ownership of land presented a most serious obstacle in their adoption of the ways of the whites. An opinion commonly held by Indians of the time regarding land ownership is well expressed in the following statement made by the Shawnee Chief, Tecumseh, in 1810.

> "I am a Shawnee. My forefathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. From them I take only my existence,

> from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune, and Oh! that I could make that of my Red people, and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of the spirit that rules the Universe. I would not then come to Governor Harrison to ask him to tear up the treaty, and to obliterate the landmark, but I would say to him: 'Sir, you have liberty to return to your country.'
> The being within, communing with past ages, tells me that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent, that it then all belonged to the Redman, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race, once a happy race; since made miserable by the white people who are never contented but always encroaching.
> The way, and the only way, to check and to stop this evil, is for all the Redmen to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first and should be yet; for it was never divided, but belongs to all for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers - those who want all and will not do with less. The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first, it is theirs. They may sell, but all must join. Any sale not made by all, is not valid. The late sale is bad. It required all to make a bargain for all. All Redmen have equal rights to the unoccupied land. The right to occupancy is as good in one place as in another."[1]

The philosophy of communal ownership was clearly established by Tecumseh's statement as he recognized the fact that any transfer of land ownership must involve unanimous agreement by all.

Fear of the Indian in private ownership of land was also reaffirmed in a petition presented by the Cherokees against land allotments.

> "Our people have not asked for or authorized this, for the reason that they believe it could do no good and would only result in mischief in their present condition. Our own laws regulate a system of land tenure suited to our condition, and much safer than that which is proposed for it.

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[1]Samuel G. Drake, The Book of Indians of North America, VII, Book V, (Boston: Antiquarian, 1836), pp. 121-122.

> Improvements can be and frequently are sold, but the land itself is not chattel. Its occupancy and possession are indispensable to holding it, and its abandonment for two years makes it revert to the public domain. In this way, every one of our citizens is assured of a home. The changed individual title would throw the whole of our domain in a few years into the hands of a few persons. In your treaties with us you have agreed that this shall not be done without our consent; we have not asked for it and we call on you not to violate your pledge with us."[1]

The trend in our time confirms this early fear held by the Indians that individual ownership of land would lead to control of large expanses of land by a relatively small segment of our total population. This tendency toward larger land holding has not been considered to be detrimental at the present time. However, if we entertain visionary thoughts for a moment the time might be foreseen when it will be necessary for an authority to break up and redistribute extensive holdings of privately owned land just as we have observed our present government effect restraints whenever business alignments suggest the possibility of a cartel.

It is obvious that all the ingredients were present for conflict between the Indians and the early settlers of this country. The divergent nature of the two races was almost certain to create dissension. With the Indians living close to nature, accepting the hardships and the joy of their communal life, and making little effort to influence their environment, we could not expect blissful compatibility with the independent, ambitious, greedy, and covetous pioneer settler.

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[1]U. S., Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 3rd Session, 1881, Petition of the Five Tribes, Part I, p. 781.

Prior to 1849, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was administered by the military. During this time, Indian Tribes were treated as independent nations and the military rule was mainly interested in keeping the Indian Tribes in a submissive attitude to prevent them from interfering with the desired expansion plans of the white settlers who were relentlessly moving into areas which the Indians considered their own. The official attitude of the government toward the Indian population during the period following the Civil War may be interpreted from statements made by Francis A. Walker who became Commissioner of Indian Affairs on December 11, 1871. In his annual report of 1872 he stated:

> "There is no question of national dignity, be it remembered, involved in the treatment of savages by a civilized power. With wild men, as with wild beasts, the question whether in a given condition, one shall fight, coax, or run, is a question merely of what is easiest and safest. Just as soon as these tribes cease to be formidable, they should be brought distinctly to the realization of the law that if they would eat they must also work. Nor should it be left to their own choice how miserable they will live in order that they may escape work as much as possible. The Government should extend over them a rigid reformatory discipline to save them from falling hopelessly into the condition of pauperism and petty crime.
> Unused to manual labor and physically disqualified for it by the habits of the chase, unprovided with tools and implements, without forethought and without self-control, singularly susceptible to evil influences, with strong animal appetites and no intellectual tastes or aspirations to hold these appetites in check, it would be to assume more than would be taken for granted of any white race under the same conditions, to expect that the wild Indians will become industrious and frugal except through a severe course of industrial instruction and exercise under restraint."[1]

Walker's strong feeling toward the separation of Indians from the whites was evident.

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[1]Francis A. Walker, The Indian Question, (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1874), p. 9.

> "This principle of excluding Indians from whites for the good of both races is established by an overwhelming preponderance of authority. There are no mysterious reasons why this policy should not be adopted; the considerations which favor it are plain and incontestable. The first is the familiar one, that the Indian is unfortunately disposed to submit himself to the lower and baser elements of civilized society and to acquire the vices and not the virtues of the whites."[1]

There can be little question that the administration of Indian Affairs under such direction as offered by Commissioner Walker would take the course suited to the white population without regard for humanitarian consideration which we would expect the Indians to be entitled. It should be remembered, too, that this was the attitude following the Civil War in which Indian soldiers served with distinction in both armies.

The Indians gained little in sympathetic administration with the appointment of William A. Jones as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1897. The following comments taken from his annual report of 1901 indicate his detached attitude toward his Indian subjects.

> "Perhaps in the course of merging this hardly used race into our body politic, many individuals unable to keep the pace, may fall by the wayside and be trodden underfoot. Deeply as we deplore this possibility, we must not let it blind us to our duty to the race as a whole. It is one of the cruel incidents of all civilization in large masses that some, perhaps a multitude, of its subjects will be lost in the process."[2]

A pattern was difficult to discern from the treatment offered the Indian population by the government. At times, the treatment might

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[1]Francis A. Walker, The Indian Question, (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1874), p. 62.

[2]Walter H. Blumenthal, American Indians Dispossessed, (Philadelphia: G. S. MacManus Co., 1955), p. 7.

have been extremely benevolent and paternalistic and at other times, extremely cruel, oppressive, and inhuman. Agents of the government were, at times, quite generous in offering huge expanses of land (often land considered to be undesirable or unneeded for white settlement). However, when necessary, the most unscrupulous means were used to secure their purpose.

The submissive posture of the American Indian (for many years the only posture they were allowed) over an extended period surely remains a telling influence in the current habits and attitudes of these people. The issuing of rations by our government including food, money, clothing, and implements over a period of several generations to many Indian tribes might also have served to dull their desire for independence and personal achievement.

The Indian population of the territory which now comprises the original forty-eight states was estimated to be about 900,000 when the first immigrants settled in North America. This number was reduced to an estimated 242,000 in 1887. The rapid decrease in the Indian population during these years has been attributed to the following causes: all associated with the white man's presence: (1) smallpox and other epidemics, (2) tuberculosis, (3) veneral diseases, (4) whiskey and attendant dissipation, (5) removals, (6) starvation and subjection to unaccustomed conditions, (7) low vitality due to mental depression under misfortune, and (8) wars.[1] This threatened extermination of the Indian population by the various ravages associated with the white man must

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[1]World Family Encyclopedia, IX, (New York: Standard International Library, Inc., Copyright, 1954), p. 2512.

have left its mark on the thinking of subsequent generations of Indians. In fact, as late as 1920, the Indian population was just able to maintain its numbers at the 1887 level. Since 1920 this number has approximately doubled.

Reduction in the Indian population was explained by former U. S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs (1933-1945), John Collier.

> "Disease was a factor; wanton murder which the white community did not view as murder at all; enslavement. But the principle cause was a more subtle and more dreadful thing, as C. Hart Merriam, a profound student of California Indians has pointed out; it was the gradual but relentless confiscation of their lands and homes, forcing them to seek refuge in remote and barren localities where health, even life itself frequently, could not be sustained. There was cause more subtle and dreadful yet . . . a psychological depression resulting in the will to die, for their societies were slain."[1]

While this reference describes California Indians specifically, it was also a fitting description of many Indian tribes during this critical stage in their history.

The legacy of extreme poverty and weakness to which our Indian population was reduced by the greed and callous disregard of the whites has made their recovery a slow and trying ordeal. The many stigmas related to this condition are too often unnoticed by the favored segment of the population.

Eric Hoffer is credited with the comments which seem appropriate in describing the disadvantaged position of the weak.

> "It has been often said that power corrupts. But it is perhaps equally important to realize that

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[1]John Collier, Indians of the Americas, (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1948), p. 132.

> weakness, too, corrupts. Power corrupts the few, while weakness corrupts the many. Hatred, malice, rudeness, intolerance, and suspicion are the fruits of weakness. The resentment of the weak does not spring from any injustice done to them but from the sense of their inadequacy and impotence. Our healing gift to the weak is the capacity for self-help. We must learn how to impart to them the technical, social, and political skills which will enable them to get bread, human dignity, freedom, and strength by their own efforts."[1]

The extent of our neglect in improving conditions under which many American Indians live was clarified in an editorial from the Kansas City Star, September 18, 1966. This editorial began with a statement taken from the Northwest Territory Ordinance of July 13, 1787.

> "The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians; and in their property, rights and liberty they shall never be invaded or disturbed . . . Laws founded in justice and humanity shall from time to time be made for preventing wrongs being done to them and for preserving peace and friendship with them."[2]

The fact that this doctrine was endorsed in an act of Congress two years later has had no noticeable influence on Indian policy since that time.

The editorial continued in its indictment of the national policy toward our Indian population.

> "If the record of conquest can be justified on grounds of historic inevitability, no amount of rationalization can pardon the cruelty of the manner in which the displacement of the Indian was accomplished. No aggression in the annals of mankind has ever proved so swift, so successful, so irresistible or so catastrophic to the dispossessed."[3]

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[1]Eric Hoffer, Ordeal of Change, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

[2]Kansas City Star, Editorial, (September 18, 1966), p. 6G.

[3]Ibid.

Reference was made to a survey by the Department of Interior in 1947 on the Navaho reservation in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. The survey reported 61,000 Indians living on an area with resources to support no more than 35,000. One out of every three of this population was said to be suffering from tuberculosis and with inadequate medical facilities; tribal cures were the only treatments available to many of them. The survey also reported an infant mortality rate six times the national figure. An illiteracy rate of 90 percent was reported along with an average per capita income of $82 per year. Nineteen years after this initial survey conditions were little improved. Infant mortality was 70 percent higher than the national average; the average income was only half the national poverty level; unemployment approaches 50 percent of the entire Indian work force.

Much has been written about the mistreatment of our Indian population; however, this literature has not received the wide acclaim associated with that which invariably found the Indians to be villains and the soldiers, settlers, or cowboys their victims and eventual victors. It is understandable that the truth in this case would be much less popular. In fact, there is little in our past dealings with the Indian population that we can refer to with pride. The unbelievably barbaric and inhuman atrocities perpetrated on these people, warriors as well as unarmed and helpless women and children, often in the name of Christianity and always in the name of progress, is difficult to believe.

References to particular events in subsequent portions of this chapter are not offered in an attempt to vilify the Anglican

participants nor to absolve the Indian, but rather to illustrate the nature of acts which might make it difficult even to this time for the Indian to have full confidence in the white mans proposals for Indian relief.

The subdued and peaceful attitude of the Cherokees prior to their removal was evidenced by their most eloquent and touching appeal in a final plea to the United States Government to recognize their claim to Eastern lands on which they had lived and hunted and farmed for many generations prior to the coming of the white man.

> "The title of the Cherokee people to their lands is the most ancient, pure, and absolute known to man; its date is beyond the reach of human record; its validity confirmed by possession and enjoyment antecedent to all pretense of claim by any portion of the human race. The Cherokee people have existed as a distinct national community for a period extending into antiquity beyond the dates and records and memory of man. These attributes have never been relinquished by the Cherokee people..and cannot.. be dissolved by the expulsion of the Nation from its own territory by the power of the United States Government."[1]

Ralph Waldo Emerson voiced the moral conscience of the country in a letter to President Van Buren during the time Van Buren was considering the disposition of the Cherokee appeal.

> "The soul of man, the justice, the mercy that is the heart's heart in all men, from Maine to Georgia, does abhor this business-a crime is projected that confounds our understandings by its magnitude-a crime that really deprives us as well as the Cherokee of a country, for how could we call a conspiracy that should crush these poor Indians, our government, or the land that was cursed by their parting and dying imprecations, our country any more? You, sir, will bring down that renowned chair in which you sit into infamy if your

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[1]Dale Van Every, "Disinherited," The Lost Birthright of the American Indian, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1966), p. 13.

> seal is set to this instrument of perfidy; and the name of this nation, hitherto the sweet omen of religion and liberty, will stink to the world."[1]

While President Van Buren must have been considering the national implications related to Indian removal, Emerson plainly identified the moral issues at stake and questioned the attitude of a government which would even consider such action. With Van Buren and Emerson viewing the situation from their somewhat remote vantage points, the comments made by Wilson Lumpkin in a speech in Congress just prior to his election as Governor of Georgia might be considered indicative of the prevailing local southern attitude concerning Indian removal.

> "Pages may be filled with a sublimated cant of the day, and in wailing ever the departure of the Cherokee from the bones of their forefathers. But if the heads of these pretended mourners were waters, and their eyes were a fountain of tears, and they were to spend days and years in weeping over the departure of the Cherokees from Georgia, yet they will go."[2]

An attitude in a political figure so completely oblivious to the inhumaneness of his stand would be beyond our comprehension today were it not for currently active political figures who have gained substantial popular support by their own outspoken disregard for basic human rights.

The fact that Indians of this period were familiar with and obedient to the laws of the United States is surprising to many. That Indians were attempting to find redress through accepted channels seems to be a clear indication of their desire to maintain friendly relations,

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[1]Dale Van Every, "Disinherited," The Lost Birthright of the American Indian, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1966), p. 13.

[2]Ibid.

and it also illustrates their awareness of established legal procedures.

Though the Indian cause seemed always to be subservient when an issue arose with the whites, this was perhaps due to the nature of the times rather than an innate desire on the part of the white population to impose an injustice on the Indian. George Harmon attempted to rationalize the situation by explaining that, "Despite the fact that most Federal Officials of this era were honest and actuated by the best of motives, public opinion and prevailing conditions were conducive to the perpetration of wholesale fraud on the Indian tribes through the machinations of designing, avaricious, and land hungry speculators of the frontier."[1]

This prevailing attitude probably accounts for the fact that the Federal Government was able to negotiate and ratify 245 separate treaties with the Indians between the years of 1789 and 1850, thereby, securing more than 450 million acres of land at a price of approximately twenty cents per acre.[2]

In regard to Indian land disposition, Dan Clark felt that it would be difficult, indeed, to find a land cession made by the Indians entirely of their own volition. Clark categorized Indian land disposition as resulting from one or more of the influences listed below:

1. "Many cessions were made at the close of wars, such as that at the Treaty of Greenville, following General Anthony Wayne's campaign, where the defeated Indians signed, 'but scarcely voluntarily.'

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[1]George D. Harmon, Sixty Years of Indian Affairs, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), Preface.

[2]Walter H. Blumenthal, American Indians Dispossessed, (Philadelphia: G. S. MacManus Co., 1955), p. 18.

Likewise, the Fort Jackson Treaty of August 9, 1814 resulted from the crushing defeat of the Creeks at Horse Shoe Bend, and conveyed much of the Creek Land in Alabama.

2. Many cessions were made under Government pressure, such as the Removal enforcement of 1830-40, and through treaties under duress when the policy of segregated Indian Territory was abandoned after 1853.

3. Many cessions were compulsive on the Indians through the insistent demand for land for settlement, as, for instance, the over-reaching and unjust treaties maneuvered by William Henry Harrison in opening up Indiana to whites."[1]

Van Every's research into Indian History presents general information and accounts of particular actions which reveal injustices imposed upon the Indians. His narrative, while somewhat inclusive of all American Indians, deals mainly with the removal problems of the Five Civilized Tribes with perhaps greater emphasis upon Cherokee Indian History. A brief description by Van Every of Indian philosophy, temperament, and heritage along with the issue in question casts some light on this subject.

"In 1830, the government of the United States after long and deliberate consideration decreed the exile of all surviving eastern Indians to the plains of the far west. The inexorable mandate came at the end of a period in which the Indians had made the most earnest efforts to conform to the wishes of their white conquerors. They had submissively accepted federal jurisdiction as their sole remaining defense against injustice. They had long since ceased to exercise any military power whatever. They represented no physical threat to the weakest frontier community. They were confined to continually shrinking reservations where most were making laborious efforts to learn to plant and reap. Nevertheless, more than 20 nations were suddenly required to abandon an environment to which they had been attached for

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[1]Dan E. Clark, Dictionary of American History, III, (New York, 1940), p. 101.

un-numbered generations.

In the long record of man's inhumanity, exile has wrung moans of anguish from many different peoples. Upon no people could it ever have fallen with a more shattering impact than upon the eastern Indians. The Indian was peculiarly susceptible to every sensory attribute of every natural feature of his surroundings. He lived in the open, as responsive to sun, wind, rain, snow as any wild animal. He knew every marsh, glade, hill top, rock, spring, creek as only the hunter can know them. He had never fully grasped the principle establishing private ownership of land as any more rational then private ownership of air, but he loved the land with a deeper emotion than could any proprietor. He felt himself as much a part of it as the rocks and trees, the animals and birds. His homeland was holy ground, sanctified for him as the resting place of the bones of his ancestors and the natural shrine of his religion. He conceived its waterfalls and ridges, its clouds and mists, its glens and meadows, to be inhabited by the myriad of spirits with whom he held daily communion. It was from this rain-washed land of forests, streams and lakes, to which he was held by the traditions of his forebearers and his own spiritual aspirations that he was to be driven to the arid, treeless plains of the far west, a desolate region then universally known as the Great American Desert.

The northern Indians in their dispersed locations scattered across the Great Lakes region into which they had been forced by the advance of white settlement accepted their fate with dismay but without serious protest. Seneca, Shawnee, Wyandot, Delaware, Miami, Ottawa, names at which the white frontier once had shuddered, were now but names attached to the vestiges of nations whose numbers had been reduced to impotence by war and disease and whose once proud spirit had been broken by long continued adversity. Since physical resistance was hopeless, they submitted to the removal (to Oklahoma) decree with sullen resignation. Some even saw a glimmer of new hope in the wider room to hunt on the western plains. Others found some consolation in the mere prospect of getting farther away from their white tormentors.

It was a different story in the south. There the more numerous and less primitive southern Indians occupied a relatively homogeneous block of territory in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and Florida. The Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Seminole had made such progress in the adoption of white manners and skills that they were already termed the 'Five Civilized Tribes.' Many had become proficient artisans and

> with the exhaustion of hunting resources all were supporting their families by dependence on farming. Some had developed large plantations, owned scores of slaves, and were more prosperous than most of their white neighbors. The southern Indians were adapting to the white man's world at such a rate that there was every prospect that they might soon merge into the mainstream of American life as fully acceptable citizens. This dawning hope was crushed by the removal decree requiring them to abandon all that they had accomplished to start over again among the discouraging handicaps of the barren far west.
> After desperate protests, the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek yielded to the inevitable posed by overwhelmingly superior force. In their migration, shepherded by bayonets, they lost most of their property and a third of their numbers. The Seminole elected a resort to arms. They were only routed from their sanctuary in the Florida swamps by an eight-year-long war costing $20,000,000 and 1500 American lives. The Cherokee elected to resist by claiming the protection of the laws of the United States through an appeal to its courts. This also became an eight-year-long struggle but one which in the end gained them no safer refuge than the everglades had afforded the Seminole."[1]

For those who would argue that discrimination against the American Indian is a thing of the past in this country, we need only refer to the United States Supreme Court decision which upheld the ruling of the Supreme Court of Iowa that the constitutional rights of an Indian killed in the Korean War in 1951 were not violated when a Sioux City, Iowa Cemetery refused to permit his body to be buried there. President Truman ordered the body of Sergeant John Rice, a Winnebago, to be buried in Arlington Cemetery with military honors.[2] If our society must continue to make exception to the Indian and refuse him

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[1]Dale Van Every, "Disinherited," The Lost Birthright of the American Indian, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1966), pp. 8-10.

[2]W. H. Blumenthal, American Indians Dispossessed, (Philadelphia: G. S. MacManus Co., 1955), p. 156.

unquestioned admittance into contemporary affairs, settlement of the Indian problem has little possibility of being resolved.

The appropriation by the Anglo American of that which they desired from the Indian throughout their association would certainly discourage independent initiative on the part of the Indian. "Why should the Indian be expected to plant corn, fence lands, build houses, or do anything but get food from day to day, when experience has taught him that the product of his labor will be seized by the white man tomorrow? The most industrious white man would become a drone under similar circumstances."[1] Not so long ago, it is reported, the backward full-bloods of the Cherokee tribe held council and took a voluntary vow of poverty believing that so long as they possessed anything worth taking, the white men would keep after them until they got it. They moved back into the hills and took up lives of mere subsistence in order to be left alone and to save what was left of their tribal civilization.[2]

While the Cherokees were being driven from their homes in Georgia and refused access to the courts for redress, the Creek Indians in Alabama were being defrauded of their land by every conceivable means; they, too, were denied the right to seek retribution through established legal channels. Robert Crawford, U. S. Marshall for the Southern District of Alabama, described the shocking conditions

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[1]Helen H. Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1881), p. 339.

[2]Stanley Vestal, Southwesterners Write, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1946), p. 337.

associated with the disposition of Creek land in Alabama.

> "Artful schemes and devices gave impunity and success to bold bad men, whose profligate and wanton conduct not only extended their operations, but became utterly regardless of public observation and opinion, until at length, in the spring of 1835, every prudential restraint was set in defiance, and acts which should make men cover their faces and shun daylight, came to be the boast of these despoilers of Indian property.
> I have never seen corruption carried on to such proportions in all of my life before. A number of the land purchasers think it rather an honor than a dishonor to defraud the Indian out of his land."[1]

John B. Hogan, who was finally appointed to investigate these land transactions, reported on January 22, 1836, "A greater mass of corruption, perhaps, has never been congregated in any part of the world than has been engendered by the Creek treaty in the grant of reservations of lands to these people."[2] Though the Creeks were reduced to a virtual state of starvation in their native land, they had no confidence in themselves or in the whites who offered them relief in the Indian Territory to the west. The first contingent of 630 Creeks to move west made the trip during the coldest months of the year and suffered greatly from exposure and disease. Only 469 survivors of the original 630 reached Fort Gibson on March 28, 1835, and it is reported that losses would have been much greater had not Captain John Page, who was in charge, did everything in his power to make the trip easier.

We are able to gain further insight into the plight of the

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[1]Grant Foreman, Indian Removal, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), p. 130.

[2]Ibid., p. 134.

Creeks from an article which appeared in The Southern Advocate (Huntsville, Alabama) as taken from the Montgomery Advertiser:

> "The Red Man must soon leave. They have nothing left on which to subsist. Their property has been taken from them . . . their stock killed up, their farms pillaged . . . and by whom? By white men. By individuals who should have scorned to take such mean advantages of those who were unprotected and defenseless. Such villainy may go unpunished in this world, but the day of retribution will most certainly arrive."[1]

Final removal of the Creeks was accomplished by force with many of them compelled to endure long marches while hand cuffed and chained to each other.

The "Trail of Tears" suffered by the Cherokees in their enforced removal during the winter of 1838 has been the subject of much discussion and research. In preparation for the trip to Oklahoma, the Cherokees were rounded up by soldiers and held in make-shift stockades during the hot summer of 1838. During this time they were subjected to such adversity that energy and vigor for the trip ahead was completely lacking. Even during the years prior to removal, the Indians were without any legal rights in Georgia. The following provisions were included in an Act passed by the Georgia Legislature in 1829 to become effective on June 1, 1830.

1. Confiscation by the state of Cherokee land for the purpose of its erection into counties and early distribution among white owners. (The distribution was presently effected by the institution of a land lottery.)

2. Abolition of the authority of the Cherokee government,

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[1]Montgomery Advertiser, (Huntsville, Alabama: quoted in The Southern Advocate, May 17, 1836), p. 3.

the nullification of all Cherokee laws and the exclusive subjection of all Cherokee residents to state jurisdiction.

3. Prohibition of the meetings of the Cherokee Council and of all other gatherings of Cherokee for any purpose, including religion.

4. Punishment by imprisonment of all Cherokees who advised other Cherokees to refuse to migrate.

5. Abrogation of all contracts between Indians and whites unless they had been witnessed by two whites.

6. Denial of the right of any Cherokee to testify in court against any white.

7. Specific denial of Cherokee right to dig for gold in the recently discovered Cherokee gold fields.[1]

The Choctaw Nation was the first of the Southeastern Tribes to move to their newly assigned lands in the Indian Territory. Though unavoidable hardship was experienced by all groups, the Choctaws' and Chickasaws' removal was perhaps less trying than the removal of the Cherokees, Creeks, and Seminoles. The Choctaws and Chickasaws were able to begin their journey without going through months and even years of adversity which reduced the mental and physical vigor of the other tribes. The Seminoles were so determined to remain in the south that they retreated to the swamps of Florida where they had to be hunted and captured at great cost in men and materials. Their removal was effected several years after most of the relocation had been completed. For the most part, they were able to take greater advantage of water transportation which afforded a much easier trip than any overland route.

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[1]Dale Van Every, "Disinherited," The Lost Birthright of the American Indian, (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1966), p. 132.

The futility of the Indian position is illustrated by Clark Wissler as he related the manner in which the Pawnee Indians were treated without regard for the fact that the Pawnee had always been loyal to the United States.

> "The Pawnees boast that they never fought against the United States, and history seems to confirm their claim. Time after time, they joined the whites to fight against other Indians, until, in recognition of their loyalty and ability, an army division of scouts was authorized into which qualified Pawnee men were enlisted. These scouts wore military uniforms when on parade and were especially honored. They rendered signal service in the Indian Wars of the period from 1865, to 1885. Yet, ironically enough, the Pawnees were eventually dispossessed of their lands in Nebraska and forced to settle in Oklahoma, where half of them died from disease and exposure. Once boasting a strength of ten thousand, they now number less than nine hundred; a remnant of a once powerful nation. This is their reward for aiding the whites."[1]

Authenticated reports of senseless and inhumane injustices imposed upon the native American Indians seem almost endless. Additional references can only add to our consternation and dismay without bringing us closer to an understanding. "The testimony of some of the highest military officers of the United States is on record to the effect that, in our Indian wars, almost without exception, the first aggressions have been made by the white man; and the assertion is supported by every civilian of reputation who has studied the subject."[2] While the references cited in this chapter carry a strong

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[1]Clark Wissler, Indians of the United States, (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc.), p. 134.

[2]Helen Jackson, A Century of Dishonor, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1881), p. 339.

indictment of our past national policy, as well as often indefensible personal prejudices, the time has long since passed for us or the Indians to be concerned with retribution. We should, however, be moved to demand that our government allow no deterrent in providing Indians the assistance needed to become in every respect first class citizens. If we were able to disregard completely the injustices of the past, we would still find an urgent moral commitment to take whatever action is necessary to relieve the many thousands of Indians who are shackled by poverty, deprivation, illiteracy, and social and economic isolation.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND EVALUATION OF DATA

Procedure

Presentation of accumulated data and related information has been divided for reporting purposes into three categories. The first category will deal with information gathered from the survey of Indian families and will include a map indicating the geographical location of each Indian family in the Oklahoma City School District.

The second division of this chapter will present a brief look at the staying power of Indian students at Central High School in Oklahoma City by identifying the Indians in two tenth grade classes, 1964-65 and 1965-66, and following their progress to the present time or until they either graduated, dropped out, or transferred to another school. The second division of this chapter also includes a brief look at the transient nature of Indian students in selected elementary schools and a comparison of reading achievement levels and percentile ranking of sixth grade Oklahoma City Indian students to nationally standardized norms based on the California Achievement Test Battery-Metropolitan Reading Test.[1]

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[1]Ernest W. Tiegs and Willis W. Clark, California Achievement Tests Complete Battery, (Monterey, California: Published by California Test Bureau, Del Monte Research Park, 1957 Edition).

The third part will consist of the presentation of information gathered from interviews with especially knowledgeable individuals concerning the urban Indian.

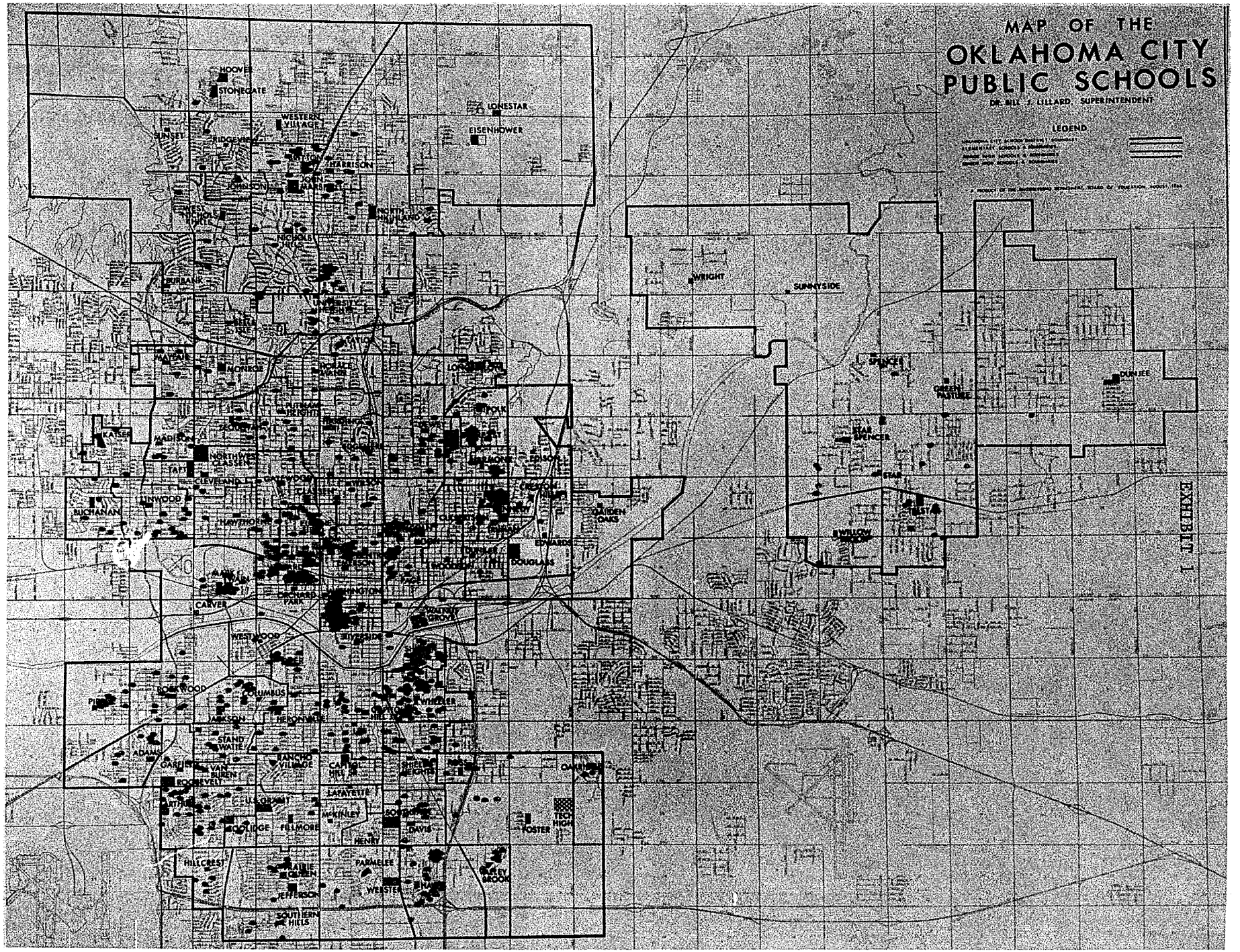
Survey of Indian Families

The home visit and application of a carefully prepared questionnaire by the Personal Interview Technique to selected families in the community was designed to collect information regarding the conditions which characterize the Indian family in the Oklahoma City Community. First hand observation of the home and family made possible by the interview visit afforded a revealing insight into the economic, cultural, social, and educational level of the home environment from which the Indian youngster and adult as well must make their way.

To gain an overall knowledge of the distribution of the Indian population in Oklahoma City, a pictorial identification of the location of the Indian population of school age has been prepared by pinpointing on an Oklahoma City School District map the address of each family listed as being one-fourth or more Indian on the 1966 School Enumeration. A photographic reproduction of this map, reduced to usable size, is submitted as a part of this study, Exhibit 1. Preparation of this map confirms the notion that the Indian population tends to be congested in several low income areas of the city, but it also shows that a liberal sprinkling of Indian families is to be found in almost every portion of the city.

The original sample of 125 families was randomly selected from the 1966 School Census of Indian Children of the Oklahoma City School District. The visit to the homes of selected families revealed that

EXHIBIT 1


MAP OF THE
OKLAHOMA CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DR. BILL J. LILLARD, SUPERINTENDENT
LEGEND
HOOVER
STONEGATE
WESTERN VILLAGE
SUNSET
RIDGEVIEW
HARRISON
JOHNSON
JOHN MARSHALL
WEST NICHOLS HILLS
NORTH HIGHLAND
NICHOLS HILLS
BURBANK
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
BELLE ISLE
MONROE
HORACE MANN
LONGFELLOW
PUTNAM HEIGHTS
KAISER
MADISON
NORTHWEST CLASSEN
TAFT
CLEVELAND
GATEWOOD
CLASSEN
LINWOOD
BUCHANAN
HAWTHORNE
EDISON
CRESTON HILLS
GARDEN OAKS
EDWARDS
DOUGLASS
WOODSON
ORCHARD PARK
CARVER
WESTWOOD
RIVERSIDE
WALNUT GROVE
ROCKWOOD
COLUMBUS
JACKSON
HERONVILLE
WHEELER
STAND WATIE
ADAMS
GARFIELD
VAN BUREN
RANCHO VILLAGE
CAPITOL HILL
SHIELDS HEIGHTS
ROOSEVELT
LAFAYETTE
U.S. GRANT
McKINLEY
COOLIDGE
FILLMORE
DAVIS
HENRY
FOSTER
TECH HIGH
HILLCREST
PRAIRIE QUEEN
PARMELEE
WEBSTER
VALLEY BROOK
JEFFERSON
SOUTHERN HILLS
LONESTAR
EISENHOWER
WRIGHT
SUNNYSIDE
SPENCER
GREEN PASTURE
DUNJEE
STAR SPENCER
STAR
WILLOW BROOK

many families were not living at the address listed on the school census. These home visits also showed that several non-Indian families were listed as Indian on the census. Among the non-Indian families listed on the census were Negores, whites, and caucasian. By checking all addresses of the original sample and following references to new addresses whenever available, forty-three families from the original sample were contacted and interviewed. To secure the desired number of respondents, another sample of the same number was selected in the same manner.

Randomness in the selection of each sample was achieved by assigning each of the 806 Indian families as listed on the 1966 School Census a separate number, placing corresponding numbers in a container, and drawing from the total until the desired sample had been selected. In this manner, each family from the total population under consideration had an equal chance of being chosen, thus, meeting the qualifications for randomness as prescribed.[1]

Findings are reported later in this chapter by Sample A, (first sample) and Sample B. Since no clearly defined variances were noted (variances that would place one group of respondents in a different social, economic, or educational attainment level than the other), the samples were considered to be somewhat representative of the Indian families with school age children in the Oklahoma City Public School District. Findings are also reported in which the combined totals are listed and graphic illustrations are submitted for combined totals.

Marital Status. -- The marital status of the head of households

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[1]Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), p. 52.

of the forty-three families contacted in Sample A was as follows: married (30), divorced (10), widowed (2), single (1). From Sample B the results were as follows: married (41), divorced (10), widowed (5), single (1). The combined totals were: married (71), divorced (20), widowed (7), and single (2). No inquiries were made regarding earlier divorce and remarriage prior to the existing family arrangement. The divorce rate of one in five as listed above is the same as the national divorce rate in 1946 as reported by Webster's Unified Dictionary and Encyclopedia, published by Stuttman Company, in 1954.

Tribal Ancestry. -- Tribal groups represented in the selected homes were divided into ten categories for reporting purposes. These categories were: Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, Civilized Mixed, Civilized and other Mixed, non-Civilized Tribes, non-Civilized Tribes Mixed, and Caucasian. Tribes represented among the selected families in addition to the Five Civilized Tribes listed above include Arapho, Kiowa, Euchee, Caddo, Comanche, Pawnee, Oneida, Cheyenne, Wichita, Kickapoo, Pima, Oto, and Osage.

The tribal ancestry of Indian heads of families from Sample A represented in each of the ten reporting categories was as follows: Choctaw (11), Cherokee (7), Chickasaw (2), Creek (5), Seminole (1), Civilized Mixed (4), Civilized and other Mixed (2), non-Civilized Tribes (9), non-Civilized Tribes Mixed (2), Caucasian (0). The distribution by categories from Sample B is, Choctaw (7), Cherokee (10), Chickasaw (5), Creek (5), Seminole (5), Civilized Mixed (5), Civilized and other Mixed (3), non-Civilized Tribes (8), non-Civilized Tribes Mixed (6), Caucasian (3).

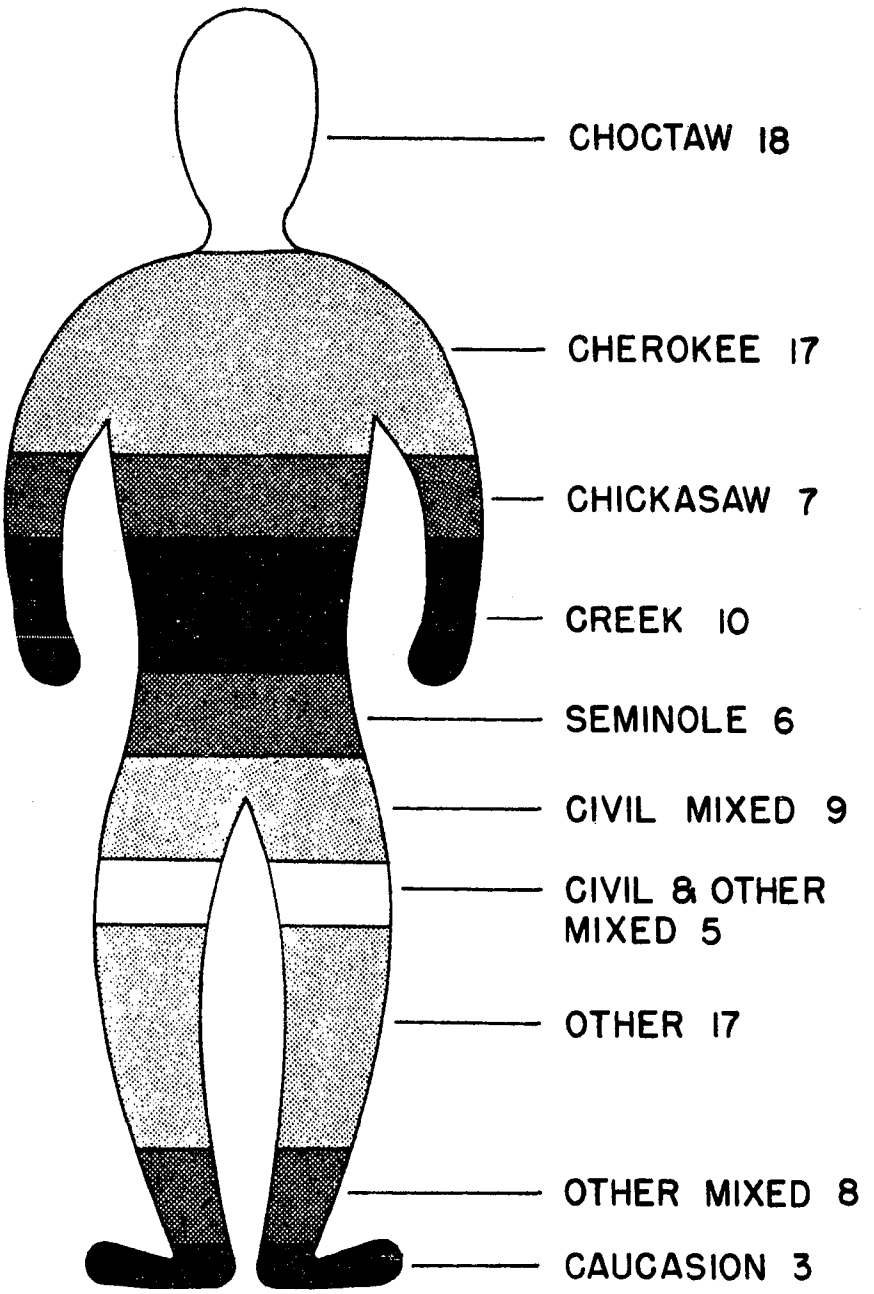
The combined totals of these distributions are presented in Exhibit 2 according to the following totals: Choctaw (18), Cherokee (17), Chickasaw (7), Creek (10), Seminole (6), Civilized Mixed (9), Civilized and other Mixed (5), non-Civilized Tribes (17), non-Civilized Tribes Mixed (8), and Caucasian (3).

To insure inclusion of the tribal affiliation of all families, the Indian member of the family was considered in the families where one spouse was white or other than Indian. The three caucasian families listed have Indian children in their household. In families where both mates were Indian, the tribal affiliation of the head of the household is listed in the above tabulation.

On the basis of information listed above, the Indian population of Oklahoma City appeared to be about equally divided between members of the Five Civilized Tribes and others. It was obvious too, that intermarriage between Indians of different tribal ancestry was commonplace. This practice applied to several generations is sure to weaken the ties with the original tribal body and might be one of the strongest forces working toward total assimilation of the Indian population into the white society.

Percentage of Indian Blood. -- Survey results revealed that fifteen white men and twelve white women were married to an Indian or part Indian spouse. The percentage of Indian blood of male respondents was divided into five categories. These percentages as reported by respondents from Sample A were as follows: four-fourths or full blood (19), three-fourths (1), one-half (2), one-fourth (5), none (6). Respondents from Sample B are: four-fourths (22), three-fourths (1),

EXHIBIT 2



TRIBAL ANCESTRY OF
100 HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

one-half (7), one-fourth (5), and no Indian blood was reported by eight males in this group.

These combined totals are illustrated in Exhibit 3 as follows: four-fourths or full blood (41), three-fourths (2), one-half (9), one-fourth (10), none (15).

Percentage of Indian Blood of Spouse. -- The percentage of Indian blood of female respondents from Sample A was: 100 percent (23), three-fourths (3), one-half (5), one-fourth (4), no Indian blood (6). The percentage of Indian blood of female respondents from Sample B are: 100 percent (31), three-fourths (1), one-half (4), one-fourth (5), no Indian blood (6).

These combined totals are illustrated in Exhibit 3 as follows: four-fourths (54), three- fourths (4), one-half (9), one-fourth (9), no Indian blood (12).

The data listed above also supports the tendency toward intermarriage which in time will result in children being more white than Indian. The urban Indian because of greater exposure to the dominant white culture and white population would be expected to move more rapidly toward intermarriage with the whites than his rural counterpart. Continued intermarriage carried to its logical conclusion would mean that final assimilation is inevitable, whether desired or not.

Language Spoken in the Home. -- English was the predominant language spoken in each of the homes visited. However, three families reported grandparents in the home who were unable to speak English. Eight families reported that an Indian language was spoken as a second language in the home. No interest was noted among parents to provide

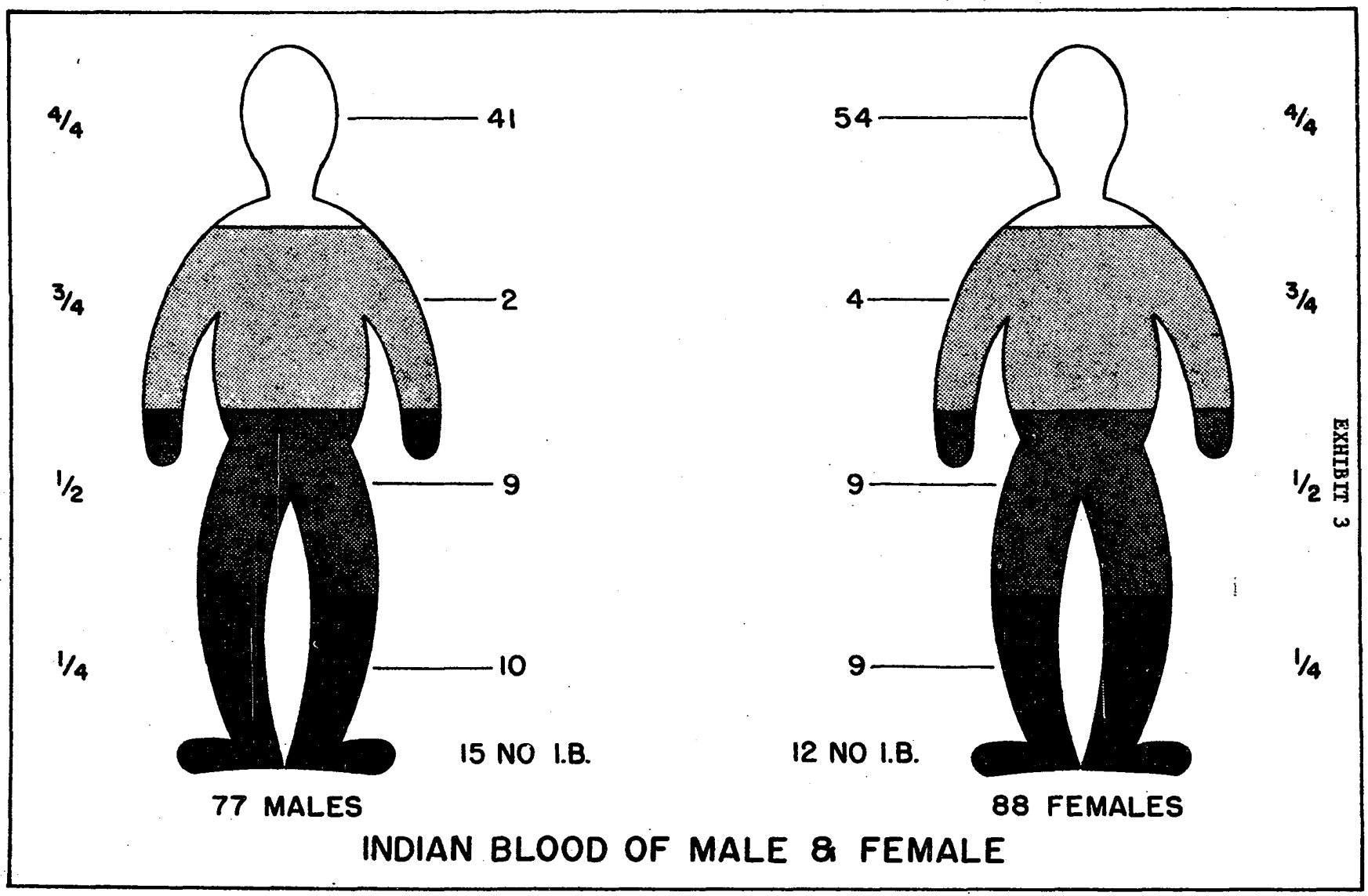

4/4
41
3/4
2
1/2
9
1/4
10
15 NO I.B.
77 MALES
54
4/4
4
3/4
9
1/2
9
1/4
12 NO I.B.
88 FEMALES
INDIAN BLOOD OF MALE & FEMALE

EXHIBIT 3

their children with bilingual experiences, and many parents who previously had spoken a tribal language had forgotten it through disuse. Several cases were noted in which the marriage to another Indian but from another Tribal group resulted in two different languages being spoken with neither spouse understanding the other's native tongue. The settlement in each case was to speak English and lose command of the native language through disuse.

The language barrier, long an impediment in the progress of Indians, should be less and less a problem in subsequent generations of urban Indians. There was little apparent interest in retaining their native tongue, which might be partially explained, by realizing that their own native language is not adequate in the urban Indian community because of the diversity of the tribal background of the residents. Overton James, Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, indicated that he did not speak the Chickasaw language. All Chickasaw tribal activities are handled in the English language. While the Indian-speaking youngster entering school is sure to be at a decided disadvantage, the frequency of this occurrence is sure to be small, especially after the first generation of urban living. However, the influx of rural (real Indian) Indians into the urban centers will insure the existence of a communication problem between urban Indians and whites for some time to come.

Number in Household. -- The average size family of the selected homes was 5.8 members with the actual range varying from one household with two members to one household with thirteen members. Twenty-three families reported four members, this being the mode for the one hundred families visited. The number of families of each size reported from

Sample A was as follows: five families, three members; eleven families, four members; nine families, five members; seven families, six members; five families, seven members; three families, eight members; two families, nine members; and one family, ten members.

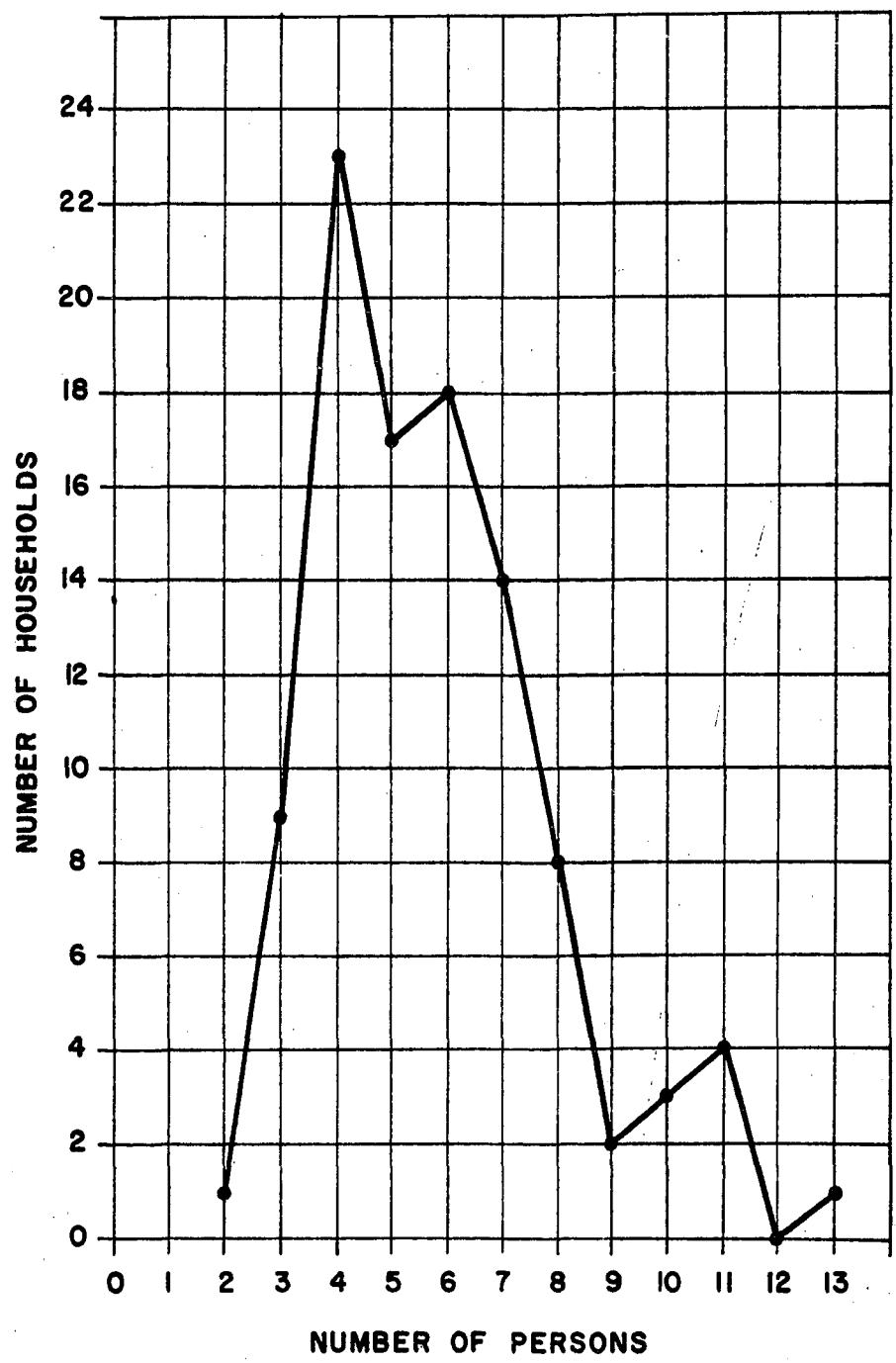
The number of families of each size reported from Sample B was as follows: one family, two members; four families, three members; twelve families, four members; eight families, five members; eleven families, six members; nine families, seven members; five families, eight members; two families, ten members; four families, eleven members; one family, thirteen members.

The total number of families of each size is illustrated in Exhibit 4 according to the following total distribution: one family, two members; nine families, three members; twenty-three families, four members; seventeen families, five members; eighteen families, six members; fourteen families, seven members; eight families, eight members; two families, nine members; three families, ten members; four families, eleven members; one family, thirteen members.

The average size household of 5.8 members in the Indian homes as determined by the survey compares with a current national average of 4.7 members in each American home. Several homes had only one adult which means there were actually more than 3.8 children per family in the homes visited.

Guardian of Children. -- Grandparents were the guardians of the children in three families, an Aunt was the guardian in one family and an Uncle the guardian in another. In other families, the guardian was one or both of the parents, in a few cases adopted parents.

EXHIBIT 4



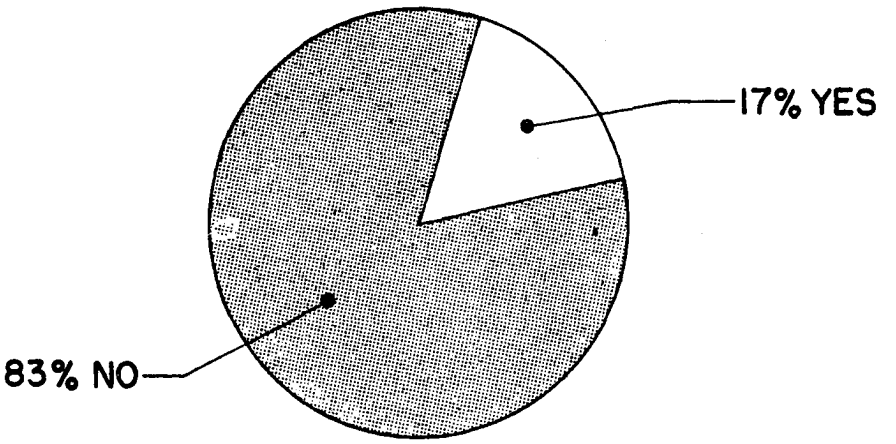
NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD

Grandparents Living in Household. -- Seventeen of the homes visited reported one or more of the grandparents as a member of the household, Exhibit 5. Six of this total were reported from Sample A and eleven from Sample B. The influence of grandparents living in the home might serve to retain more of the older Indian customs than would be observed if the younger generation was living alone. Three homes reportedly contained grandparents who were unable to speak English. In these homes the native language was used in communication with the grandparents but in each case it was considered to be a second language. Some concern was noted regarding the limited availability of welfare to support dependents who were not a part of the regular family.

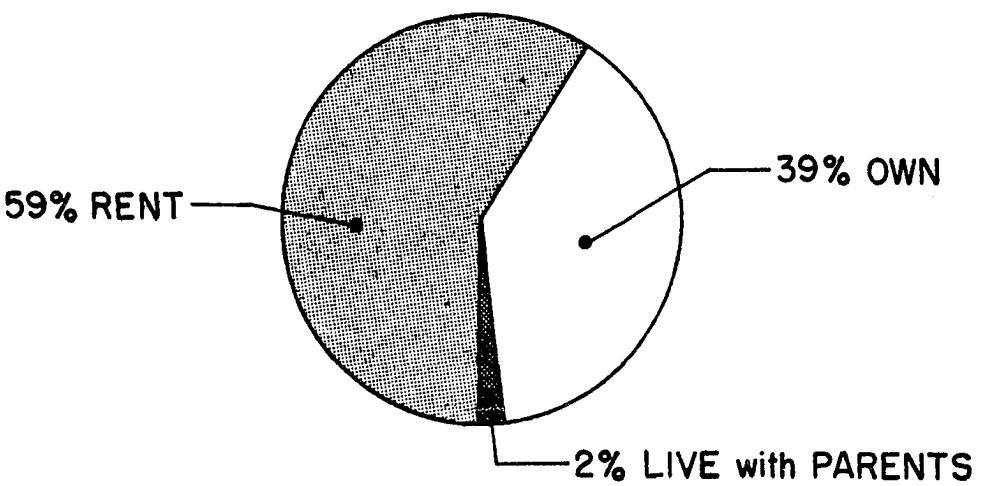
Home Ownership. -- Thirty-nine percent of the families indicated they either owned or were in the process of buying the home in which they lived. Twenty-three of this number were from Sample A and sixteen were from Sample B. Fifteen families from Sample A and forty-four from Sample B rented the home or apartment in which they lived. One family from each of the reporting groups indicated they were living in the home of their parents. The combined totals in each category are illustrated in Exhibit 5.

Years in Oklahoma City. -- Eighteen families from Sample A reported Oklahoma City as their home for fifteen years or more. Other reports from Sample A indicated that two families had lived in Oklahoma City one year; three families, three years; one family, four years; three families, five years; one family, six years; three families, seven years; one family, eight years; four families, ten years; one family, eleven years; three families, twelve years; one family, thirteen years; and one family,

EXHIBIT 5



GRANDPARENTS LIVING IN HOME



PERCENTAGE OF HOME OWNERSHIP

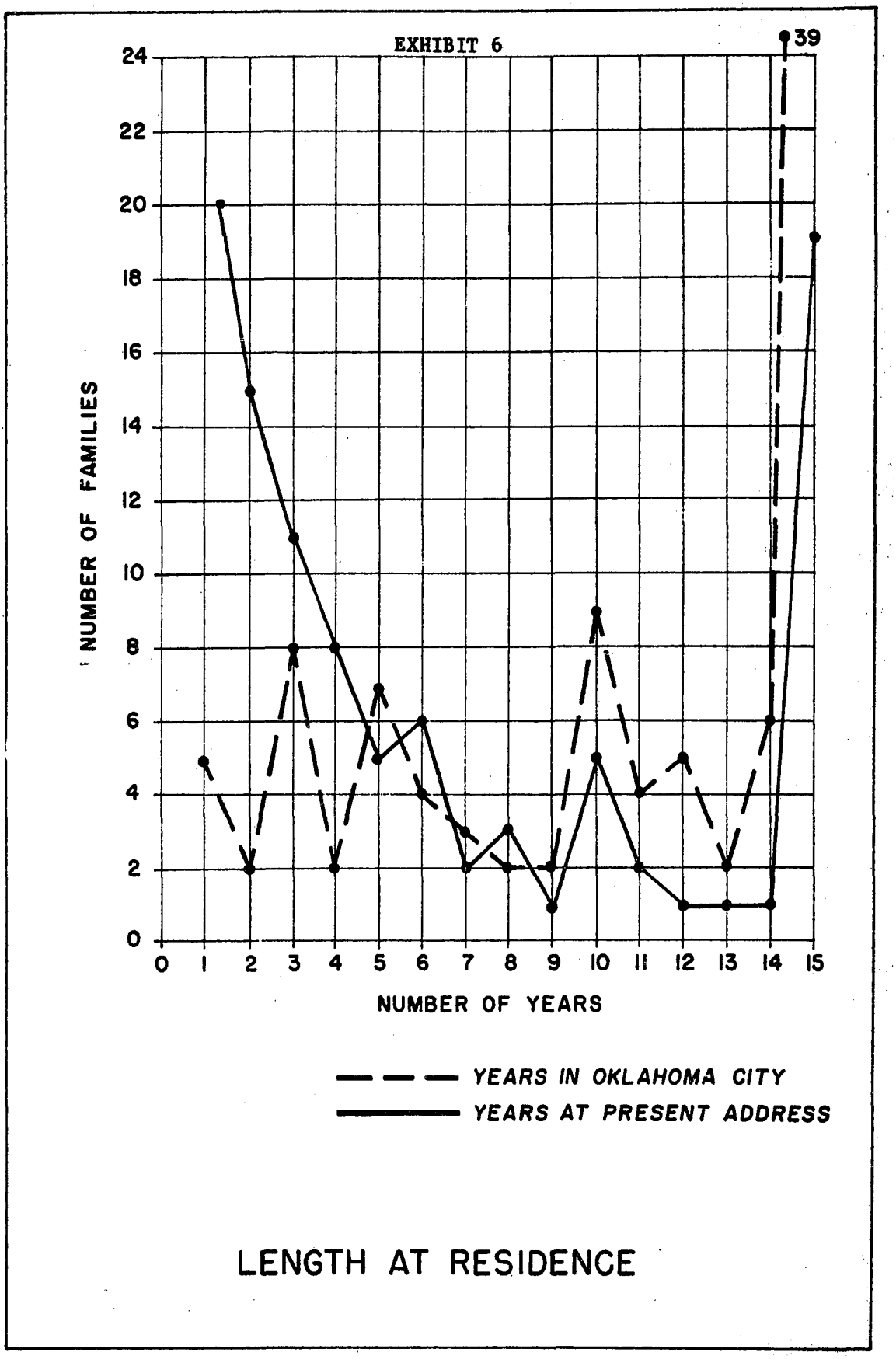
fourteen years.

Twenty-one families from Sample B indicated they had lived in the area for fifteen years or more. Three families reported they had lived in Oklahoma City for one year; two families, two years; five families, three years; one family, four years; four families, five years; three families, six years; one family, eight years; two families, nine years; five families, ten years; three families, eleven years; two families, twelve years; one family, thirteen years; and five families, fourteen years.

The combined totals of distribution of families according to the number of years in Oklahoma City is illustrated in Exhibit 6. A surprising number of the families contacted have lived in the Oklahoma City area for several years with only twenty-four moving to the area within the last five years.

If exposure to urban living promotes acculturation of the Indian family and acculturation encourages greater participation in current habits and standards, the Indian resident of several years should be expected to become less Indian in his thoughts and actions. From observations made, these families may think less like an Indian than their recently arrived counterparts; however, there was little to indicate economic progress to any marked degree had been achieved.

Years at this Address. -- Twenty families, (six from Sample A, fourteen from Sample B) reported that they have lived at their present address less than two years, while a total of nineteen families, (five from Sample A, fourteen from Sample B) have lived fifteen years or more at their present address. The range and distribution by family for the



LENGTH AT RESIDENCE

total number is illustrated in Exhibit 6. The distribution as reported in Sample A was as follows: six families, one year; seven families, two years; seven families, three years; three families, four years; three families, five years; one family, six years; two families, seven years; one family, eight years; three families, ten years; one family, twelve years; one family, thirteen years; and five families, fifteen years or more.

The distribution as reported in Sample B was: fourteen families, one year; eight families, two years; four families, three years, five families, four years; two families, five years; five families, six years; two families, eight years; one family, nine years; two families, ten years; two families, eleven years; one family, fourteen years; and fourteen families, fifteen years or more.

The many families with relatively short tenure at their present addresses as shown in Exhibit 6 emphasized the transient nature of many Indian families in the urban community. This also explained to some extent the difficulty in locating families which were selected for a home visitation and interview. Only five families reported to have come to Oklahoma City from out of the state, and in some cases, these families were simply returning to their home state. Others listed various Oklahoma towns and cities, or rural communities around these towns, as being the place from which they migrated. In some cases, the families moved to Oklahoma City direct from a rural community while others might have made a temporary stop in the town near their rural homes. The following Oklahoma towns or cities were listed as being the places from which Indian families migrated: Seiling, Seminole, Ada,

Dustin, Ponca City, Haskell, Watts, Anadarko, Muskogee, Talihina, Atoka, Shawnee, McAlester, Tahlequah, Okemah, Madill, Wagoner, Poteau, Binger, Okmulgee, Tulsa, Stilwell, Broken Bow, Henryetta, Apache, Wetumka, Lindsay, Redrock, McCurtain, Purcell, Haileyville, Tishimingo, Antlers, Pawnee, Stigler, Weleetka, El Reno, Carnegie, Pauls Valley, Eufaula, Boswell, Bochito, Holdenville, Stonewall, and Durant.

Educational Attainment (Male). -- The average grade achievement level of the male spouse of the families visited was grade 9.2. This compares to a grade attainment level of 4.9 as reported by Underwood in his study of Indians in three counties of eastern Oklahoma. The grade attainment of Sample A male respondents was: one, third year; one, fifth year; three, sixth year; one, seventh year; four, eighth year; three, tenth year; three, eleventh year; twelve, twelfth year; two, fourteenth year, and one, sixteenth year, or a college graduate. The attainment level as reported from Sample B was: one, third year; six, fourth year; one, fifth year; four, sixth year; four, seventh year; nine, eighth year; five, ninth year; eight, tenth year; two, eleventh year; nine, twelfth year; one, thirteenth year; two, fifteenth year, and one, sixteenth year.

Of the eighty-four respondents, twenty-one reported finishing high school. Of the seven respondents from this group attending college, only two had completed four years of college work. Excluding those who finished high school, the eighth grade was the most listed with thirteen respondents indicating this was the last grade they completed. The grade level of educational attainment is illustrated in Exhibit 7.

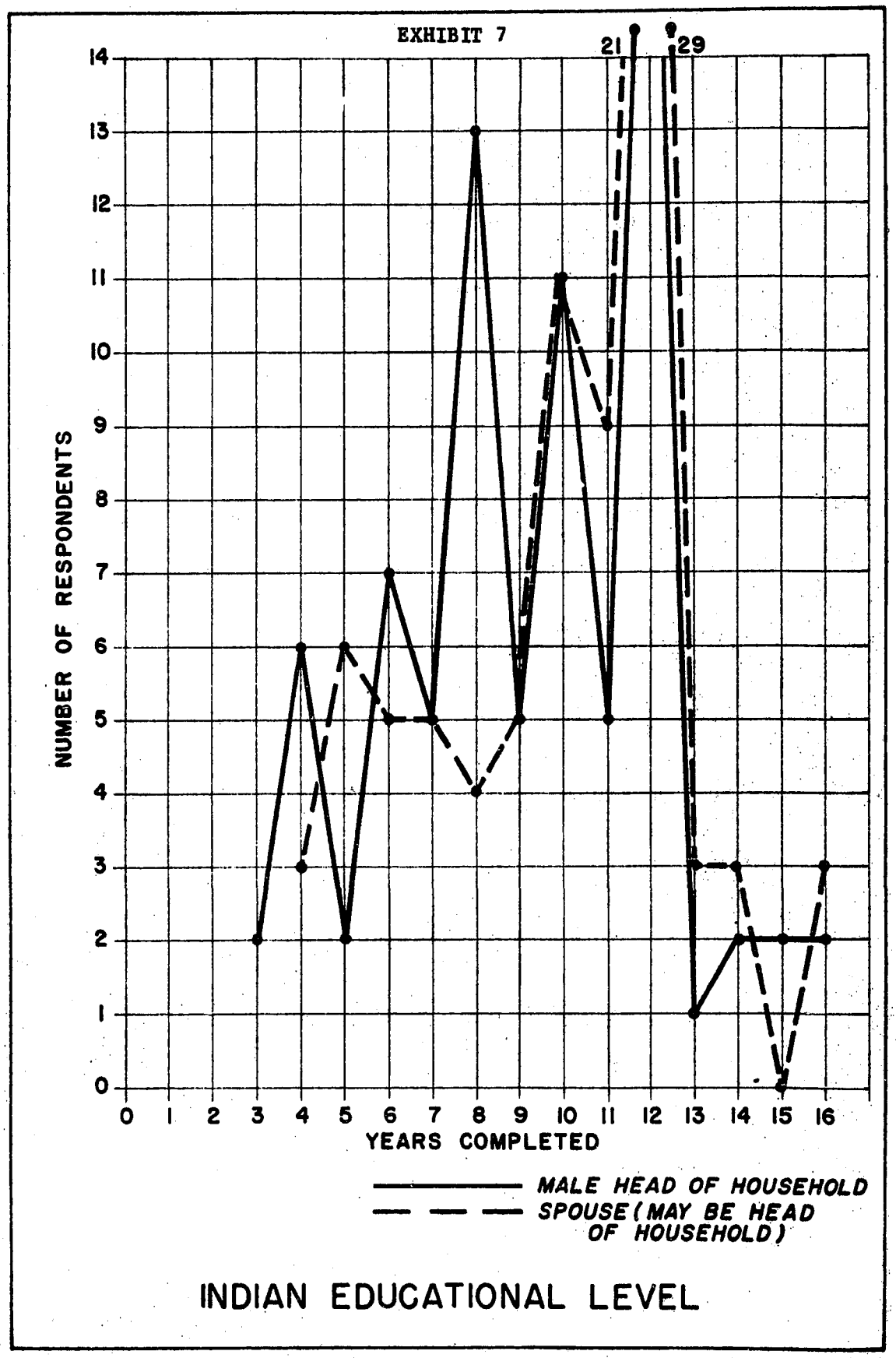


EXHIBIT 7
21
29
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
YEARS COMPLETED
MALE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD
SPOUSE (MAY BE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD)
INDIAN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Educational Attainment (Female). -- The average grade achievement level of the female spouse of the families visited was 10.3. The grade level attained was reported as follows with Sample B respondents listed in parentheses immediately after Sample A for each year: fourth year 0 (3), fifth year 1 (5), sixth year 1 (4), seventh year 0 (5), eighth year 4 (0), ninth year 2 (3), tenth year 6 (5), eleventh year 7 (2), twelfth year 14 (15), thirteenth year 1 (2), fourteenth year 1 (2), and sixteenth year 2 (1).

Twenty-nine respondents from this group reportedly finished high school, nine attended college, and three completed four years of college. Excluding those who finished high school, the tenth grade was the last grade finished by the greatest number of respondents, with eleven females reporting this as their last year of school. Nine females reportedly finished the eleventh grade. The grade level of educational attainment is illustrated in Exhibit 7. Based on the above information, we find the Indian girl a better prospect for finishing high school than her male counterpart.

School Dropouts before High School Graduation. -- Twenty-three families reported that one or more of their children had dropped out of school prior to high school graduation. Fifteen families reported that one child had dropped out prior to high school graduation, five families reported two dropouts, one family reported three dropouts, one family reported four dropouts, and one family reported six dropouts. The ages at which these dropouts occurred ranged from thirteen to eighteen. The ages of sixteen and seventeen seemed most vulnerable with respective dropouts of five and eight reported at these ages. Grades involved

ranged from seventh through the eleventh, grade ten having the greatest number of dropouts with eight.

High School Graduates. -- Nineteen families reported one or more children who had graduated from high school. Eight families reported one high school graduate, nine families reported two graduates, and two families reported three graduates.

Education Beyond High School. -- Six families reported children continuing their education beyond high school. Of these six families, two reported two children in college, and one family reported three children in college.

Occupation. -- Many occupations were listed by the responding families. Though the labor category predominated with forty-five members of the work force in this category, occupations specifically listed included, salesman, welder, machinist, mechanic, teacher, baker, secretary, carpenter, bricklayer, cement finisher, musician, engineer, plumber, chef, fireman, truck driver, Indian Health Service Advisor, miner, along with self employed contractors, retired military officers, and government employees.

Employer. -- The U. S. Government with eight workers employed more Indians than any other employer listed. Wilson Packing Company with six employees and the City of Oklahoma City with five employees ranked next in order behind the U. S. Government as employers of Indians. Other employers listed include, Stan Ramsey Company, Superior Company, Unit Parts, Sears, Ford, Western Electric, Capitol Roofing, Aero Commander, Hospitals, Schools, Acme Fence, Lee Way Freight Lines, Wonder Bread, John A Brown, Anthony's, Western Union, Humpty Dumpty,

Fuzzy's Club, Service Stations, Steel Construction Company, and Bearing Company. Eighteen respondents were self-employed.

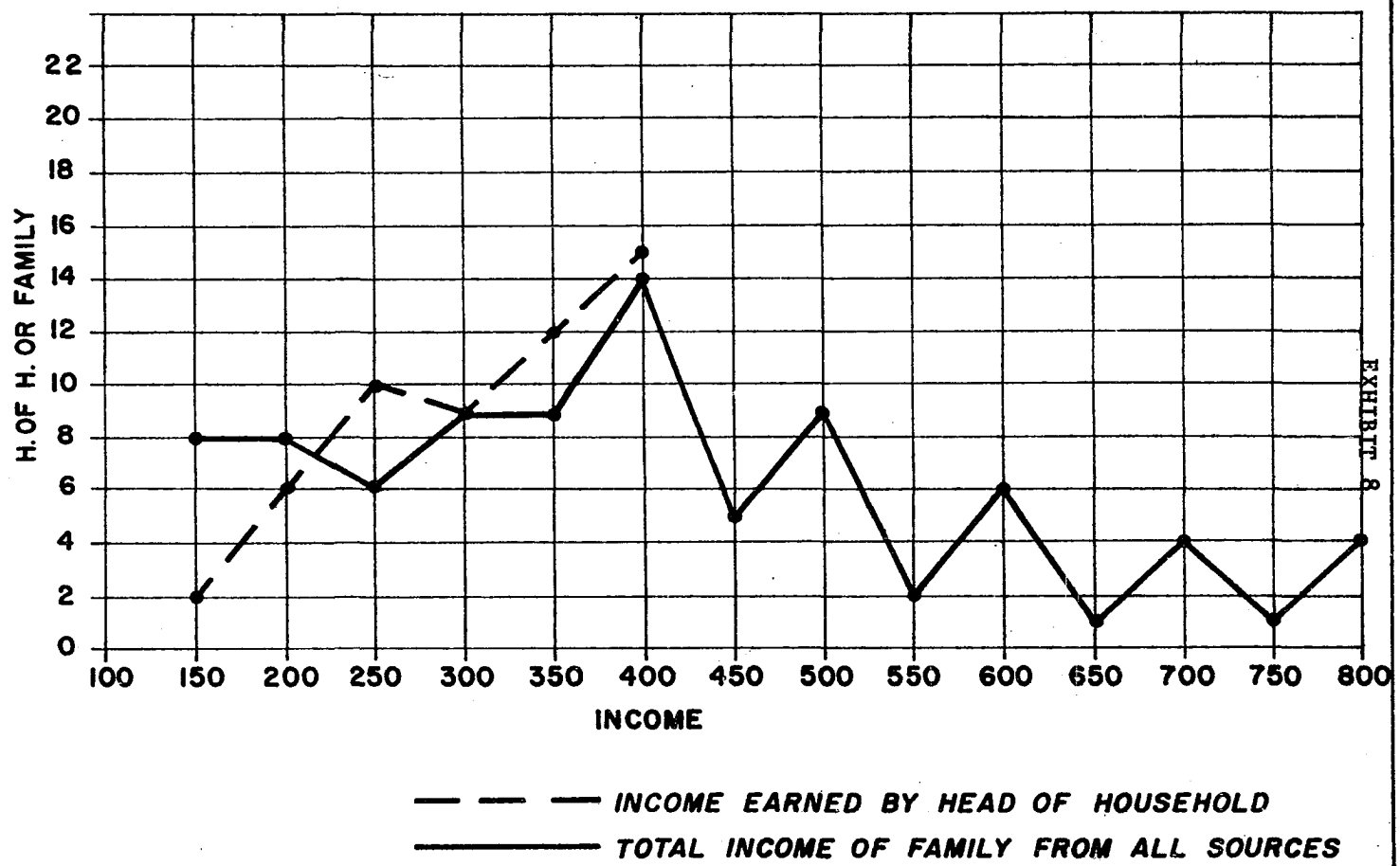
Earned Income by Head of Household. -- Twenty-six families reported earned income by head of household of more then $400 per month. Distribution of the income of the eighty families having earned income is illustrated in Exhibit 8. This distribution was reported as follows: $150.00 (2), $200.00 (6), $250.00 (10), $300.00 (9), $350.00 (12), $400.00 (15), more than $400.00 (26). Employment of more than one member of the family was reported in many homes. This total income from all sources is reported under another heading.

The scale used in reporting income by head of household was only extended to $400.00 per month with income in excess of this amount undivided. Extension of this scale should have revealed a better picture of the earning power of individuals at the upper end of the scale. As with all other responses collected during the survey, no attempt was made to verify information offered. The condition of the home did not always measure up to what should be expected from the income reported.

Total Family Income from all Sources. -- Approximate total income of responding families from all sources has been listed in $50.00 increments starting at $150.00 and ranging to more than $800.00. Distribution of this income is illustrated in Exhibit 8 according to the following schedule: $150.00 (8), $200.00 (8), $250.00 (6), $300.00 (9), $350.00 (9), $400.00 (14), $450.00 (5), $500.00 (9), $550.00 (2), $600.00 (5), $650.00 (1), $700.00 (4), $750.00 (1), $800.00 (4), more than $800.00 (8). These approximate listings include earned income from all members of the household along with any welfare, social security,

EXHIBIT 8

MONTHLY EARNED INCOME



NOTE: *26 Families reported that Head of household earned in excess of $400. monthly.*
8 Families reported total income from all sources in excess of $800. monthly.

retirement, or other income.

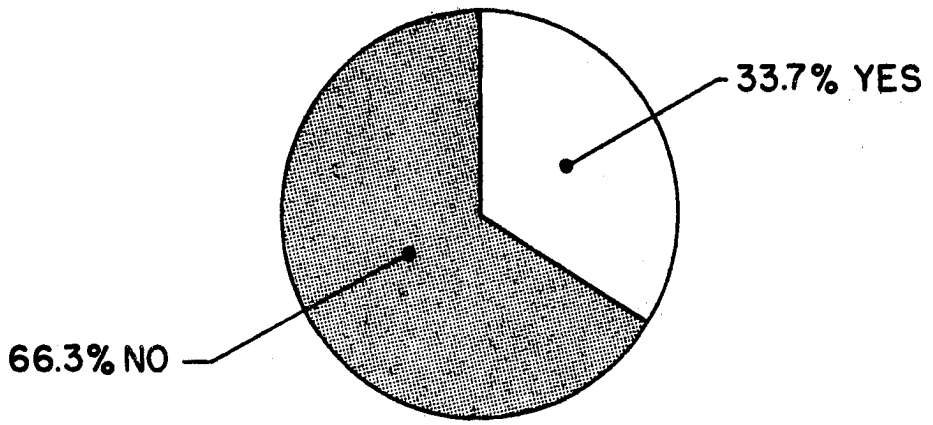
Sixteen percent of the families reported that no members of the family were employed full time. Forty-six families had one full-time employed member and twenty families had two members employed full time. One family reported that the father, two sons, and one daughter had full-time employment. In addition, eleven families reported one member employed part time, and three families reported two members employed part time. The fact that more than one member of many families contributed to the earnings explains the occurrence of several families near the top of the total income scale in the preceding paragraph. Again, the total income reported did not buy the standard of living, as judged by home conditions, that might ordinarily be expected from these levels of income.

Welfare Payments and Commodities. -- Thirty-one percent of the families reported some income in the form of welfare payments as illustrated in Exhibit 9. Commodities were being received by thirty-three percent of the responding families. At least two families reported eligibility for commodities yet refused to accept them because they did not care for the items that were available.

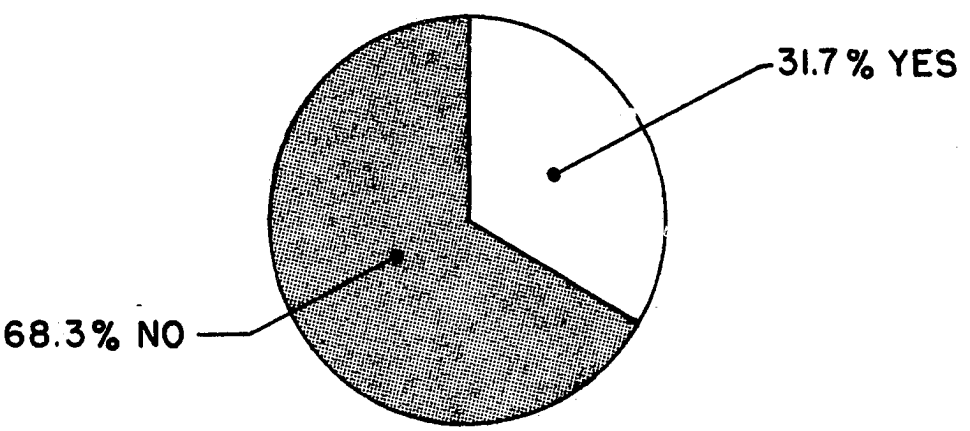
An obvious lack of enthusiasm was noticed in regard to available commodities. Proper training in varied and interesting ways to utilize these free foods might encourage their use with subsequent health benefits to those involved.

Interest to Improve or Develop New Skills. -- Only twenty respondents indicated some interest in additional skill training. Areas of interest are included in subsequent paragraphs.

EXHIBIT 9



COMMODITIES RECEIVED BY HOUSEHOLD



WELFARE RECEIVED BY A MEMBER OF HOUSEHOLD

In response to a suggestion that respondents offer their ideas for improved community services, several worthwhile comments were elicited. One concern voiced quite often was that medical service was available to them only by going to Shawnee or some other inconvenient location. Several reported that they had never taken any member of their family to a local doctor. The complaint that Indian women married to white men were not eligible for medical priviliges except in a poverty situation was also heard. The concern for health might have prompted other respondents to express an interest in nurses training and practical nurses training. The Indian families visited often seemed to have little awareness of programs provided by the community or by the Indian service which might be helpful to them.

The need for advanced training for the young was an often expressed concern, with the argument that the high school should prepare their youth with a salable skill. Other families noted that in their home community Indian children had received free lunch in the schools. They simply did not understand the law which made these free lunches possible in their rural setting specifically and excluded the application of this law in the urban community. One respondent expressed an interest in learning the printing business, but because of his present earnings he was declared ineligible for acceptance in the training program at Okmulgee. A commonly heard comment was that there should be a more equal division of money being spent to relieve conditions among the Negroes to allow Indians to benefit also from these resources. One comment which seemed especially appropriate suggested a need for advisors who could assist Indian families in money matters, helping them

to put their limited income to the best use for the greatest benefit to their family.

Strong ties between the families visited and their original homes were obvious in many cases, with some families regularly attending church services or taking part in sporting and social events in their home communities. It often appeared that the only reason for the family living in Oklahoma City was an economic one and that given a choice, it would gladly return to its old community if employment was available. This attitude did not exist from a feeling of discrimination, but rather from a desire to live more closely with their own people in a setting away from the environment they have experienced in the urban community. In only two cases were individuals actually taking part in available training programs. One divorced mother was attending classes in the Manpower Program at Washington School in an effort to develop a marketable skill. Another mother was attending Practical Nurses Training at Emerson School.

Convenient availability of child care centers might encourage mothers to take advantage of training programs being offered in the community. Skill areas in which an interest was expressed include: nurses training, office skills, welding, auto mechanics, barber, cosmetology, radio and television, and printing.

Achievement Level of Indian Students

Reading comprehension scores, reported in percentiles, and grade placement of 105 sixth grade Indian students representing two school years provide the basis for a comparison of Oklahoma City Indian Student achievement to city and national norms as reported by the California

Test Bureau of Monterey, California.

Fifty-four Indian students were identified as sixth graders during the 1966-67 school year. The reading comprehension percentile rank and grade placement of each of these students was taken from the results of the California Achievement Test Battery. Oklahoma City sixth grade Indian students in the school year 1966-67 ranked at the 36 percentile on reading comprehension compared to the national norms as determined in 1963 by the California Test Bureau.[1] Median percentile rank of all Oklahoma City sixth grade pupils was fifieth percentile.

The average grade placement of these same students was 5.6 compared to the norm of 6.3. This grade placement left these students more than one-half year below the average achievement level of their age group. The range of these students on reading comprehension was from a low of one percentile to a high of ninety percentile. The range on grade placement was from a low of 2.8 to a high of 7.9.

Fifty-one Indian students were identified as sixth graders during the 1967-68 school year. The same test scores of these students were also taken from the California Achievement Test Battery. Oklahoma City sixth grade Indian students in the grade placement of these students was 5.5 compared to the norm for this group of 6.1. These students, too, were more than one-half year below the average achievement level of their age group. The range of these students on reading comprehension was from one percentile to ninety-five percentile. The range on grade placement was from a low of 2.2 to a high of 8.5. The

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[1]Ernest W. Tiegs and Willis W. Clark, California Achievement Tests, (Monterey, California: California Test Bureau, 1957 Edition).

Oklahoma City norm on reading comprehension for all sixth grade students was the fiftieth percentile with a grade placement of 6.0.

Indian Dropouts, Central High School

In order to assess the holding power of Central High School for Indian students, two tenth grade classes, (1964-65 and 1965-66) were identified. The progress of each student was checked to the present time or until he had graduated, dropped out, or transferred to another school. Indian students transferring to other schools in the Oklahoma City System from Central were also checked to determine whether or not they remained in school.

Twenty-seven Indian students were identified as tenth graders at Central High School during the school year 1964-65. These students were scheduled to graduate in May of 1967. Records show that only eight from this total of twenty-seven actually graduated with their class. Four students dropped out of school for one year but later returned to Central and were scheduled to graduate with the class of 1968. Seven students who dropped out of Central did not request transcripts to other schools and are presumed to be high school dropouts. Three students transferred to other city schools; however, these students did not graduate from the new school nor are they presently enrolled. Since no transcripts were sent on these students, they also are presumed to be high school dropouts. Of the five remaining students, no report was available. One transferred to a school out of Oklahoma, another transferred to an Oklahoma Indian School, and three transferred to schools in Oklahoma but out of the Oklahoma City area.

Thirty-three Indian students were identified as tenth graders at Central High School during the school year 1965-66. Records indicate that only six students from this total of thirty-three are scheduled to graduate with their class in May of 1968. Fifteen of these students have quit school. Four students transferred to other city schools, but only one is enrolled presently at a new school. One student left school to have a baby, gave the child up for adoption, has now returned to school and will graduate in 1969 if she remains in school. Another student transferred to an out of state school and six transferred to public schools outside the city area.

On the basis of information available, it appears that only one of the seven Indian students transferring from Central High School to other city high schools will graduate. If this percentage is maintained by students transferring to other schools, the dropout rate of the sixty students identified as tenth graders at Central High School will approach seventy percent during the last three years of high school. Staff members at Central High School report the excessive dropout rate as the result of little or no parental interest in their children's progress rather than academic problems faced by the students.

This dropout rate of the Indian student becomes even more alarming when we realize that the educational program at Central High School is especially planned to meet the needs of minority groups and disadvantaged youth with special attention directed toward holding students through high school graduation.

Mobility or Transient Nature of Indian Students in Two Selected Elementary Schools. -- In order to understand better the transient

nature of the urban Indian, the two Oklahoma City elementary schools with the largest Indian student enrollment were identified. The two schools, Emerson and Willard, with Indian enrollments as of April 1, 1968 of 46 students and 69 students respectively, were checked to determine the movement of their Indian students during the present school year, 1967-68.

It was learned that their present combined enrollment of Indian students at these two schools included 35 students who transferred in during the course of the school year. Twenty-one transfers were from other schools in the City System and 14 were from schools outside the City System.

Transfers or drops from these two schools during the first seven months of the school year totaled 52 students. Three students from this group were dropped because of non attendance. Twenty-seven reportedly transferred to other schools in the City System and 15 moved to schools outside the City System. The remaining seven students from this group transferred to other schools; the locations of the new schools are unknown.

As reported by the principals of these schools, it is not uncommon for Indian children to attend four or more schools during the course of the school year. The problems related to academic and social progress of students who move so frequently are readily obvious. The best efforts of a community to assist these transient Indian families will be largely nullified until they can become settled in one location for some extended period of time. Frequent moves of a family from one community to another seem likely to be more the result of undesirable

living conditions and environment rather than a desire to be continually on the move.

Interviews with Indian and Other Leaders

Overton James, Governor of the Chickasaw Nation. -- Mr. Overton James, Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, serves his people as a political appointee of the President of the United States. He is assisted in his Tribal activities by an eight member Advisory Board, four of whom are elected by popular vote with four being appointed by the Governor. Governor James makes his home in the Oklahoma City area. As related by James, "The sooner Indian youngsters learn the ways of the whites, the sooner they will become an active force in contemporary society."

He stated that old habits, languages, and customs must be relegated to a secondary role in the life of today's Indian. He also stated that unless the English language is taught first (prior to teaching an Indian language) to an Indian child, that child is almost sure to be in a disadvantaged position in his early school experiences. This child, according to James, is very likely to spend two years in the first grade in overcoming the language handicap and this, of course, creates an additional problem for the youngster to contend with during his entire school career. While James has strong feelings for the culture of his people, he feels that their ultimate future lies in complete assimilation into the dominant white society. The urban Indian must not use his heritage as an escape or crutch if he is to succeed in today's world. His closer association with the white society, as

compared to his counterpart, means that he will lead his people in accepting the challenge to live as an equal in every respect in the white man's world.

As reported by James, the Bureau of Indian Affairs extends little service to the Indian living in the urban communities. Medical treatment is available to Indians if they are willing to go to an Indian Clinic for this service. Shawnee has the nearest available Indian Clinic for Oklahoma City residents. Indian medical facilities are also available at Concho, Anadarko, Lawton, Tahlequah, Pawnee, Pawhuska, and Talihina. However, this is not a complete list of available facilities. Indian Health was transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1955 to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Congressional appropriations finance these services which are administered by HEW.

All tribal activities of the Chickasaws are conducted in the English language, according to James. He reports that ceremonial occasions do not have the support and participation they enjoyed in the past. He credits this change to the fact that the tribal population has become separated and more involved with contemporary activities. He recognizes that many complications are involved as his people move from their rural homes into impersonal urban communities in search of economic advancement; however, the Indian himself is the one who must ultimately resolve these issues.

Dennis Belindo, Kiowa Tribal Council. -- Dennis Belindo, a full blood Kiowa, a member of the Kiowa Tribal Council, and an art teacher at Central High School reports that he plays the white man's game only

from economic necessity. He states that Indians, especially the urban Indians, must live a double life. First, they must mimic the white man in economic aggressiveness for employment purposes. Their second role is as an Indian in the home and among his family and people. Belindo feels that practically all urban Indians share his own desires to be able to live among their own people undistrubed by the whites. Indians are reared in a non aggressive society and must learn aggressiveness from non-Indians. He reports that Indians have never been interested in equaling anyone, thinking their way of life was better than any other. This accounts for the extremely slow transition of the Indian population to the white way, according to Belindo.

Indian art students are probably more able than the non-Indians in his classes at Central; however, they often fail to achieve to the full extent of their capabilities. He credits this lack of desire to an almost non existent home life which offers practically no parental encouragement. The degenerative effect of urban slum living on the Indian family soon expresses itself in the breakdown of the home environment. Belindo serves as co-sponsor of the Central High School Indian Club, which provides Indian students an opportunity to extend mutual aid and encouragement to each other. These students, he reported, are determined to maintain their Indian identity. Belindo appears to be a very able spokesman for his people and his great interest seems to be the improvement of their condition.

Wesley Driggs, Director Adult Institute, Oklahoma City. -- The Adult Institute which provides skill training and the opportunity to earn a high school diploma is sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public

Schools. Wesley Driggs serves as Director of the Institute. Enrollment is limited to high school dropouts between the ages of 19 and 22 years of age. The length of the training period is determined by the grade level at the time the student left high school and the time required for the student to develop a marketable skill.

Driggs stated that the Indian male is the least responsive of all students with whom he works. He further reported that during the first five years of the program a total of 573 young adult males were enrolled. Of this total, only twelve were Indians and only four of this group completed the training period for a completion rate of 33% compared to an overall completion rate of 57%. Of the eight Indian students who dropped out, seven were full blood Indians and one was part Indian. Of the four Indian students completing the program, three were part Indian and one was full blood.

Every city area school dropout is contacted and advised of the Adult Institute training program available to him. Job seekers at the Oklahoma City Employment Offices who are eligible for this training are also advised of the program as well as inmates released from institutions who meet entrance requirements.

Indian girls have a better completion rate than the Indian males. Thirty-two Indian girls were enrolled in the program and nineteen completed their work for a completion percentage of 59% which is in line with the completion rate of all female students.

In addition to the program described above which affords dropouts an opportunity to earn a high school diploma while developing a salable skill, an Adult Basic Education Program is offered free during the

evening in twenty-five different locations in the Oklahoma City area. This program, also directed by Driggs, is designed for adults of any age who have had little or no education. He reported participation of approximately 3,000, about equally divided between white and Negroes with perhaps a total of fifty Indian women, yet not a single Indian male had participated.

Ladella Peterson, Counselor, Central High School, Oklahoma City. - The most important single reason for the dropout of Indian students at Central High School is lack of parental concern, according to Ladella Peterson, girls counselor. She reported that parents do not offer encouragement and, for the most part, provide very little supervision for students. Very few of the dropouts result from low or failing grades. The fact that parents fail to hold their children accountable for their actions probably explains why so many of the students find themselves in some kind of trouble which prompts their leaving school. Peterson was advised by one of her Indian students, "I live in your world eight hours a day and then return to my jungle." This same student reported that she did not know a single adult Indian who did not have a drinking problem. She also said, "I can quit when I want to but the adults I know cannot seem to stop once they have started drinking."

Another girl who became upset with her mother for some reason left home and did not return until four days later. When questioned about where she spent four days, she stated simply, "Oh, I have places where I can stay." Peterson reported that another Indian girl, an excellent student with a good personality, had dropped out of school for the second time to have an illegitimate child.

After strong encouragement, two Indian graduates of the class of 1967 entered college. One of these dropped out after a very short time and the other was reported to be doing well in a Kansas school for Indians. Peterson stated that Indians are taught distrust of whites and after reinforcing this distrust by their own experiences it is difficult to gain their confidence in counseling activities.

Richard D. Poweshiek, Opportunities Industrialization, Inc. -- Conditions of the urban Indian are much worse than is obvious to the non-Indian observer. Indians are unlikely to reveal the full extent of their personal problems to a non-Indian, according to Richard D. Poweshiek, a full blood Sauk and Fox Indian employed by Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc. Poweshiek's responsibility with this organization, which offers technical and skill training to unemployed or underemployed individuals in the city area, is to locate and advise prospective participants of the services available through his organization. While there is no charge for this training program to eligible participants, there is also no financial assistance to trainees during the course of the programs which normally take about eight months. Training is presently available in the areas of clerk-typist, stenography, machine tool operation, auto-mechanics, welding, and retail sales and management. Poweshiek reported that approximately two-thirds of the Indians who start this training fail for some reason or another to finish.

Poweshiek worked in a similiar assignment in Chicago for four years prior to his work in Oklahoma City. In this work, he was able to observe at the closest level the problems faced by Indians living

in a large urban community. He stated that only an Indian who has grown up among Indians can understand them and gain their confidence to the point that their innermost feelings are revealed. Even the successful Indian who has prospered in the white mans ways is often the object of extreme jealousy and envy, and because of this his efforts to work with his people may be mainly fruitless. Poweshiek reports that this is not a natural Indian characteristic but one learned from the whites and perhaps magnified by the fact that so many of them have failed in their efforts to climb the ladder of success in the white world. The helpless Indian may be so frustrated from his own limitations that he will discredit his successful counterpart in every opportunity, according to Poweshiek.

The highly revered Indian characteristics of dignity, pride, patience, and stoicism which have described Indians for generations may be lost, fears Poweshiek, as the Indian population becomes more assimilated. Among the urban Indians it is not uncommon to observe children crying, siblings fighting among themselves, or even to find children talking back, disputing, or questioning the authority of their parents and elders, all of which would have been highly unusual in earlier generations. It is simply not the nature of Indians to demonstrate, to verbalize, and to project themselves in the manner of other minority groups or whites. It is also unlike the Indian to draw undue attention to his suffering. The reserved dignity and pride of an Indian would also prevent him from revealing the true picture of his economic deprivation, according to Poweshiek.

Poweshiek observed that the poor non-Indian suffers more in a

rural setting than the Indian but the situation reverses itself when the Indian moves to the urban community. The Indian can live better on limited income in the country because he is willing to live very simply without conveniences and without complaining. The fixed expenses of rent and necessary utilities in the city may be overwhelming to the newly arrived rural Indian family. Exposure to the base element surrounding the low rent district where the new arrival is often forced to live adds to the degradation of the experience. Unpleasant home conditions and a community barren of acceptable and convenient social functions leads the urban Indian to gather with his friends in the local bars and taverns with the resulting expense and further deterioration of his family.

Alcohol, in the opinion of Poweshiek, is a much greater threat to the Indian living in a large city. Too often it becomes his escape from the conditions in which he is forced to live. He is, also, usually able to find fellowship with other Indians as he participates in his drinking activities.

He stated that it is too much to expect American Indians to live in two worlds, Indian and non-Indian, over an extended period of time, even though they are extremely proud of their heritage. Greater familiarity and association with the dominant white way will result in their becoming less Indian and more white until finally assimilation is complete and the American Indian will exist only in anthropological history. He predicts that the trend to urban living will increase the assimilation rate of American Indians.

L. J. Laney, Director of Indian Education, State of Oklahoma. --

Mr. L. J. Laney, Director, Division of Indian Education of the Oklahoma State Department of Education is charged with the responsibility of administering the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1936. This Act, in its original wording, included only those Indians living on tax-free reservation lands. Since Oklahoma has no Indian reservation land, the interpretation as applied to Oklahoma Indians includes only those living in rural areas or in towns of less than 500 population. Since this interpretation obviously excludes Indians living in Oklahoma City and other large cities, Laney reported that his office has practically no contact with the Indian children living in the urban communities. However, his office does provide application forms for scholarships and grants to high school graduates of urban schools. According to Laney, these grants cover the necessary financial assistance to allow recipients to attend either Chilocco or Haskell Institute for vocational training or the college of their choice. So that available funds can assist a greater number of students, encouragement is given to attend state schools, He did state, however, that several Oklahoma Indians are attending out of state colleges on these grants which range from $700 to $1200 annually.

Funds for financing these grants are appropriated by Congress and administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Laney reports that his office merely assists in the distribution of application forms. The application is submitted to the appropriate area office at Anadarko or Muskogee for final determination. Recipients of these grants must be one-fourth of more Indian blood.

A study of the annual report submitted by Laney's office indicates

a major portion of his budget was used to furnish school lunches to Indian students and to pay for boarding school expenses. According to the report, $475,000 annual payment was received to finance the Johnson-O'Malley Act in Oklahoma. Approximately $53,000 was required for office salaries and related expenses. Four hundred twenty thousand dollars were distributed to schools and all but $87,000 of this was for lunch reimbursement, boarding school expense and lunch related expenditures. Oklahoma County received a total of $3,042.00 with $2,042.00 going for lunches and $1,000.00 to a State Center Remedial Reading teacher.

The Johnson-O'Malley Act, commonly referred to as the Indian Welfare Act, takes into account the indigent nature of many Indian students by providing financial assistance to them, yet, the Oklahoma interpretation of this act excludes the urban child of any benefit from this legislation as well as many other Indian pupils who live in smaller towns. A commonly held misunderstanding persists among Indians and non-Indians alike regarding benefits available to Indians under this act. Too often the uniformed think that financial assistance is readily available to all Indian students under the provisions of the Johnson-O'Malley Act. In reality, the total benefit to Oklahoma Indians from this legislation is insignificant. It is true that many Indian youngsters in rural communities receive free school lunches; however, our present welfare program provides commodities in liberal quantities as well as financial assistance to eligible families throughout the state. Greater ultimate benefit to the Indians might be realized from these funds by underwriting experimental approaches to resolving problems peculiar to the Indian

community. As with all expenditures for public relief, assistance should be offered in such a way that initiative and independence are rewarded rather than penalized and destroyed.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to identify certain conditions which characterize Indian families in the Oklahoma City Public School System with the belief that an understanding of these conditions could be of importance in developing improved programs for them in the school and community.

In order to better understand present Indian attitudes and behaviors and the conditions under which they live, an investigation was conducted into the history and background of Indians and their relationships with the Federal and State governments.

That Indians are among our most overlooked and under-educated citizens is clearly recognized. There can also be little doubt as to the prohibitive cost of sustaining this population in a semidependent state over an extended period of time, yet, this is the position in which we find ourselves at this time. The fact that approximately 380,000 of our Indian population continue to live in abject poverty on minimum existence income, along with the disadvantages experienced when these people attempt to improve their condition by separating themselves from their group and seeking relief on their own, is reason enough for us to take a new look at existing policies. These

policies which determine the national direction in Indian affairs must be subjected to the most rigid scrutiny and revision where required to achieve for the Indian population the economic, social, and educational status to which they are entitled.

While there are many influences which share a responsibility for the present deprived condition of a good portion of our Indian population, no improvement can be expected simply from fixing the blame. However, we must not forget that the suffering endured by these people during several generations of flagrant, unchristian, and inhumane abuse is certainly enough to color their attitude toward our form of government and our way of life. The comparative position of the Five Civilized Tribes was better prior to their removal than it has ever been since our land hungry settlers and an acquiescent government allowed them to be forcibly removed from that which was theirs by every conceivable legal and moral right. The fact that these Indians as a group have never regained their former relatively superior position since relocation attests to the degenerative effects of such action.

Any program of relief for American Indian families must be designed so as not to appear to be a penalty for poverty but rather as an opportunity to work in partnership in the improving of a position which has tended to imprison the American Indian. Active participation on the part of the Indians in the planning and directing of this endeavor seems essential if any notable degree of success is to be attained.

Alienation, confusion, and misunderstanding are sure to prevail so long as we continue to judge the Indian entirely on the basis of

Anglo-oriented values with complete disregard for his adherence to highly treasured and desirable characteristics which would serve any society well. Our society may soon be making an effort to understand better and to practice the Indian art of relaxed living and leisure activities. Our past experiences should cause us to move with extreme caution in suppressing any tribal activity since we have observed the debilitating effects of such action. The vigor of the Indian has surely been reduced because modern America has interferred with his practice of ceremonial activities which have great meaning for him.

The conflicting cultures to which Indian children, as well as adults, are subjected makes it difficult for them to fit completely and comfortably into either. The long established tribal traditions and customs provide security in the sense that most judgements are based on group achievement or failure, thus protecting its members from individual evaluation. This feeling of security which is gained from close association with his own group causes great reluctance on the part of the Indian to enter the highly competitive social and business community of today.

In measuring Indian student achievement, we often simply measure the childs absorption of the Anglo middle class culture. Since our measuring devices are usually standardized on Anglo children, the Indian is likely to fall very low on an achievement rating scale even though his actual rate of progress might be quite rapid. Any rating of Indian student progress to be meaningful must allow for the background of the child. It is commonly accepted that there is a high correlation between academic success and the cultural background of a

child. The Indian child, with his disadvantaged cultural environment, cannot be expected to perform initially as well as the economically and culturally favored white child.

Problems of economy, health, and education appear to be uppermost on a priority scale for assistance to our Indian population. We know that slum living and impoverished conditions breed social insecurity. Deprivations experienced during long exposure to poverty are likely to instill in an individual or group such a state of inaction and indifference to their condition that they are incapable of initiating the kind of action which would bring about an improved status. The repeatedly rejected members of the lower class communicate a sense of despair and bitterness to their own children as well as to each other which makes escape from this environment especially difficult. The slum-dwelling Indians of the large urban communities not only suffer from their own deprived state but are subjected as well to the ghetto bred cynicism which is likely to be more dangerous than poverty alone could ever be.

Education for the Indian, as with other disadvantaged groups, appears to be the greatest hope in overcoming his impoverished condition. This education must be comprehensive in its scope with special concern for convenient availability and attraction for the lower economic group. If education is to have the greatest support of the Indian population, it seems essential that we capitalize on the rich ethnic background of these people and stimulate pride in their Indian heritage. The adult Indian must be induced to learn, not only more about the white man's world, but to acquire more knowledge generally.

He must be assured that schools are not designed to cause his children to forget their native language and customs nor to weaken the Indian tribal activities, but rather to augment his native skills in providing economic security and social satisfaction for himself and his family and to provide for maximum participation in all categories of activity of the American scene. Inclusion of Indians in the planning and execution stages of any program designed for them seems highly important. We must remember that Indian children upon their introduction to school should not experience too much frustration--too many failures--too much criticism. To allow this to happen is surely the best way to guarantee the childs leaving at an early age to seek security or obscurity within the protective isolation of his people.

A wise man once said, "Possession always cheapens the thing that was precious." Our efforts to relieve the plight of the Indians should be directed toward liberation rather than confinement. Our goal should be to release their inhibited desires to move with confidence into the fiercely competitive world of today. The Indian's great challenge is the slow and difficult and sometimes painful transition to that positive attitude from which they can rule their present and future existence as a complete equal in the white dominated culture of our time.

Major Findings

Educational achievement level of the urban Indian was considerably higher than that of the rural Indian of Eastern Oklahoma, as reported by Underwood. According to his study, the average grade attainment of the heads of households in Cherokee County was 4.9

compared to an attainment level of 9.2 of the urban Oklahoma City Indian head of household.

The inability of many urban Indians to realize the maximum utilization of available resources for the economic, social, and cultural advancement of their position appears to be one of the most urgent problems facing the Indian today. This problem appeared to exist for the Indian in the Oklahoma City community.

Indian residents of Oklahoma City reported earning ability above what normally would be expected from a disadvantaged minority; however, it should be remembered that incomes were reported as approximate earnings and in many cases, the obvious standard of living did not measure up to the reported income. The survey indicates and special interviews support these findings that unemployment is not as great a problem as might be expected. In fact, money management appeared to be a greater problem than limited earning power for the urban Indian. Seventeen families reported income in excess of $700.00 monthly, yet, the condition of the home and neighborhood in many cases failed dismally to reflect this income level.

The average size of the Oklahoma City Indian family based on the survey was 5.8 with the actual range varying from two members to thirteen members. Though the traditional Indian reserve was often quite obvious, the urban Indian appeared to have fewer problems with language and communication than have been observed among rural Indians. Little interest was noticed among parents in teaching their children to speak an Indian language. In the few cases where an Indian language was spoken in the home it was to communicate with some

member, usually the grandparent, who was unable to speak English.

Only five of the Indian families visited had lived in the Oklahoma City area for less than two years. However, the families to be visited were selected from the 1966 school census and this precluded the involvement of the most recently arrived rural Indians. The fact that thirty-nine families reported to have lived in the area for fifteen years or longer emphasizes the fact that urbanization of the American Indian has been under way for many years. The Oklahoma City Indians came mainly from rural Oklahoma communities with only five families coming from out of the state.

Indians in almost every case appeared willing to work and expected to work for their living. No attitude, or philosophy, or desire to live off charity was observed.

Recommendations

Specially trained employment counselors should be available to all Indians, including those remotely located from existing employment agencies.

Adult education activities should be organized for the adult Indian population of Oklahoma City and other urban areas with special attention given to health education, family finance, and consumer education. An organization such as the Family Finance Institute of the Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies is especially equipped to provide these services in collaboration with the Oklahoma City Public School System.

Assistance should be provided to Indians who desire to locate nearer to industry or prospective employment. Often Indians are

reluctant to relocate due to difficulties associated with securing shelter, clothing, food, and the important problem of achieving a comfortable relationship with neighbors in an unfamiliar community.

Planned industrial development in the areas where concentrations of Indian labor is available should be forthcoming, and at the same time allow the Indian residents of the area to become productive citizens without moving away from their home communities. This has been effective in other states.

The establishment of a counseling service employing individuals especially trained to assist with family planning, economic, social, and cultural problems of the urban Indian should provide some relief in these areas. These advisors should also concern themselves with Indian pupils school attendance. Counselors of Indian ancestry should be most effective.

A university program, perhaps at the University of Oklahoma, should be developed which offers formal training for individuals who are interested in working among Indians. This training would place special emphasis upon Indian-oriented psychological training.

Urban schools with high concentrations of Indian families should consider the establishment of a program for pre-school age children. This could serve a twofold purpose, the relieving of the mother to take advantage of available training or employment and the enriching of the pre-school experiences of the child.

Special attention should be directed by the Oklahoma City Public School System to the development of a challenging educational program for minority pupils, including Indians, as a part of the total

proposal evolved for the system under the provision of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Oklahoma City School System should systematically locate and identify all Indian pupils in the school district and follow their progress in school more adequately.

This study also showed that the annual school census in Oklahoma City was not accurate. If the annual census is to be continued, adequate safeguards should be established to assure an accurate report.

Leadership programs should be developed for urban Indians by agencies such as The Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies which has developed similiar programs for Indians in other parts of the state.

The Johnson-O'Malley Act contributes almost nothing to assist the urban Indian. New legislation designed to provide needed assistance to the Indian pupil living in towns and urban centers should replace the outdated provisions for aid as prescribed in the Johnson-O'Malley Act.

APPENDIX A

Guide for Interviewer

This guide was designed to assist the interviewer in securing information relative to the economic condition, cultural background, and educational achievement level of the families of Indian pupils living within the Oklahoma City Public School District. All names have been purposely excluded to assure the family being interviewed of complete protection against indiscreet or improper use of any information offered.

Material gathered from this interview was analyzed in such a way that characteristics common among the Indian population could be readily identified. No identification of any family or member of a family will be made. (The personal interview will attempt to gather most of the information identified here.)

Questions are to be directed to the head of household.

Marital status M D W S Tribal Ancestry_____

Percentage of Indian Blood_____Spouse_____

English spoken by all members of the household_____

Language spoken in the home_____Number in household_____

Guardian of the children in this household is the parent_____

Grandparent____Other____Grandparents living in household_____

Length of time you have lived in Okla. City_____This address_____

Residence prior to living in Oklahoma City_____

Own or buying home_____

Educational grade level attained by the head of household_____

_____Spouse_____

Children of the household who dropped out of school before high school graduation: No._____ Ages_____ Grade levels_____

Number graduated from high school_____

Number that has continued in school beyond high school_____

Occupation of head of household_____Employer_____

Earned monthly income of the head of the household is approximately:

$150.00_____, $200.00_____, $250.00_____, $300.00_____,

$350.00_____, $400.00_____, or more than $400.00_____

Members of this family work full time_____Part time_____

Welfare payment received by any member of household_____
(This is to include assistance to the aged, disability, dependent children, or other welfare benefits. Do not include social security, earned retirement, or military service related income.)

Approximate total monthly income of household from all sources_____

_____

Federal commodities received by this household_____

Member of this household interested in adult training programs designed to either improve job skills or develop salable skills.

_____

_____

Training programs or community services which might be of special benefit to the Indian residents of Oklahoma City.

_____

_____

_____

The back of this form may be used for listing observations relative to social, cultural, economic, and educational conditions noted during the home visit.

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