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1967

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THE INDIAN CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

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PREFACE

Various writers on the New Deal have referred to the Indians in the Civilian Conservation Corps without much discussion of the subject. They usually have remarked in passing that CCC provided badly needed relief, and that the pay was far above the Indians' normal income. Such vague and broad generalizations give the erroneous impression that CCC spelled a new era of prosperity for the Indians. This study attempts to show more precisely the effectiveness of CCC operations on Indian reservations, the relationship between the Indian Bureau and the main CCC office, and what bearing the conservation program had on Indian policy after 1933.

The New Deal propensity for constantly changing names of various agencies creates a problem in semantics throughout this study. The Indian Bureau in 1933 called its CCC organization the Indian Emergency Conservation Work (IECW) program. In 1937 the Bureau renamed it the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division (CCC-ID). For convenience and clarity, the term Indian CCC is used in this work to describe the entire program from 1933 to 1942.

I deeply appreciate the patient guidance and aid of Dr. W. Eugene Hollon in the preparation of this study. He graciously consented to add the direction of the dissertation to his already busy schedule. His comments and criticisms have been a rewarding experience in themselves. The other members of my committee, Dr. Donald J. Berthrong, Dr. Gilbert C. Fite, Dr. A. M. Gibson, and Dr. Rufus G. Hall, Jr., made additional improvements to the reading copy.

Numerous people contributed to the research for the dissertation. Dr. Donald J. Berthrong first interested me in New Deal Indian policy during my course work at the University of Oklahoma. He guided my search for a topic and gave sound advice on the use of Indian records before he left on a leave of absence.

The aid of Miss Jane Smith, Mr. Robert Kvasnicki, and Mrs. Miriam Stockwell of the National Archives speeded my research through the voluminous official correspondence of Indian CCC.

Former Indian Bureau personnel have been especially helpful in judging the merits of Indian CCC. Mr. Ernest V. Downing, now an official of the Public Health Service, contributed much to my knowledge of general New Deal Indian policy. Miss Ruth Buring, also of the Public Health Service, gave me better insight into the personality and leadership of Daniel E. Murphy, Director of Indian CCC after 1933. Mr. J. M. Jackson of Anadarko, Oklahoma took time off from

his many business and farming ventures to spend several hours answering questions about the outstanding Indian CCC program he helped develop at the Kiowa agency. His uncanny memory for facts and dates ar : realistic appraisals helped in the writing of the al chapter.

Mr. E. H. Pubols of the Denver Federal Records Center and Mr. M. D. Davis of the St. Louis Federal Records Center both sent materials that were not available in the National Archives.

This still remains an "honest preface" by giving my wife, Nadyne, major credit in completing the dissertation. She photocopied hundreds of documents at the National Archives as well as typed the preliminary drafts of the manuscript. Her willingness to assume these and other burdens were invaluable in the preparation of this work.

Mrs. Josephine Soukup typed the final draft with her usual high skill. Any errors that appear in the dissertation are my own responsibility.

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THE INDIAN CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

CHAPTER I

A NEW DEAL FOR THE INDIANS

An analysis of the operations of Civilian Conservation Corps for the Indians warrants consideration of their general economic conditions and problems during the 1920's and the era of the great depression. Indian population in 1933 approximated 320,454. Some 197,852 of these lived under federal jurisdiction and were formally enrolled tribal members. The rest lacked full legal status as Indians for reasons such as residence outside their reservation or because their names were not on any tribal roll. The four states of Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, and South Dakota contained nearly two-thirds of the Indian population. Oklahoma had the largest number with 94,707, while Arizona claimed 43,927, New Mexico 34,196, and South Dakota 26,558. No other state possessed more than 15,000, but Indians resided under federal jurisdiction in a total of twenty-three states.

Contrary to the popular stereotype of a swarthy,

taciturn individual, Indians of the 1920's and 1930's had an amazing diversity in terms of acculturation, education, wealth, and personal appearance. Through integration--legal and otherwise--Indians of the Lake States, for example, often possessed blue eyes, spoke English with a distinct Scandinavian accent, and were skillful lumberjacks. The oil-rich Osages of Oklahoma displayed still another type of acculturation. They were the nouveaux riches of their race, and their affluence was often evidenced by chauffeur-driven Packards and Buicks, winter homes in Florida, summer visits to the mountains, and private schools for their children. On the other hand, Indians of the southwestern states of New Mexico and Arizona were predominantly full bloods. Many Navajos and Apaches lived in conditions only slightly removed from their life before the entry of the first Anglo-Americans. Very few had ever entered school and most could not speak or understand English. As they followed their herds of goats and sheep, they remained isolated and indifferent to the white world and the federal government. Contacts with whites were almost solely with those who ran trading posts where the Indians exchanged wool and blankets for staple foods, clothing, saddles, and bridles.

With rare exception, a common characteristic of North American Indians was an extremely low standard of living. Although whites of the 1920's enjoyed general

prosperity, a voluminous independent study issued by the Meriam Commission in 1928 revealed the opposite for the Indians: "An overwhelming majority . . . are poor, even extremely poor, and they are not adjusted to the economic and social system of the dominant white civilization."[1] Out of 188,363 Indians, nearly half or 46.8 percent lived on an average annual income of under $200, while only 2.2 percent enjoyed incomes of over $500 per year.[2]

"In Nevada the Indians when hard pressed kill and eat the desert jack rabbits and then dry the skins and weave them into a heavy quilt," the "Meriam Report" stated. "In the Mission country they gather . . . acorns and make them into a paste. Among the Apaches and Pimas the mesquite bean and cactus are extensively used. The Chippewas gather wild rice, make maple sugar, and gather and dry berries. When really hungry during the winter of 1926-27, the Pine Ridge Sioux ate horse meat."[3]

At the same time, the Osages, with their annual income of over $19,000 per capita, furnished amusement and colorful newspaper material for the American public. Some readers, as a result, got the mistaken idea that all Indians lived a gay and spendthrift life.

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[1] Lewis Meriam et al., The Problem of Indian Administration (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1928), 3.

[2] Ibid., 447.

[3] Ibid.

One of the Meriam Commission's major findings was that proper utilization of the Indians' natural resources would provide them with a fairly comfortable standard of living. On the typical allotted reservations of Oklahoma and the northern Great Plains various conditions and practices traditionally worked against this. Among them was the custom of leasing farm and range land to whites, and thereby providing the Indian a much smaller income than he could receive from grazing or farming the land himself. Some preferred this lower income to the hard work of utilizing their own holdings. In other cases where the land had been allotted and the original owner had died, holdings had been divided and redivided among heirs into very small plots. Thus, leasing remained the only practical way of obtaining any income whatsoever. Moreover, Indians who wanted to work their own land often lacked the necessary capital. Borrowing was virtually impossible since restricted allotments could not be used as collateral for loans.

Conditions were little better when Indians owned tribal lands or mineral rights. In the Lake States and Pacific Northwest, the undermanned forestry division of the Bureau could do little more than supervise sales of Indian timber. In the Southwest an almost complete absence of fire protection facilities allowed uncontrolled blazes to destroy vast amounts of timber. Indeed, forests every-

where needed more fire trails, better detection service, and additional protection from disease and insects. In addition, tribal range land produced little income for the Indians of the Southwest and northern Great Plains because of inferior livestock, lack of water, and overgrazing. Money collected by the Bureau from tribal timber, mineral, and grazing resources was sent to the Indians in per capita payments without thought of creating new sources of income for future needs.

In summary, the evidence presented by the Meriam Commission revealed that various circumstances conspired against the Indians' economic advancement. Lack of education and skill tied them to their land, and an absence of capital, credit, and incentive hampered their use of potential resources. The Commission strongly recommended a new emphasis on increased productivity of Indian land, improved vocational education, and the creation of a division of planning and development to lend technical assistance to a self-supporting program.[4]

The "Meriam Report" would prove a turning point in Indian policy and the Bureau would make significant reforms during the Hoover administration. Charles J. Rhoads became Commissioner of Indian Affairs and J. Henry Scattergood the Assistant Commissioner in 1929. Both were Quakers whose

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[4] Ibid., 430-546.

interest in Indian affairs was stimulated through their membership in the Indians Rights Association of Philadelphia. They cooperated fully with a series of educational reforms initiated by W. Carson Ryan, director of the education division. Ryan abolished corporal punishment and detention cells, opened more day schools, and introduced a more flexible curriculum to train Indian youths in vocational skills suited to local conditions. The Bureau also overhauled its medical facilities to fight the extraordinary high rates of tuberculosis and trachoma among the Indians. Stronger cooperation between federal and state agencies concerning Indian education and welfare, improvement of agricultural extension work, and higher standards for hiring Bureau employees were among other important reforms of the Hoover years.[5]

Despite these successes and the honest administration of Rhoads and Scattergood, the depression overwhelmed the Indian Bureau after 1929. Since most Indians lived on the verge of despair in normal times, the depression struck them with catastrophic results. Wages which the Indians normally received as domestic workers and farm and ranch laborers dropped sharply. Revenues from lumber, a major source of income in the Pacific Northwest and the Lake States, virtually ceased when the construction industry

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[5]John Collier, From Every Zenith (Denver: Sage Books, 1963), 144.

collapsed. Crude oil prices dipped to ten cents per barrel in early 1932, and newly drilled oil wells on the Shoshone Reservation in Wyoming were not put into operation until the Indian Bureau threatened legal action. Moreover, handicraft industries such as rug making, basket weaving, and pottery no longer supplemented the Indians' regular income.

Worse yet, the condition of agricultural prices ruined the farming and livestock industries, the cornerstones of Indian economy. Low farm prices also made it impossible for whites to pay rentals on Indian lands, and drought conditions and a severe winter in the Southwest in 1931 worsened conditions even more. The depression ultimately led to an unusual "back to the reservation" movement which seemed to compound the dilemma. The customary complaint of the Negro--"first fired, last hired"--seemed to apply to those Indians who had left their reservation for jobs in urban areas. Thus, the unemployed had no alternative but to return and share the meager supplies of their relatives.[6] A study of Indian conditions in late 1933, when federal relief projects were already under way, revealed a shocking per capita average income of only $81.[7]

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[6]From a speech delivered by William H. Zeh at the Second Arizona Semi-Annual Coordination Meeting of the National Emergency Council, Phoenix, Arizona, April 8, 1936, File 59039-36, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75.

[7]"The Social Security Act," Indians at Work, II (August 1, 1935), 46. Hereafter cited as IAW.

Already strained by its numerous responsibilities, the Indian Bureau proved unable to cope with the new burdens brought on by the great depression. Though it provided seeds and tools and encouraged the Indians to grow food to relieve their pressing needs, drought and insects often made a shambles of the crops and vegetable gardens. In all, the Bureau in 1932 distributed forty car loads of army surplus clothing to the Indians of the drought-stricken Great Plains and Southwest. This was supplemented by contributions of cloth by the Red Cross, along with large quantities of flour.[8] Such relief measures did little to solve the basic problems of Indian poverty, but more effective action would come with the New Deal.

Franklin Roosevelt's election in 1932 touched off immediate speculation regarding a new Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Indian Truth, the organ of the Indian Rights Association, wanted the Rhoads-Scattergood team to continue.[9] There was much to commend the suggestion, for the two Quakers had given honest and nonpolitical direction to the extremely difficult and thankless task of running the Indian Bureau. Their relief and reform programs had been systematically crippled by reduced appropriations from a divided

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[8] Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1933 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1933), 94-97. Hereafter cited as Annual Report.

[9] "Of Concern," Indian Truth, IX (November, 1932), 1.

Congress. Among the other candidates for the position was Edgar B. Merritt, a former Assistant Commissioner whom Hoover had demoted to a minor position in 1929. Though Merritt had the support of Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas, there was also powerful opposition to the old-line bureaucrat. Foremost among those who opposed Merritt was the militant crusader John Collier and his American Indian Defense Association. Moreover, Collier himself was the candidate of the All-Pueblo Council which he had helped organize in 1921. Lewis Meriam, who had headed the study published in 1928, also drew support as a fairly serious candidate, along with Nathan Margold, a prominent lawyer from New York. Except for the progressive Republican Harold L. Ickes, none of the other numerous candidates was given much consideration.[10]

Ickes at this time possessed no national reputation and received his only major support for the post of Indian Commissioner from his friend Collier. He later declared that his interest in the commissionership started mild and rapidly grew milder, for meantime he had decided to seek the office of Secretary of Interior under the New Deal administration. As he humorously described his feelings: "It would be no more painful or fatal to be hung for a secretary than for a commissioner."[11] After a fruitless

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[10]"Some of the Candidates," American Indian Life, Bulletin 21 (January, 1933), 33.

[11]Harold L. Ickes, Autobiography of a Curmudgeon

trip to Washington, Raymond Moley, a member of Roosevelt's "brain trust," called Ickes in Chicago and invited him to a meeting in New York with the President-elect. In mid-February, 1933 Ickes stopped in Washington to solicit support for the cabinet post, only to learn that his quest seemed hopeless. He then continued to New York and the meeting with Roosevelt, whereupon the President-elect surprisingly informed him that confirmation of his appointment would be at 7:00 p. m. That evening Roosevelt called Ickes to his quarters and introduced him to Frances Perkins as the new Secretary of Interior. A selection such as his, Ickes believed, "wouldn't happen again in a millennium."[12]

The new Secretary promptly reciprocated Collier's friendship by supporting him for the post of Indian Commissioner. The reformer claimed that he had no interest in the position except to see that someone of honesty and democratic ideals took charge of Indian affairs. In fact, Collier had already laid plans to retire and write a book on the Indians of the Americas.[13] But upon Ickes' insistence, Collier eventually agreed to seek the office. All of the other candidates gradually dropped out except Collier and Merritt. Several weeks after his inauguration,

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(New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1943), 265.

[12] Ibid., 270.

[13] Collier, From Every Zenith, 169.

Roosevelt broke the deadlock and selected Collier.

Although not openly opposed on the Senate floor, Collier's confirmation on April 20, 1933 aroused misgivings among several western Senators. The Oklahoma congressional delegation, led by Senators Elmer Thomas and Thomas P. Gore, vigorously resisted Collier's selection in private. According to Representative Wilburn Cartwright, the delegation's opposition to Collier, plus Governor Bill Murray's campaign remarks against Roosevelt, seriously damaged the state's opportunities for future patronage.[14] Other westerners who were less than enthusiastic for Collier included Senator Burton K. Wheeler. As chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, the Montanan had cooperated with Collier's reforms from time to time, even though their ideas differed somewhat. While Collier believed that the Indians should be encouraged to retain and develop their own culture, Wheeler emphasized the necessity for rapid assimilation. In the end, however, Wheeler reluctantly supported Collier's appointment.[15] The historian William E. Leuchtenburg has called it an act of courage on Roosevelt's

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[14]Wilburn Cartwright to Hiram Impson, May 31, 1933, Cartwright Papers, Box 11, Division of Manuscripts, Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

[15]From an interview by John Leiper Freeman, Jr., of A. A. Grorud in Washington, D. C., March, 1952, in John Leiper Freeman, Jr., "The New Deal for the Indians: A Study in Bureau-Committee Relations in American Government" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1952), 107.

part in selecting a militant idealist for the position, but this was by no means a singular act, for the new President surrounded himself with social crusaders.[16]

A month after the Collier appointment, Ickes selected an old family friend, William Zimmerman, Jr., as Assistant Commissioner.[17] Zimmerman had studied economics and business at Harvard before entering an employee-owned firm in Indianapolis, Indiana. Later he moved to Chicago as a writer and editor for World Book and Compton's Encyclopedia.[18] Suave and practical, he brought to the office no fixed set of ideas on Indian affairs, and, unlike Collier, he would remain flexible in his attitudes. Zimmerman's common-sense approach and his business experience added a stabilizing influence to the Commissioner's proneness for innovation and polemics. Moreover, the two men made an ideal combination, with Zimmerman handling administrative duties and Collier concentrating on policy making.

Collier's appointment climaxed a lifetime of work in dealing with social problems and minority groups. Reared in Atlanta where his lawyer-banker father once served

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[16]William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 329.

[17]New York Times, May 27, 1933, p. 7.

[18]"In the Indian Bureau," American Indian Life, Bulletin 32 (July, 1933), 10.

as mayor, the future Commissioner attended Columbia University and College de France in Paris before a career in social work in Georgia, New York, and California. His first real contact with the Indians came in 1920 when he and his family visited Taos, New Mexico and witnessed the impressive Pueblo Christmas rites. A year later Collier returned to the Southwest and organized the various Pueblo villages of the region against Interior Secretary Albert B. Fall's legislative proposal, the Bursum Bill. The proposal threatened the loss of over half the Indians' land in the United States, and Fall's personal policies had also restricted the Indian freedom by banning tribal religious rites. With an instinctive sense of publicity, Collier organized a party of Pueblo leaders to raise funds for the fight against the Bursum Bill. Dressed in native costume and carrying canes symbolic of their authority, the Indians toured Chicago, Wall Street, and Washington, D. C. The subsequent publicity, along with the powerful support of progressives like Robert LaFollette, allowed Collier to win a victory over Albert B. Fall a short time before the Secretary became enmeshed in the scandals that helped ruin the Harding administration.

In the meantime, Collier had been named executive secretary of a new reform group, the American Indian Defense Association. From his Washington office he raised legal fees for the Pueblos' land cases, wrote articles on Indian

reforms, and edited the Association publication, American Indian Life. His various activities in behalf of the Indians brought him in contact with many important figures, including the Ickes family. A student of Indian life herself, Mrs. Ickes ultimately would write a very acceptable book on the Southwest tribes.[19] Besides his ties with Wheeler and LaFollette, Collier worked closely with Senators William Borah of Idaho, Thomas Walsh of Montana, Hiram Johnson of California, Lynn Frazier of North Dakota, and Robert LaFollette, Jr., of Wisconsin. His closest relations, however, were with Senator William H. King of Utah, for whom he helped write speeches on Indian affairs throughout the 1920's.

Senator King secured the approval of a comprehensive investigation of Indian conditions by a subcommittee of the Indian Affairs Committee late in 1927. The investigation lasted twelve years and involved numerous tours of reservations during periods when Congress was not in session. Collier traveled with the investigating committee during its early and most active years, and helped arrange witnesses and proceedings for the hearings which followed. The work made him famous, but investigations also provided ammunition for Collier's critics after he became head of the Indian Bureau.

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[19]Anna Wilmarth Ickes, Mesa Land (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1933).

Collier undoubtedly became the most noted Commissioner of Indian Affairs in American history. Some measure of his fame rested on his personal appearance and manner, for he was small, slender, and slightly stooped. Even at his best, he managed to look slightly rumpled in the baggy, ill-fitting suits he invariably wore. Some people sensed an academic air about Collier because of the deluge of ideas which poured from his mind in conversation. He took on a rustic appearance by habitually wearing an old green sweater in his office, and acquaintances often quipped that he carried a frog in his pocket. He delighted Indian audiences with a soft Georgia accent and a habit of playing with an old corn cob pipe. He became intense when called on to speak and possessed the ability to turn Indian apathy into applause.

But Collier's chief reason for fame rested upon his willingness to battle for his reforms, regardless of whether his opponent was a harmless Indian critic or a powerful congressman. Like most dedicated personalities, he attracted close friends or made bitter enemies. Once in office, he proposed a host of new programs and policies aimed at correcting abuses he had fought against as a lobbyist. Despite his best efforts, Collier discovered, like many reformers, that solutions which seemed easy in theory became difficult in practice. For example, his early hopes that local self-government by the Indians would function

smoothly and provide sizable savings for the Bureau was one of the utopian dreams shattered by actual experience. A year after Collier took office, Congress refused to enact his plans for a system of special courts for Indians and his later proposals for an Indian claims commission. Nevertheless, Collier remained a tireless fighter who possessed imagination, drive, and a flair for publicity, and his twelve years of service remain the longest in the history of the Bureau.

Soon after Collier became Commissioner, he outlined his new program around four major points: (1) a continuation of educational reforms which stressed day schools rather than boarding schools off the reservations; (2) an increased role for the Indians in their own government by reviving their tribal organizations; (3) decentralization of the Indian Service by a local integration of its functions--irrigation, education, extension, forestry, and other divisions--so all would combine to improve the Indians' economic situation; and (4) a reversal of the allotment system, acquisition of more land, and better conservation of natural resources.[20]

Since Indian CCC would become a major factor in the realization of the latter goal, some elaboration of Collier's land policies during the 1930's is pertinent.[21]

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[20]Annual Report, 1933, 68-69.

[21]Collier's ideas on land policy and solutions are

Aware of the industrial unemployment and economic depression, Collier saw absolutely no possibility that Indians would become self-supporting by resettlement away from their reservations. Hence, the only solution lay in their earning a living, at least at a subsistence level, by farming and ranching. But the depression even made this policy difficult. A study undertaken by the Civil Works Administration near the end of 1933 revealed that dependence upon agriculture was minor. Indians received forty percent of their income from such unearned sources as land, mineral, timber leases, and annuities. Another forty percent came from wage work which was obviously higher than normal because of relief projects in 1933. Only twenty percent of Indian income came from their own farming and grazing activities.[22] Certainly it would be necessary to provide more land as well as increase the productivity of present holdings before the Indian could raise his standard of living.

The situation seemingly was not hopeless, for the Indians already held 52,000,000 acres, an amount perhaps sufficient for their needs if it could be properly utilized.

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widely scattered among statements he made before congressional committees, at Indian meetings, and in editorials in Indians at Work. The best summary of his policy is found in Ward Shepard, "Land Problems of an Expanding Indian Population," in Oliver LaFarge (ed.), The Changing Indian (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942), 72-83.

[22] Indian Land Tenure, Economic Status, and Population Status, Part X of The Report on Land Planning (Washington, D. C.: The United States Government Printing Office, 1935), 48-49.

Unfortunately, they had lost their more valuable land by the Allotment Act of 1887, and they now retained only 4,000,000 acres suitable for crop farming. Slightly over 2,000,000 acres fell under three miscellaneous categories: swamp, solid timber, and completely unusable lands. The great bulk of their holdings, over 45,000,000 acres, was classified as range land. Some of this vast acreage offered definite promise for several reservations possessed adequate grass and water for fairly heavy grazing. Moreover, nearly all the Indian lumber resources were located on 9,500,000 acres of mixed pasture and timber in remote, mountainous areas of the 45,000,000 acres of range land. But unfortunately, the majority of the range land was too eroded or arid to support intensive grazing.[23]

The most appalling problem facing Collier was over 100,000 landless Indians. Although many of this number technically owned land, in reality their minute heirship plots brought virtually no income from lease money. Some of the landless were original allottees who had been declared competent and who promptly had sold their holdings to whites. Still others were offsprings of such unfortunate individuals. A few Indians were unenrolled and hence excluded from all land, either allotments or tribal holdings. The landless maintained themselves only by wage work or ra-

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[23] Ibid., 6-7.

tions distributed by the Bureau. Agricultural experts estimated that it would require nearly 10,000,000 acres of additional land just to raise the Indians to a subsistence level, and almost 16,000,000 acres to increase their standard of living to that of white farmers during the 1920's.[24]

During the New Deal period the Indian Bureau made various attempts to solve the land problem through emergency funds to purchase more acreage and resettle Indians. Moreover, the Bureau diverted money to irrigation projects in arid regions. Collier tried to deal with splintered heirship holdings in the Wheeler-Howard Bill of 1934 by a complicated scheme of land exchange, purchase, and "use certificates" under tribal ownership and control. Fearful of threats to the laissez faire tradition, both the Indians and Congress attacked the provisions, and the House and Senate Indian Affairs Committees dropped them from the bill in the early deliberations. The problem remains unsolved today and grows more complicated as the number of heirs increases with each generation.

Despite frequent Bureau propaganda that Roosevelt guided New Deal Indian policy, the President actually lent his support only indirectly. The rare exceptions came during periods of crisis and severe criticism. Otherwise,

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[24]Edwin Locke, "Indian Land and Resettlement," IAW, III (May 1, 1936), 31.

Collier seldom dealt with Roosevelt, especially since Ickes handled nearly all Bureau matters submitted to the administration. The President did render considerable service as well as large relief grants to Collier and thus provided a free climate for his innovations. The New York Times on April 25, 1934 observed that Collier was one of the few "idea men" who remained after the New Deal began stressing administrative ability instead of innovation. Even though Collier remained an exception to this trend, he was never a part of the "brain trust" because of his total absorption in Indian affairs.

Initially, Ickes gave constant, direct, and fierce support to Collier and the Indian Bureau. The two men conferred regularly, especially during the first year. Even after Ickes became involved in other matters, his appearances before congressional committees in behalf of Collier's proposed legislation still revealed considerable understanding of Indian matters. The "curmudgeon of the New Deal" loved a good fight, and when Collier came under fire, he countered with press releases which damned the special interest groups--ranchers, lumbermen, and traders--who sought to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor Indians. Except for such crises, however, Collier himself eventually had to assume the burden of achieving the New Deal Indian program.

The Indian CCC could offer no direct aid in Collier's

efforts to add more land and reverse the allotment system, but it became the key factor in raising the productivity of existing holdings. Areas subject to wind and water erosion could be protected by dams, terraces, and reseeding. Timber could be saved by the construction of better fire protection facilities and the eradication of insects and disease which threatened healthy trees. Grass land without water for livestock could be made to carry larger loads by providing wells, developing new springs, and building dams. Thus, Indian CCC's major aim was to increase the value and income of resources the red man already owned. But the problem in 1933 was even more basic for the Indians were on the brink of starvation and they needed money to tide them over this immediate crisis.

CHAPTER II

THE HECTIC FIRST YEAR, 1933

Congress passed the Emergency Conservation Work Act during the hurried atmosphere of the Hundred Days and thus started the large conservation effort which ultimately became one of the most notable programs of the New Deal. The legislation authorized the employment of unmarried men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five on forestation projects within the public domain.[1] Although forestation in the act was defined very broadly to include soil erosion control and renewal of reservation grazing lands, Bureau officials believed that the special conditions of Indians' life and economic situation demanded a separate program controlled by the Office of Indian Affairs. But the problems involved in obtaining funds and a separate administrative structure would delay field operations on the reservations until midsummer. Once started, however, the Indian conservation program proceeded rapidly through the late summer and fall of 1933. During the first year of Indian

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[1] U. S., Statutes at Large, LXXIII, Part 1, 22-23.

Emergency Conservation Work (IECW) various weaknesses and mistakes were revealed in the program, but at the same time many destitute Indians received relief and the groundwork for a vastly improved program was laid.

The application of Emergency Conservation Work (ECW), later known as CCC, to the Indians came as a virtually unsolicited bonus to the Bureau. Senate debate on a revised ECW Bill on March 27, 1933 gave the first indication that the legislation might apply to Indian reservations. Senator Joseph Robinson asked Thomas Walsh if the words "Government Reservations" in the bill included Indian reservations, and the Montana Senator replied in the affirmative. The brief exchange raised no issue, and debate quickly turned to other matters.[2] The Indian Bureau, still headed by Rhoads--pending Collier's appointment--quickly recognized that many reservations would benefit from the new relief program because of severe cuts in regular appropriations for 1933. Indeed, conservation projects would allow the Bureau to achieve many long-needed improvements, never possible with regular appropriations.[3]

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[2]U. S., Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Part 1, 865.

[3]J. P. Kinney, who served as Director of Forestry under Rhoads and later as General Production Supervisor of IECW, reveals in his book, Indian Forest and Range, how few funds Congress granted to protect Indian forests before 1933. The Bureau asked all superintendents in 1912 to submit estimates for the improvements needed to properly care for the forests. The total of all estimates was slightly

Within a few days after Congress passed the Emergency Conservation Work Act, the national organization of CCC began to take form. Its director, Robert Fechner, had been General Vice President of the International Association of Machinists before his appointment on April 5. Born in Tennessee and reared in Georgia, the former union official typified the working man who started "at the bottom" and who rose to prominence through the labor movement. Fechner became a national officer in his union in 1905, and during World War I he gained a notable reputation by solving labor disputes which threatened war-production work. Despite a lack of formal education, Fechner lectured intermittently at Harvard, Brown, Dartmouth, and other colleges on labor economics.[4]

His appointment was not as unorthodox as it appeared, for organized labor had placed strong pressure to obtain the selection of a union official to head ECW. Labor leaders greatly feared the new relief program would create a general

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under $500,000 or less than one-tenth the sum given to IECW during its first six months. Kinney submitted a five year program in 1927 for Indian forests which would have cost $3,000,000. Despite the need, Congress actually gave less than $300,000 to the Bureau forestry program from 1928 through 1932. Range improvement presented a greater problem because this had received virtually no attention, although foresters knew that many reservations were badly overgrazed and eroded. J. P. Kinney, Indian Forest and Range, A History of the Administration and Conservation of the Redman's Heritage (Washington, D. C.: Forestry Enterprises, 1950), 278.

[4]"Robert Fechner, Director of E.C.W.," Indians at Work, III (April 1, 1936), 7-8. Hereafter cited as IAW.

decline of industrial wages, displace skilled workers in private industry, and lead to regimentation. Their pressure forced Congress to stipulate that ECW would only do forestation work on the public domain and hire young unmarried men without jobs whose families were on relief. More important, union organizations woud support ECW only if one of their own leaders directed it.[5]

The national organization formed by Fechner was a hybrid affair controlled by a small central office which operated in conjunction with other government agencies. The Department of Labor recruited the enrollees and certified their eligibility to join ECW. The War Department then took over the recruits, organized the camps, and handled such administrative matters as medical services, education, and recreation. Various "cooperating agencies" of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior such as the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, National Park Service, and Indian Bureau employed CCC boys and supervised their work. Camps were set up throughout the United States, Hawaii, Alaska, and the Virginia Islands.

To coordinate this crazy-quilt organization, Fechner established an Advisory Council of representatives from the major government agencies involved. Originally the council consisted of men from the Departments of War,

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[5]U. S., Congressional Record, 73rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXXVII, Part 1, 862.

Interior, Agriculture, and Labor. In 1937 the Veterans' Administration was added, and the following year Labor was dropped from the Council.[6] Meanwhile, Fechner led discussions on policy changes, failures, fiscal matters, and other developments. Ultimately, the Department of Interior would establish its own departmental advisory council of six or more representatives from its various agencies involved in the CCC program. Despite the seemingly chaotic nature of ECW, Fechner's forceful leadership made the overall program operate in an effective manner.

Soon after Fechner took office, the Indian Bureau began agitation for inclusion in ECW and permission to form a separate program suited to the needs of Indian reservations. J. P. Kinney, Director of Forestry, attended the first meeting of Fechner's Advisory Council and presented the Bureau's demands. Kinney explained the great need for forestry and conservation improvements on Indian lands and found the Advisory Council generally receptive. The War Department representative, however, stated emphatically that the Army wanted no part of operating camps on Indian reservations.[7] Commissioner Rhoads outlined a detailed

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[6]"Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the United States Department of the Interior," Conrad Wirth to Harold Ickes, January, 1944, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[7]Kinney, Indian Forest and Range, 275-276.

plan of conservation projects a few days later which included work on forest trails, lookout towers, water development, erosion control, pest eradication, telephone lines, fencing, blister rust control, and reforestation. The proposal also included irrigation and flood control work outside the reservations in the Southwest. The cost would total $5,520,000 for the first six months. Rhoads submitted the plan to Fechner with the request that only Indians be employed. The Commissioner argued that the Indians' destitution would not be relieved if large numbers of whites received CCC jobs on the reservations.[8] Shortly thereafter Ickes and Fechner agreed informally that the Indians would have separate camps, but they concluded nothing about establishing Indian Bureau control over ECW on the reservations.[9]

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[8]C. J. Rhoads Memoranda, April 18, 1933, File 74638-1940, Duplicates of Authorities 1933-36, Schedule of Work for CCC in 1933, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[9]"Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," p. 16, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, NA, RG 75. Hereafter cited as "Final Report." This report has been an invaluable source for this study since it contains the final figures on production, camps, enrollees, and other matters. Records were not systematically kept during the first year of ECW and the "Final Report" has offered much assistance in filling in serious research gaps. Finding the report was something of a dramatic coup in itself. It was located while searching through "odds and ends" and after examining the main files of CCC-ID at the National Archives. The "Final Report" was compiled by Daniel E. Murphy who directed Indian CCC from late 1933 to its close. Murphy finished the report in 1943 and the original copy was lost in 1946. Fortunately, a carbon copy was found among the papers of former Assistant Commissioner

On April 20 the Senate approved Collier's appointment, and the new Commissioner immediately tackled the job of obtaining a distinctly Indian ECW program under the control of the Bureau. In his first day in office, Collier revised the Rhoads' program from 23,000 men to 14,400 and canceled the off-reservation flood control and irrigation projects in the Southwest. In submitting the new proposal, Collier, like Rhoads, stressed the need for a separate program for Indians. A few days later Ickes, doubtless at Collier's prompting, outlined the following reasons why Indian reservations deserved special consideration.

> 1. Enrollment was being done by the Department of Labor through regularly organized social workers of the various States and municipalities. The representatives of the Department of Labor considered it impracticable to apply their enrollment plans to Indians living on reservations.
>
> 2. Indians would resent the importation of whites. The Federal Government had special responsibility for the protection and welfare of the Indians and several federal laws provided for preference for Indians for any employment on Indian reservations.
>
> 3. Areas on Indian reservations needing work of the kinds contemplated were vastly greater with relation to the area of publicly owned lands than the proportion of Indians to the total population. Thus, if Indians from a Western State were to form part of the general enrollment, not even a reasonable beginning could be made on the proposed conservation plan as to resources of reservations.
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> 4. Indians were accustomed to working with their families: if families were permitted the

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William Zimmerman, Jr., in 1950 and this was placed in the National Archives.

number of people in camp would be from 600 to 900. Some villages were not even on friendly terms with each other.

5. A large part of the work in the Southwest must be done in semi-desert areas, and water was scarce.

6. Furnishing of employment to Indians was preferable to issuing rations. Emergency Conservation Work would meet the needs for wages and at the same time take effective steps to conserve resources.

7. Employment of Indians would avoid the necessity of transportation and make possible accomplishments of greater results with the same funds.[10]

On April 27 President Roosevelt approved a program of conservation for the Indians, and Fechner announced it publicly three days later.[11] The plan provided for $5,875,000 for the first six months with the establishment of seventy-two camps on thirty-three reservations.[12] By far the greatest amount of work was anticipated for the Southwest. New Mexico and Arizona would receive forty-three camps, twenty-five of which would be assigned to the Navajo reservation alone. Oklahoma surprisingly was not included in the original announcement, though the Bureau switched funds to the state before the end of the year. This omission might have represented retaliation for Oklahoma politicians'

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[10] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[11] New York Times, May 1, 1933, p. 9.

[12] All CCC operated on six month enrollment periods until more permanent legislation was passed in 1937. The enrollment periods corresponded to the term of service for regular CCC enrollees.

opposition to Roosevelt and Collier, but more likely the new Commissioner believed that the intensive drought in New Mexico and Arizona took precedence over everything else.

Some two weeks after the public announcement of IECW, Fechner authorized Ickes to start conservation projects on the various reservations.[13] Only Indians could be hired and the general requirement elsewhere of maintaining camps of 200-250 men would not apply. Instead, the Bureau could establish smaller camps, organize family camps, or simply dispense with camps altogether and hire men who lived at home. Recruiting, medical examinations, discipline, and all matters of camp administration came under the control of the Indian Bureau. Particularly indicative of the Bureau's commanding position was its authority to switch funds from one reservation to another. Collier thus received all the control and the separate organization he had wanted, but delays in getting money kept IECW field operations from actually starting until mid-June.

William Zimmerman, Jr., recalls that the Bureau employees literally worked day and night throughout the summer of 1933. They commonly stayed in their offices at nights, all day Saturdays, and Sunday mornings. A Bureau employee considered it something of a treat if he could share

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[13]"Final Report," p. 20.

one meal per week with his entire family present.[14] Red tape, formalities of rank, and observance of proper channels had not yet imposed themselves on the neophyte bureaucrats. Ickes remained accessible at first, and each morning before work Collier and Zimmerman usually dashed up the two flights of stairs to the Secretary's office to discuss the many problems with him.[15] According to Zimmerman, everyone seemed intent on grasping the opportunity for reform and strove to create programs that no Republican administration would dare repeal.[16] The mores of bureaucracy inevitably crept back into practice, and in Zimmerman's opinion the reformers soon "lost the fresh, friendly informality" of the early New Deal.[17]

In mid-June Collier received the first six months' appropriations of $5,875,000 and promptly notified the reservations to start field operations on conservation projects. The initial notice went to fifty-six reservations, and by June 19 work already had begun at Fort Belknap, Montana. Other agencies quickly followed, but

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[14]Personal interview with William Zimmerman, Jr., Washington, D. C., August 29, 1965. Hereafter cited as the Zimmerman interview.

[15]William Zimmerman, Jr., "The Role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Since 1933," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCCXI (May, 1957), 31.

[16]Zimmerman interview.

[17]Zimmerman, "Role of the Indian Bureau," 32.

the majority waited until the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1. Collier revised the entire program in August, reduced the money for some agencies, raised it for others, and added several new reservations.[18]

With the broad authority granted to the Indian Bureau in 1933, it at first seemed that regular CCC had abandoned all control over IECW. This was not completely true, however. The Bureau did operate a separate program, but it had to meet most of the regular CCC regulations. Where conflicts developed, the administrative rules of the parent organization automatically took precedence. Moreover, Fechner's strong personality and positive knack for writing lucid English further insured a strong influence over IECW. His major control was a regulation that he must be consulted by IECW for any expenditure for supplies over $2,500. Comments Bureau officials made on the margins of rejected requests attest to his concern for unnecessary spending. Not even Collier's considerable persuasion inhibited the CCC Director's tendency for vetoing questionable purchases. If one letter failed to effect a solution, the tenacious Director wrote others of increasing urgency until IECW corrected the situation. With the scattered distribution of IECW camps, the Bureau often found it difficult to comply fully with everything demanded by the

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[18] John Collier to superintendents, June-August, 1933, File 74638-1940, Duplicates of Authorities, 1933-36, Schedule of Work for CCC in 1933, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

central CCC office. Fechner, however, maintained a steady pressure on the Indian Bureau. Despite his frequent admonitions, he remained a friendly critic of IECW and resisted any attempt to place the Indians under control of the regular CCC.[19]

The delay between the authorization of a separate IECW on May 15 and the start of project work in June provided badly needed time to create a field organization. Originally the forestry division had been placed in charge of IECW, but this had to be abandoned because that department lacked the personnel. More importantly, many of the projects involved knowledge of soil conservation and water development which foresters did not possess. To solve the dilemma, Collier established a new organization within the Bureau with a Director and a General Production Supervisor in charge. The Director handled over-all administration while the General Production Supervisor dealt with technical aspects such as checking and approving work projects.

The Bureau also established six district offices for IECW. These were located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Billings, Montana, Spokane, Washington, Phoenix, Arizona, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Muskogee, Oklahoma to correspond roughly with the major geographic regions of Indian country. The main function of the district offices con-

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[19]Zimmerman interview.

sisted of rendering technical advice to the reservations. Each was headed by a production coordinator assisted by a staff of foresters and engineers. People from the forestry division tended to dominate the top district positions in 1933 since they outnumbered the engineers and soil erosion experts. In addition, each district office contained a camp supervisor who dealt with the living conditions and off-duty activities of the enrollees.

In the rush to get the field work started, the district offices received little time in 1933 for planning the projects. For example, the production coordinator of the Minneapolis district learned of his appointment on May 12 and left for the Red Lake reservation that afternoon. Four days later he completed a work plan at Red Lake and moved on to another reservation. Within a month he had outlined plans for all the major reservations in Minnesota and Wisconsin.[20] The district offices could only assist in planning projects in 1933, and they had no power to reject proposals or to supervise field operations until later.[21]

The absence of experts in soil erosion and range

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[20]William Heritage to District #1 personnel, Work Plan, April 1, 1937, to June 30, 1938, File 59039-36, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[21]Lee Muck to Production Coordinating Personnel of the Northwest District, July 9, 1934, File 1327-1927, Enrollee Program, Spokane District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

development in the Bureau forced Collier to rely heavily on men in the Department of Agriculture. The major figure in this interagency cooperation was H. H. Bennett of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. In a preliminary meeting with Indian Bureau leaders in May, 1933, Bennett stated that erosion control in parts of the Dakotas would be economically sound, while Oklahoma offered excellent opportunities for building check dams and terraces. The participants at the meeting agreed to conduct surveys of erosion damage in the Dakotas and Oklahoma and to suggest suitable control measures.[22] Representatives of the two agencies met again the following month. Collier, Zimmerman, and Jay B. Nash, newly-appointed Director of IECW represented the Indian Bureau, while the Department of Agriculture officials at the later meeting included H. G. Knight, Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, Bennett, and several other soil experts. The principal result of this meeting was the placement of Bennett in charge of a soil erosion survey of the Navajo reservation.[23]

This early cooperation between the Bureau and the Department of Agriculture was more important for what it foreshadowed than the immediate results in 1933. The report

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[22]Report on interviews with W. [sic] H. Bennett and others, Department of Agriculture, May, 1933, Control of Erosion, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[23]Henry G. Knight to the Secretary of Agriculture, June 9, 1933, File 19414-1933, ibid.

on the Sioux reservation was quite sketchy, and records of the Oklahoma survey are missing from Indian Bureau files. Bennett completed his study of the Navajo reservation after a month of investigation, a time far too short to adequately cover the 13,000,000 acres. Nevertheless, the Bennett report laid the groundwork for extensive subsequent cooperation between the Bureau and the Department of Agriculture on the Navajo and Pueblo reservations.

No matter how much assistance the district offices and the soil experts from Agriculture might provide, the bulk of responsibility and day-to-day administration of IECW rested on the shoulders of the already overburdened superintendents. Recruiting, record keeping, requisitioning supplies, discipline, and a host of other duties connected with IECW were added to the superintendents' regular tasks. Much of the success of IECW, particularly in education and recreation, depended upon the attitude of the superintendents. Every reservation of any size maintained a staff of specialists whose duties complemented functions of IECW. Staff members such as teachers, doctors, nurses, home and agricultural extension experts, and foresters could provide valuable assistance to IECW in planning projects, education work, wise investment of wages, and recreation if the superintendent urged their cooperation. In cases where IECW remained unrelated to the regular agency employees, it acted as little more than a means of keeping

part of the Indians off the rations list.

Throughout the history of IECW a group of its leaders believed that conservation work should be separated from the superintendents and the regular Indian Service personnel. This school argued that IECW was too specialized and technical for the supervision of such laymen. Because Collier entered office determined to decentralize authority, he would never accept separating IECW from normal reservation control.[24]

To assist the superintendents in getting the conservation program under way, Collier appointed Jay B. Nash the first Director of IECW sometime near the end of May. The two men had known each other for several years through Nash's membership in the American Indian Defense Association and the American Civil Liberties Union.[25] At the time of his appointment, Nash headed the physical education department at New York University and enjoyed a national reputation in adult education and outdoor recreation. Although unversed in technical aspects of forestry and soil conservation, he agreed with Collier that the camps should be organized to fit tribal culture and local Indian conditions.

Few records exist on Nash's work in 1933, but he

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[24]Zimmerman interview.

[25]John Leiper Freeman, Jr., "The New Deal for the Indians: A Study in Bureau-Committee Relations in American Government" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1952), 175.

operated almost exclusively in the field and concentrated his direct efforts at camp organization in the Southwest. A party of social workers, teachers, and students traveled with Nash in this area and performed cooking and sewing demonstrations, made clothing for the workers' children, and organized recreation programs. An ebullient description of the group's activities by one of the participants indicates clearly that they considered themselves bearers of instant salvation to a downtrodden people.[26] But with seventy reservations involved in conservation projects in 1933, Nash could not have personally organized every IECW camp throughout the West.[27] Instead, superintendents and their staffs established the majority of camps without Nash's direct supervision. The first Director of IECW resigned and returned to New York University at the end of the summer.[28]

To deal with the technical side of IECW, Collier named J. P. Kinney as General Production Supervisor. Kinney had headed the forestry division under Rhoads and had faced frequent criticism from Collier. His new appointment obviously represented a demotion, but he accepted his new position and remained with IECW until the program disbanded

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[26]"The Program in Arizona," IAW, I (August 15, 1933), 20-22.

[27]Jay Nash to John Collier, September 12, 1933, no file number, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[28]"Dr. Nash Completes His Task," IAW, I (September 15, 1933), 6.

in World War II. The fact that he possessed unquestioned ability seemed to be proved in 1942 when he was named a Fellow in the Society of American Foresters, a distinction accorded to only the most able members.[29]

Unbelievable confusion and delay surrounded the efforts to start local project work in June and July. Indian Service employees knew that an IECW program existed, but they had no precedents to guide them and the channels to Washington were jammed with a multitude of requests for information. To further complicate matters, IECW was considered a temporary program destined to cease after only six months. Indians were equally bewildered by the nature of IECW. Many had heard that the Army operated the program, and they had no desire to enlist or serve under military control. Some hesitated because of compulsory medical examination and vaccinations.

Other problems existed. The sudden demand for new harness and small horse-drawn scrapers needed to build check dams and stock ponds quickly exhausted local supplies. Merchants and traders ordered new stocks from the East, but weeks lapsed before they arrived. The Bureau itself faced the same problem in securing everything from small hand tools to heavy machinery. Some of the bulldozers and graders never even arrived, and projects had to be revised

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[29]"J. P. Kinney is Honored," ibid., IX (March, 1942), 33.

or the dirt moved by hand. Nevertheless, work proceeded as rapidly as possible in order to spend the first six months' appropriation in time. By September, the Bureau managed to fill 13,000 positions of its quota of 14,400 enrollees.

Understandably, such haste and confusion resulted in extremely poor quality work. Truck trails frequently had to be rebuilt later because of land slides or lack of culverts and grader ditches for drainage. Dams frequently failed because porous soil allowed water to seep through them. In other cases, they lacked the storage capacity for their drainage area and spillways proved too small to handle the overflow. When fall and spring downpours came, the water sometimes rose over the top of the embankments and destroyed the earth works. Some projects received no more planning than that given by one foreman who measured off a dam and told his inexperienced crew: "Well boys, there it is."[30]

Regardless of confusion, poor quality work, and waste, IECW meant the difference between near starvation and a fairly comfortable existence in areas where drought and insects had ruined the Indians' normal livelihood. Intense suffering especially existed among the Navajos of New Mexico and Arizona who had long since exhausted their credit with the white traders. Nash reported that the southern

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[30]Sylvester Tinker, "What IECW Means to the Osages," ibid., III (September 15, 1935), 18.

Navajos suffered from malnutrition and showed tendencies of scurvy and rickets. Navajo enrollees frequently collapsed when first put to work on projects, and Nash ordered camp managers to provide a special diet which included brown rice, whole wheat bread, tomatoes, and dried fruit.[31]

Even so, no other group reacted more favorably to IECW in 1933 than the energetic but destitute Navajos. They came in droves to meetings where agency officials explained IECW and how to join it. One incident near Chin Lee, Arizona in 1933 indicates vividly the Navajos' great desire to enroll in the relief program. One Indian on horseback hailed down a truck jammed with fellow tribesmen on their way to enroll in IECW. Still far from the enrollment point and fearful that he might miss his chance altogether, the Navajo carefully gave his census number to the driver and asked that his place for enrollment be reserved.[32]

The Jicarilla Apaches, on the other hand, suffered nearly as much from the drought as the Navajos, but their isolation and suspicion of whites made them reluctant to enroll in IECW. Emmett Wirt, the legendary and colorful trader on the Jicarilla reservation, had extended as much

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[31]Jay B. Nash to John Collier, August 4, 1933, ibid., I (September 1, 1933), 6.

[32]Louis C. Schroeder to John Collier, Report of the first three months . . . of I.E.C.W. in District No. 4, 1933, no file number, General Service, 032, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

credit to the Indians as he dared in the winter of 1932-1933, and he coaxed some Jicarillas into joining so they could repay their debts. Nevertheless, about half of the positions went unfilled.[33] Moreover, absence of acute distress made other tribes somewhat reluctant to join in IECW.

Where Indians failed to fill their reservation's quota of enrollees, the Bureau adopted the policy of transferring the funds to other agencies or bringing in members of more needy tribes. Sometimes the enrollees of one tribe went on their own to an IECW camp of another reservation, and in other cases the Bureau brought them in by trucks. To fill vacant positions on the Jicarilla Apache reservation, IECW established a boarding camp for youths from the Navajo reservation. Outside Indians were placed in camps on the Klamath reservation in Oregon because timber revenues, even in the depression, provided an adequate standard of living for tribal members. Enrollees from Turtle Mountain, a poverty-stricken reservation in North Dakota, worked at Fort Berthold in the western part of the state in 1933.

A much more typical problem was a surplus of applicants for IECW and no place to send them. This led to the practice of staggered employment among IECW enrollees who

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[33]Personal interview with Ernest V. Downing, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 10, 1966. Hereafter cited as Downing interview.

lived at home. Under this arrangement two separate crews alternated with each other at intervals of two weeks or a month. Naturally this meant each enrollee received only half pay, but at least he enjoyed some benefit, and IECW funds reached more Indians. Staggered employment became ideal where the enrollees farmed and could use their off-duty time caring for livestock and crops. The statistics of IECW make no distinction between jobs filled by one person and those which were staggered. Certainly the practice was widespread in the first year as evidenced by a Bureau estimate that a total of 25,000 men worked on IECW in 1933, while the largest number hired at any one time never exceeded 13,000.[34]

The practice of withholding part of the enrollees' wages in 1933 offered still another means of increasing the benefits of IECW. Since the original plans called for a program of six months, many Indian families would need savings to carry them through the winter of 1933-1934. Even if IECW continued, some projects would have to be curtailed or shut down during cold weather. Hence the Bureau followed the practice of regular CCC and arbitrarily withheld part of the enrollees' wages. The Indians' immediate needs and their disdain for such abstractions as

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[34]Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1934 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1934), 102-103. Hereafter cited as Annual Report.

receipts instead of hard cash caused several to protest against withheld wages, and the Bureau allowed a few exceptions to the policy during the first months.[35] After 1933 the entire question of savings was handed over to the reservation superintendents. Some officials coaxed the Indians into saving part of their wages, while others gave in to their protests and paid them in full. Although the savings policy was never completely abandoned, it certainly was most prominent during the first year of IECW.

Much greater success resulted from Collier's insistent policy that Indians receive preference in all phases of Bureau employment. He demanded that enrollees be moved up to higher-paying skilled jobs and salaried positions as rapidly as they qualified. During 1933 the policy struggled unequally against the hard facts of Indian inexperience and lack of skill. White employees tended to dominate the higher positions such as foremen and project managers, while Indians rarely held salaried jobs higher than camp managers and assistant foremen. Whites gained IECW salaried positions in various ways. IECW admitted some white residents of reservations married to Indian women and sometimes placed these people in supervisory jobs. Outside whites frequently were hired because the reservations had no one with the technical skill or experience needed for supervising projects. IECW leaders who

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[35] Ibid.

emphasized production efficiency hired other outside whites to operate trucks and other machinery on the excuse that unskilled Indians frequently damaged or wrecked such equipment. Moreover, the drive for Indian employment preference encountered the hostility of veteran Bureau personnel who feared the loss of their jobs.[36] Even local whites became embittered if the Indians received preferential treatment. Nevertheless, Collier continued to insist on a policy of employing Indians for salaried positions.

Whites held less than forty percent of the salaried positions in IECW by late 1933.[37] Even so, the technical positions at the district level remained in the hands of non-Indians. The principal reason for this fact was the pathetic lack of educated Indians before the New Deal. The Annual Report of 1933 stated that only twenty Indians who graduated from college that year had applied for jobs with the Bureau. Since the depression made it nearly impossible for educated Indians to find jobs in private enterprise, the twenty graduates probably represented nearly all who finished college in 1933. None of the twenty was a forester or engineer.[38] Even though the policy of placing Indians in supervisory jobs later enjoyed considera-

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[36]Downing interview.

[37]"Indians in Salaried Positions in Their Emergency Conservation Work," IAW, I (November 1, 1933), 29.

[38]Annual Report, 1933, 79.

ble success at the reservation level, whites continued to dominate the district posts throughout the history of Indian CCC.

The first enrollment period of CCC was scheduled to end on September 30, 1933 and newspapers began reporting that all conservation work would close at that time. The news alarmed Collier for the delayed start of IECW had prevented field operations from reaching anything near full stride until August. In that month the Bureau still had nearly $3,000,000 in unexpended CCC funds from its original allotment of $5,875,000. Worried that the money might be lost, Collier contacted Fechner and requested that the funds be carried over into the summer of 1934.[39] Fechner replied that not only would the money remain available, but that Roosevelt had approved a second enrollment period and that the Indian Bureau could now request more funds to continue IECW through the winter of 1933-34.[40] Collier soon obtained an additional grant of $4,000,000 for the second enrollment period.[41]

IECW operations continued during the winter of 1933-1934, but cold weather forced a serious reduction of the

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[39]John Collier to Robert Fechner, August 17, 1933, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[40]Robert Fechner to John Collier, August 22, 1933, ibid.

[41]John Collier to Robert Fechner, September 6, 1933, ibid.

program in many areas. Work on the reservations west of the Cascades went on with little interruption and many southwestern tribes completed soil erosion control projects. Special provisions had to be made, however, in the type of work undertaken on the northern Great Plains, the Lake States, and parts of the Pacific Northwest. The deeply frozen soil of these regions canceled all earth moving projects and forced IECW to stress various forestation tasks and general clean-up work. Doubtless much of the winter activity tended toward busy-work aimed at keeping the Indians off rations.

The decision to carry on a winter program created the problem of proper clothing for the enrollees, since many married enrollees needed all their wage earnings to maintain their families. In late September, Daniel E. Murphy, who succeeded Nash as Director, asked Collier if IECW could issue clothing.[42] Collier endorsed the idea and asked Fechner to approve a grant of $250,000.[43] After a month of haggling, the parsimonious Director of CCC authorized a clothing allowance, but only if Ickes personally gave his consent. The Secretary approved on November 16 and the Bureau notified the superintendents to spend

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[42]Daniel Murphy to John Collier, September 26, 1933, ibid.

[43]John Collier to Robert Fechner, October 4, 1933, ibid.; Robert Fechner to John Collier, October 21, 1933, ibid.

some $20.00 per enrollee for heavy clothing and footwear.[44]

As IECW slowed down for the winter, the Indian Bureau suddenly received a new and unexpected source of relief money in November when President Roosevelt announced the creation of the Civil Work Administration under the direction of Harry Hopkins. Two weeks later the Bureau released funds to reservation superintendents with orders to employ 4,500 people during the winter months. The new program operated in typical Hopkins' fashion. Superintendents received a supply of blank checks and orders to employ Indians at any "useful needed work." The CWA projects tended toward direct relief of poverty with little attention for long-range improvements.[45] Typical projects included making clothes for needy children and old people, construction of simple houses to get Indians out of dilapidated shacks, general clean-up programs to provide more sanitary living conditions, and the clearing of land for subsistence gardens. CWA ended the following spring as rapidly as it started, but it helped carry a portion of the more needy Indians through a crisis period when IECW and other relief programs had to curtail operations.

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[44]William Zimmerman to Harold Ickes, November 8, 1933, ibid. Unlike regular CCC, IECW never purchased uniforms for its enrollees. The winter clothing allowance seems to have been restricted to northern regions and some items remained the property of the Bureau.

[45]"Employment under the Civil Works Administration," IAW, I (December 1, 1933), 5-6.

Too often people with a casual knowledge of the New Deal Indian policy believe that all relief in the 1930's came to the tribes through CCC. This is hardly the case at any time during the period. In the first six months of the Roosevelt administration, for example, the Bureau received $6,820,000 in Public Works grants as compared to $5,875,000 for IECW. The Public Works money provided $4,000,000 for constructing roads, $1,500,000 for day schools, $130,000 for hospitals, and $1,190,000 for miscellaneous purposes.[46] Funds from other relief programs continued to rival those given to Indian CCC throughout the New Deal as the Bureau intensified the construction of day schools, hospitals, and administrative buildings. Conservation work no doubt received more attention because it inherited the favorable publicity of the regular CCC as a tremendous means of improving the physical health and moral character of American youth.

One of the more important aspects of IECW during 1933 which was somewhat unrelated to normal activities of the organization was the establishment of Indians at Work on August 1. Financed from IECW funds, the biweekly magazine served as the official organ of that agency and tried to stimulate interest in conservation among the Indians. It closely resembled the mimeographed weekly newspapers

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[46]"Some Budgetary Facts," American Indian Life, Bulletin 22 (July, 1933), 12.

customarily put out by high school journalism classes. The editor, Mary Heaton Vorse, altered the homey format according to whim, and articles in double space on one page were frequently changed to single space on the next--or vice versa. The right hand margins were left open and strikeovers were apparently not among the proofreader's major taboos. Each issue opened with an editorial by Collier in which the Commissioner discussed new policies, pending legislation, and major current problems. The articles by Bureau personnel which followed dealt almost entirely with IECW activities. Every issue closed with brief excerpts about project work or camp life taken from weekly foremen's reports.

Despite the contrast between Indians at Work and the "slick" publicity materials issued by other New Deal relief programs, the magazine enjoyed a great success. It was sent to anyone--Indian or white--who asked for copies, and issues were automatically forwarded to Indian schools, hospitals, agencies, and CCC camps. The enrollees must have read it, for they or their camp managers soon began writing bitter letters to the editor complaining about her failure to publish stories or pictures about their particular activities. Collier soon recognized that Indians at Work would serve as an admirable device for publicity, and he broadened the scope of the publication by including more editorials and stories on the Bureau's

general reforms. By the end of 1933 the magazine had lost much of its emphasis on conservation and had become the general voice of the Indian Bureau.[47]

The theme of relief stands out as a major characteristic above everything else during the IECW's first year. The distress of the Indians and the delays and frustrations of getting projects started simply did not allow for systematic planning, concern for permanent rehabilitation, and technical perfection. The loose control exerted by the Washington office of the Bureau and the diverse nature of local reservation conditions contributed additionally to the wholesale mistakes and waste in IECW during its first year. No doubt the faults could be justified because the projects brought relief to some 25,000 Indians, but the first year experience established precedents and provided lessons for the future.

Certainly another important theme of IECW in 1933 was the tendency for innovation and leadership by men new to the Bureau. Collier, himself, played the dominant role

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[47]The publication continued to lose its emphasis on conservation after 1933 and to become more of a general publicity outlet for the Indian Bureau. Circulation eventually reached 12,000 and the quality of the magazine improved considerably. The Bureau began paying half the publication expenses from regular appropriations and made Indians at Work the official organ of the Office of Indian Affairs in 1935. Stories about Indian CCC continued, though less frequently, after that time and each issue contained excerpts from the foremen's reports. R. N. Elliot to Bennett Champ Clark, May 17, 1937, U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Part 6, 6382.

in both policy making and administration of IECW during its initial stages. Nash and the coterie of other recreation experts, social workers, and teachers operated in a fashion never before seen in dealing with the Indians. A spirit of idealism prevailed in both the Washington office and in the field, and Collier was still in the "honeymoon" stage of his administration before his vague reform concepts had been defined and subsequently battered by the hard knocks of pragmatic Congressmen and hordes of bitter Indian critics.

As the first IECW work season grew to a close, signs of change began to appear with the departure of Nash and similar neophytes. During the winter months the Solicitor's Office of Interior wrote up the first draft of the Wheeler-Howard Bill. Early in 1934 Collier began a campaign to pass the legislation and appeared numerous times before congressional hearings and ventured on long trips to Indian meetings. The Commissioner's control over IECW slipped in proportion to his new activities. The more practical Zimmerman, Murphy, and Kinney assumed added control over IECW and the "brain trust" atmosphere came to an end.

CHAPTER III

CAMP LIFE

All activities of Indian CCC fell into the two broad categories of production and camp life. Production, of course, involved the planning of projects and the supervision of the enrollees' work. Camp life, on the other hand, dealt with their food, housing, health, safety, education, recreation, and discipline. While project work brought immediate and tangible results, whatever value Indian CCC had in social rehabilitation generally stemmed from the Indians' participation in off-duty activities.

Despite its importance, no facet of Indian CCC is more difficult to uncover than the human side of the program. The events of people's daily existence, whether in white or Indian society, seemingly lack the drama and importance necessary for being recorded in historical sources. A second and even greater frustration concerns the tremendous variation among Indian CCC camps. Those which lasted for several years under sound supervision became better than the installations of white CCC. Others received so little attention that they produced deplorable

living conditions. Moreover, the majority of Indian CCC camps were used for a single work season or less before they closed or moved to a new site. Despite the paucity of records and great diversity, the main patterns of enrollee life emerge from a careful gleaning of bits and pieces of information from the official correspondence, Indians at Work, and reports of observers.

The reservation superintendent and his staff began the enrollment of workers as the first step in setting up a new camp. The officials posted notices of openings and selected the applicants who most needed jobs. The regular Indian Service physicians administered a routine medical examination to the incoming enrollees and gave them smallpox and typhoid vaccinations. The participants had to be free of communicable diseases, but neither physical defects nor age necessarily disqualified a person from entering Indian CCC. In fact, only two percent of the prospective enrollees failed to pass the medical examinations.[1] The program accepted a handicapped person if he could do office work, help around the camp, operate a truck, or serve at similar light tasks. Although most enrollees were thirty or younger, Indians in their sixties frequently joined and engaged on the same projects as the other men.[2] Indeed,

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[1]D. E. Murphy to H. E. Weatherwax, April 10, 1937, File 59039-36, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[2]The age groups of the enrollees were as follows:

the possession of age and a picturesque appearance ranked next to a feat of life saving as a sure means for an enrollee to get his picture in Indians at Work.

Once the correct number had been hired, the enrollees went to work at $30.00 per month. This amounted to $1.50 per working day for Indian CCC spent only twenty days each month on production. Workers who used their own horses on projects received from $1.00 to $2.00 per day for "team hire" depending on the size of the animals and whether the government or the owner provided feed. This hardly brought great wealth to the Indians according to their many complaints about the government pay scale. From the starting wage, the enrollee could advance to assistant leader at $36.00 per month, leader at $45.00, subforeman at $100.00, assistant foreman at $135.00, and group foreman at $167.00. Indian CCC frequently deviated from these ranks and pay scales in hiring project managers who supervised all the projects on a reservation and received a salary based on their training, experience, and responsibilities. Moreover, the "facilitating personnel" of Indian CCC--skilled workers such as equipment operators, mechanics,

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27 percent were 17-23 years of age
25 percent were 24-30 years of age
23 percent were 31-40 years of age
13 percent were 41-50 years of age
12 percent were above 50 years of age
"Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," p. 37, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, NA, RG 75. Hereafter cited as "Final Report."

welders, surveyors, and trail locators--were hired at roughly the same salaries currently paid by private enterprise in the area.

For administrative purposes, Indian CCC designated enrollees, assistant leaders, and leaders as workers. They received wages and free quarters and food in boarding camps or a commutation allowance. All higher ranks and the facilitating personnel were considered supervisory employees. They worked on a salaried basis and paid for their room and board if they lived in a boarding camp. The breakdown between workers and supervisors was a highly important matter. A large portion of the supervisory personnel were whites, especially in the first years of the program. Many reservations tended to hire too many salaried employees to maintain higher quality production. Field reports on the ratio of workers to supervisors allowed the Washington office to evaluate roughly the efficiency of Indian CCC operations on different reservations. Such checks frequently resulted in the release of excess white supervisors and facilitating personnel so the Indians would obtain a larger share of the funds.

Three general types of camps developed according to the local needs of reservations and the wishes of the superintendents. The boarding camp came closest to that found in regular CCC since it housed unmarried men where work could be maintained in one area for at least a full

summer. The more temporary family camp became popular for projects of short duration or where too few unmarried enrollees could be recruited to justify a boarding camp. The third type allowed the workers to live in their regular homes. Indian CCC officials quite frequently combined the three types and added modifications under special circumstances.[3]

Boarding camps used for a single season generally housed the men in the standard square army tent. The enrollees installed wooden floors in such tents and boarded up their sides to a height of four feet. Indian CCC participants sometimes lived in rough shacks built from materials at hand. Camps of any size possessed an office, combination kitchen and dining hall, building for meat storage, shower house, outdoor toilet, and warehouse for supplies and tools. A "bullpen" nearby provided a place to park and repair trucks and other motorized equipment. Married supervisors who stayed in camps lived in separate quarters with their families. Newly built camps presented a rustic but often beautiful appearance because of surrounding scenic forested or mountain settings.

When units lasted beyond a single summer, the en-

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[3]None of the Indian CCC records ever broke down the enrollees according to how many lived in each type camp. Definitely a minority stayed in boarding camps. This was true even in the Minneapolis district where such camps were most common. Probably Indian CCC never had more than one-third of the enrollees in true boarding installations.

rollees built permanent bunk houses and made refinements to enhance the appearance and comfort of the camps. A recreation hall invariably became the most desired improvement. Indian CCC officials sometimes installed recreation equipment in an existing dining hall, but the enrollees frequently built separate facilities. The recreation hall offered books, magazines, a radio, and tables for cards and other games. The facilities sometimes became surprisingly elaborate. Camp Marquette in the remote northern peninsula of Michigan completed a combination recreation and education building in 1937. The enrollees installed shop equipment, and a foreman skilled in carpentry taught the boys his trade. They soon outfitted the new building with attractive furniture made of peeled and varnished sapling wood. In the same building, the enrollees attended classes in arithmetic, typing, and music--taught by a foreman's wife--and studied correspondence courses from the University of North Dakota.[4] Marquette was a model camp, but several other installations maintained even more sophisticated recreation facilities.

The more permanent boarding camps also featured canteens where the enrollees purchased candy, cigarettes, and sundries. A committee of three or four men operated

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[4]J. H. Mitchell to John Collier, September 27, 1937, File 4049-1937, Enrollee Program, Minneapolis District, 346. CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

the small shops after the evening meal and on week-ends. Those in charge sold the goods at a small discount and spent the profits on securing recreation and education equipment. A common first purchase was a movie projector used for weekly shows. Enrollees paid a nominal fee for seeing the movies, and the profits again went for more camp equipment. Since the enrollees had few wages to spend, adequate recreation facilities helped those who wished to save back a portion of their money.[5]

A camp manager headed each boarding installation, and his duties were easily the most difficult of any official in Indian CCC.[6] The camp manager's tasks officially started when the men returned from work in the evening and ended when they loaded on the trucks to leave for the projects in the morning. But the head of a camp always found himself involved in record keeping and various other

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[5]An amusing running battle developed between Fechner and Indian CCC over the purchase of movie projectors. A regulation of CCC ruled out buying projectors without Fechner's express approval, and camp managers constantly bombarded the director with purchase requests, using the most ingenious arguments about the special educational value of movies for the Indian enrollees. Fechner adamantly refused each request with his customary strong language. Nevertheless, the camps added the projectors in one way or another. The white CCC engaged in the same practice. Lists of surplus equipment distributed when their installations closed almost invariably showed a movie projector.

[6]The title "camp manager" was originally used in IECW, but was officially abandoned in favor of "camp assistant." The latter term never seemed to catch on and camp manager stayed in vogue except for official purposes.

duties during the daytime. Moreover, he faced many pitfalls in his relations with the enrollees. He worked with men in isolation and of a different culture than his own if he happened to be white. The camp manager always faced the prospect of resentments arising among the men, and his failure to keep liquor out of the camp could have disastrous consequences. Those in charge of camps always found their authority relatively limited in comparison to the size of their responsibilities. Some coaxed the enrollees, while others yelled at them, but none could expect official support for the use of harsh discipline of punishments. The wise camp manager avoided possible trouble by keeping his men constantly occupied with recreational activities, educational programs, and camp improvement projects. Some well educated men failed completely as camp managers, and others of less academic training produced highly successful results. If the camp manager won the respect of his men and dealt with them fairly, life usually offered fewer problems.

Despite the theoretical separation between camp life and production, the two overlapped considerably in actual practice. In addition to his regular duties, the camp manager handled many of the clerical tasks of project supervisors by making out reports and keeping records. On the other hand, foremen and other production officials often taught off-duty classes which came under the responsi-

bilities of camp management. Moreover, a strong connection existed between the health and morale of the enrollees and their willingness to work on projects. When they became ill from bad food and sanitation or grew disillusioned with camp conditions, project work suffered as a consequence. Production supervisors and camp managers not only cooperated in the better-run camps, but both spent many extra hours working with the enrollees.

Indian CCC prided itself on keeping a small proportion of the enrollees engaged in menial work around the camps. Hence, the camp manager admonished his men to make up their own beds, sweep and mop the barracks, build fires, and take care of personal effects. This released more enrollees for production and, of course, saved money.[7] Regulations required camp helpers to put in a full eight hours per day, although the cooks and kitchen employees worked much longer because they got up early in the morning and stayed to clean up after the evening meal. The practice of keeping more Indian enrollees on production work, according to some observers, contrasted with the high percentage of regular CCC workers assigned to camp duties.[8]

A typical day in the boarding camps started at 6:00

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[7]Daniel E. Murphy to District Camp Supervisors, January 2, 1941, File 66439-1936, General Service, 169, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[8]Robert Marshall to John Collier, June 1, 1936, ibid.

in the morning with reveille. The men had a half hour to clean their quarters and wash before breakfast. After eating, the enrollees policed the camp area for trash, and at 7:00 they started loading tools on their trucks and then left for their day's work. The kitchen force brought a hot lunch at noon, and the work crews broke off for an hour to eat and relax. At 5:00 the men reported back to camp and showered before eating supper an hour later. The enrollees then were on their own and could participate in sports, reading, or indoor games. The day ended at 9:30 or 10:00 with "lights out."[9]

The regular CCC and the Indian boarding camps handled the men with a quasi-military discipline which avoided any appearance of formality or harshness. Both organizations allowed the men to leave the camp during off-duty periods, and failure to report back before lights out created no outcry against the enrollee if he appeared for work the next morning.[10] The remoteness of most boarding

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[9]Louis C. Schroeder, "Indian Conservation Camps," Recreation, XXVIII (August, 1934), 250-251. Actually, the typical day varied somewhat in Indian CCC. The men spent eight hours on project work in the first years. By around 1937, most district offices included the lunch hour as one of the eight hours and also counted transportation to the projects as work time. This was Fechner's policy in regular CCC. However, the Oklahoma district office demanded eight full hours of actual time on the job until 1937.

[10]Charles Price Harper, The Administration of the Civilian Conservation Corps (Clarksburg, West Virginia: Clarksburg Publishing Company, 1939), 51.

camps, however, made this freedom meaningless, for the Indian enrollees seldom possessed any way to reach towns. Except for those kept in camps on special duty, nearly all the Indian enrollees went home or visited nearby towns on week-ends. Camp managers frequently provided trucks for this purpose.

The responsibility and authority for maintaining discipline among the enrollees and establishing rules for their behavior rested entirely with the reservation superintendents. In fact, the Bureau issued no instructions of any sort on handling misbehavior during the first year of IECW. Collier sent a letter the next year to all superintendents instructing each "to work out a satisfactory plan for his own unit."[11] Superintendents and camp managers usually dealt with discipline problems personally. Some allowed the regular tribal judges to hear cases. The enrollees of a few camps organized "kangaroo courts" which judged and punished their erring comrades.

The local autonomy of the superintendents and a lack of full records make it difficult to describe fully the extent of discipline problems in Indian CCC camps, but the common offenses included the refusal to work, drinking in the camp area, stealing, and personal disputes. A

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[11]John Collier to all superintendents, April 23, 1934, File 58839-1936, Educational, Welfare, etc., General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

typical incident occurred at a CCC dance held in a recreation hall at the Red Lake reservation in Minnesota in 1938. Although warned earlier, the Indians brought liquor to the dance, and over one-third of those in attendance were whites from off the reservation. Deeming the affair too wild, the camp manager discharged four enrollees guilty of "improper conduct" and banned all future dances.[12] In another typical situation, two enrollees at the Cameron (Arizona) leader camp went on a week-end drinking spree and landed in a local jail, and Bureau officials caught several others partaking from a bottle. The superintendent gave the entire group a severe "tongue lashing," and frightened them enough to correct the problem until the camp closed a short time later.[13] Enrollees seem to have varied considerably in their reaction to camp discipline. The camps of the Pacific Northwest contained a mixture of local and outside enrollees, and supervisors found the men hard to handle. Louis Schroeder, however, organized all the units in New Mexico and Arizona in 1933, and he noted that "disciplinary measures were nil in all well established camps."[14] Cer-

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[12]Stanford L. Okeness to Mr. Bitney, January 17, 1938, File 4049-1937, Enrollee Program, Minneapolis District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[13]William H. Zeh and George W. Hedden to John Collier, April 24, 1934, Report on Cameron Leader Camp, 1934, Box 94, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[14]Louis C. Schroeder to John Collier, 1933, Report of the first three months . . . of I.E.C.W. in District No.

tainly most breaches of discipline involved drinking, and the real problems developed on the week-ends when the men left their camps.

Both the Indian Bureau and Fechner's office attempted faithfully to keep the camps free from arbitrary rule or any hint of physical punishment. Collier's letter placing discipline in the hands of the local superintendents demanded that all accused enrollees receive a hearing. Fechner in 1935 caught wind of an Indian policeman in Oregon who "manhandled" an enrollee accused of stealing. The Director immediately sent an investigator to the camp who learned the report was not only true, but the policeman had broken regulations by interrogating the accused boy without the camp manager present. In his typical uncluttered language, Fechner demanded: "It is our intention to give law officers our full cooperation in the proper discharge of their duties but I want to make it perfectly plain that this will never include the right of any law officer to physically abuse an enrollee."[15] The absence of contracts or definite periods of enlistment in Indian CCC acted as a further deterrent against harsh disciplinary measures; if the enrollee felt himself unfairly treated, he had only to draw

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4, no file number, General Service, 032, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[15]Robert Fechner to D. E. Murphy, January 24, 1936, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

his pay and leave.

The camp manager's best weapon against misbehavior problems was a full and active recreation program in which every enrollee participated whether active and skilled or old and inept. Camp leaders promoted competitive sports among the young with boxing, basketball, football, and baseball. While the Indians already knew these sports, they enjoyed learning volleyball and soccer. Older enrollees participated in less strenuous games such as horseshoes and tossing arrows at a mark. Some camps built fires after darkness fell, and the Indians gathered around for singing and dancing until "lights out."

Every camp of any duration sponsored teams in baseball and basketball and, in a few cases, football. Even in Oklahoma, which had no boarding camps for several years, the district camp supervisor organized an active basketball program for the younger enrollees during the winter of 1933-1934 by renting local high school gyms and using those in Indian institutions. The Indian athletes in all regions played schedules against other CCC squads, including those from white camps, and local town teams. Camp pride in sports achievements was evidenced by the frequent news of victory strings and upsets found in Indians at Work.

As noted earlier, movies became an almost universal feature of the more permanent boarding camps, but the temporary nature of installations in New Mexico, Arizona,

and the Great Basin made it difficult to provide shows for the enrollees. To solve the problem, the Phoenix district office equipped a panel truck with a mobile projector unit and sent it to all Indian CCC groups. Indians everywhere relished movies, but hardy Navajos not on the CCC payroll traveled miles to see the films shown by the mobile unit. Their interest remained undampened through the high drama of conservation films which depicted scenes of blowing sand and gully erosion that every Navajo had known from birth. They were equally unperplexed by subtle and involved love plots, although a large percentage did not understand English. One group of Navajos watching a newsreel of Roosevelt--whom they all recognized--became disappointed because the President failed to chat with them personally. Another audience emptied a hogan in record time when the screen suddenly flashed a close-up of a roaring freight train moving under a full head of steam.[16]

The most gala period for boarding camps were the open house days held each year in early April to celebrate the founding of CCC. The camp manager usually ignored regulations about working full hours and gave his men the day off for such celebrations. He also invited in the enrollees' families and the general public. Baseball games, Indian dances, tugs of war, foot races, equipment and

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[16]"Indians in the News," Indians at Work, IX (December, 1941), 18. Hereafter cited as IAW.

project displays, and guided tours commonly made up the day's activities. The kitchen crews served light lunches and coffee, and local white or tribal leaders frequently addressed the enrollees and guests. Enrollees in married camps and those who lived at home celebrated the founding of CCC in a very austere manner. They received only a short break at midday while the foremen read messages from Fechner, Collier, and the district production coordinator. Some camps staged a Christmas party highlighted by an indiscriminate exchange of comic gifts between the enrollees and their supervisors. Superintendents at many reservations allowed the workers time off to attend tribal dances, Indian fairs, and celebrations.

Using Army procedures, camp managers soon learned how to maintain adequate camp sanitation after some initial problems. The kitchens and buildings used to store meat were objects of special concern, and camp personnel checked carefully that these had screened doors and windows and remained free of dirt and mice. Camp managers located the toilets a safe distance from the men's water supply, ventilated and screened the buildings, and treated the human waste with chemicals to reduce the odor and possibility of disease. They also periodically tested the wells and springs used for drinking water and chlorinated doubtful supplies. Food scraps and other trash which could not be burned were placed in covered disposal pits. Regulations demanded that

the district camp supervisors visit the camps frequently and stay in them at least twenty-four hours each time to check living conditions and food service. Reports filed after such visits listed the discrepancies of the camps, and the inspectors mailed copies to Washington, to the district office, and to the camp manager concerned. The first report after an installation opened usually contained a long list of shortcomings due to the camp manager's inexperience, and later visits revealed much improvement.

The kitchens offered a simple but adequate diet based on Hyde's Army Mess Management Simplified which was standard for every camp. The Army influence also prevailed in the cafeteria style service used in dining halls. Most of the food supplies were requisitioned through the regular agency warehouses and purchased in quantity from wholesalers. Camp managers, however, sometimes brought food from nearby Indian farmers and ranchers. The Navajo camps, for example, served locally purchased goat meat two and three times a day because the enrollees preferred it over mutton and much more than beef or pork.[17] Several camps in the Lake States and Oklahoma by the late 1930's raised their own gardens and kept hogs and chickens to supply foods for their kitchens.[18] The absence of food riots and

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[17]Louis C. Schroeder to John Collier, 1933, Report of the first three months . . . of I.E.C.W. in District No. 4, no file number, General Service, 032, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[18]"Final Report," p. 35.

the high rate of Indian enlistment in World War II indicates that the cooks failed to follow completely everything they read in Army Mess Management Simplified.

There was nothing fancy about the appearance of Indian CCC dining halls or the foods served in them. Camp managers left the halls unfinished as a rule, and the enrollees built crude tables and benches which served for eating. Oil cloth normally covered the tables, and enrollees thought themselves fortunate if their dining hall had tables with varnished tops. Despite these conditions, one Indian lady, who describes herself as "terribly finicky," found she enjoyed the food served at Nett Lake in Minnesota when she visited a CCC camp to help inventory agency property.[19]

Food costs at boarding camps ran about sixteen and a half cents per meal, according to a survey the Washington office made in 1940.[20] This low figure allowed only simple

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[19]Personal interview with Rugh Buring, March 10, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Miss Buring started her secretarial career in the Consolidated Chippewa Agency office. It was in this connection that she visited the Nett Lake camp as a young woman.

[20]"All-Service Summary of Costs of CCC-ID Boarding Camps," August, 1940, File 79633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75. The food costs during the earliest years of IECW probably ran about twelve cents per meal. The 1940 survey came after general price levels had increased. This and lower appropriations during the late 1930's and early 1940's made it difficult to keep within the food budgets during the last years. D. E. Murphy to F. J. Scott, December 4, 1941, File 4049-1937, Enrollee Program, Minneapolis District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

meals consisting of meat, vegetables, fruit, and milk. The food and wholesome outdoor work of Indian CCC, however, put weight on almost all the enrollees. IECW recruited 103 Pima youths in June, 1935 and sent them to the San Carlos reservation where they worked seven days a week on forestry projects and camp development. Their agency doctor weighed them at departure and again when they reported back two months later. They had gained a total of 612 pounds or very nearly six pounds per person.[21]

The location of many boarding camps in forested areas and the drought of the 1930's made firefighting a very common part of the enrollees' lives. When a blaze broke out, all Bureau employees--even office workers--abandoned their immediate tasks and rushed to man the fire line. The enrollees acted as an important second line and major manpower source behind the handful of Indians hired by the Bureau with regular funds to serve in the lookout towers and to ride forest patrols. Several fires on week-ends during 1933 caused extreme damage because virtually all the enrollees had left their camps. Before the next summer Collier ordered camp managers to detail some of the men as full-time fire guards and to keep portions of the other enrollees in camp over the week-ends during fire season.[22] The following year the Bureau authorized IECW

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[21]Helen Easchief, "Six Hundred Pounds of Pima," IAW, III (September, 1935), 40-41.

[22]John Collier to Superintendents on Forest Reserva-

to hire fire guards at $90.00 per month during the fire season. Enrollees often helped fight fires in national forests and parks. An agreement between the Indian Bureau and Forest Service in 1934 provided for jointly fighting fires by the CCC camps of both agencies and sharing detection facilities.[23] A similar arrangement existed between the Bureau and the National Park Service. The worst part of fire fighting duties for the enrollees involved the camp manager's power to keep part of the men in camp over week-ends during fire season. It takes little imagination to picture the reaction of the poor enrollee who found his week-end plans shattered by a fire alert. Yet fire fighting was a major contribution of Indian CCC. It supplemented the enrollees' efforts in the control of tree diseases and pests, and their improvement of fire detection facilities.

Water development and soil erosion projects covered extensive areas in grazing country, and Indian CCC typically used the more mobile married camps. The enrollees lived with their families in shacks or tents close by the work. Under this arrangement, Indian CCC control of the enrollees generally extended only to their production work. After the workers finished a project, the camp either broke up

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tions, April 26, 1934, File 58839-1936, Educational, Welfare, etc., General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[23]Fred Morrill to John Collier, July 23, 1937, File 55839-1936, General Service, 339, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75. This document cites a renewal of the original agreement in 1934.

or moved to a new location. This system had the advantage of allowing the workers more freedom, and it fitted in with their customary mode of life while they attended Indian fairs and celebrations, or went on hunting trips. The great advantage for the government lay in a greatly reduced overhead compared to boarding camps. The married enrollee received his regular wage of $30 per month and an additional commutation allowance of $12 per month to defray the living expenses for himself and family. Although the Bureau raised the allowance to $15 in early 1935, the new sum represented less than half the cost of boarding and feeding each enrollee in a boarding camp.[24]

The diversity of conditions already noted in boarding camps became even greater in the married camps. As in most things, the effectiveness and sympathy of the reservation superintendent largely determined whether the married enrollees and their families lived in squalor or in comfort. When many of the enrollees could not bear the expense of buying tents, camp stoves, and other necessities in 1933, some superintendents arranged to purchase these items on credit from local merchants. A few superintendents even bought camping equipment from wholesalers at reduced prices and paid for it by monthly deductions from the enrollees'

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[24]The 1940 survey of boarding camp costs showed that it required $38.70 per month to feed, house, and supervise each enrollee. "All-Service Summary of Costs of CCC-ID Boarding Camps," August, 1940, File 79633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

wages. Such well-run camps developed many of the same features as found in the better boarding installations. Recreation programs, sanitation facilities, and even educational classes all flourished under helpful leadership.

Bureau publicity favored the idea of married camps and painted an idyllic scene of tepees and tents arranged in a large circle, a backdrop of beautiful mountains, and groups of happy children playing while their mothers chatted. Like most publicity, the overenthused Bureau writers relied on selective examples, and a more realistic observer found a different picture in camps of the northern Great Plains in 1936:

> Shelters of tents or shacks made of scrap lumber, tin galvanized or paper roofing are erected. Such nondescript camps are common and noticeable around the agencies, particularly in Sioux country. Tin cans, paper, and garbage are thrown around in most disorderly fashion. Water is often not easily available. Sanitary facilities are inadequate or wholly failing.[25]

Besides promoting squalor, the married camps conflicted with Collier's goal that conservation projects would make the Indians self-supporting. Often married camps sprang up around agency offices during the 1930's, just as Indians in the past drew together wherever the Bureau distributed monthly rations. Moreover, the married enrollees lost all interest in farming and ranching, and their regular

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[25]Lawrence E. Lindley, "Emergency and Relief Work," Indian Truth, XIII (October, 1936), 3.

homes quickly deteriorated. Even the most optimistic advocates of relief, however, admitted that CCC and other relief work at best supplemented the Indians' own agricultural efforts and tided them over a crisis period. Drawing them away from their land and homes actually harmed their interests. Their ultimate economic salvation, at least according to Collier's policies, depended on their land and their willingness to use it to the fullest potential.

The third major type camp kept the Indians on their land by allowing both married and unmarried enrollees to live at home. The workers collected each morning at pick-up points, and then rode to their projects on Indian CCC trucks. The enrollees received the same commutation allowance of $12--and later $15--per month as married camp workers. The families of enrollees who lived at home avoided the poor living conditions found in many family camps. Although used widely, the live-at-home camps became most common in Oklahoma. The fairly dense population and small projects of the state made the plan especially suitable. The men normally worked on CCC during short periods when their small farms could be neglected or cared for on week-ends.

Indian CCC officials found it extremely difficult to develop any sort of off-duty programs for the workers in Oklahoma during the first years of IECW. Enrollees who lived at home naturally held no special devotion to Indian

CCC and believed that their responsibilities terminated with the end of each work day. The factors of loneliness and isolation which promoted recreation and education in forest camps had little or no application for enrollees who lived at home. Moreover, CCC regulations allowed no educational activities to take place during duty hours. A. B. Finney, camp supervisor of the Oklahoma City district, tried to promote education during the first years, but his efforts met little success. Finney managed to organize some educational meetings at night for the Indian enrollees and their families at which Bureau specialists and local people presented information on farming, soil erosion, canning, and other subjects. But attendance at the affairs dwindled rapidly after the first few meetings. Not until 1937 did the Oklahoma City district finally cope with the problem with a simple but effective voluntary overtime plan.

Indian CCC camps frequently deviated from the use of the three major types outlined above or officials blended them to meet special situations. When extra help was needed in a boarding camp, for example, Indian CCC officials allowed married men to work on projects for a time. indians living close to a married camp stayed at home nights and rode or walked to the projects. Sometimes superintendents allowed an extended Indian family to handle small projects by putting their leader in charge. The

Hopis adapted the live-at-home camp to their tradition as great runners by jogging to and from their CCC projects each day.

When working on fencing and spring development, the Indian CCC supervisors frequently established a few enrollees in a temporary installation called a fly or spike camp. Small tents served for quarters, and the enrollees cooked their own meals outside. In such camps the workers' only contact with the agency headquarters might be a weekly supply truck. The enrollees in spike camps tried to fight against the loneliness by taking along baseball gloves, bats, and balls, but the time doubtlessly passed slowly after work hours. Spike camps added extra overhead for CCC, and Fechner opposed their use for this reason.[26]

Several reservations used box-shaped house trailers for widely-scattered work. The Flathead reservation built the first trailers in 1934, and later they were adopted by the Carson Agency in Nevada, Colville in Washington, Blackfeet in Montana, Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma, and Klamath in Oregon. Indian CCC shop workers built a trailer by nailing together a light framework, covering it with plywood, installing windows, and then mounting the structure on an old truck chassis. The white trailer bodies resembled the temporary dwellings erected by many colleges

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[26]Robert Fechner to Conrad L. Wirth, September 25, 1936, File 59225-36, Fechner Correspondence, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

to house married students after World War II. Hitches on the trailers enabled trucks to pull them to new projects in caravan fashion. Some trailers served as sleeping quarters and others as kitchens, warehouses, and offices.[27]

In many camps, reservation superintendents made provisions for employing local Indian students during their summer vacations, and this led to the creation of a formal policy in 1936. The group of 103 Pimas transported to the San Carlos reservation in 1935 were mostly students from the Phoenix Indian School.[28] Other Indian students worked in the camps at Truxton Canon, Arizona the same summer.[29]

Fechner first officially authorized Indian CCC to employ Indian students in 1936. The Minneapolis office even set up a special district camp for students in 1936 and 1937. Superintendents throughout the district received a quota and orders to fill it with the best of their students. Indian CCC housed the boys in a Catholic mission

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[27]Except for blueprints, the official correspondence of Indian CCC has little information on the trailers. Supervisors apparently used them in groups of ten and classified them as boarding camps. The Blackfeet reservation had four different groups operating as boarding camps in 1940 and Carson agency three. Carson City Chronicle quoted in "Indians in the News," IAW, VI (November, 1940), 30; "CCC-ID on Wheels," ibid. (February, 1939), 26; "Klamath CCC Workers Return to Nomadic Life," ibid., VIII (October, 1940), 33.

[28]Easchief, "Six Hundred Pounds of Pima," 40-41.

[29]"From I.E.C.W. Reports," IAW, III (November 1, 1935), 50.

school and set them to work on forestation projects.[30] The following year the Bureau aided Indian college students by placing them in CCC camps at a maximum of $75 per month on technical work related to their academic fields.[31] Unfortunately, Fechner terminated all student aid before the 1939 season, although sympathetic superintendents probably continued to hire some on an informal basis.[32]

In a few cases women served as enrollees for Indian CCC, although their exact number is not recorded. Some women worked on rodent eradication projects. A few made willow mats used for rip-rap on dams where no gravel or rocks could be found to protect embankments against wave erosion. Several boarding camps hired women to work as cooks or kitchen helpers. The largest number, however, worked as secretaries in the agency offices. To handle the extra paperwork of Indian CCC, superintendents commonly obtained additional help by placing secretaries on the CCC payroll. This practice aided many Indian girls--and boys--unable to find jobs in private industry, and many presently

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[30]Robert Patterson to John Collier, September 5, 1936, File 4049-1937, Enrollee Program, Minneapolis District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; J. H. Mitchell, "A District Students' Camp (An I.E.C.W. Innovation)," IAW, IV (November 15, 1936), 47-48.

[31]Conrad L. Wirth to Robert Fechner, April 5, 1938, File 59225-36, Fechner Correspondence, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[32]Fred T. Johnson to Robert Fechner, April 9, 1939, ibid.

hold positions with the Bureau.

Some facets of camp life varied little regardless of what sort of arrangements Indian CCC used for housing and feeding the enrollees. One of the most important of these was medical service for the workers. Unlike regular CCC, which detailed doctors from the military services to treat enrollees, the Indian Bureau turned the problem of health services over to its regular medical division. An enrollee unable to work reported to his agency doctor or a private physician under contract to the Indian Bureau. The doctors placed the seriously ill or injured in Indian hospitals until they recovered and went back to work. Since the Bureau already provided medical services for the Indians, no charges were made against the CCC budget. Agency physicians also rendered considerable aid in small camps by checking on sanitation and teaching classes in first aid and safety, especially in the first years of IECW. Sound medical attention tended to break down the Indians' traditional resistance toward obtaining treatment of illnesses, for camp managers automatically sent any sick enrollee to the doctor. Quick detection and treatment of diseases, when combined with a balanced diet, outdoor work, and personal cleanliness, undoubtedly meant a major improvement in the health of the enrollees.

Providing a safety program and teaching classes on the subject also came under the duties of camp management

and varied little regardless of local conditions. After the first year of CCC a specialist in Fechner's office directed the safety program for all agencies involved in CCC, and kept monthly statistics on the accidents of each. Although records on safety are incomplete, Indian CCC compared quite favorably with other divisions of the parent organization.[33] From four to six accidents per month for each 1,000 men employed seems to have been normal.[34] The injuries and infrequent deaths were commonly caused by falling trees, lacerations by improperly used hand tools, snake bites, falls, and truck collisions.

Despite a slow start, Indian CCC gradually managed to provide adequately for the enrollees' safety. Each reservation placed one production official in charge of enforcing safety regulations. The official insured that

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[33]There is little definite information on the number of fatalities for the entire history of Indian CCC. Collier stated that there had been seven or eight job-connected deaths during the first year. By 1936 the figure had risen to twenty-five according to William H. Zeh. In view of the improved safety program and decreased number of enrollees after 1936, the total probably ran around fifty. Truck accidents and falling trees accounted for a majority of fatalities. John Collier to S. M. Lauderdale, July 13, 1934, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; William H. Zeh, "Indian Emergency Conservation Work," IAW, III (July 1, 1936), 38.

[34]S. M. Lauderdale to cooperating agencies, June 2, 1936, File 55439-36, Correspondence, General Service, 145, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; Safety Division "Monthly Safety Bulletin," November, 1936, File 58839-36, Welfare File, General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; ibid., January-February, 1937; D. E. Murphy to all Superintendents and Supervisory Personnel, December 9, 1936, File 51639-36, General Service, 345, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; "Final Report," p. 49.

trucks used to haul workers had tool boxes for keeping shovels, axes, and similar items from underfoot. The same boxes allowed the men to sit instead of standing as they rode. Short ladders used by the enrollees to get on and off the trucks lessened the danger of falls. The reservation safety director countered the antics of wild drivers by installing governors on all trucks and pickups which kept their speed under thirty-five miles per hour. Regulations required that a first aid kit be carried on each truck and the driver be trained in its use. After initially meeting the first aid requirements for drivers haphazardly, IECW began training enrollees as instructors at special district schools in 1936. This procedure not only improved the safety program, but served as an important precedent for the general education of enrollees in the following years.[35]

Indians at Work and the official correspondence of Indian CCC both contain numerous cases in which enrollees or former enrollees saved people from bleeding to death, snake bite, and drowning. Perhaps the most dramatic occurred when Malcolm Long, an engineer from the Billings office, fell into deep water while inspecting a newly-completed dam at the Rocky Boy reservation in Montana. The water pulled Long through one of the outlet pipes of the

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[35]See Chapter VI, "The Enrollee Program."

dam, and he emerged in the stream below where the workers found him unconscious. Three men took turns applying artificial respiration, and after thirty-five minutes, Long began breathing again. A circle of enrollees watched all this intently, and when Long showed signs of life, one wide-eyed Indian blurted: "It's just like bringing a man back from the dead."[36]

Certainly the most frustrating effect of Indian CCC and other relief programs was their tendency to increase the problems of lawlessness and drinking among the red men. While the enrollees' deportment in camp and on the job rarely caused concern, the money they and others on relief work earned increased an already sizable problem of lawlessness once they left camp. In New Mexico and Arizona and other isolated areas, wage work replaced the system of barter which had formerly kept Indians tied to their reservations. The new roads built at many agencies in the 1930's and cars purchased with relief wages enabled Indians to begin visiting towns and dances off the reservations. Increased drinking, gambling, and trips to brothels followed in the wake of the Indians' new mobility, causing additional headaches for Bureau officials.

As a result of the Indians' wages and week-end trips, a number of off-reservation towns further enhanced their

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[36]Claude C. Cornwall to John Collier, April 8, 1941, File 3400-1937, Billings District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

reputation as centers of vice. Liquor stores located a few yards off the Crow agency in Montana catered to the Indians during the 1930's. As a result, State Highway 87-E, which ran between the liquor stores and Hardin on the reservation, became a frequent scene of injury and death to whites and Indians alike. A conference of local, state, and federal officials at Billings in 1937 noted a huge increase in drinking and related crimes such as assault, disturbance of the peace, and even a man run over while lying drunk in the road.[37]

Much the same picture developed on the Klamath reservation in Oregon. Whites made up three-fourths of the population at Klamath, and they constantly sold whisky to the Indians. The Klamath superintendent viewed liquor control as virtually hopeless: "Confronted with the fifty-mile-square area of this reservation and its large population of white people drawn from all strata of life, it is impossible to enforce prohibition with the present personnel which consists of two special officers and a police private."[38] About half of the enrollees at Klamath were

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[37]"Informal Conference Held in the Office of the United States Marshal, in the Federal Building at Billings, Montana, June 5, 1937 . . .," File #3, Crow Agency, July, 1937 to June, 1946, Law and Order Case Files, NA, RG 75.

[38]"Klamath Reservation, Superintendent's Annual Report, Narrative Section, For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1938," File #1, Klamath Indian Agency, November, 1930 to June, 1937, Law and Order Case Files, NA, RG 75; "Narrative Report, March 8, 1937" (unsigned), ibid.

drifters from other tribes. Their behavior differed little from the unruly whites hired by commercial lumber companies of the area. The Klamath superintendent noted increases in promiscuity and instances of illegitimate children among the younger Indians, including those with education.

Towns clustered around the Navajo reservation were even greater centers of Indian vice. Holbrook, Winslow, and Flagstaff in Arizona and Farmington, Grants, and Cuba in New Mexico all earned infamous reputations. Gallup, New Mexico, however, achieved the greatest notoriety in the Southwest. A scholar studying social disorganization among the Navajos found Gallup a wide-open town in 1940. Indeed, vice had become so blatant and obvious that even the most law-abiding townspeople knew the location of the two large houses of prostitution in Gallup, the precise number of girls in each, and which one welcomed Indian customers. Numerous other prostitutes operated in freelance fashion from private rooms. Navajos could obtain drinks across the bar in many of the city's forty-five saloons, and bootleggers maintained runners who sold liquor to the more wary tribesmen in isolated alleys. Open gambling went on at some twenty different locations, allowing Indians to indulge freely in craps, black jack, and poker.

The organization of this vice followed the classical patterns of corrupt political machines found elsewhere. According to the sociologist, a Democratic boss in Santa Fe

controlled Gallup, but the Republican administrations of the past had been no less bad. The precise amounts of pay-offs to police by bootleggers, gamblers, and prostitutes were common knowledge. The police, in fact, arrested all the prostitutes and madams at regular intervals, brought them to court, and fined them to help pay the city expenses.[39]

Not all tribes underwent a dramatic increase in sin during the 1930's. The long indoctrination by Christian missionaries preserved the morality of the Nez Perces. A similar strong fundamentalist outlook shielded the North Carolina Cherokees from any sudden outbreak of vice. Isolation continued to protect a few tribes. Some Indians of the Southwest and Great Basin stayed on their reservations even after new roads and relief wages increased their mobility. In such cases, bootleggers were too leery of federal laws against selling liquor to Indians to bring supplies on the reservations.[40]

The small handful of law enforcement officers in Indian Service faced serious handicaps in combatting vice because of a confused legal system. State laws rarely applied to reservations, but came into force whenever the

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[39]Floyd Allen Pollock, "Navajo-Federal Relations as a Social-Cultural Problem" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1942), 189-194, et passim.

[40]Personal interview with Ernest V. Downing, March 10, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Indians left tribal lands. Federal criminal laws applied to reservations for only ten felonies and selling liquor to the Indians.[41] For other major and minor crimes some reservations in the 1930's developed their own legal codes and set up courts presided over by Indian judges. Agencies without this system lived under a legal code promulgated by the Secretary of Interior and enforced by the superintendent. A very few reservations relied on state laws and enforcement.[42]

Native Indian policemen handled law enforcement within the reservations with occasional aid from special officers hired by the Bureau. Indian policemen prevented lawlessness by patrolling such trouble spots as dances, fairs, and other gatherings. The tribal judges who heard cases rendered a rough and ready sort of justice based more on common sense than Blackstone. A constant complaint against them by many Bureau officials was their habit of lenient decisions.[43]

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[41]The ten major crimes included murder, manslaughter, rape, assault with the intent to kill, assault with a deadly weapon, arson, burglary, larceny, incest, and robbery. For a fuller discussion of the Indians' legal situation see U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings on H. R. 7902, A Bill to Grant to Indians Living under Federal Tutelage the Freedom to Organize for the Purpose of Local Self-Government . . ., 73rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1934, pp. 322-23.

[42]John Collier to Superintendent Councils of the Lake States, the Dakotas, and the Inter-Mountain areas, 1940, File 77730-1939, General Service, NA, RG 75.

[43]Howell Hoops to Louis C. Mueller, August 24, 1938, File #3, Crow Agency, July, 1937 to June, 1946, Law and Order Case Files, NA, RG 75.

Since the Indian policemen's jurisdiction extended only to the reservations, suppression of the liquor traffic basically rested with a small group of special officers. These officials were stationed throughout the West, and led by Louis C. Mueller from a headquarters at Denver, Colorado. Mueller's men could arrest both whites and Indians in liquor cases on and off the reservations, but they failed to cope with the rapid increase in drinking and lawlessness during the 1930's. Seeing this, the Bureau diverted CCC funds to hire ten or so deputy special officers who assisted the overburdened regular force. Mueller assigned the new officers to towns in the West frequently visited by Indians.[44]

Special officers and deputy special officers typically worked at night and tried to find drunken Indians, arrest them, and then learn where they had obtained the liquor. In the towns near the Navajo reservation, the officers' greatest problem naturally concerned drying up the sources of the liquor. Tramps and various low types acted as runners, and each time that the Bureau officers arrested or ran one out of town, two seemed to appear in his place. Arresting the big suppliers depended on the cooperation of local

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[44]Mueller's regular force of special officers consisted of around fifteen men and the number of deputy special officers numbered about ten, depending on how well Collier supplied him with funds. Congress appropriated around $75,000 for liquor suppression in the regular Indian Bureau budget. "Liquor Problem," Indian Truth, XIV (December, 1937), 4; Louis C. Mueller to John Collier, March 19, 1937, File 51639-36, General Service, 345, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

police, and towns like Gallup, needless to say, protected the bootlegging rings which sold to the runners. Special officers also found themselves handicapped by regulations prohibiting the use of coercion, marked money, and informers. At best, the Indians found their liquor supply temporarily disrupted until the bootleggers devised new strategems to confound the special officers. In no case did the Bureau completely solve the problem.

In estimating the importance of camp life, it quickly becomes apparent that the tremendous variation in conditions allows no neat and easy generalization to adequately describe the effect of off-duty programs. Some camps actually worsened the Indians' living conditions and drew the enrollees away from their regular homes and land. In other instances, relief wages increased the Indians' ancient problem with liquor. On the other hand, many camps offered excellent facilities and contributed much to the improvement of the participant's character, education, recreation, work skills, and economic position. Enrollees in boarding camps generally received better care and supervision than those who lived in other types. This was not always true. Camps for unmarried youths on the Klamath reservations were poorly run and contributed little to the improvement of the participants, while some family camps had excellent off-duty programs.

Several significant variables accounted for the vast

disparity between the best and worse Indian CCC camps. Certainly the staffs of the district offices played a vital role. These ranged from the excellent off-duty programs devised by the Minneapolis office to the almost complete neglect of education and recreational activities in the Billings district. Much the same attitudes developed among the always powerful superintendents within the districts. Geography and the nature of projects also influenced camp life. The small projects and live-at-home camps of Oklahoma frustrated an experienced and sincere district camp supervisor's efforts to establish a viable off-duty program. The most important variable was the individual enrollee's attitude toward camp life. If he viewed Indian CCC strictly as a source of wages, the best equipped and supervised camp could not benefit him. But if the enrollee remained alert to the full potential of Indian CCC, it could be an important means of self-improvement, even when those in charge overstressed production.

CHAPTER IV

INDIAN CCC AT WORK

No matter how much camp life might contribute to the well-being and improvement of the enrollees, actual project work remained the immediate purpose of Indian CCC and chief justification for obtaining funds for the program. Because production achievements were tangible in nature, Bureau publicity tended to emphasize such activities and statistics more than camp life. Differences in geography and individual whims of district and reservation Indian CCC officials led to an unbelievable variation in the nature and size of projects. The "Final Report" of the program, in fact, listed 126 different types of activities undertaken which ranged from the operation of a fish hatchery at Lac du Flambeau in Wisconsin to an archaeological excavation on the White River Apache reservation in Arizona.[1] Nearly all production, however, dealt with some phase of water development, soil erosion control, or forestation. Each

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[1] "Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," pp. 71-74, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, National Archives, Record Group 75.

of the six districts of Indian CCC had its own conservation problems and special solutions.[2] This chapter outlines the more typical production activities the district offices utilized to meet the Indians' conservation needs.

Not all conservation programs were supervised and planned by the Indian CCC district offices west of the Mississippi. The Washington office dealt with the fairly sizable projects undertaken by the Florida Seminoles and the North Carolina Cherokees. The same was true of minor conservation programs among the tribes of upper New York and the Choctaws of Mississippi. The Eskimos and Indians of Alaska, who were under the jurisdiction of the Indian Bureau, worked in camps of the Forest Service.

The Oklahoma City district supervised all Indian CCC work in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas. The district office was originally located at Muskogee, Oklahoma and headed by the superintendent of the Five Civilized Tribes with the assistance of Fred L. Verity, a project manager. When this proved unsatisfactory, the Indian Bureau made Verity a pro-

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[2]The six districts of Indian CCC should not be confused with those used by the Indian Bureau for its other functions such as education, forestry, and irrigation. The geographic units of Indian CCC and the other divisions corresponded only roughly. Even after the Bureau adopted a supposedly uniform district system for all field functions in 1937, Indian CCC seemed to have its own variations from the regular administrative units. Moreover, the district lines of Indian CCC were never rigidly set and maintained. Minor agencies were frequently transferred from one district to another, and personnel from one district office sometimes helped execute CCC functions in another area.

duction coordinator and placed him in charge of a district office in Oklahoma City. Nearly every Indian tribe in Oklahoma received CCC grants, but most of the money went to the Five Civilized Tribes in the hilly eastern half of the state, or to the Arapahoes, Kiowas, Cheyennes, and Comanches who lived in the more arid regions to the west. The district office also supervised small but active CCC operations on the Pottawatomie agency located north of Topeka, Kansas and on the Alabama-Coushatta reservation in the "Big Thicket Country" of eastern Texas. The latter tribe was under the jurisdiction of Texas and not the federal government, but it received CCC funds for fencing, stream clearance, and drilling wells under the loose supervision of the Kiowa superintendent.

Soil erosion control dominated Indian CCC in the Oklahoma City district from the first days of the New Deal. Unfortunately, the early efforts to reduce washing suffered from various restrictions because of the nature of Indian land holdings in Oklahoma. Except for an insignificant amount of tribal and Indian Bureau land, all the Indians' holdings consisted of restricted allotments. The Emergency Conservation Work Act authorized work only on public land unless failure to improve nearby private property might endanger the success of a CCC project. Fechner considered restricted allotments as privately owned and refused to authorize CCC funds for erosion control on such land. Since

conservation was something of an innovation, Indian farmers remained apathetic about spending their own money to combat erosion, and white lessees expressed even less interest in improving property they did not own.

Such obstacles forced the Oklahoma City district to concentrate on very small projects on tribal lands or plots used by the Indian Bureau for schools, hospitals, and agency offices. Hence, the live-at-home camps became characteristic of the state, and the Oklahoma Indians typically worked in small groups and built check dams made of brush, loose rocks, and poles. Such efforts were at best temporary expedients. They arrested the further deepening of the gullies but failed to protect against sheet erosion on the hillsides.[3] Moreover, Indian CCC would have worked itself out of projects after a few years had Fechner continued his restrictions against using CCC funds on allotted lands.

Fred L. Verity, the district production coordinator, first asked for authority to extend operations to restricted allotments in 1935. His proposals were obviously patterned after the techniques and procedures of the Soil Conservation Service. Verity requested that IECW be allowed to stop

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[3]Sheet erosion is the gradual and even washing away of the top soil between the crest and lower portion of a hill. Because this type of erosion is slow, it generally escapes notice until extensive areas of land have no top soil left and will support only rough plant life.

gully erosion on allotments if the Indian owner signed an agreement to build terraces and pay for materials. In addition, the owner would adopt a five-year cropping plan which provided adequate plant cover and restored soil fertility.[4] Verity argued that restricted allotments were part of the public domain since the government still held title to land while entrusting it to Indians. Fechner approved Verity's plans in late 1935, and the following summer the Oklahoma City district office initiated a new conservation program.[5]

The new system offered a comprehensive solution to soil erosion. Indian CCC abandoned the construction of temporary check dams for gullies in favor of baffles. These masonry structures resembled regular check dams except they were designed with a spillway at the top of the embankment which forced the runoff to stay in the ditch and kept the water from cutting a new channel around the end of the baffle. Indian CCC crews bulldozed in shallow gullies and sowed a cover grass on the now level ground. After the enrollees had completed their work, the Indian owner built terraces and instituted a five-year cropping

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[4]Fred L. Verity to John Collier, July 10, 1935, File 19414-1933, Control of Erosion, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[5]John Collier to District Production Coordinators, December 8, 1935, File 57439-1936, Subsistence Gardens, General Service, 344.1, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

plan to protect against sheet erosion.

Although Verity's plan offered a technical solution, many Indians could not afford the cost of terracing their land and buying materials for baffles because of the depression and continued drought. This led Verity to purchase small horse-drawn terracing machines with CCC funds which the Indian farmers used free of charge. The Bureau sometimes allowed allottees to pay for land improvements over several years by deducting amounts from their tribal annuity payments or lease money. In other instances the district office called the Indian lands "demonstration plots" and paid all expenses for erosion control.[6]

With the soil conservation program under way, the Oklahoma City district turned to an extensive shelterbelt program. For this work, the office copied the example of the Forest Service which had made large-scale experimental plantings in the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma in 1935.[7] When these succeeded, Indian CCC started setting out shelterbelts on tribal holdings and Bureau lands. A. C. Monahan, the Bureau's regional coordinator for Oklahoma,

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[6]Fred L. Verity to John Collier, May 17, 1937, File 51839-36, Soil Erosion Control, General File, 349, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75; ibid., August 9, 1937. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[7]A. C. Monahan, "Shelterbelt Work in Kansas and Oklahoma: An Indian CCC Project," Indians at Work, V (May, 1938), 23. Hereafter cited as IAW.

asked the Washington office in late 1937 to approve using Indian CCC enrollees on shelterbelt projects for restricted allotments in Oklahoma and Kansas.[8] The request was approved and the enrollees started setting out trees the following spring.

The shelterbelt program relied very heavily on the cooperation of the Forest Service. Two nurseries of that agency in Oklahoma supplied free seedlings to Indian CCC. Several foresters paid by the Forest Service worked full time checking potential sites for shelterbelts and helped supervise the planting operations. In similar fashion to soil erosion control, the allottee signed an agreement with the Bureau in which he promised to provide proper cultivation of the soil and to protect the young trees from rabbits which ate the bark in winter months. Far more Indian owners requested the shelterbelts than expected, and enrollees completed over 200 miles of plantings by 1940.[9]

Each shelterbelt was approximately seven rods wide and contained various types of trees planted in rows ten feet apart. The plantings were set out on the south side of a field and sometimes also on the west. One-third of

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[8]A. C. Monahan to John Collier, November 8, 1937, File 51839-36, Soil Erosion, General File, 349, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[9]Allan W. Mollison to Indians at Work, July 18, 1940, File 55839-1936, General Service, 339, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

the shelterbelt, facing the prevailing summer wind, contained permanent and slow-growing cedars and pines. Taller trees such as oak, black locust, apricot, hackberry, walnut, and American elm made up the middle third of the shelterbelt. The remainder was devoted to species which grew very rapidly such as cottonwood and Chinese elm or mulberry and osage orange. After a few years, the trees in this "early protection strip" could be cut for firewood or fence posts. The middle strip would provide fruits and nuts and salable hardwoods. Later, the cedars and pines remained as a windbreak. Soon after the shelterbelts were established, they protected against wind erosion, provided a windbreak for homes and livestock, and offered a refuge for wildlife.[10]

Although soil erosion control and shelterbelts dominated, Indian CCC in Oklahoma engaged in many other projects. The construction of truck trails, for example, in the rugged southeastern section of the state provided a means for fire fighters to reach the numerous blazes which broke out each spring. The same trails served to relieve the isolation of many Indian families in the area. The district office also fought against the severe drought by constructing stock ponds, drilling wells, and irrigating subsistence gardens. Very few of the projects were large,

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[10]"Cross Section of a Shelterbelt," ibid.

however, and all the enrollees lived at their regular homes until 1937 or 1938. During that period the district office established two or three boarding camps for shelterbelt planting and land improvement.[11]

In contrast to the varied operations found in Oklahoma, the Minneapolis district concentrated on forestation projects of various types. The district production coordinator supervised all Indian CCC operations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. The reservations tended to be small and were located west and south of Lake Superior. The extensive holdings of forest in the region made permanent camps practical and these, as noted earlier, gained a notable reputation for their physical facilities and excellent off-duty programs.

During the first years of the New Deal, the district office gave most of its attention to the control of blister rust, a disease of white pines first brought to the Lake States on seedlings imported from Europe. The Indians' timber had remained free of extreme damage and was still quite susceptible to eradication of the disease. Blister rust was spread by an interesting exchange of microscopic spores between white pine trees and gooseberry and currant bushes which acted as host plants. Pines stricken by

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[11]"Annual Report, 1938," A. C. Monahan to John Collier, July 1, 1938, File 466-1937, Enrollee Program, Oklahoma District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

blister rust could not infect others nearby, but each spring the diseased trees released spores which traveled through the air and landed on the host plants. The infected currant and gooseberry bushes released their own spores each fall, and these entered a white pine through its needles. The disease eventually spread into the trunk of the tree causing it to die. Mature and healthy pines might live up to five years after their first infestation of blister rust, but young trees often died in one year.[12]

Since the spores released by the host plants traveled a maximum of 300 yards, the removal of all gooseberry and currant bushes from a forest protected the trees from blister rust. The Minneapolis office began an intensive effort to eradicate blister rust in 1933 by using Indian enrollees. For a thorough job, this required three different coverages of a forest. A forester first led a small party of men on cruises through the timber to detect and mark the gooseberry and currant bushes. A second and larger crew followed and grubbed them out and either burned the bushes or turned them upside down so they could not take root again. A third party followed to insure that all the host plants had been detected and destroyed.

With the completion of most blister rust projects

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[12]William Heritage, "Blister Rust Control on Indian Reservations of Minnesota and Wisconsin," IAW, I (December 15, 1933), 16-18.

after the first two or three years, the Minneapolis district devoted much more attention to other facets of forestry, especially fire protection. Such work had long been a pressing need in Indian forests for fire fighters often had no way to reach blazes except by horseback or on foot. Their delay in arriving at a fire might allow it to get out of control, and even after they arrived, they could not quickly put out blazes with the small amount of equipment carried with them. Hence, truck trails and fire lanes absorbed more funds than blister rust control in the Minneapolis district after the first years.[13]

Except for poor construction in 1933, IECW supervisors relied heavily on the handbook used by Forest Service for building truck trails. This demanded a careful survey of the route by a trained trail locator to insure that the grade did not exceed seven or eight percent and would be free of landslides. After the survey, crews of enrollees cleared away small growth, cut down large trees, and grubbed out their roots. Bulldozers and graders then prepared the road bed. Often Indian CCC built high-quality truck trails with elevated road beds, grader ditches, and gravel surfaces. The elaborate trails were in reality general purpose roads

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[13]In 1937 blister rust control absorbed less than ten percent of the Minneapolis district's funds while fire prevention and control received sixty to seventy percent. William Heritage to John Collier, July 10, 1937, File 59226-36, Circulars and Memos, General Service, 112, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

as much as a means of reaching fires. Other trails were crude affairs designed to permit the passage of trucks only during the dry fire season. Many forests in the Lake States contained swampy ground and the enrollees built truck trails over such terrain by placing logs side by side to form the familiar corduroy road. The truck trails were completed by installing culverts and bridges. These had been built of wood during the first year, but high maintenance expenses led IECW officials to switch to durable structures made of concrete, masonry, or steel.

The Minneapolis district combined trail building with many other forestation projects. Enrollees cleared fire lanes through stands so that runaway blazes would burn themselves out before destroying large areas. The construction of lookout towers connected by telephone lines to the agency offices made rapid detection of blazes possible. Indian CCC helped prevent fires by clearing away dead underbrush and fallen trees which acted as tinder to start blazes during dry seasons. Reforestation was aided by the use of Indian CCC funds to operate nurseries at Red Lake and Lac du Flambeau when the Forest Service could no longer supply seedlings in 1937. Enrollees used the seedlings to replant areas previously cut clean by commercial lumber companies. Many projects improved existing stands by cutting inferior trees and thinning overcrowded growth.

The intensive concentration on forestry activities

by the Minneapolis district was aided by the Indians' aptitude for the work. In the Marquette National Forest, the Forest Service maintained three camps of white enrollees and one of Indian youths. One forest ranger claimed that he would prefer to lose the white enrollees before the Indians, because "they are at home in the woods and know all about an axe." The ranger thought so well of the Indians' abilities that he used them for skilled work and saved the simpler tasks for the white youths.[14]

The great need for forestry improvements in the Lake States allowed only a few other types of projects. For areas affected by the drought, some work was done on irrigating gardens and drilling wells but this apparently was minor. The Minneapolis office also assisted the Chippewas' wild rice industry in various ways. Enrollees cleared camp sites for the rice gatherers, dug wells to provide clean water, constructed sanitary facilities, built walkways and docks to give access to the lakes, and general-

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[14]Robert Patterson to John Collier, March 16, 1937, File 4049-1937, Enrollee Program, Minneapolis District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75. Camp Marquette was a unique installation because of its location in a national forest. The camp was authorized by a conference of local officials, Forest Service representatives, and Indian Bureau employees at Sault Ste. Marie in late 1934. They agreed that something had to be done for the large number of unemployed Indian youths in the area even though there were no tribal lands available for a CCC camp. The Bureau operated the Indian camp and off-duty programs while Forest Service supervised production. This hybrid arrangement worked extremely well. Both the Forest Service and the Bureau considered Marquette as the best camp--Indian or white--in the Great Lakes region.

ly made the Chippewas' annual trips to gather rice more bearable.

To the west of Minnesota lay the huge Billings district made up of the Dakotas, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska. The district contained several large reservations, including the Cheyenne River, Rosebud, and Pine Ridge in South Dakota; Standing Rock which straddled the two Dakotas; Fort Berthold in North Dakota; the Blackfeet, Fort Peck, and Crow in Montana; and the Wind River in Wyoming. Although geographic conditions varied considerably, the predominant feature of grazing land in the district and the drought forced Indian CCC to emphasize water development and irrigation projects more than other activities. Hence, engineers instead of foresters filled nearly all of the positions in the district office.

During the first two or three years of IECW, the Billings district concentrated on building small dams to provide water for livestock. This aided conservation, for animals could not graze more than two or three miles from their water supply. Where sources of water were widely separated, part of the range went ungrazed and grass near wells, springs, and streams meanwhile was literally eaten into the ground. Water development projects, therefore, raised the carrying capacity of the range and helped prevent erosion due to overgrazing. Dams also served to end gully erosion and (according to the more optimistic)

raised the level of underground water supplies.

Construction of dams on the northern Great Plains during the first two years was normally done by scrapers drawn by horses or small tractors. Many of these early dams failed because of poor planning and workmanship, and all cost much more than those constructed by large equipment. The Billings office, and other regional headquarters experiencing similar problems, corrected such faults by better planning and a greater reliance on heavy machinery. In the Billings district, however, the quest for efficiency and big dams became almost a mania.

The Billings district began the construction of large and elaborate dams after 1935. Such structures were designed for flood control and irrigation and only incidentally to provide water for livestock. The White Clay dam at Pine Ridge, for example, contained 65,000 cubic yards of fill and boasted a re-inforced concrete spillway 100 feet in width. A system of flood gates and pipes distributed water onto 350 acres of irrigated land.[15] Such dams obviously meant an end to building small reservoirs with horses and tractors. The new trend necessitated heavy equipment such as earth movers, dump trucks, cranes, gravel crushers, and large cement mixers. The purchase of more machinery, in turn, meant that fewer enrollees were needed

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[15]Russel E. Getty, "The White Clay Dam at Pine Ridge," IAW, VI (September, 1938), 20-22.

even though a major purpose of IECW was to benefit the unemployed.

A number of factors combined to cause the stress on efficiency and large projects in the Billings district. Dam building lent itself to an easy and accurate analysis of production cost by the engineers in the district office. Indian CCC foresters, on the other hand, seemed to lack the interest or means to tabulate the precise cost of labor and materials that went into their projects. The vast area of the Billings district perhaps fostered large projects which would be easy to supervise and plan from a central office. Still another factor was Fechner's authorization in late 1935 for IECW to cooperate with the irrigation division in developing irrigation facilities for subsistence gardens. Such work quickly became a prominent activity throughout much of the district. The Billings office planned all the subjugation work for the lands which were to be irrigated and drew up the blueprints for numerous large reservoirs.[16]

Tom C. White, the district coordinator, was undoubtedly the major factor behind the increased size of projects and heavily-staffed Billings office. A small, wizen man, White was a self-trained forester who had spent

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[16]"Progress Report, Irrigated Subsistence Gardens, Northern Plains," March, 1937, File 57439-1936, Subsistence Gardens, General Service, 344.1, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75. Some subsistence gardens were irrigated in Oklahoma, Minnesota, and other areas, but these were unimportant compared to the Billings district.

many years in the Bureau before his appointment to the Billings position.[17] Despite his unimpressive appearance, White was an inveterate "empire builder" whose letters to Washington were filled with ideas for new and bigger roles for the Billings office. A consistent theme in his correspondence was the need for greater production efficiency, and most of his proposals won acceptance.

The Billings office gradually became a very large operation, and by 1942 it contained a fully equipped design room where draftsmen and engineers drew blueprints for large dams and irrigation projects, a soil-testing laboratory which analyzed samples from potential dam sites, and a sizable district repair shop with complete facilities for rebuilding motors and overhauling heavy equipment. In addition, White maintained a district equipment pool which contained drag lines, gravel-crushing machines, power shovels, bulldozers, compressors, large trucks and semi-trailers, a fleet of dump trucks, and other pieces of machinery. Ownership and control of the equipment was vested in the Billings office, and White rented items to reservations in the district upon call. Thirty full-time employees staffed the Billings office, while White added an even greater number in the busy summer seasons to operate

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[17]Tom C. White file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.

the machinery in the equipment pool.

Had White shown the same concern for the enrollees that he did for production efficiency, his record would have been outstanding. Unfortunately, such was not the case. White's concentration on production accomplishments seemed to preclude his taking any interest in the social welfare of the Indian workers. He constantly requested permission to hire skilled whites to operate machinery in the equipment pool, but never made reference to plans for preparing Indians for such jobs. White's policy, except for lip service about on-the-job training, was to keep the enrollees in unskilled work so they would not damage any equipment or slow down production. Moreover, the Billings district lagged far behind every other in all phases of off-duty programs. Boarding camps were a rarity and living conditions in married camps were frequently a disgrace. The Billings office had no educational program well after other districts had perfected theirs by overcoming difficult obstacles. As a result, any efforts to improve the enrollees by off-duty activities came from the local reservations for the Billings office provided little encouragement.

Several of the reservations in the northern Great Plains had timber stands. Flathead, Blackfeet, Wind River, Crow, Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, and Tongue River spent fairly large sums on truck trails and other forestation

projects during the late 1930's. The district as a whole, however, still spent three times more on water development than for forestation in 1938.[18]

The Spokane district covered northern Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and northern California. Its larger agencies included the Nez Perce in Idaho, Colville, Spokane, and Yakima in Washington, and Warm Springs and Klamath in Oregon. The district also contained a multitude of very small reservations in northern California and around Puget Sound in Washington. Many of the Indians in these small jurisdictions suffered extreme poverty, but they owned little land or timber for conservation work and depended on other New Deal relief programs to relieve their distress. The larger reservations possessed valuable stands of pine which needed forestry improvements, but Indian CCC operations in the Spokane district seemed somewhat less active than other regions.

The relative prosperity of most northwestern Indians largely accounted for this inactivity. The area remained free of the extreme drought found in the Southwest and Great Plains, the Indians frequently enjoyed private or self-employment, and some tribes received timber revenues during the depression. The superintendent of the Klamath reserva-

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[18]D. E. Murphy to J. L. Acuff, October 19, 1938, File 58439-1936, Water Supply, General Service, 424, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

tion, B. G. Courtright, reported in 1937 that he could not get enough local Indians to serve in CCC. About half of his Indian CCC workers were "outsiders" brought in from northern California, western Washington, the Rocky Mountains area. In fact, fifty-nine of Courtright's enrollees hailed from northern Minnesota.[19] The Klamath superintendent still could not recruit enough enrollees, and he had trouble spending all his CCC funds. The Washington office notified him in 1937 to spend money faster or get out of conservation work entirely.[20]

The usual forestation projects--truck trails, fire lanes, reseeding, stand improvement, and lookout towers--occupied Indian CCC crews in the Spokane district. One major exception was a massive effort to control pine beetles, rather than blister rust, which destroyed vast numbers of trees in Indian forests. These insects began their annual attacks in the early summer by boring tiny holes through the outer bark of pines to the "cambium layer" or innerbark. The beetles then formed "galleries" inside the sapwood and laid their eggs. By late summer the eggs had passed through the larvae and pupa stages, and the young adults emerged from the now dead tree and attacked

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[19]B. G. Courtright to John Collier, August 9, 1937, File 53849-1936, Klamath, 250, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[20]D. E. Murphy to B. G. Courtright, December 2, 1937, File 53849-1936, Klamath, 240, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

others nearby. Mild winters and dry summers in 1935 and 1938 caused heavy infestation of the destructive insects.[21]

Control of the pine beetles depended on expert spotting during cruises and the removal or destruction of infected trees. Trees attacked in the summer were fairly easy to spot, for their needles soon turned a light greenish yellow, and then a drab tan. Trees infested in the fall, however, retained their color through the winter. To detect the presence of the insects in such trees, the spotters had to carefully look for the minute traces of sawdust in the bark which fell as the insects bored into the sapwood. Even the best crews missed five percent of the infected trees. After the survey and marking, Bureau foresters tried to sell all dead and diseased trees and others whose overage made them susceptible to attack. Where no market existed, enrollees felled the stricken trees, stripped off the bark and sapwood, and burned these materials around the stump. Foresters much preferred to sell the diseased trees for the "cut and strip" method left the logs on the ground to rot.[22]

Beetle control never aimed at complete eradication,

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[21]Harold Weaver, "E.C.W. Pine Beetle Control Spotting Instructions," January 8, 1937, File 54239-36, Insect Control, General Service, 256, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[22]Harold Weaver, "Report on the Pine Beetle Situation on the Indian Reservations of the Pacific Northwest - 1938," ibid.

for cruises made of treated areas only a year later always revealed new damage. Bureau foresters selected the areas of heaviest infestation for treatment. By this means, they reduced the losses and checked the spread of the insects until nature provided severe winters which killed the dormant pine beetles, or heavy snowfalls and summer rains gave the trees a heavy sap flow and greater resistance. Even though used only on selected areas, Indian CCC beetle control projects had treated 77,500 acres on the Klamath, Warm Springs, and Yakima reservations up to the summer of 1940.[23]

The Indian CCC operations in the Great Basin and most of California were supervised from Salt Lake City. There was no district office for the region at first and the reservation superintendents apparently administered CCC projects themselves or relied on help from offices at Phoenix, Spokane, and Billings. Even after the Bureau set up headquarters in Salt Lake City, the district possessed little geographic continuity or logic and tended to resemble a sort of no-man's-land for agencies which fitted in nowhere else. Thus Fort Hall, located outside the Great Basin in southern Idaho, was placed in the Salt Lake district because it was too far from Spokane or Billings. The various reservations of the Carson Agency of western Nevada were more

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[23]"Northwest Indians Attack Deadly Pine Beetle," IAW, VIII (May, 1940), 32-33.

than 400 miles from Salt Lake City, but even farther removed from any other district office. The thirty tiny Mission reservations near San Diego, California were a foundling group placed in the Salt Lake City district for a time and later supervised by the Phoenix office. In fact, the only major agency near Salt Lake City was the Uintah and Ouray located some one hundred miles to the southeast. Despite its huge size, the Salt Lake City district contained a small number of Indians and the amount of funds spent on CCC operations never approached that of other regions.

Except for the Mission reservations, the agencies of the Salt Lake City district were extremely isolated and CCC programs operated under many handicaps. The responsibility for directing both the production and off-duty activities of the enrollees fell more upon local reservation and Indian CCC officials than in other regions. A large proportion of the Indians could not speak English, and this made it difficult to meet regulations for classes on safety and first aid and other types of education. Despite such handicaps, the local CCC officials, in most cases, managed in haphazard fashion to meet the enrollees' needs, and some agencies offered educational programs before better financed reservations of other regions.

CCC production efforts in the Salt Lake City district tended to resemble basic improvements such as would be made by pioneers entering virgin country. Much of the work had

to be done from lonely spike camps by small crews. The enrollees fenced off reservation boundaries for the first time to keep out trespassing white men's cattle. Often the Indian youths built fences in terrain so rugged that they packed in tools and barbed wire on horseback. Most forests were untouched before CCC crews made improvements, and preparation of roadbeds for truck and pony trails in mountain areas sometimes required the removal of loose rocks by hand.

The intense drought which gripped many reservations in the district focused attention on water development and range improvement during the first years of Indian CCC. Besides building reservoirs, the enrollees hunted out wet ground which indicated a potential spring, dug down to release the water, and then piped the flow into stock tanks. Other crews searched along streams to destroy poisonous plants such as locoweed, larkspur, and whorled milkweed, which the hungry cattle ate for lack of better browse. Eventually the emphasis in the district turned more to forestation on most reservations, and by 1938 the district spent more on truck trails and other forestry projects than on water development.[24]

To tighten up control by the district office, the

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[24]D. E. Murphy to J. L. Acuff, October 19, 1938, File 58439-1936, Water Supply, General Service, 424, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Bureau transferred G. A. Trotter from assistant superintendent of the Navajo reservation to Production Coordinator at Salt Lake City in 1938. An experienced and blunt-spoken leader, Trotter wasted no time in applying uniform administrative standards to CCC efforts at the reservation level. He also demanded a better educational system which stressed both on-the-job training and formal classes. Although Trotter retired after less than two years, he brought new unity to the district and vastly improved the morale of the Salt Lake City office.[25]

The Phoenix district consisted of New Mexico and Arizona and nearby agencies in Colorado, Utah, and California. The heavy population of Indians and serious erosion problems found in the area caused the Bureau to lavish more attention and funds on conservation operations in the district than any other region. Because conservation programs were especially active during the first years, the Bureau maintained a second headquarters at Albuquerque, but it transferred all supervision to Phoenix in 1937.[26] The district contained many important reservations, including the Mescalero and Jicarilla in New Mexico; the Consolidated Ute in southern Colorado; Fort Apache, San

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[25]Robert J. Ballantyne to D. E. Murphy, January 24, 1939, File 3116-1937, Enrollee Program, Salt Lake City, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[26]William H. Zeh file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.

Carlos, Papago, and Colorado River in Arizona; and Fort Yuma and Mission in southern California. The Navajo and Pueblo reservations were in the Phoenix district, but their Indian CCC efforts, discussed in a separate chapter, were largely supervised by the Soil Conservation Service.

The drought and geography of the region affected the nature of Indian CCC operations in the Phoenix district to a greater degree than anywhere else. The drought had struck in the Southwest before spreading to the Great Plains, and the dry region had suffered privations and losses of income long before the New Deal relief programs. Moreover, the light and sandy soils of New Mexico and Arizona were particularly susceptible to both wind and water erosion. The drought had undone the delicate balance between livestock and browse always found in arid regions and caused serious overgrazing. Hence, the range lacked adequate cover, and wind erosion removed great quantities of top soil. Additional amounts were washed away by the late summer cloudbursts which fell so quickly that little of the water could soak into the ground. Instead, the muddy water rushed down arroyos and caused serious problems of flooding and silting. The area seldom received other moisture the rest of the year except for light snows and rains during the winter.

The first conservation efforts in the Phoenix district concentrated heavily on water development. The

high evaporation rate of the area dried up natural supplies of water in streams and springs, and the early CCC projects attempted to store moisture from the late summer rains by building deep charcos or ponds. In relatively smooth terrain, the Indian CCC workers located the charcos in shallow washes and sometimes dug ditches above the dams to divert more water into the excavation. In hilly areas they built charcos across smaller arroyos because dirt embankments could not hold back the heavy floods in the larger washes. Even so, many of the dams washed out during late summer cloudbursts. In mountainous areas even the smallest streams broke dirt embankments, and crews constructed masonry dams. These were built by anchoring the masonry embankments to the solid rock sides and floor of narrow canyons. In this way the dams could withstand the enormous force of the water which surged down mountain streams after cloudbursts. A pipe running from the reservoir through the embankment conveyed the water to a stock tank below the dam. Spring development also received much attention during the early years.

After the first year of the New Deal, the Indian Bureau finally obtained Fechner's permission to use CCC funds for drilling and improving wells. Although this activity took place in every district, it quickly became most typical in New Mexico and Arizona. Indian CCC officials sometimes paid private contractors to drill the

wells, but in many instances crews of enrollees operated drilling rigs purchased with CCC funds. Most of the wells were from 500 to 1,000 feet deep, but a few reached down as far as 1,500 feet. Indian CCC crews also improved many existing wells by cleaning them and putting in new casings.

Even after wells were completed, several problems still remained. Nearly all were too deep to pump by hand, and many produced a small flow which failed altogether during dry spells. To cope with these problems, Indian CCC crews installed pumps powered by windmills or electric motors. By pumping the flow into large steel tanks with a capacity of 50,000-60,000 gallons, the water could be stored during the rainy season or when livestock grazed other parts of the range.

Range improvement and control of erosion both received major attention by Indian CCC in the Phoenix district. Nearly everything done along such lines was based on the idea of slowing the runoff so the soil would absorb the water. Since the Indians' land had little value, the methods of soil erosion control in New Mexico and Arizona were quite inexpensive and primitive. Enrollees, for example, cut willow branches in the spring and stuck them in the moist soil along arroyos so they would take root and slow the water. Even branches of cholla cactus were placed in shallow arroyos for the same purpose. Indian CCC crews put up thousands of small check dams made of earth and brush to divert

water from small washes onto more level areas. By spreading the water and forcing it to soak into the soil, Bureau officials hoped to restore nutritious grasses destroyed by the drought.

Even the best conservation efforts, however, could never fully restore the range until overgrazing was stopped. This especially demanded the removal of thousands of half-wild horses which fed upon Indian ranges. Although the mustangs have served as a romantic symbol in American folklore, their effects on the Indians' range was another matter. Long generations of unselective breeding had made the horses degenerate, small, and of no practical value to their owners. They constantly ate or trampled good grass and drank up the limited quantities of water. The horses often acted as pests by breaking up salt blocks with their hooves and chasing other livestock away from watering places. Despite all the mustangs' faults, the Indians remained reluctant to part with them, for the possession of horses still conveyed prestige upon their owner. Nevertheless, some tribes consented to sell their mustangs. While CCC funds could not be used to pay for the horses, enrollees formed roundup parties, captured the mustangs, and brought them to shipping points.

Even though water development and range restoration projects always dominated, the enrollees of the Phoenix district completed many forestation projects. Various

reservations such as the Jicarilla, Navajo, Fort Apache, and San Carlos had untouched stands of pines in mountainous areas. Fortunately, William H. Zeh, a high-ranking Bureau forester, headed the Albuquerque office after 1934 and supervised all CCC programs when he transferred to Phoenix in 1937. Along with his CCC duties, Zeh served as regional forester and knew the forestry needs of the area.[27] He regularly included projects for truck trails and fire detection services. Later when lumber prices rose in World War II, the Indians started receiving money from timber sales.

For some operations, Indian CCC found the district system ineffective and modified normal administrative procedures. For installing telephone lines and equipment, for example, the Washington office eventually established supervisory offices in Salt Lake City and Billings. The telephone division contained twenty to twenty-five field employees who were detached in small parties to reservations which needed their services. When they arrived on the reservation, the superintendent detailed enrollees to assist the telephone crews in constructing the lines. Although the size and remoteness of many reservations demanded excellent communications, the telephone facilities were unbelievably bad before 1933. Lines attached to trees and others to fence posts resulted in frequent failures and

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[27] Ibid.

maintenance expense. In at least a few cases, superintendents of consolidated agencies lacked telephone connections with their outlying jurisdictions.[28]

The Bureau justified using CCC funds for telephone projects because lookout towers needed instant and reliable connections with agency offices. While this was true, quite often the justification served as a convenient excuse for installing new switchboards and lines never allowed by the regular Bureau appropriations. Nevertheless, the bulk of telephone work took place in the northern Great Plains, the Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest where Indian CCC concentrated on improving fire detection facilities.[29] Where distances made telephone lines too expensive, the Bureau used CCC money to purchase radio equipment for lookout towers and inter-agency communications in the late 1930's.[30]

The very extensive program of rodent eradication

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[28]The Bureau's policy of consolidating small reservations under centralized agencies during the 1930's increased the problem of communications. M. K. Sniffen of the Indian Rights Association reported that the superintendent of the Colorado River Agency at Parker, Arizona lacked telephone connections with his charges at the Yuma reservation 150 miles to the south and at the Mohave reservation 120 miles to the north. M. K. Sniffen, "Field Notes," Indian Truth, XII (November, 1935), 2-3.

[29]D. E. Murphy to Employees, August 6, 1937, File 57839-1936, Telephone, General Service, 347, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[30]Personal interview with Ernest V. Downing, March 10, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

by Indian CCC also ignored the district system. On the theory that gophers, prairie dogs, ground squirrels, and other rodents destroyed large quantities of grass on Indian range land, IECW launched huge eradication projects in 1933. Such work covered every section of the West, and reached a peak during the next year when Indian CCC crews treated 4,000,000 acres at a cost of $57,000 in materials alone.[31] Since the Indian Bureau had no facilities for rodent eradication, it cooperated with the Bureau of Biological Survey in the Department of Agriculture. This agency maintained a plant and warehouse at Pocatello, Idaho which mixed and stored poison grains and kept traps, bait bags, and other equipment. Each spring the Washington office notified the Pocatello plant to send supplies to reservations with rodent eradication projects. Representatives of Biological Survey frequently trained and supervised CCC enrollees in running detection surveys for rodents and placing the poisoned grain so livestock could not eat it.

Collier questioned whether rodent eradication efforts were really economical on range land and ordered the work cut in half for 1935. The following year Charles T. Vorhies of the University of Arizona charged that one federal rodent eradication program had spent nineteen cents

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[31]John Collier to Robert Fechner, May 1, 1934, File 57039-1936, Rodent File, General Service, 933, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

per acre on land which annually rented for only four cents per acre.[32] Even though this project had not been conducted by Indian CCC, Collier asked several experts whether eradication was worthwhile. When they replied in the negative, Collier terminated all rodent eradication after 1936 except on more valuable lands.

A somewhat similar cooperation developed between Indian CCC and the Bureau of Entomology of the Department of Agriculture to combat the infestations of Mormon crickets and grasshoppers in the northern Great Plains. Such efforts were never placed on a systematic basis, probably because the Bureau could not predict the outbreaks of insects beforehand. Collier contributed $25,000 in CCC funds for eradication work on the Crow, Fort Belknap, and Fort Hall reservations in 1934. The Bureau later apparently used funds from other relief programs to control grasshoppers and Mormon crickets and allowed the Department of Agriculture to supervise such efforts.[33]

Throughout the history of Indian CCC, production activities frequently clashed with off-duty programs which attempted to educate the enrollees and improve their character. Except for the Billings office where the

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[32]Arizona Republic, April 28, 1936, no page number, enclosed in W. J. Keays to J. P. Kinney, April 30, 1936, ibid.

[33]John Herrick to George I. Gilbertson, August 1, 1938, File 54239-36, Insect Control, General Service, 256, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

"production school" dominated strongly, most field officials of Indian CCC tried to give equal attention to project work and the social welfare of the enrollees. Production activities in themselves, however, contributed to the enrollees' well-being and education. Simply taking orders, working on a schedule, and earning wages were instructive to the many Indians who had never before held a regular job. Enrollees from the remote reservations of the Salt Lake City and Phoenix districts who were awed at first by bulldozers, cranes, jackhammers, and other machines quite frequently learned to operate such equipment in a skilled manner. Other enrollees became proficient in telephone work, welding, radio operation, and many other tasks. Thus CCC equipped thousands of enrollees with skills needed for off-reservation jobs.

Production made an even greater contribution when it put the land in better shape for Indians who preferred to remain on their own reservations. Indian CCC, however, was but one of several other Bureau programs during the New Deal which attempted to make the reservations more self-sufficient. Purchases of drought cattle, loans to Indians, founding of cooperative enterprises, and purchases of additional land for grazing or farming aided those who wished to stay on their own reservation.

The poverty of many Indians today indicates all too clearly that not all the hopes of Indian CCC were

realized, but some reservations did benefit enormously. When Claude Cornwall of the Washington office visited Fort Hall in 1939, he attended a cattle auction by the local Indian cattlemen's association. The head of the association had formerly been an IECW official. When Cornwall asked the Indian what conservation had done for the reservation, he answered that fences kept out trespassing cattle and water development increased the grazing capacity of the range. Cornwall then inquired what the former IECW official had learned personally from the program. Without hesitation, he quipped: "I learned that I could make more money out of the cattle business."[34] His reply was much more significant than he realized, for production activities of Indian CCC were not planned as an end in themselves. Hopefully they pointed to a brighter day when the enrollee would find it more profitable to leave Indian CCC to secure a job or to start farming or ranching on his own.

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[34]Claude C. Cornwall to John Collier, November 27, 1939, File 466-1937, Enrollee Program, Oklahoma City District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

CHAPTER V

NATIONAL POLICY DURING THE MIDDLE YEARS, 1934-1937

The hurried atmosphere and strong emphasis on getting relief to the Indians that characterized the first year of IECW gradually disappeared in the subsequent period. The major leadership posts of the organization were taken over by career Indian Bureau men. These individuals corrected the mistakes of 1933 and devoted more attention to project planning, the use of machinery, and supervision of field operations. By 1937 Indian CCC had become a firmly institutionalized agency in terms of production, and it retained much the same basic procedures until brought to an end in World War II.

Daniel E. Murphy became the Director of IECW after the resignation of Jay B. Nash in the fall of 1933. A native of the East, the future Director had graduated from a Boston high school with honors and attended a business school before entering Indian Service in 1911. He had filled numerous positions as a clerk, touring auditor, and superintendent before the Bureau assigned him as principal

clerk of the Osage agency in 1929.[1] The post was one of the most difficult and sensitive in Indian Service at the time because of the large sums of oil money collected and distributed to the Osages by the Bureau. Murphy apparently succeeded quite well, for two years later he became superintendent at Osage. His strong record permitted him to escape numerous demotions and dismissals of other veteran Bureau employees when Collier became Commissioner in 1933.

Even though Collier has called Murphy "one of the ablest among the old-line Bureau functionaries," the new Director of IECW never became one of the small group which formulated New Deal Indian policy.[2] Instead, Murphy's role dealt almost entirely with administrative matters, and his talents for this were widely recognized. Assistant Commissioner, William Zimmerman, Jr., particularly remembers Murphy as a methodical person who kept the records of Indian CCC in better shape than the main files of the Bureau.[3]

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[1]Daniel E. Murphy file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri. The connotation of the term principal or chief clerk is somewhat misleading. The position ranked second only to that of superintendent. The principal or chief clerk was in charge of the agency office and acted for the superintendent in his absence.

[2]John Collier, From Every Zenith (Denver: Sage Books, 1963), 187.

[3]Personal interview with William Zimmerman, Jr., Washington, D. C., August 29, 1965. Zimmerman's compliment takes on added weight because he and Murphy bitterly disputed the transfer of a clerk in the latter's office. The two men remained on a non-speaking basis after this.

Although not a driving personality, Murphy held a firm rein over his organization. He met failures and problems in the field with letters which displayed a full understanding of pertinent regulations and closely reasoned solutions. Murphy was essentially a careful and moderate person who administered Indian CCC with a minimum of bombast and confusion.

Murphy possessed a genuine interest in Indians and their culture in contrast to many experienced Bureau employees. He hoped some day to write a book on the American tribes, and he gathered a mass of information and bibliographical data on Indian history and ethnology during his long and varied career in the Bureau. He also displayed considerable talent in collecting Indian artifacts. Moreover, Murphy was often troubled by how little his Indian friends knew about their own history. He frequently admonished them to study more about their cultural background, and he took pride in his ability to identify every tribe, past or present, that had ever lived in the present area of the United States.[4] Murphy's interest in the Indians

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[4]Personal interview of Ruth Buring, Oklahoma City Oklahoma, March 10, 1966. Miss Buring worked under Murphy several years when he headed the Minneapolis area office from 1946 to 1950. Her information was extremely helpful in disclosing the personal side of Murphy. She describes him as a dark-haired and fairly good looking man of medium height and build. He possessed an unvarying sense of friendliness and understanding for his subordinates on the job, but he became somewhat aloof and seldom associated with them outside the office. Miss Buring noted a growing bitterness

probably accounts for the strong sympathy he displayed for enrollee training, better camp conditions, and other off-duty programs of Indian CCC.

Murphy encountered no major legislative changes in leading IECW before mid-1937. When the Emergency Conservation Work Act of 1933 expired on March 31, 1935, Congress had failed to authorize a continuation of the program, and nearly all reservations stopped their project work. But eight days later Congress passed a resolution extending the original act for another two years. The same legislation provided $600,000,000 to operate Fechner's organization during the same period.[5] Before this second Emergency Conservation Act terminated, Congress approved a deficiency grant of $95,000,000 February, 1937 to continue CCC to the end of June.[6] A revised CCC program took effect the following July.

IECW was abundantly financed all during the middle years. Murphy inherited a surplus left over from the first

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in his behavior around 1950. She thought at the time that he probably resented the arduous responsibilities of heading an area office and wanted to become a personal representative of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It was rumored that when Murphy visited Washington in 1950, he demanded the easier but more prestigious post of personal representative. When this was refused, he asked to be retired. The government gave Murphy a Meritorious Service Award for his thirty-nine years in the Indian Bureau.

[5]U. S., Statutes at Large, XLIX, Part 1, 115-119.

[6]Ibid., L, Part 1, 10-11.

work season when he assumed control of IECW; he used the money during 1934. From the start of the program to July 1, 1934, IECW received $9,540,000 from Fechner. The organization reached the peak of its spending in fiscal 1935 when it used $11,075,000. IECW suffered reductions to $9,345,000 in 1936 and to $8,230,000 in 1937.[7] These two cuts did not force a serious curtailment of IECW projects. A sizable portion of the funds during the initial two or three years of the program had been used to buy the original production machinery and to set up the first camps. Once these expenses were out of the way, IECW could afford to take some reductions without adversely affecting the program.

The finances of IECW up to mid-1937 were frequently in near chaos because of disparities between the time span of CCC grants and the fiscal year. Originally, Emergency Conservation Work had been financed on the basis of six-month enrollment periods. These caused considerable confusion because they did not correspond to the periods normally used for government financial matters. Fechner apparently continued to use the enrollment periods for granting funds until July 1, 1935 when he switched to annual allotments.[8] While this procedure helped relieve some of

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[7]"Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the United States Department of the Interior," Conrad Wirth to Harold Ickes, January, 1944, Box 131, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[8]A. E. Demaray to Robert Fechner, December 27, 1935,

the trouble, the problem was not entirely solved until Congress passed the Civilian Conservation Act of 1937. This legislation gave CCC a place in the federal budget and permitted the organization to operate completely on the fiscal year.

The effects of Fechner's bewildering financial arrangements on IECW were most unhappy. Some IECW grants from the parent organization were for three months, others for six months, and still others for a year. The entire IECW organization from Murphy to the project managers constantly faced extra paperwork in drawing up estimates and plans. Local officials usually had less than a week's notice to design and submit proposed projects for the next enrollment period. Systematic administration and long-range planning could not be done under such conditions.

Fechner's relations with IECW during the middle years continued along much the same lines as 1933. He sometimes visited IECW projects on official tours, and he seemed quite pleased with both the field work and camp facilities.[9] The Director never showed the least inclination to cancel the special concessions given to IECW in 1933, nor did he ever seem interested in incorporating the Indian program into his own organization. His financial

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Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[9]Robert Fechner to John Collier, September 12, 1934, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

allotments to IECW were always in direct proportion to the money granted to the regular CCC.

Nevertheless, Fechner maintained a sharp eye for unnecessary expenditures by IECW, and he continued his habit of writing amazingly lucid reprimands to Murphy's office. One of the most frequent causes of dispute between the testy Director and IECW were repeated attempts of the Indian Bureau to broaden the scope of CCC operations by adding new types of projects. Getting the approval of Fechner for any innovation never came easy. He seemed to reject every new proposal out of hand and then think of reasons for his disapproval. He also vigorously exercised his authority to review and veto all supply requisitions of over $2,500.

After Fechner had rejected projects and purchases, IECW officials typically waited a year and resubmitted the same proposals in new language, hoping to catch the crusty Director off guard. Hence, relations between IECW and the main CCC office usually resembled a game of bureaucratic "cat and mouse," but Fechner's vigilance and power gave him a decided edge over Murphy and his associates.

The underlying reason for most of the disputes between Fechner and IECW was a difference of opinion about what constituted valid projects for CCC. Fechner defined his policy on the subject when he rejected an IECW purchase request for fencing supplies. The Director disapproved

the requisition because he felt "that fencing in a grazing area is not primarily an improvement of the National domain, but rather for the purpose of improving the general condition of the Indians. . . ."[10] In Fechner's opinion every activity of IECW had to relate directly to the main purposes of CCC: the relief of unemployment, and the conservation of resources on the public domain. He tried, with only fair success, to judge every new activity of IECW by these two standards. IECW officials, on the other hand, tended to select projects by how well they would benefit the Indians, even if the work barely touched on the main purposes of CCC.

Despite Fechner's reluctance to approve additional types of work, he authorized several significant new activities for IECW that he had strongly rejected earlier. His freer policy on water development in mid-1934 led to extensive IECW projects for drilling wells and installing windmills, pumps, and storage tanks in every area of the West.[11] A year later Fechner ended his opposition to soil conservation projects on restricted allotments. He also authorized IECW to cooperate with the irrigation division of the Indian Bureau to help provide subsistence gardens in late 1935.

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[10]Robert Fechner to D. E. Murphy, March 3, 1936, File 59225-36, Fechner Correspondence, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[11]"Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," pp. 56-58, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, NA, RG 75.

All three new activities became important supplements to the meager appropriations the Bureau received for such projects.

Fechner frequently complained that IECW employed too many supervisory personnel. The regular CCC maintained approximately fifteen enrollees for every supervisor, compared to a ratio of eight to one in IECW. Robert Marshall, who headed the forestry division and was influential with Collier, became irritated with Fechner's criticisms and demanded that IECW ignore them. Marshall argued that the parent organization kept a lower percentage of salaried employees by assigning many enrollees to nonessential camp duties, skimping on the supervision of production, and using inefficient hand labor instead of machines. The quality of forestation efforts of the parent organization had suffered, and their projects were "disgraces to conservation" in Marshall's opinion.[12]

In one of his rare protests, Murphy defended his efforts to meet Fechner's demands about the high percentage of supervisors on the IECW payroll. Murphy felt that the central office of CCC had been "most cooperative and considerate and . . . we should be equally so." He pointed out that Fechner had never insisted IECW match the fifteen to one ratio of the parent organization, and the CCC

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[12]Robert Marshall memorandum, June 1, 1936, File 66429-1936, General Service, 169, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Director had merely wanted the Indian Bureau to not hire over one salaried employee for every ten enrollees. Moreover, Murphy denied that the demands of the central CCC office would threaten the quality of production. He stated that he had never protested the ratio of workers to supervisors on any reservation until it fell below six to one.[13]

This dispute accurately illustrates the relationship of IECW with Fechner and the parent organization all during the middle years. The CCC Director constantly criticized and badgered IECW officials to improve the performance of their program, yet he repeatedly made special concessions to them that he never granted to the regular CCC.

Freedom from any basic changes in IECW, the absence of drastic reductions in funds, and the basic sympathy of Fechner allowed Murphy to perfect his organization and make it more efficient. One of his first major tasks was to increase the proportion of Indians in salaried positions. Early in 1934 IECW established four leader camps for 222 enrollees at Yakima, Washington, Mescalero, New Mexico, and Fort Apache and Cameron (Western Navajo), Arizona. The instruction in the three leader camps in the Southwest dealt with a wide variety of subjects, including erosion control, range improvement, telephone line construction, surveying, water development, forestation, and camp management. The

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[13]D. E. Murphy memorandum, June 1, 1936, ibid.

enrollees at Yakima studied only various facets of forestry.[14] The camps lasted ten weeks. Actual production work occupied seventy-five percent of the trainees' time and classroom studies twenty-five percent.

The leader camps suffered from many mistakes according to reports filed afterward. Perhaps the worst error was allowing the local superintendents to select the participants. This resulted in sizable disparities in age, educational background, ability, and interest. The older men had trouble comprehending and remembering classroom instruction and information. Many of the trainees had not understood the purpose of the camps. Some believed that their stay of ten weeks would provide a college degree, and others thought they would be allowed to specialize in one area of studies. Very few of the enrollees realized beforehand that production would take up the bulk of their time. And ten weeks was not enough time to develop effective leaders. The traits required of a foreman demanded a slow process of actual experience in handling men.

A follow-up study of the participants' success in obtaining salaried positions in July, 1934 revealed further shortcomings. Inability to locate all of the men made the study inconclusive, but it definitely established that many

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[14]William H. Zeh and George W. Hedden to John Collier, April 24, 1934, Report on Cameron Leader Camp, Box 94, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; Percy E. Melis to John Collier, April 4, 1934, The Fort Simcoe ECW Leader Camp, ibid.

had already left IECW. Of the 211 enrollees who completed the leader training, only fifty men or approximately twenty-four percent held salaried positions in IECW.[15] The strong tendency of more able enrollees to take jobs in other relief programs, become self-employed, or enter private industry, made leader training impractical.

One of the most important changes of IECW during the middle years was the replacement of hand labor and horses on projects with heavy equipment. An inventory in mid-1935 showed that IECW owned 1,196 trucks, 189 tractors, 45 compressors, 95 graders, 72 scrapers, and 53 bulldozers. Production officials evidently felt they needed still more machinery. During the twelve months after April 1, 1935, IECW bought $977,000 worth of new equipment and paid out an additional $282,000 in rentals and repairs. In the same period, the organization spent only $63,000 on hiring Indian teams and providing feed.[17]

IECW obtained much additional used equipment from the Army and regular CCC. Such acquisitions started when the Army began turning over surplus property to CCC camps. Except for hand tools, most of the items offered had little

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[15]C. N. Willington to John Collier, August 2, 1934, ibid.

[16]John Collier to Robert Fechner, July 24, 1935, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[17]Emergency Conservation Funds, File 50839-1936, Funds, 220, General Service, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

value for IECW. Much larger and more valuable amounts of property were made available by the regular CCC after 1935. In that year the parent organization hit its peak size with around 500,000 participants. Enrollment by 1937 had dropped to approximately 300,000, and many camps had closed. Fechner made the equipment of defunct units available to the rest of CCC if local officials were willing to bear the expense of removing it. While many of the trucks, cars, and other machines were not worth the cost of transporting them to Indian reservations, several IECW camps repaired the more serviceable equipment for use on their projects. The Billings office, in particular, seems to have obtained much of its district equipment in this manner.

Indians that had been isolated from all modern technology experienced endless problems in learning how to operate the trucks and other machinery of IECW. Pictures in the field reports submitted to the Washington office give graphic evidence of the Indian enrollees' troubles in learning to drive. Dented fenders, caved in cabs, and a general battered appearance were standard for all but IECW's newest trucks.[18]

The Indians' woes with machinery provoked innumera-

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[18]White enrollees of CCC evidently shared the Indians' problems in learning how to drive trucks and operate machinery. Records of the parent organization show that collisions between CCC trucks and vehicles of private citizens led to many claims against the government and caused local outcries against Fechner's organization.

ble humorous situations. Such became the case when an IECW foreman ordered two Jicarilla Apaches to unload some trash off a long-wheel-base truck. The driver, who had spent considerable time off the reservation and knew something about such matters, decided to back the truck up to an arroyo and shovel the trash off the rear. He stationed his companion outside the truck and told him very emphatically: "Tell me to stop when the rear wheels reach the edge!" The literal-minded Indian gravely motioned the truck back, and as its wheels went over the edge of the arroyo, he shouted: "Stop, you're there!" When the dust settled, the truck was in a vertical position with its back resting on the floor of the arroyo and the cab and front wheels sticking up in the air above the edge of the bank. After struggling to get out of the truck, the enraged driver reached his shaken companion and yelled: "I told you to tell me to stop when the wheels reached the edge." Although the other Jicarilla's eyes were still wide with fright, he replied indignantly: "I did tell you. You said to tell you when the rear wheels reached the edge and that's exactly what I did."[19]

Of all the disputes among IECW officials over whether the program should stress production or the enrollees' welfare, none became so heated as the question of allowing the

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[19]Personal interview of Ernest V. Downing, March 10, 1966, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Indians to operate trucks and machinery. Production-minded officials were aghast at the prospect of enrollees damaging expensive equipment and delaying production, while other leaders heatedly pointed out that IECW should train the Indians in such skills and not bring in skilled white operators.

The policy Fechner imposed on IECW after 1935 steered a middle course between the two schools of thought. When IECW submitted a request to employ some 800 additional skilled whites in 1935, Fechner approved hiring only more engineers and surveyors. The Director insisted that enrollees do all less skilled work.[20] As a result, the Washington office ordered that only Indians be used as truck drivers, blacksmiths, rodmen, and compressor and jackhammer operators.[21] Fechner later relented slightly and allowed IECW to add more skilled whites. Production officials after 1935 were generally forced to use Indians in semi-skilled work such as truck driving, but they usually served as assistants to skilled whites in more demanding jobs.

Even with the best operators, the application of more machinery created many maintenance and repair headaches

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[20]Robert Fechner to John Collier, July 25, 1935, Fechner File, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[21]John Collier to Robert Fechner, August 30, 1935, ibid.

for IECW. Rough terrain and rocks often snapped front axles of heavily-loaded trucks or tore breaks in the tires. The bulldozers, scrapers, and other earth-moving equipment were frequently damaged or ruined by the strain of rooting out tree stumps and removing large boulders. Foremen and project managers traveled extensively over poor roads and rugged trails and turned their cars and pickups into complete wrecks after two or three years. All motorized equipment suffered shortened engine life from dust in the drought regions. Such problems forced the local IECW officials to establish repair shops wherever projects used much machinery. These at first were normally staffed by white mechanics and Indian helpers, but the enrollees often soon took over as full mechanics.

A fairly sizable portion of the equipment purchased by the Bureau failed to hold up under the rugged demands of IECW project work. In an attempt to economize, the Bureau purchased several small and badly underpowered sixty-horsepower Fords and Graham "crusaders" in early 1937. Officials who used the small cars complained that they had to drive them in low or second gear, except on level hard-surfaced roads, and that the radiators boiled constantly in hot weather. Two of the "Crusaders" were assigned to deputy special officers at Gallup, New Mexico for capturing bootleggers. The cars hardly lived up to their names, and one of the officers dryly reported: "In

one instance a Ford Model-A outran me. I was after this car to search [it] as I knew they had liquor. Another, a Chevrolet 1934 roadster outran me. Both got away. I did catch one Chevrolet 1935 but he did not know I was after him."[22]

There was no humor in a purchase of nine trucks from the Walter Truck Company of New York. The massive Walter trucks were designed to pull semi-trailers with heavy machinery. They were equipped with a front-wheel drive and special differentials that provided traction from all four wheels simultaneously. IECW officials thought the vehicles would be ideal for moving heavy loads over the varied terrain of reservations and paid $63,000 for the nine trucks. But field supervisors soon reported countless transmission and differential breakdowns with them. Such failures not only delayed production, but IECW had to pay costly towing charges when the trucks broke down between distant reservations. Several Corbitt telephone trucks with four-wheel drives proved equally unsatisfactory. IECW experienced a host of more minor troubles with various firms' earthmoving machines.

The Bureau seldom enjoyed much success in attempts to win adjustments from manufacturers of faulty equipment.

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[22]A. G. Aldrich to William Nash, June 26, 1937, File 51639-1936, Equipment, General Service, 345, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

The companies invariably blamed the breakdowns on improper use of maintenance failures by IECW. The purchasing agent's office in the Bureau insisted that the equipment had not met specifications, was improperly designed, and had not been adequately serviced before delivery. Major firms such as Ford and General Motors replaced bad parts and machines free of charge after a minimum of dispute. The Graham-Paige Company proved more reluctant, but eventually it exchanged the "Crusaders" for an equal number of heavier and more expensive cars. The smaller firms were quite obstinate. The Walter Truck Company repaired its vehicles, but did not solve the problem. The Corbitt Company apparently did nothing. The Bureau evidently did not feel that legal action was worthwhile in these and other cases. Its biggest threat was to remind the delinquent firms that failure to make adequate adjustment would cancel all future business with the Bureau.

IECW eventually stopped making unsound equipment purchases by adopting a series of safeguards. Some firms loaned one of their models to Indian CCC for trail use before the Bureau made a large purchase. The Washington office also started drawing up more rigid specifications before letting contracts, and field leaders carefully checked deliveries to insure that they met the prescribed standards. In at least one case, IECW engineers tested different firms' earthmoving machines to compare their merits and capacity.

Indian CCC shops quite frequently modified production equipment to correct weaknesses.

Better planning of projects accompanied the increased application of machinery. During the first year or so, reservations had planned their production very casually with a minimum of assistance from the district offices. To reduce the resulting failures, Murphy gave the district offices the power to disapprove work believed unfeasible. The Washington office also demanded that all proposed projects be placed on standard forms and submitted to the district offices for approval after February, 1935. This resulted in the practice of local officials calling in district foresters and engineers to help judge the merits of prospective work and to draw up plans. After the projects were designed, reservations sent them to the district coordinator for approval. He then forwarded them to the Washington office for a final review by J. P. Kinney, the General Production Supervisor. These procedures gradually involved district engineers and foresters in actual supervision of projects whenever local project managers and foremen needed technical assistance.

Improved planning did not change the goals of IECW but attempted to improve production and avoid the project failures of the first years of the program. The new emphasis on quality was badly handicapped by the disparities between enrollment periods and the fiscal year noted earlier.

Sound project planning on an annual basis was finally achieved by the Civilian Conservation Corps Act of 1937.

The problems encountered in planning projects were slight compared to those experienced by IECW in financial accounts and records at the agency level. During the first three years, IECW operated under Emergency Relief Administration funds. Accounting problems seldom arose, mainly because no outside officials interfered. The records of IECW doubtless were in disarray on many reservations. The bookkeeping system used by the Bureau for its regular functions was inadequate for IECW affairs. Some agencies adopted other accounting methods, and other superintendents continued with the old system. Investigations by the Department of Interior frequently revealed that agency records were so confused that neither the auditors or local officials could tell how IECW funds had been spent. The checks did indicate that the relief money had often been used for unapproved projects and by the regular divisions of the Bureau.

The free and easy methods of accounting came to an end at the start of fiscal 1936. At that time IECW began submitting all payroll and purchase vouchers through the Accounts and Deposits Offices of the Treasury Department located in each state. Treasury accountants rejected many IECW vouchers for various minor discrepancies, and Murphy ordered all the senior district clerks and production coordinators to a conference at Billings, Montana in August,

1936.

Representatives of the Washington office and the Treasury Department appeared before the district officials at Billings and explained the proper procedures for submitting vouchers to the Accounts and Deposits offices. The conference then established a more uniform system for keeping IECW records at the agency headquarters and set up a standard method for examining such files by the senior district clerks.[23] While the Billings meeting ended most accounting problems, Murphy in 1937 still had to send a Treasury Department accountant and a senior district clerk to various agencies in Arizona and New Mexico to straighten out local IECW records.[24]

The middle years of Indian CCC were brought to a close by the passage of the Civilian Conservation Corps Act of 1937. President Roosevelt early in 1937 decided to revise CCC and make it a permanent agency of the federal government.[25] His goal seemed to involve little difficulty, for the attitude of the public toward CCC had changed dramatically since 1933. A sizable portion of the public

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[23]Robert J. Ballantyne to D. E. Murphy, August 15, 1936, File 51639A-1936, General Service, 258, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[24]Grover Jones to Commissioner of Accounts and Deposits, Treasury Department, May 18, 1937, File 50039-1936, Accounts, General Service, 250, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[25]New York Times, March 19, 1937, p. 6.

and Congress originally had questioned the wisdom of the government undertaking a conservation program. Organized labor had placed several stipulations in the 1933 act before they would accept it. Four years later labor seemed disinterested in CCC. Moreover, Fechner's organization by 1937 easily ranked as the most popular New Deal program, and one poll showed that eighty-two percent of the general public favored CCC.[26]

Despite these favorable conditions, the Roosevelt administration encountered surprising difficulties in efforts to secure a revised and permanent CCC. When Fechner appeared before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor in March, the members treated him with unusual friendliness and deference. The only hint of criticism came when the chairman, Hugo L. Black, apologetically mentioned that he had received several letters protesting the inadequacy of educational facilities in CCC.[27] Fechner, however, got a less favorable reception in the House hearings. Representative William J. Fitzgerald quizzed the CCC Director sharply about the lack of systematic and compulsory education in the organization. Fechner explained that he had required illiterate enrollees to attend classes and had placed an

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[26]U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, Hearings on S. 2102, A Bill to Establish a Civilian Conservation Corps, and for Other Purposes, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, p. 12.

[27]Ibid., p. 11.

educational advisor in each camp to promote training for other youths on a voluntary basis. The Director felt that the participants learned all they needed to know from their project activities, and he believed that formal education would entail too much expense. When asked about his reaction to using part of the work week for compulsory classes, Fechner replied heatedly: "Forty hours out of 168 hours in a week is little enough for any boy who has desire, and he has plenty of opportunity outside of that 40 hours work in the field to study and improve himself. . . ."[28] Despite the Director's reluctant attitude, the House committee added a provision for ten hours of compulsory education per week during the enrollees' off-duty hours.

New and more bitter attacks on the CCC Bill arose during the House and Senate floor debates in May and June. Although the extension of CCC was assured, the legislators disputed constantly over the various provisions of the bill. The attempt to make CCC a permanent agency especially evoked hostility, and a House amendment limited the program to two additional years.[29] The Representatives also disagreed about whether to make the ten hours of education a required or permissive feature of CCC and what subject matter should

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[28]U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Labor, Hearings on H. R. 6180, To Make Civilian Conservation Corps a Permanent Agency, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, p. 34.

[29]U. S., Congressional Record, 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXi, Part 4, 4383.

be taught. Minor disputes also arose about bringing CCC supervisory personnel under Civil Service and the proper eligibility requirement for admitting enrollees to the program.

Although not mentioned openly during the debates, the attacks on the CCC Bill to a large extent reflected resentment against Roosevelt's Supreme Court plan more than actual opposition to the legislation at hand. One of the most ardent foes of revising the Supreme Court, Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri, had bitterly criticized Fechner earlier for supporting the administration's court plan.[30] Clark during the Senate debate amended the bill to reduce Fechner's salary from $12,000 to $10,000.[31] Both this unsubtle slap and the amendment limiting CCC to two additional years resulted from the growing hostility and suspicion of Congress against the Roosevelt administration. After lengthy debates and two considerations by a conference committee, Congress finally passed the CCC Bill and the President signed it on June 28, 1937.

The final form of the legislation differed considerably from the early plans of Fechner and Roosevelt. Congress refused to make CCC a permanent agency, and supporters on the conference committee were able to extend

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[30] New York Times, April 22, 1937, p. 15.

[31] U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Part 4, 4831.

the program for only three years. The Clark amendment cutting Fechner's salary remained in the final enactment. Supervisory personnel were not required to take Civil Service examinations because CCC remained a temporary organization. The act emphatically endorsed ten hours of enrollee education per week, but the provision was permissive.[32]

The CCC Act of 1937 did not greatly affect the Indian program in a direct manner, except for the increased emphasis on education. The Indian Bureau still retained control of its own CCC organization and all the special concessions granted by Fechner in 1933. The new law established a maximum quota of 10,000 enrollees for Indian CCC. This provision would have little effect since enrollment after 1937 never approached 10,000. Whites could no longer serve as enrollees in Indian CCC, but the Bureau had followed this policy rather rigidly after 1933.[33] Because Congress had officially named Fechner's organization the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Indian Bureau now styled its program as the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, or CCC-ID.

The passage of the CCC Act of 1937 marked a turning point for both the parent organization and CCC-ID. The

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[32] Statutes at Large, L, Part 1, 319-322.

[33] Ibid.

congressional hostility against Roosevelt would soon be felt in reduced appropriations for Fechner and fewer funds for CCC-ID. Murphy could no longer depend on the central CCC office for abundant allotments in the lean years ahead. On the other hand, the legislation had extended CCC for another three years. Since production and administrative difficulties had been largely solved by 1937, Murphy could turn his attention to other matters. In fact, the emphasis of CCC-ID after 1937 swung gradually but definitely toward a general improvement of education, recreation, camp conditions, rehabilitation, and all other off-duty activities of the program.

A review of the middle yars of Indian CCC shows clearly that a quest for production efficiency and perfection of administrative procedures dominated the organization. The excitement, urgency, and sweeping policy changes that had typified IECW in 1933 disappeared in the later period. Trends and developments, instead of major events, characterized IECW under Murphy's leadership. Although he lacked both the influence and personal desire to institute drastic policy changes, he did perfect his organization by 1938. He gradually replaced chaos with order in record keeping, equipment purchases, and general administrative practices. The hiring of more technicians and increased application of machinery resulted in better project plan-

ning, greater efficiency, and fewer production failures. In terms of field work, Indian CCC had become fixed in its basic policies and procedures by 1938.

CHAPTER VI

THE ENROLLEE PROGRAM

The provision for ten hours of training per week in the CCC Act of 1937 focused new attention on this much-neglected aspect of Indian CCC. The Washington office had already instituted several new policies which pointed in the direction of better enrollee training. The most important of these steps was the creation of the enrollee program in early 1937. This new organization placed the education of Indian CCC enrollees on a much more systematic and mandatory basis. The program, however, was badly hampered during its first years by serious obstacles such as weak central leadership and the hostility of production officials. Nevertheless, educational activities gradually gained a prominent place in Indian CCC and would eventually become one of the most notable achievements of the entire program.

All education before 1937 had been provided by the very loose and nebulous welfare program. An almost total absence of records on this organization, if it can be called that, makes it impossible to fully describe its

functions. Besides education, the welfare program supposedly looked after needy enrollees and provided recreation facilities. It is far from clear how it could have achieved any of these purposes for it had no Director or budget during most of the period before 1937. District camp supervisors and local camp managers carried on some enrollee training under the welfare program, but they evidently gave the bulk of their attention to charity and recreation. The enrollee program, on the other hand, was almost entirely devoted to education.

Various factors operated against enrollee training during the first years of Indian CCC. Certainly the entire CCC organization from Fechner to the lowest field officials considered their program as primarily aimed at production rather than education. Fechner felt that the enrollees received sufficient training on the job, and he did not need to provide formal educational activities except for illiterates. Not until 1936 did the parent organization appoint an educational advisor for each camp. The Indian Bureau, moreover, had its own special problems in starting enrollee training. Three percent of the enrollees could not read or write English and only one-half had completed more than four grades in school.[1] The irregular size and

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[1]The educational levels of the enrollees were as follows:

3 percent could not read or write English
48 percent had completed 4th grade

nature of Indian CCC camps and the constant high turnover of enrollees made it very difficult to devise workable training programs.

Nevertheless, random educational activities had been provided at some camps during the first years of Indian CCC. Even when every effort was bent toward establishing camps and getting field work under way in 1933, some camp managers reportedly provided newspapers and magazines for Indian enrollees and held meetings to explain personal hygiene, soil erosion control, range restoration, forest fire fighting methods, and other matters.[2] Camp managers and district camp supervisors stimulated training for enrollees on some reservations after the initial year in various other ways. They sometimes asked doctors, extension agents, teachers, foresters, and other Bureau personnel to teach classes to the enrollees. Harry Hopkins first opened the educational facilities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to Indians in late 1934.[3] Collier

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30 percent had completed 8th grade
17 percent were on a high school level
2 percent were on a college level
"Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," p. 37, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, National Archives, Record Group 75.

[2]Jay Nash to John Collier, September 12, 1933, no file number, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[3]John Collier to Superintendents, November 20, 1934, File 79633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

asked superintendents to investigate the possibilities for obtaining FERA instructors and facilities for their reservations. Although records are very sparse, at least a few FERA teachers instructed Indian enrollees. Other CCC workers may have participated in correspondence courses prepared by Hopkin's organization.

IECW officials frequently combined education with the enrollees' production activities. The four leader camps in early 1934 noted in an earlier chapter applied the trainees' classroom studies to project work. Five Bureau vocational schools the next year conducted short courses for sixty mechanics employed by IECW, roads, and irrigation.[4] Several types of projects demanded the instruction of enrollees before they could start work. Very few enrollees had any experience in stone laying, for example, and foremen in charge of building masonry dams, bridges, and culverts had to teach their men how to prepare the mortar and use a trowel before starting such projects. This sort of training became even more prominent in the Lake States and Pacific Northwest on forestation work. Enrollees in both areas participated in classes on forest fire fighting, correct methods of controlling blister rust and pine beetles, surveying truck trails, and other sub-

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[4]"Instructional Courses for Tractor Mechanics," Indians at Work, II (April, 1935), 43. Hereafter cited as IAW.

jects. Some supervisors, regardless of the task at hand, made a point of explaining the "why" behind the enrollees' work and how projects would benefit their particular tribe.

Of the various educational efforts before 1937, none was more important in the creation of the enrollee program than the safety regulations which Fechner's office issued in 1934. The instruction of enrollees in first aid and safety, according to these regulations, had to be done by men who had received specialized training and passed Red Cross proficiency tests. Fechner demanded that all production supervisors, leaders, assistant leaders, truck drivers, and machinery operators be trained in first aid so they could render assistance whenever someone was injured. During the first two years of the safety program, Fechner allowed Indian CCC to evade full compliance with his first aid regulations. While training was sometimes provided by Indian Service physicians, more often it was given by unqualified camp managers and production supervisors, or ignored altogether. The absence of a serious accident problem in Indian CCC and the shortage of qualified instructors perhaps justified such haphazard arrangements for first aid training, but Fechner seems to have pressured Murphy to meet the regulations more fully.

As a result, Murphy appointed Robert M. Patterson as the first educational director of Indian CCC in September, 1935. Patterson possessed a varied background which seeming-

ly prepared him for his new position. He had been trained in philosophy at St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia before he entered the Army in World War I. While in service, Patterson had obtained his Master's degree in animal husbandry at Virginia Polytechnic at Blacksburg, Virginia, and after the war he had worked in various land management positions both in the United States and abroad. He had taken a Master's degree in sociology in 1932 at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and had served as a camp commander in the regular CCC and rehabilitation worker among transients for FERA immediately before his appointment by Murphy.[5]

The idealistic Patterson accepted Collier's thinking that enrollee education should be extremely flexible and fitted to local tribal customs and economic needs. He also believed that the bulk of training should be aimed at the younger and more able Indians. In addition, Patterson seemed to feel that local Indian CCC officials would voluntarily devise and carry out educational activities, especially on-the-job training. Allowing field leaders to provide training on their own initiative proved to be a serious mistake which played into the hands of the production-minded and delayed substantial progress in general

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[5]Robert M. Patterson file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.

enrollee education for at least two years.

Patterson instituted a new program to train first aid instructors before the start of the 1936 work season. He established training centers in each district to which superintendents sent enrollees for two weeks of instruction by Red Cross representatives. Patterson asked that the superintendents take care to select men who had an aptitude for teaching regardless of their experience or rank in IECW.[6] The reservations evidently made sound selections, for 194 out of the 211 trainees in 1936 received first aid certificates, and 133 of them additionally qualified as first aid instructors.[7]

The use of training centers solved the problem of supplying qualified instructors for first aid classes. The youths who met Red Cross standards returned to their own camps and taught their fellow enrollees. The teaching sometimes forced the instructor to translate his subject matter from English into his tribal tongue. Making good translations for information on resuscitation, shock, artificial respiration, and tourniquets may have strained the ingenuity of some instructors, but most could lecture equally well in their own language or in English.

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[6]John Collier to all District Camp Supervisors, March 6, 1936, File 58839-36, Welfare File, General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[7]A. E. Demaray to Robert Fechner, July 16, 1936, File 59039-36, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Training centers became a most important part of enrollee education in the period after 1936. Indian CCC soon adopted the same plan for supplying instructors in general safety, life saving, fire fighting, and foremanship. Since youths of various reservations attended the sessions together, the use of training centers doubtlessly weakened many trainees' prejudice against other tribes and helped break down the provincial outlook of enrollees who had never before traveled beyond their own locale.

Soon after Patterson founded the district training centers for first aid, the Bureau made a second important advancement in enrollee education. William Zimmerman, Jr., instructed superintendents to establish a budget category for education when they submitted their project plans in mid-1936. Zimmerman added that the Bureau now expected IECW to give more attention to the welfare program in general. It had been financed up to this time by transferring money from work projects or by profits from camp canteens. Most production supervisors resisted switching money from projects to off-duty activities, and no canteens existed, of course, in married camps or where the enrollees lived at home. The Bureau at last showed a willingness to actually spend money on education instead of merely giving it lip service.

Despite this important step, education continued to drag for at least another year. Reports from the West later

in 1936 indicated that superintendents had no idea of what to do with their new educational funds. Some felt that they should buy movie projectors, and when the Washington office rejected such purchases, they treated the education budget as a "slush fund" for incidental camp expenses. Very few field officials, according to the reports, had established classes for their enrollees.[8]

A clear indication of the general neglect of enrollee training before 1937 can be seen in a report by J. H. Mitchell, camp supervisor of the Minneapolis district. Although Mitchell had developed the best off-duty activities of any district, he estimated that the total expenditures on the welfare program, including salaries of camp managers, medical care, recreation, and clothing issues, had absorbed less than one percent of the IECW funds spent in the Lake States since 1933. Mitchell also complained that the Bureau had been extremely slow in filling vacant camp manager positions in his district, and thus three boarding camps at the time had no one to supervise off-duty activities.[9]

The provision for ten hours of training per week in the CCC Act of 1937 centered more attention on education,

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[8]Lucy Wilcox Adams to Willard Beatty, September 30, 1936, File 50839-1936, Funds, 220, General Service, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[9]J. H. Mitchell to District #1, Work Plan, April 1, 1937 to June 30, 1938, File 59036, General Service, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

and Patterson outlined the enrollee program for the first time in September.[10] Although the purposes of the welfare program were retained, charity and recreation henceforth would be subordinate to education. Patterson still believed that local CCC-ID officials should formulate and manage their own educational programs. The education director also asked that each reservation detail one official to full-time duty on the enrollee program. In addition, superintendents were expected to spend around five percent of their CCC-ID funds on education.[11]

The reaction of the more production-minded district and reservation CCC-ID officials to the enrollee program could have been predicted beforehand. They felt that education would be a most excellent idea, but conditions in their particular area unfortunately did not permit them to start classes. Their excuses included the scattered nature of work, the small size of crews, the absence of permanent boarding camps, the indians' weak educational background,

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[10]There was no direct connection between the creation of the enrollee program and the CCC Act of 1937. Patterson's correspondence in early 1937 mentions the enrollee program, and he apparently took preliminary steps to revise the welfare program before passage of the legislation. Regardless of the timing of events, the CCC Act of 1937 gave support to educational activities for both the parent organization and Indian CCC.

[11]Robert M. Patterson to CCC-ID District Coordinators, Camp Supervisors, and Indian Service Superintendents, September 14, 1937, File 1327-1937, Enrollee Program, Spokane District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

and the high turnover among the workers. The officials politely concluded that the enrollee program had much merit for other regions, but the peculiar handicaps of their own area would allow only on-the-job training.

The adverse reaction to the enrollee program was but another variation of the old conflict over whether Indian CCC should devote its primary attention to the workers' social welfare and well-being or to production. After they had read the CCC Act of 1937, a good share of the field officials feared the prospect that they might have to provide ten hours of enrollee instruction per week. Moreover, the same officials seemed to believe that somehow the enrollee program would shorten the work week and interfere with production. Both district and local CCC-ID leaders, therefore, regularly ignored educational materials that the Washington office sent out to help start classes. In fact, most felt that anything signed by Patterson meant nothing and could be freely ignored. Field supervisors in the lower ranks who sympathized with the enrollee program hesitated to start classes for fear their superiors might object.

The resistance against the enrollee program required strong support from Collier before the Washington office established it in the field. Sometime in late 1937 or early 1938 Collier visited the Navajo agency headquarters at Window Rock, Arizona and discussed the status of the

enrollee program with Claude C. Cornwall, camp supervisor of the Phoenix district. Cornwall explained that education needed the Commissioner's backing and added: "The enrollee training program . . . hasn't done so well. In many places it hasn't even gotten off to a good start, and I think one of the difficulties is that some of the production staff, who are in charge of CCC under our set-up, haven't given it much of a break."[12] Murphy's lack of influence with Collier probably contributed to the field officials' habit of resisting the enrollee program.

Patterson's idealism and his lack of ability hampered the installation of the enrollee program in the field even after Collier had become aware of the situation. His belief that each reservation would voluntarily organize and present classes to the enrollees was far too utopian a scheme to succeed against the tough-minded hostility of many local CCC-ID officials. Patterson's correspondence to the field spoke of the education program as a means of opening great new horizons for the Indians, but the same letters offered little in the way of concise and clear directions that local CCC-ID leaders could use to start classes.[13] Moreover,

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[12]Claude C. Cornwall to John Collier, February 8, 1938, File 79633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[13]This excerpt from an introductory paragraph of one of Patterson's memorandums illustrates bureaucratic jargon at its worst: "The following recommendations, previously submitted to the Office by the undersigned are

events in Patterson's subsequent career show that his own personal problems perhaps contributed materially to the slow start of the enrollee program. The Bureau shifted Patterson to the Phoenix office in late 1938. Transfers to lower positions in another region had long been a standard practice of the Bureau whenever an employee had trouble with the Indians or otherwise could not perform his duties. Even the reassignment failed to save Patterson, for the Bureau dismissed him in 1939 "because of excessive use of intoxicants and failure to gain the confidence of the officials of the [Indian] service."[14]

Murphy replaced Patterson with Claude C. Cornwall who had held various camp management positions in the Albuquerque and Phoenix offices since the start of Indian CCC. The new Director had an even more varied background than Patterson's. Cornwall had received a degree in engineering at the University of Utah, worked for several irrigation companies, taught at the Latter Day Saint University in Salt Lake City, served as an artillery instructor in

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self-explanatory. They deal less with IECW Education directly than with the foundation and tie-in and minimum set-up whereby enrollee instruction can be accomplished, and are in full recognization of existing policy and regulations, and of the Service and IECW administration, production, and staff set-ups." Robert M. Patterson to District Camp Supervisors, 1937, ibid.

[14]Robert M. Patterson file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.

World War I, supervised the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association of the Mormon Church, and acted as a recreation director for eleven passenger ships operated by the United States Steamboat Lines of New York. When this firm folded during the depression, Cornwall had been unemployed until he entered New York University. He had finished a Master's degree in educational sociology and had nearly completed his doctorate when employed by the Bureau in 1933.[15]

Cornwall's diverse background provided many lessons for the difficulties he faced as Director of the enrollee program. His work with the Mormon youth organization and the steamship line had given him experience at supervising people who were widely scattered and outside his direct control. He understood the nature of CCC-ID field operations and the lack of sympathy that many officials felt for the enrollee program. Cornwall fortunately was a practical person who established clear procedures and persisted in his new duties. With Collier's support, Cornwall dropped the old policy of letting local CCC-ID officials voluntarily start enrollee training. Instead, the new

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[15]Cornwall retained his habit of starting new careers after Indian CCC ended in 1942. At that time he joined the War Relocation Authority until 1945 when he became a counseling psychologist for the Veterans Administration. He retired from the latter agency in 1959. Claude C. Cornwall file, Personnel Records of the Department of Interior, Federal Records Center, St. Louis, Missouri.

Director made an active enrollee program mandatory for every reservation with CCC-ID projects.

Cornwall otherwise made very few changes on Patterson's policies. The new Director believed that enrollees could learn much from their foremen, and he asked production officials to give more attention to on-the-job training under a four-step procedure. The steps included telling the enrollees what to do, demonstrating the tasks involved, allowing them to do the work by themselves, and criticizing their efforts.

Cornwall encouraged each superintendent to appoint an enrollee program coordinating committee from his reservation staff. The committee helped plan educational activities, advised camp managers and production leaders, and assisted in teaching classes. Since education never received over five percent of the CCC-ID budget, the fullest cooperation of the reservation staff, especially teachers and extension workers, was vital to the success of the enrollee program. Fifty-nine agencies had formed enrollee program coordinating committees by mid-1939, and CCC-ID workers had received an average of nearly three hours of instruction per week during the previous twelve months.[16]

The following year, the enrollee program became

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[16]D. E. Murphy to Superintendents, October 25, 1939, File 59633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

much more active. The workers spent an average of nearly four hours per week in training activities. The number of instructors increased to 751, or nearly double the previous figure. Two-thirds of these were regular CCC-ID personnel and the remainder were reservation staff members, Red Cross representatives, and Works Progress Administration teachers. The enrollee program trained nearly 5,000 Indians in forest fire fighting and another 1,000 in truck driving. Other major subjects taught included tractor operation, techniques of blasting, telephone and radio communications, first aid, and life saving. Enrollees also studied various other subjects by enrolling in correspondence courses supplied at a nominal cost.

One of the most significant developments during 1939 was detailing ten men from the district offices for a course in foremanship offered by the Interior Department in Washington. The ten men returned and held week-end seminars in the field where they instructed CCC-ID foremen in the latest techniques of on-the-job training.[17] This procedure doubtlessly improved the quality of training the enrollees received on their project work, but, even more important, it weakened the production leaders' bias against educational programs. Once the enrollee program had gotten a good start, many CCC-ID field leaders gradually

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[17] D. E. Murphy to all Superintendents, September 1, 1940, File 79633-1937, ibid.

dropped their hostility and became strong advocates of educational activities.

Although not every district and reservation had achieved the fullest potential of the enrollee program by mid-1940, Cornwall had installed active training for a majority of workers by that time. Some of the minor agencies, such as the Mission reservations in southern California, probably never had a real enrollee program for the small size of their operations did not justify the expense of trying to establish classes. Nevertheless, Cornwall had made the enrollee program virtually mandatory for the larger reservations.

The enrollee program took many forms in the six districts as it slowly played a more important role in CCC-ID. Perhaps of all areas, Oklahoma made the greatest improvement in enrollee training. Officials of the district office had always supported educational activities but had never been able to find a means of overcoming the enrollees' apathy for training while they lived in their homes. The Kiowa agency solved the problem in 1937 with the "voluntary overtime procedure." Under this plan, the enrollees agreed to work an extra hour for the first four days of the week, and in return they received four hours off on Friday afternoon for enrollee training. The Kiowa superintendent found that the voluntary overtime plan quickly became popular among both foremen and workers. The district office soon installed

the procedure at other CCC-ID installations in Oklahoma and Kansas, and Murphy authorized all reservations to start their own voluntary overtime plan the following year.

When Claude Cornwall visited the Oklahoma City district in 1939 he discovered that the quality of enrollee training equaled or exceeded that of the Lake States. The head of the boarding camp at Fort Cobb, Oklahoma had his enrollees raising their own chickens and hogs and tending an irrigated subsistence garden during their spare time. These training projects gave the Indian youths experience in farming and contributed to their camp larder. At Bull Hollow, a boarding camp near Tulsa, the enrollees received off-duty training in such subjects as blacksmithing, operation of machinery, shoemaking, and carpentry. Bull Hollow also possessed a well-stocked library for the enrollees' use.[18]

But the voluntary overtime plan worked almost as well for enrollees who lived at home. Oklahoma officials regularly brought such enrollees to boarding installations where they participated in Friday afternoon training sessions with the unmarried youths. Where distances made it difficult to transport the married enrollees to boarding camps, instructors sometimes taught the workers near their

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[18]Claude C. Cornwall to John Collier, May 18, 1939, File 466-1937, Enrollee Program, Oklahoma City District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

project sites. The enrollee training at the Pottawatomi agency in Kansas took place at night and included both the workers and their families.

Regardless of the mechanics of assembling the enrollees, they received very practical training in the voluntary overtime sessions. Classes were taught by the enrollees' supervisors, farm extension agents, physicians, and vocational training teachers of the Bureau, and other government employees such as Forest Service men. Most of the instruction dealt with agricultural subjects such as livestock judging and care, soil erosion control, and crop production. Forestry, surveying, leather work, and tractor operation also proved popular among the enrollees. Workers at both the Kiowa and Pottawatomi agencies erected chicken and hog houses as a part of their enrollee training. Under this scheme, Indian farmers supplied the materials and the enrollees contributed their labor on Friday afternoons. Thus the enrollees gained experience in various skills, and the farmers obtained needed buildings at little cost.

The great virtue of the voluntary overtime plan was its flexibility. It could be applied to nearly any subject matter and to all of the various types of camps found in CCC-ID. At its best, the voluntary overtime plan was oriented toward practical improvement of the Indians' economic conditions. Despite these virtues, the procedure required much planning and the fullest sympathy and support

of district and reservation officials of both CCC-ID and the regular Indian Service. In most areas, the required cooperation gradually developed until the voluntary overtime procedure had become a common and valuable part of CCC-ID at many reservations by 1942.

In the Minneapolis district, the enrollee program initially emphasized classroom studies so workers with little education could obtain eighth grade certificates. This training relied on teachers from the Works Progress Administration and the Minnesota and Wisconsin departments of education which administered tests to certify the enrollees. Studies under the WPA instructors were most prominent during the winters when bad weather gave the enrollees more leisure time. Such training often had touching aspects for the older Indians struggled against severe handicaps to master enough arithmetic, spelling, history, grammar, and other subjects to pass the tests. Twenty-six enrollees, ranging in age from nineteen to sixty-five, at the Great Lakes agency qualified for their eighth grade certificates in 1941. The superintendent staged a full commencement exercise for the men and invited the president of Northland College to address the "graduating class" and present their certificates. The guest speaker remarked after the ceremony that conferring degrees upon college graduates had never moved him so deeply as presenting certificates to the proud Indians.[19] In all, 126 enrollees qualified as eighth grade

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[19]"Wisconsin Reservation Stages Unusual Ceremony,"

graduates before CCC-ID closed in 1942.

The WPA also provided valuable assistance to educational activities in the Spokane district. The district camp supervisor, Gerritt Smith, worked out arrangements with the Idaho department of education and WPA in late 1936 so enrollees in the state could participate in correspondence courses on forestry, diesel engineering, psychology, business law, aeronautics, auto mechanics, bookkeeping, typewriting, journalism, arithmetic, radio, and blueprint reading. Smith made similar arrangements for the enrollees of Washington the following year.

Each correspondence course consisted of a set of lessons, answer sheets, and text. The enrollee wrote out answers for each lesson and mailed them to the state department of education. Teachers paid by WPA corrected the answer sheets and then returned them to the enrollees. If the enrollee passed the test given at the end of the course, he received a certificate from the state department of education in Idaho or Washington. The certificates might be accepted as high school and college credits if the enrollee demonstrated ability to do adequate scholastic work as a full-time student.

The correspondence course efforts started with a flourish, but Smith found that the enrollees' interest

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IAW, VIII (April, 1940), 31.

could not be sustained since employment in Indian CCC tended to be seasonal and all study had to take place during off-duty hours. When the demand for correspondence courses virtually ceased in 1938, Smith switched the emphasis of the enrollee program to classes in welding and mechanics at CCC-ID shops.

Both the Phoenix and Salt Lake districts faced many obstacles in starting the enrollee program. A high percentage of the workers had little or no educational background and many lacked proficiency in English. Both districts, moreover, pursued range restoration and water development projects which demanded the use of small crews and scattered temporary camps. Changes of leadership within the two districts fortunately allowed camp supervisors largely to overcome these obstacles. William H. Zeh took charge of all CCC-ID operations in New Mexico and Arizona in 1937, and G. A. T tter became head of the Salt Lake City office the following year. Even though Zeh tended to stress production, he recognized the need for a better enrollee program, while Trotter strongly favored any sort of education which would make the Indians more self-sufficient.

Some of the problems of teaching the more isolated tribesmen of the two districts are revealed in a fascinating report by James W. Wilson, a WPA instructor who taught night classes on agriculture at the Uintah and Ouray reservation

for nine months during 1938 and 1939. A recent college graduate, Wilson found that he had to be resourceful to interest the Utes in education. When he first came to the reservation, he made no immediate efforts to start classes because the Indians automatically refused to cooperate with any newcomer. Instead, Wilson traveled with the farm extension agent, became acquainted with the Indians, and answered "questions which white people want to know but are usually to [sic] 'proud or polite' to ask." After six weeks of this, Wilson invited the Utes to a "big meeting" at their community house. The young instructor refused to tell the Indians the purpose of the meeting for fear they might refuse to attend. His ruse succeeded and a large crowd attended the first weekly class.

Wilson soon found it necessary to employ several stratagems even though the Indians appeared interested and attentive during the classes. When the Utes' attendance dropped after the first few meetings, Wilson felt that they had become disinterested or angry at him. He discovered, however, that the Indians' poor sense of time did not permit them to plan commonplace activities a week ahead. Their attendance soon recovered after Wilson began personally inviting each family a day or so before the classes met. He learned, also, that having the lessons interpreted contributed substantially to the Indians' understanding. Although most of the Utes had at least a rough knowledge of

spoken English, even younger and more fluent tribesmen benefited from having ideas presented in two languages. In addition, Wilson found that oral instruction alone was too abstract and that the Indians learned more quickly and clearly from filmstrips, movies, and other visual aids in conjunction with lectures.

The obstacles of distance and the enrollees' weak educational background did not permit elaborate classroom training in the Salt Lake City and Phoenix districts. Instead, CCC-ID officials in the two areas emphasized the four-step procedure used for on-the-job training. Production leaders also attempted to show the enrollees the necessity for controlling soil erosion and keeping the livestock grazing load at a level the range could safely carry. The training tried to make the Indians take a personal interest in conservation and to prepare them for the day when they could no longer depend on CCC-ID to care for their land. The formal classes that were taught generally had a direct relation to production or meeting the mandatory regulations of Fechner's office. Thus the Indians received some training in such subjects as fire fighting, safety, first-aid, truck driving, and machinery operation.

During the third year of the enrollee program, Erik W. Allstom, an assistant to the Phoenix district camp supervisor, set up and operated an ingenious mobile classroom. This consisted of a panel truck which contained a

movie projector, educational films, portable generator, books, charts, maps, and illustrations. The truck toured CCC-ID camps in the Phoenix district throughout the summer of 1939. Allstom and Bureau personnel at each stop showed films and taught classes on conservation with the educational materials in the truck. The movies alone would have insured the success of the innovation, but Allstom seems to have been well liked by the Indians and was an effective instructor in his own right. The unusual success of the mobile classroom led Murphy to extend its operations to the CCC-ID camps of the Salt Lake City district. The Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River agencies in the Billings district also used CCC-ID funds to equip a truck with a traveling library in 1939.

In general, however, the efficiency-minded officials in the Billings office resisted enrollee training long after other areas had provided active programs. The often-repeated excuse of Billings officials that the district was too large to permit education hardly justified their poor record. The Crow reservation located just outside Billings spent no money on enrollee training in 1938, nor did the superintendent appoint an enrollee coordinating committee from his staff.[20] The Billings office received $3,000 in

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[20]D. E. Murphy to T. C. White, November 29, 1938, File 3400-1937, Enrollee Program, Billings District, 345, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

enrollee program funds in fiscal 1939 to pay for interagency expenses such as training instructors and renting projectors for camps. During the third quarter of the year, the Billings office spent $3.06 for film, $5.40 for a year's subscription to Happy Days, $36.85 for a steel desk, and $6.63 for stencils.[21] Other districts at the time had a real need for enrollee program funds, and Murphy withdrew $1,000 from the Billings office for another area headquarters.

The peak of Billings officials' resistance against the enrollee program came when Murphy tried to install the voluntary overtime procedure in the district. After the Washington office authorized the use of the plan for all CCC-ID in 1938, the Billings office argued that it would disrupt their work week and conflicted with the regulation that enrollees must spend forty hours per week on project work. This, of course, was not true since the enrollees worked an extra hour four days per week before receiving instruction on Friday afternoons. The district still had not installed the voluntary overtime plan when Claude Cornwall visited Billings in 1940. Tom White, the District Production Coordinator, was obviously under fire from the Washington office by this time, and Murphy had ordered Cornwall to prod the Billings headquarters into creating an enrollee program based on the voluntary overtime pro-

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[21] Ibid., February 1, 1939. Happy Days was a newspaper issued by the regular CCC.

cedure. After his interview with the Billings staff, Cornwall reported that they had still argued that enrollee training was inapplicable to their district and that the voluntary overtime plan violated the regulation for a forty-hour week.[22]

White continued to defy the Washington office even after Cornwall's visit. In answer to Cornwall's unfavorable report, White wrote Murphy and cited a regulation which stated that the voluntary overtime plan was "with the voluntary consent of the men and, of course, with the approval of the Superintendent." White then sanctimoniously added: "We do not believe it . . . ethical or proper to arbitrarily decide for the enrollees that they shall devote overtime for any purpose except emergencies such as fire fighting [,] etc."[23] In his reply, Murphy informed White that the regulation he had cited no longer remained in force, and that it was now mandatory upon all agencies with CCC-ID projects to provide enrollee training. Murphy questioned whether White had ever really tried to encourage education, but the CCC-ID Director admitted that enrollees could not be forced to receive instruction.[24] White seized

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[22]Report by Claude C. Cornwall, September 12-17, 1940, ibid.

[23]Tom C. White to John Collier, October 5, 1940, ibid.

[24]D. E. Murphy to T. C. White, December 4, 1940, ibid.

upon Murphy's admission as a last means for obstructing the installation of the voluntary overtime plan. The wily district leader allowed the CCC-ID workers to vote on whether they wanted to receive enrollee training. It requires only the slightest imagination to picture how the matter was presented to the workers before they voted, and Murphy summarily ordered the Billings district camp supervisor to install enrollee training and to end all such evasive tactics.[25] Unfortunately, CCC-ID lasted only another year, and there is no indication that the Billings district ever developed a strong education program.

The hostility for the enrollee program by the Billings office almost amounted to a tragedy, for the region ranked second only to the Phoenix district in the amount of funds received from CCC. Although the reservations in Northern Great Plains were widely scattered and seldom used boarding camps, these problems were no greater than those faced and solved by the Oklahoma City, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City offices. Moreover, the flexibility of the voluntary overtime plan permitted educational activities under nearly any conditions. Even the Unitah and Ouray reservation eventually established an active enrollee program despite the high percentage of Utes who were not fluent in English.

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[25]D. E. Murphy to O. H. Schmocker, January 8, 1941, ibid.

Despite all the obstacles and problems the enrollee program encountered, it became a highly important and effective part of Indian CCC. The training activities helped break down the long-standing barrier between the Bureau and the general Indian population. In particular, the Indians of the more remote reservations had never fully understood what services and opportunities the Bureau was trying to provide. By bringing in personnel from extension, irrigation, and other divisions of the Bureau, the enrollee program helped remove the Indians' suspicions and made them more aware of their problems and possible solutions.

Of much greater importance, the enrollee program provided an avenue by which the younger and more ambitious Indians could advance themselves. The great majority of Indian youths entered CCC handicapped by a serious lack of education and job skills. Enrollee training, along with production activities, gave the more alert participants a much needed second chance to correct their background weaknesses. For those who already had solid academic and job qualifications, the enrollee program preserved and sharpened their talents by keeping them interested in education and providing practical experience. Without something like the enrollee program, talented Indian youths otherwise would have fallen into the apathy and despair which accompanied the lack of economic opportunities during the depression.

Despite the enthusiasm that many field officials displayed for the enrollee program, many doubtlessly wondered what benefit education could have for Indian youths who had virtually no chance to find jobs off their reservation. Such doubts came to a gradual but dramatic end when the national economy revived around 1940. Soon afterward the federal government made the enrollees eligible for classes provided by the National Defense Vocational Training Act. The enrollee program had already readied the Indian CCC participants for the new vocational training and hundreds attended the classes. The flourishing enrollee program, the new demand for labor, and national defense training culminated in a surprisingly large exodus of Indians who assumed off-reservation jobs.

CHAPTER VII

INDIAN CCC AMONG THE NAVAJOS AND PUEBLOS

The Navajo and Pueblo CCC programs operated in a distinctly different manner than those of other reservations. In contrast to the normal procedure of the six Indian CCC district offices helping plan and supervise local projects, the Navajo and Pueblo superintendents dealt directly with Daniel E. Murphy's office. They also held virtually autonomous powers over all Bureau functions normally delegated to the division chiefs in Washington. Under this unusual arrangement, representatives of the Soil Erosion Service, and later the Soil Conservation Service, assumed most of the duties of the district CCC offices. An attempt to incorporate the Navajo and Pueblo conservation programs into the normal agency functions such as education, irrigation, and extension accompanied this interagency cooperation. Despite the special administrative arrangements, large expenditures, and attention lavished on the Navajos and Pueblos during the 1930's, the Indian Bureau faced more bitter criticism and hostility from the Indians and interested whites than it encountered in any other region.

Except for their intensity, Indian CCC field operations on the Navajo and Pueblo reservations differed little from those normally found elsewhere in the Phoenix and Salt Lake City districts. Projects throughout the Southwest focused on building reservoirs, drilling wells, erosion control, reseeding the range, removing surplus horses, fencing, and other work needed in an arid region. However, the Indian CCC activities on both the Navajo and Pueblo reservations became entwined with other programs. Hence, it becomes impossible to discuss adequately the various CCC operations without relating them to the general reorganization of the Navajo and Pueblo administrations and the strong influence of the Soil Erosion Service and Soil Conservation Service.

The Navajos already had an unusual agency organization when Collier took office in 1933. The huge reservation covered 13,000,000 acres in northeast Arizona, northwest New Mexico, and a narrow strip of southeast Utah. The Bureau maintained six different Navajo agencies located at Fort Defiance, Tuba City, Leupp, and Keams Canon in Arizona and Shiprock and Crown Point in New Mexico.[1] Each of the six

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[1]The agency at Keams Canon actually served the Hopis, whose tribal lands were in the middle of the Navajo reservation. The two tribes are unrelated; the Hopis dwell in permanent villages and farm, in contrast to the Navajos' semi-nomadic and pastoral life. Collier included the Hopis in the reorganization of Navajo administration, but they eventually received their own agency headquarters.

agencies had an independent superintendent directly responsible to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The Bureau never established a central headquarters for the Navajos, and they did not have a strong sense of tribal unity before the New Deal. Although the Navajo Council had been formed a few years earlier, the tribal members in remote areas were not aware of its existence.

No tribe had greater need for conservation than the Navajos. Years of overgrazing, plus the current drought, had created serious erosion problems throughout most of the reservation. At the same time the Navajo population of 45,000 was increasing rapidly. The depletion of the range and growth in population threatened the pastoral economy which was the very taproot of Navajo existence. In fact, the entire tribe faced eventual starvation unless the Bureau could stop further erosion, restore the range, and make the land support a larger population. The alternative was permanent relief.

The Navajo problem did not spring forth overnight, nor was the Collier administration the first to recognize it. As early as 1894 a Navajo agent had observed that: "'The Reservation is not large enough or in condition to support the herds of the Navajos and this had been the subject of several reports by me.'"[2] The Indian Bureau had

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[2]Lieutenant Plummer to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 3, 1894, as quoted in Robert W. Young (ed.),

solved the problem in the past by occasionally enlarging the reservation whenever the Indians needed more land. Strong opposition by white ranchers to further expansion of the Navajo grazing area had developed by the 1920's, and informed observers realized that the present reservation area must be made more productive in the future.

With this in mind the superintendent of the Shiprock agency, Albert H. Kneale, started a program in 1924 to improve his local Navajos' hardy but unprofitable sheep. Kneale purchased Rambouillet rams and sold them to the Indians on credit to upgrade their herds. By 1927 sheep in the Shiprock area showed a significant increase in wool clip, percentage of lambs saved, market weight, and total profits.[3] Edgar B. Merritt, Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs, warned a group of Navajo leaders in 1928 that the tribe eventually would have to limit the number of livestock that each member could graze.[4] A general study of the range conditions in 1930-1931 by Lee Muck, a Bureau forester, showed that the Navajos grazed twice as many livestock as their land permitted. The Muck study

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The Navajo Yearbook, 1957 (Window Rock, Arizona: Navajo Agency, 1957), 59.

[3]Albert H. Kneale, Indian Agent (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1950), 348-351, p. 26 of illustrations.

[4]Young, Navajo Handbook, 1957, 59.

also revealed that serious overgrazing would eventually destroy the remaining productive range areas.[5]

When Collier took office in 1933, he immediately launched an all-out effort to provide relief work for the Navajos and to correct their serious erosion problems. He ordered the Navajo superintendents to turn over their regular agency facilities to Indian CCC and to assist the program in every possible way. Jay B. Nash, the first Director of IECW, led several eastern recreation experts to the Navajo reservation to organize the original CCC camps. Droves of destitute Navajos joined IECW during the first work season because of the drought and depression.

While blunders in IECW were commonplace elsewhere in 1933, the Navajo operations seemed to suffer more than normal. The original plans called for a program of forestation with the bulk of money to be spent on truck trails. This demanded the purchase of many bulldozers and other heavy equipment, but the Bureau suddenly canceled these plans in favor of water development and erosion control projects. Meanwhile, some of the heavy machinery had arrived at agency headquarters when officials acted too late in canceling purchase orders.[6] The abrupt change in plans

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[5]Phelps-Stokes Fund, The Navajo Indian Problem (New York: n. p., 1939), 8-12.

[6]John Collier Memorandum, September 8, 1933, File 00-1933, Navajo, 150, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter

also forced production supervisors to design projects after work had already started.

Years later the Bureau was still trying to untangle records of CCC expenditures in 1933 on the Navajo reservation. Some superintendents used conservation funds in an irregular manner and allowed their accounts to become hopelessly confused. According to one later investigation, the superintendent at Tuba City had constructed an unauthorized $15,000 apartment building for agency employees by tapping funds from ten different appropriations. Nearly $6,000 of the money came from CCC, although the building had nothing to do with the program.[7] Such problems did not affect the Navajos, who welcomed the relief wages and initially supported the Collier administration.

Meantime, Collier had made an agreement with the Department of Agriculture to have H. H. Bennett and a team of experts conduct a study of erosion on the Navajo reservation in late June, 1933. The Bennett group found that around seventy percent of the reservation was badly eroded and some areas already were damaged beyond recovery. The erosion problem was not confined to hilly regions of the reservation. Constantly widening arroyos were removing large amounts of alluvial soil from the fertile stream

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cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75. Glavis Memorandum, ibid.

[7]William Zimmerman, Jr., to John E. Balmer, March 18, 1937, File 59230-1935, ibid.

valleys.

The study also revealed that the Navajos' range warranted immediate attention and relief from overgrazing. The natural browse near the streams and water holes had been destroyed, and the only vegetation left was a thin cover of weeds. The Navajos' hungry sheep and goats had even killed shrubs and small trees by eating their leaves and twigs. Tree roots in many places had been exposed by the top soil washing away in the recent past. Bennett's group estimated that even the best range management could not restore the Navajos' land to more than fifty to seventy-five percent of its original grazing capacity. They believed that the present livestock load of roughly 1,350,000 sheep units[8] on the reservation must be reduced by fifty percent before the range could maintain itself.

The study further recommended that the Indian Bureau establish the Mexican Springs area to demonstrate proper methods of range restoration and to train the Navajos in land use. They selected this site, located twenty-six miles north of Gallup, New Mexico, because its varied terrain contained nearly every type of erosion problem found on the Navajo reservation. The group asked that the area be fenced, livestock removed, and full conservation prac-

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[8]The term sheep unit was used to determine grazing loads and capacity. A sheep or goat made up one such unit, while each cow or horse was figured as five sheep units.

tices be applied. Under the proposed plan the enrollees would stay at the demonstration plot only one month, and they would be given an intensive education in conservation practices in conjunction with their project work. They would then return to their communities as "Range Conservation Missionaries," and persuade local residents to take over a program of land use as a purely Indian function. Enrollees with extra ability would be kept at Mexican Springs for additional training so they would become "Conservation Directors" in their home communities.

The Bennett team recognized that a complete solution to the Navajo problem would require broad powers and adequate financing. They believed that the Bureau should establish a Navajo Reservation Authority for this purpose. This organization would have a regular appropriation from Congress and powers similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority except the Director would be responsible to Collier and not the President.[9]

Collier wasted little time in applying the recommendations of the Bennett report. He appeared before the Navajo Council in late July, 1933 and won its approval for the Mexican Springs experiment. CCC enrollees started fencing the 47,000 acre site immediately. Collier presented

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[9]Report of the Conservation Advisory Committee for the Navajo Reservation, July 2, 1933, File 31777-1935, Plan on Soil Conservation with the Department of Agriculture, Cooperative, 344, Central Correspondence Files, 1907-1939, NA, RG 75.

a definite conservation program to the Council three months later. It contained five major points: (1) a drastic reduction of livestock, (2) an attempt to expand the reservation, (3) continued emphasis on soil conservation and range restoration, (4) additional CCC projects, and (5) the construction of numerous day schools which would also serve as community centers. Bureau spokesmen countered protests of the Council against herd reduction with the promise that wages from CCC and other relief programs and improved management of the remaining sheep would more than offset the Navajos' possible losses of income. The Council then consented to a reduction of upwards of 100,000 sheep.[10]

The herd reduction in the fall of 1933 antagonized many Navajos and proved very unsuccessful. The Indians complained about low government prices and sold only their culls. The ricos or large herders refused to sell a higher ratio of their sheep than small herders as demanded by the Bureau's graduated plan. The richer Navajos argued that owners of small herds got all the benefits of relief work, and that they should sell the same percentage of sheep. After much haggling, the Bureau agreed that everyone would have to reduce his herd by ten percent. This did not harm the ricos, but it imposed genuine hardships on families

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[10]Floyd Allen Pollock, "Navajo Federal Relations as a Social-Cultural Problem" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1942), 108-115.

whose herds barely provided a subsistence.

The promise of relief work to offset the loss of sheep proved equally unfortunate. Despite all the jobs provided by Indian CCC and other relief programs, the Bureau could not employ every needy Navajo, and resentment naturally arose among those who failed to get on a government payroll. Moreover, the Navajos did not feel that relief work served as an adequate substitute for the loss of their livestock. They realized that money was soon spent, but sheep represented an asset they could depend on for a livelihood both now and in the future. Tribal sentiment remained suspicious and hostile of nearly all Bureau programs in the future because of the herd reduction and its aftereffects.[11]

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[11]Another herd reduction in 1934 aroused Navajo resentment against Collier even more. Navajos were highly opposed to a second reduction, but the Council agreed to a sale of 150,000 head of livestock after Bureau spokesmen promised that 100,000 would be goats and Congress would expand the reservation. Summer heat, long drives, water shortages, and poor planning broke down the system used to collect the goats and sheep and to ship them to slaughter houses. The Bureau tried to make the best of a bad situation by allowing the Navajos to butcher the animals and dry the meat, but several thousand were shot and left on the range. The Bureau could not fully keep its promises on expanding the reservation. Congress eventually approved a bill to expand the tribal area in Arizona and seemed on the verge of passing a similar measure for New Mexico until the death of Senator Bronson Cutting in an airplane crash in 1935. This untimely event allowed Senator Dennis Chavez to block passage of the second bill on the dubious excuse that his state would lose tax revenues from the land in question. Despite heated pleas by Collier and Ickes that the taxes were insignificant and seldom paid, Chavez never allowed the measure to pass. New York Times, June 6, 1937, p. 18.

There were other hints of future trouble with the Navajos during the first year of CCC operations. A good portion of the enrollees were not fluent in English and suspected any newcomer to the reservation. The sudden intrusion of Nash and other highly-trained recreation experts from eastern colleges alternately amused and perplexed the Indians. Speeches by the learned camp leaders went completely over the heads of the enrollees. The Navajos willingly joined CCC because it made sense to prepare for the hard winter ahead. It was another matter to have to sit and listen to an incomprehensible discourse on the theory of camp sanitation. The Navajo enrollee reasoned that he had survived life thus far without special attention to such matters, and he saw no reason to learn about unseen germs and proper tent ventilation. The Navajo participants were equally pragmatic about recreation. When a CCC official promised baseball equipment to a camp, one enrollee allegedly told his mates: "'To hell with . . . baseball. We can't eat baseball bats. When we finish work we are tired and do not want to play. The Indian knows how to play his own games when he wishes to play them.'"[12]

The sudden flood of relief wages into the Navajo reservation in 1933 caused increased problems of drinking and vice in Gallup and other towns located near the tribe.

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[12]As quoted in Glavis Memorandum, September 8, 1933, File 00-1933, Navajo, 150, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

One Indian CCC official reported that 500 Navajos were drunk on the streets of Gallup during the holiday season of 1933-1934.[13]

Moreover, the wage economy particularly harmed the Navajos because they traditionally exchanged their wool, rugs, and jewelry for supplies at trading posts on the reservation. Accordingly, they rarely ventured outside their own local areas or had any cash before the New Deal relief programs.

The experiences of the first year of Indian CCC on the Navajo reservation revealed several weaknesses which affected later events. Collier's rush to start relief projects had imposed a greater burden than the six agencies could handle. The Commissioner's conservation program, especially the herd reduction, had created social disorganization and resentments among the tribe. The forced sales of sheep also had destroyed what little loyalty the tribe had for the Bureau and their own council. Of most importance, the Navajos were extremely selective in their reaction to Collier's efforts in 1933. They clamored to participate in Indian CCC and other relief programs, but they resisted anything such as herd reduction which demanded immediate sacrifices. This latter factor accounts for the remarkable success that some of the Bureau's future policies

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[13]"A Regrettable Condition," Indian Truth, XI (February, 1934), 2-3.

would enjoy and the dismal failure of others.

Nevertheless, Collier pressed his conservation program forward during 1934. Indian CCC operations continued to command much attention with projects devoted to soil erosion control, range restoration, and water development. Representatives of the Soil Erosion Service assumed some control over CCC project planning in the second year. Ickes had created SEC with a special view of providing technical assistance for the Navajo conservation program. H. H. Bennett led the new agency, and other former employees of the Department of Agriculture filled most of the other positions. Bennett's men were particularly prominent at Mexican Springs. They planned a complete range restoration program for the area, and 500 enrollees under SEC supervisors worked on projects to control erosion, reseed the range, and conserve every drop of rainfall.

In 1934 Collier also announced the consolidation of the six agencies into a single headquarters located at Window Rock. This site aroused valid criticism among both Navajos and interested whites because Window Rock was only some twenty-five miles from Gallup and its whore houses, gambling dens, and saloons. The Indians also complained that there were no means of reaching a central headquarters, and they would not receive the individual attention they had under the six agencies. Until the buildings at Window Rock were completed, Collier transferred the existing

superintendents to temporary offices in Gallup, and he named William H. Zeh acting general superintendent during the transitional period.

Changes in the Roosevelt administration deeply affected the Navajo CCC program in 1935. The Soil Erosion Service had been transferred from the Interior Department to Agriculture and renamed the Soil Conservation Service. Collier badly needed the technical advice and funds of the new agency, and he entered into a formal cooperative agreement with SCS to obtain its assistance in 1935. The compact thoroughly integrated the normal Bureau activities and relief projects with the land-use programs of SCS. An official of the latter organization was made an assistant of the general superintendent and placed in charge of the Land Management Divison at Window Rock. He controlled all soil erosion work, water development, irrigation, range management, and roads.[14]

Under this new arrangement, SCS officials in the Land Management Divison carried out various studies of the Navajos' range needs and provided general supervision of Navajo agency programs related to agriculture. Even the new day schools played a role in the conservation program, for students studied about range restoration and

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[14]John Collier to Rexford G. Tugwell, May 11, 1935, File 31777-1935, Plan on Soil Conservation with the Department of Agriculture, Cooperative, 344, Central Correspondence Files, 1907-1939, NA, RG 75.

completed minor erosion control projects near their classrooms. Indian CCC still maintained a separate identity, but SCS theoretically planned and supervised all projects to conform with the policies of the Land Management Division. The central agency and the Land Management Division seemingly resembled the "Navajo Reservation Authority" that the Bennett study had recommended in 1933. However, the comparison was distressingly superficial. The Land Management Division existed only on paper. It had no congressional authorization, and its expenses were paid by taking money from the regular Bureau appropriations, relief programs, and SCS. Since most of the funds came from the Department of Agriculture, SCS representatives naturally wanted a strong voice in the Land Management Division.

The herculean task of organizing the centralized agency and fulfilling the conservation program fell to C. E. Faris whom Collier appointed as general superintendent in 1935. Faris had been in Indian Service for thirty years and had gained a reputation as a highly competent administrator. He entered office armed with extraordinary powers, including the right to initiate new policies, to pass on all personnel changes, transfers, and promotions, and to inspect all Bureau activities on the reservation.[15] Division chiefs in the Bureau normally had the sole authority

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[15]John Collier to all Division Chiefs, July 3, 1935, ibid.

for such matters, and Faris's powers, at least in theory, made him a sort of Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Navajos.

The new superintendent lasted only a year in his new position because of a vicious three-way conflict among the Navajos, regular Bureau employees, and SCS personnel. The Indians intensely resented the new influx of SCS officials who entered the reservation to do studies on erosion, water development, grazing capacity, the trading system, and many other subjects. The Navajos illogically blamed SCS for Collier's earlier herd reductions and unfulfilled promises, and they especially feared that SCS would renew forced sales of livestock. Both the Navajos and Bureau employees frequently accused SCS officials of caring more for the land than the welfare of the tribe. Old-line agency men felt that the SCS people were arrogant and had no understanding of the Indians and how to deal with them. SCS leaders countered such charges with the rebuttal that veteran employees were grossly incompetent, unprogressive, and uncooperative.

Similar friction developed between Faris and the SCS official in charge of the Land Management Division. Instead of a coordinated administration as Collier had planned, the two men operated what sometimes amounted to two separate programs. While SCS tried to reduce the grazing load in one area, for example, Faris's men brought in relief

livestock to help needy Indians.

Confusion prevailed also in the Navajo CCC operations during Faris's short administration. The large-scale CCC activities on the reservation seemed almost as hectic as in 1933. Faris failed to bring the Navajo CCC program under the control of the Land Management Division. Instead, CCC officials still used the old six agencies for administrative purposes and record keeping, and they planned their projects without regard to the various studies of SCS. Indeed, the only role that SCS played in CCC under Faris was at Mexican Springs and similar demonstration plots.

Pressure from SCS forced Collier to name Faris as his personal representative, and E. R. Fryer became general superintendent in 1936. Although often accused of inexperience and abruptness with the Navajos, the young new superintendent possessed unquestioned administrative talents. He ended the feuding between SCS and Bureau employees by consolidating all conservation programs and regular Bureau functions under the Navajo Service. Numerous objectors were transferred off the reservation. Fryer also used the previous land-use findings of SCS to divide the entire Navajo reservation into eighteen grazing districts. The Navajo Service conducted an intensive study of each area to determine its grazing capacity, conservation needs, and possibilities for increased productivity. Fryer then established grazing regulations for each district and reduced

the livestock load.[16] Eventually he succeeded in lowering the Navajo livestock to 830,000 sheep units compared to the estimated 1,350,000 units in 1933.

In the midst of stormy protests against the new grazing districts and herd reductions, Fryer perfected Navajo CCC until it operated much more effectively than before 1936. He divided the Land Management Division into two parts: land use, and engineering and construction. Indian CCC, along with irrigation, roads, and SCS, operated under the engineering and construction program. Fryer actually based CCC projects on the intensive surveys SCS had made of each grazing district. He also consolidated the administration of all CCC projects, records, and planning under one office at Window Rock. This ended the confusion and haphazard practices which had plagued Navajo CCC operations since 1933. Fryer even tried to avoid having to submit proposed CCC projects to the Washington office for approval and asked for a lump sum of money instead. Even though Murphy refused the request, Fryer achieved much the same result by revising projects whenever he saw fit.

Fryer tightened up CCC operations even more during his second year in office. He abandoned random conservation projects throughout the reservation for a thorough

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[16]Organization of the Land Management Division by E. R. Fryer, 1936, File 4285-1937, Enrollee Program, Navajo, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

development of one or two grazing districts each year. Only when CCC crews completed their work in one district did Fryer move them to another area of the reservation. The young superintendent solved some of the problems of distance and scattered projects by establishing a base camp in the district currently under development as an administrative headquarters. Most of the enrollees lived in small temporary installations or fly camps near the projects. Here, Navajo workers cooked their own meals, and they seemed to prefer this arrangement to the boarding installations. Married enrollees, on the other hand, disliked the fly camps for they had to leave their families, or else give up their jobs when work shifted to a new district.[17]

Fryer's improved administration touched off additional protests by the Navajos, and their outcries received national attention in 1937. A delegation of confused but highly disgruntled Navajos appeared before the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs in June, 1937 to lodge many bitter complaints against Collier and the Fryer administration. Their main grievances dealt with the new grazing regulations and herd reductions, but several charges concerned Indian CCC and other relief programs of Navajo Service. The delegation accused Fryer of hiring only

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[17]Lilly J. Neil to John Collier, April 24, 1937, File 59055-1936, Navajo, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Indians who favored the Bureau, and of giving whites too many jobs. The Navajo Service, according to the group, had employed white traders as relief supervisors in defiance of Bureau regulations. When Collier and other Bureau spokesmen presented evidence that whites held only ten percent of the positions in Navajo Service and only former traders had been hired, the Indians replied that the information was not accurate because the Fryer administration had juggled job titles and falsified records.

The delegation obviously resented the presence of SCS technicians and supervisors on the reservation. When Senator Dennis Chavez asked an Indian the number of Navajo Service employees at Tuba City, the witness replied: "We can't count them. If they were stationed at one place, and if they had permanent jobs, you might count the employees. . . . They are all mixed up, and you can't count them, there are so many of them." The same witness stated that he did not understand what work the officials did: "We don't know what title they go by. Maybe they are supervisors or agents. We don't know what they are."[18]

Similar remarks by the delegation showed that most Navajos were completely bewildered by Collier's conservation program and the reorganization of the six agencies.

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[18]U. S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings, Survey of Conditions of the Indians in the United States, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, Part 37, p. 20936.

They did not recognize that range depletion and increased tribal population required grazing regulations, herd reductions, and other sacrifices. In their opinion, the numerous technicians on the reservation were personal representatives of Collier and were to blame for all the trouble since 1933. Even more indicative of the Navajos' confusion was the delegation's plea that Congress should repeal the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934. Although the tribe had rejected the legislation in a bitter referendum election two years before the Senate hearing, the Navajos still associated the Wheeler-Howard Act with Collier's conservation program; and they felt that its repeal would end all their troubles, restore the old six agencies, and revive free grazing.

Fryer's fulfillment of the conservation program after 1936 caused profound disruptions in the Navajos' traditional social and cultural patterns. As usual, Indian CCC contributed to the Navajo woes as did other relief programs. The drinking and other forms of vice in off-reservation towns continued, and used-car dealers victimized increasing numbers of Navajos throughout the 1930's. Navajo parents justly complained that the district grazing limits provided no opportunity to set aside small numbers of sheep for their children so they would have a start in life when they married. Meanwhile, Navajo youths had lost all interest in herding and founding stable marriages and frequently turned to promiscuity and other delinquent behavior. Navajo

police frequently enforced the district grazing regulations in a brutal manner and made illegal off-reservation arrests. The Navajos devised various ruses to evade the regulations, and the tribe suffered a general loss of respect for law and order. Thus, Fryer never overcame the Navajos' hostility for the conservation program, despite his unusual administrative talents.

A decrease in funds in 1938 severely limited Navajo CCC operations when Fryer had perfected the organization. A cut of some $600,000 forced the Navajo superintendent to sharply reduce supervisory personnel, enrollees, equipment purchases, and project work. Drilling wells and installing huge stock tanks previously had been a major activity of CCC, but Fryer realized that such undertakings were expensive and brought little wages to the enrollees. The able superintendent retained some well-drilling projects, but he included work requiring more land labor. Fryer also economized by having the Navajos contribute the use of their teams to projects and by abolishing maintenance expenses on completed work.[19]

One of the most beneficial aspects of Navajo CCC was helping rid the reservation of surplus horses from 1938

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[19]Minutes of the Navajo Tribal Council and the Executive Committee, Window Rock, Arizona, January 17-20, 1938, no file number, 1938, Navajo, 154, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75; E. R. Fryer to John Collier, January 18, 1938, File 59055-1936, Navajo, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

to 1940. Fryer had started such projects in 1936, but they reached a peak in 1938. He had CCC crews round up the horses and drive them to the sales pens. The horse removals helped the Navajos more than other reservations in the Southwest. The pitifully gaunt Navajo horses could barely negotiate the drive to the sales points. Many staggered to the ground and died along the way. Even so, many Navajos resisted selling their horses. Fryer managed to overcome some of their reluctance by allowing an Indian to add five sheep to his herd for every horse sold.[20] Indian CCC crews helped remove 10,000 head by 1940.

The enrollee training in Navajo CCC camps was unusually strong after Fryer assumed office. Camp managers faced many obstacles in developing a program in enrollee training. The tribe had never shown much interest in education. The Navajos had a standing joke that parents should always send their dullest children to Bureau schools and keep the more alert at home to herd sheep. Around forty percent of the Navajo enrollees could not read or write English.[21] The use of fly camps for scattered water development and range restoration projects also obstructed training.

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[20]E. R. Fryer to John Collier, April 27, 1938, ibid.; E. R. Fryer, "The Navajos Sell Their Range Robbers," Indians at Work, VII (November, 1939), 25-27. Hereafter cited as IAW.

[21]Claude C. Cornwall to R. M. Patterson, October 11, 1937, Enrollee Program, Navajo, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Nevertheless, J. J. McEntree, Assistant Director of CCC, became highly enthused with the enrollee training at Mexican Springs and felt some of the same techniques might be applicable to white camps.[22] Navajo camp managers soon afterward started much needed classes in English grammar for the enrollees. Navajo CCC leaders also sent their brighter enrollees to district training centers and made full use of bilingual instructors for first aid, safety, and forest fire fighting classes. Navajo youths seemed to have a particular knack for anything mechanical, and enrollees placed in CCC shops for training quickly qualified for better jobs with Indian Service or private employers. Fryer never lost his enthusiasm for the enrollee program. Murphy complimented the Navajo superintendent in 1941 for his excellent educational activities and noted that the enrollees had received nearly nine hours of training per week during the previous year.[23] This was more than double the over-all average for CCC-ID.

In comparison to the heated controversies which arose over the Navajo conservation program, the Pueblos' experiences with the Bureau were relatively peaceful. The 15,000 Pueblos owned nearly 2,000,000 acres of land divided

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[22]William Zimmerman to E. R. Fryer, July 31, 1936, File 59225-36, Fechner Correspondence, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[23]D. E. Murphy to E. R. Fryer, April 29, 1941, ibid.

among fifteen villages scattered from Taos in north central New Mexico to Zuni in the west central portion of the state. Their varied economy included grazing, irrigated farming, wage work, and sale of handicrafts--in contrast to the Navajos' almost total reliance on sheep and goats. Pueblo land ownership was vested in the tribe, but individuals held "use rights" to specific areas which they willed to their children or nearest relatives. Some Pueblos lacked any such hold on the land and lived in chronic poverty, but the tribe's general population was more prosperous than the Navajos. A small portion had become relatively wealthy by purchasing the "use rights" of less fortunate tribesmen.

Probably the biggest reason for the Pueblos' moderate attitude toward the Bureau's conservation efforts was their previous experience in dealing with government bureaucracy and large-scale projects. The irrigation needs of the Rio Grande Valley and the dangers of flooding had prompted New Mexico to authorize the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District in 1923. After much planning and delay, the state began construction of dams, levees, drainage ditches, and irrigation canals in 1930. New Mexico completed nearly all the original projects in 1934, and the federal government eventually paid $1,300,000 of the costs in behalf of the Pueblos.[24] The Indians gained additional experience during

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[24]Allan G. Harper, et al., Man and Resources in the Middle Rio Grande Valley (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1943), 52-53.

the 1920's when Collier and other interested whites helped organize the All-Pueblo Council to fight their many legislative and judicial battles involving land claims and other matters. Hence, the Pueblos had developed a tightly-knit intervillage organization and were experienced in modern political affairs.

In contrast to the Navajos, the Pueblos tended to be more introverted, contemplative, and conservative. They did not clamor to join Indian CCC in 1933 because they automatically rejected any innovation and resented the physical examination required of all new enrollees. However, their long contact with Anglo-Americans and Mexicans made them shrewd manipulators once they did join Indian CCC. Instead of quietly submitting to unfair work conditions and unequal distribution of funds among the villages, the Pueblo leaders were apt to write letters of protest to Collier--or even Roosevelt--demanding an investigation. One group of enrollees became angry when local officials hired a white to operate a bulldozer. Antagonized at the prospect of losing their wages, the Indians promptly chased the operator off the project. The Pueblos, both as a group and as individuals, had learned how to protest against Bureau abuses or to seek its aid in dealing with white opponents.

After two years of normal CCC operations under the Albuquerque district office, the Pueblo administration was revised in much the same fashion as the Navajo reservation.

Collier consolidated three Pueblo agency offices under a general superintendent, Sophie D. Aberle. This required many transfers of personnel and changes in records and accounts, but Miss Aberle achieved the reorganization without serious delays or frustrations. Collier also included the Pueblos in the cooperative agreement signed with SCS in 1935, but he warned officials of the agency that they must limit the size and scope of their planning and supervision until the Indians had become accustomed to the idea.[25] Collier's years of lobbying in behalf of the Pueblos doubtlessly gave him a feel for dealing with the tribe that he never had with the Navajos.

The Pueblos' herd reduction proceeded quite smoothly in comparison with the fierce outcries on the Navajo reservation. Instead of obtaining an agreement with a central body largely alienated from the general tribal population, Bureau leaders tried to convince each Pueblo village council that it should bring herds down to proper grazing levels. Only Laguna and Acoma signed formal agreements. The reductions were made over a period of several years with initial removals of horses, goats, steers, and wethers rather than ewes.[26] Even though the later reductions involved the sale

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[25]John Collier to Hugh G. Calkins, August 12, 1935, File 53076-35, United Pueblos, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[26]A wether is a castrated lamb. The two villages at first sold sheep they normally marketed in the fall.

of ewes, the use of a graduated scale removed more breeding stock from the big flocks than the small. In return for the two Pueblo villages' herd reductions, the Bureau agreed to pay all the expenses for conservation projects, including full wages to the Indians.[27] Bureau publicity made great ado about the Laguna and Acoma herd reductions, but none of the other village councils ever signed similar agreements. The Bureau did encourage the other Pueblo villages to sell their surplus livestock and effected some reduction without the sanction of the other councils.

Three years after Collier had signed the cooperative agreement with SCS, the organization virtually ceased all activity among the Pueblos. The SCS office in Washington notified Collier that it had allocated only $28,000 to the Pueblos for 1938. This amounted to a serious blow, for SCS had paid around forty percent of the labor costs and contributed a total of $212,000 to conservation projects in 1936. Collier became quite indignant at the reduction in funds and accused SCS of displaying bad faith toward both the Indians and the Bureau. The decision to withdraw quite obviously reflected previous clashes between local SCS officials and Indian Service personnel. The SCS representatives felt that they had not received adequate cooperation,

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[27]Agreement between Laguna Council and United Pueblos Organization, November 27, 1935, File 53076-35, United Pueblos, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

nor had CCC projects conformed fully with their recommendations. Collier, however, defended the Pueblo agency officials and stated that they had done the best they could with the limited CCC funds available and the restrictions which Fechner had placed on the use of the money.[28] Collier's protests were of no avail, and he eventually directed Murphy to supply additional CCC funds to the United Pueblo Agency to help offset the loss of money from SCS.[29]

Thus, Collier's efforts to integrate SCS with the functions of the Navajo and Pueblo agencies encountered serious problems on both reservations. A different outlook among the representatives of the two government organizations involved caused many of the Commissioner's woes. SCS personnel viewed conservation almost totally as a technical process to be achieved as soon as possible. Bureau employees, on the other hand, recognized the need for a conservation program, but they also understood that the Navajos and Pueblos automatically rejected drastic innovations, especially anything like herd reduction which harmed their present interests. Bureau officials, moreover, realized that only a slow and resourceful handling of the Indians would win their consent to make immediate sacrifices

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[28]John Collier to Hugh Calkins, August 26, 1937, ibid.

[29]D. E. Murphy to S. D. Aberle, April 20, 1939, ibid.

for a more abundant life sometime in the remote future.

Selfish and personal jealousies played an important role in the frequent clashes between SCS and Indian Service on both reservations. It was easy for Collier and Ickes to reach an agreement with the Department of Agriculture for SCS to supply technical assistance, but they had little control over personal squabbles at the reservation level. Since the Department of Agriculture paid the expenses for SCS operations, officials of that agency naturally felt that their wishes should prevail against those of the Indian Bureau personnel. Fryer supported the side of SCS on the Navajo reservation and embittered both the Indians and members of the regular agency staff. SCS at the Pueblo agency received less cooperation and withdrew, thus creating dissension between Collier and the organization's Washington office. The Roosevelt administration very belatedly corrected such problems and allowed the Department of Interior to organize the Office of Land Utilization for its own conservation programs in 1940. Lee Muck, a former forester and CCC official of the Indian Bureau, headed the new organization, but the change came too late to have much effect on CCC-ID.[30]

Collier's own mistakes caused many of the problems

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[30]"New Office of Land Utilization Established by Secretary Ickes with Lee Muck in Charge, IAW, VIII (November, 1940), 23-25.

on the Navajo reservation. He definitely pushed his conservation and reorganization programs too rapidly. The early herd reductions and introduction of a wage economy caused social disorganization, aroused hostility, and hampered Fryer's more efficient later administration. The Commissioner admitted after his retirement that the Navajo Council was alienated from most of the tribe and did not become a truly representative body until later.[31] This explanation does not answer the question why he failed to strengthen the Council and make it reflect tribal sentiment before launching his programs. Ruth Underhill in The Navajos theorizes that Collier felt he had only four years to effect his goals, and he moved rapidly so a new administration could not undo his work.[32] It seems equally plausible that Collier felt that it was better to spend the available relief money without serious contemplation rather than permanently lose it.

Despite all the criticisms leveled at Collier, he did take action against the Navajos' conservation problems. Even his strongest critics during the period found it difficult to deny that the Navajos were on the road to starvation at the beginning of the New Deal. Unfortunately,

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[31]John Collier, Along the Gleaming Way (Denver: Sage Books, 1962), 67-68.

[32]Ruth Underhill, The Navajos (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), 234-235.

Collier had few alternatives with which to attack the Navajo problem. He could have ignored the depletion of the range and rising Navajo population and placed the destitute on rations, but this action would have been far from a complete or lasting solution. Moving part of the tribe to other regions of the country might have been possible, but winning the consent of Congress would have been most difficult. Resettlement certainly would have resulted in social disruptions for those Navajos unable to adjust to new conditions. His only other alternative was to make the reservation as self-sufficient as possible. If not all of his programs succeeded, he at least had the courage to attack a problem which his predecessors had ignored.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLOSING YEARS, 1938-1942

Even though the major characteristics and policies of Indian CCC had become relatively fixed by 1938, changes by the Roosevelt administration and the approach of World War II created new problems and adjustments for the organization during the closing years. Certainly one of the most important developments during the period was Roosevelt's determination to economize. The retrenchment policy imposed on CCC-ID in 1938 ended the plush days when the organization could depend on an abundant supply of funds for its projects. Later reductions and rising prices made it something of a struggle just to keep CCC-ID in operation after 1940. The final years of the program, however, brought increased benefits to the enrollees. National defense training and the flourishing enrollee program equipped many Indian youths for jobs in war industries.

The first indication of curtailed funds for CCC-ID came late in 1937 as President Roosevelt and CCC Director Robert Fechner reviewed the estimated expenditures for fiscal 1939. The President stated that he wanted many salaried

personnel released in CCC, for the entire program would receive a sharp cut in funds in 1939. Roosevelt asked Fechner to halt new appointments of supervisors as a preliminary step toward the future retrenchment of CCC.[1] Only a month later, Fechner notified his entire organization that during fiscal 1938, half of which had already passed, it must employ one enrollee for every $930 received in CCC funds.[2]

Fechner's announcement came as a bombshell for Indian CCC because it had customarily hired more supervisors and used more machinery than the parent organization. Henceforth, if an Indian reservation received $93,000 in CCC funds, the superintendent must show that he employed at least 100 enrollees. The cost of board, room, and wages of the enrollees would absorb around sixty percent of the $93,000. This left only forty percent for the salaries of supervisors and facilitating personnel, production materials, transportation costs, equipment purchases, and all other expenses. Murphy recognized that the $930 limitation presented a real crisis, and he quickly analyzed the spending of the reservations for the first half of the fiscal year. He found that twenty-six reservations had exceeded Fechner's new regula-

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[1]Conrad L. Wirth to Mr. Burlew, November 9, 1937, File 59225-Fechner Correspondence, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75. Hereafter cited as CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[2]D. E. Murphy to Superintendents and Field Men, December 15, 1937, File 59039-36, General Services, 344, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

tions, and he notified the superintendents involved exactly how much they had spent on each enrollee during the past six months and what they must do in the latter half of the year to meet the $930 limitation.[3]

Both the immediate and long-range effects of Fechner's new retrenchment policy were quite dramatic. All reservations and districts in the future carefully had to avoid spending too much on items not related to the enrollees. The new policy struck especially hard at the production-minded officials because they had always employed many supervisors and utilized much machinery on projects. The ironclad nature of the per enrollee limitation also contrasted to the previous policy of running rough checks on the ratio of workers to supervisors. The old system had given Murphy and the Washington office only a vague idea of how much money went to the enrollees. Under the new policy, Murphy dispatched a fixed sum of money to each reservation, told the superintendent exactly how many enrollees must be hired, and rarely granted any appeals.

The reaction of production officials to the $930 limitation was quite adverse. They complained particularly about making the policy apply to the past six months. The retroactive nature of the regulation would force them to abandon half-completed projects which required machinery.

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[3]D. E. Murphy to all Superintendents, December 21, 1937, ibid.

Many felt that the quality of production would suffer since they must use fewer supervisors and buy cheaper materials for projects. Still others protested that the new policy had caught them with worn-out equipment that needed replacement. It would be cheaper, they argued, to trade in such machinery for new models rather than waste money on countless repairs. All field leaders felt that the projects requiring hand labor had been finished in previous years, and the remaining work required machinery.

Murphy could do little about the protests except to complain to Fechner's office that CCC-ID could not meet the $930 limitation if it applied to the first half of fiscal 1938. Fechner eventually allowed CCC-ID to start enforcement of the per enrollee limitation on January 1, 1938 instead of six months earlier.[4]

Nevertheless, the policy of forcing CCC officials to spend a set portion of funds on each enrollee continued until the organization folded in 1942. Fechner kept the $930 limitation in effect from early 1938 to mid-1939. He raised the figure to $980 per enrollee for the next year, but the increase offered little relief. Fifty-eight percent of CCC-ID funds under the new limitation had to be spent on wages and upkeep of the workers.

Coupled with the rigorously applied retrenchment

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[4]D. E. Murphy to Superintendents and Field Men, June 26, 1938, ibid.

policy were serious reductions in general funds for CCC-ID during the late 1930's. The first major cut came in fiscal 1939 when Murphy received slightly under $7,000,000, compared to nearly $8,000,000 the previous year. Project work on many reservations had to be cut back as a result. The CCC-ID allotment for fiscal 1940 remained at roughly $7,000,000. These fund reductions limited Murphy's financial freedom. He had previously held back a portion of each CCC-ID allotment in an "at large appropriation" and dispensed this money to reservations needing extra funds to complete projects. The fund reduction hampered this policy in fiscal 1939, and the Budget Bureau removed the entire "at large appropriation" after Murphy had received his annual allotment of funds at the start of fiscal 1940. Murphy warned CCC-ID field officials that they must spend exactly what he had sent them, for he would not be able to provide additional funds from the Washington office.[5]

The nature of field operations changed significantly after 1937 as reservation superintendents and CCC-ID production officials adopted various devices to cope with the new retrenchment policies. Leaders on large reservations had little trouble in keeping within the $930 limitation. They reduced the amount of projects requiring machinery and added

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[5]D. E. Murphy to Coordinating Officers and All Superintendents, July 21, 1939, File 50839-1936, Funds, General Service, 220, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

more hand work. Cooperative agreements with other divisions of the Bureau became increasingly popular. These had been used at least since Fechner first authorized Indian CCC to assist the irrigation division with developing subsistence gardens in 1935. Besides this, CCC-ID enrollees cleared the right-of-ways for truck trails by hand, while the roads division assumed the task of grading and surfacing the road bed. For the construction of large dams and similar projects, CCC-ID furnished the labor, supervisors, and machinery, and the Public Works Administration supplied the gasoline and materials. Such cooperative arrangements were frequently an unsatisfactory solution. Officials of the two divisions sometimes disagreed, and CCC regulations had to be stretched to their fullest meaning to permit such work.

Retrenchment affected some reservations far more than others. Large reservations had the flexibility to divide their work between hand labor and machinery. A majority of agencies in the Lake States, Oklahoma, and Kansas had never used much heavy equipment, and the per enrollee limits scarcely affected their production. The reservations worst affected were smaller agencies in the Southwest and Great Basin. The operations on such reservations in the late 1930's usually consisted of well drilling, truck trails, and dams. These projects forced each superintendent to employ a minimum staff made up of a project manager, foreman, clerk, mechanic, trail locator, and camp manager. The

types of projects and resulting high staff overhead made small agencies in the Southwest and Great Basin feel the fullest effects of retrenchment.

Certainly not all the results of per enrollee limits and fund cuts were harmful. District and reservation CCC-ID officials pared questionable spending to a minimum, and they became increasingly reluctant about retaining personnel whose duties contributed little to the program. District offices frequently combined the duties of two former employees under a single person, and district engineers and foresters went out in person to help supervise production on the reservations. Moreover, the per enrollee limits meant that the Indian workers received a bigger percentage of CCC-ID funds after 1937. Indeed, the number of enrollees employed by the organization remained about the same or increased slightly from early 1938 until the last year or so of CCC-ID. The fact that the enrollee program reached full bloom in 1938 and 1939 further indicates that money still existed for the more essential activities of CCC-ID.

The death of Robert Fechner in late 1939 removed a strong friend but frequent critic of CCC-ID. The forceful Director had been in ill health for some time when he suffered a heart attack and entered Walter Reed Hospital in early December, 1939. He died three weeks later. The burial ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery fittingly

reflected the unusual government career of the man who had molded and led CCC for over six years. Fechner was buried with full military honors, but six CCC enrollees from the Washington area acted as pall bearers.[6] The flags at CCC camps throughout the nation flew at half mast for the first time in the history of the organization.

President Roosevelt's appointment of James J. McEntree as Director of CCC in February, 1940 brought little change to the parent organization or CCC-ID. McEntree's background closely paralleled Fechner's. Both had been active in local and national affairs of the International Association of Machinists before they served President Wilson as labor negotiators during World War I. Fechner brought his long-time friend to Washington as Assistant Director of CCC in 1933. McEntree had taken an increasingly prominent role in the organization as Fechner's health deteriorated in 1939, and the new Director continued the same major policies after he took office.[7]

With the approach of World War II, CCC-ID became strongly involved with national defense preparations sponsored by the federal government. Indians first became eligible for benefits of the National Defense Vocational Training Act in early 1941. The United States Office of

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[6] New York Times, January 1, 1940, p. 23.

[7] Ibid., February 16, 1940, p. 41.

Education operated this program in conjunction with departments of education of each state. Collier directed that CCC-ID participants would receive practically all of the training, and district camp supervisors and local camp managers quickly made arrangements with states to start the classes.

Since CCC-ID already had the enrollee program in operation and possessed the needed facilities, courses began at camps, repair shops, schools, and agency headquarters without delay. The states appointed the instructors and supplied equipment and texts. The enrollee participants studied radio operation and repair, welding, auto mechanics, sheet metal work, carpentry, and various other subjects related to national defense. They attended the classes from twelve to fifteen hours per week for approximately two months. All CCC members in national defense training received five hours per week off from production work with pay to attend the classes throughout most of 1941. The students took proficiency tests at the end of the courses, and nearly all those who passed immediately took jobs in industry. CCC-ID ultimately helped sponsor forty-three national defense classes for 932 enrollees.

During the same period the enrollee program opened various other avenues for CCC-ID workers to receive vocational training. In cooperation with the education division, CCC-ID established radio schools at the Phoenix and

Chemawa (Washington) Indian Schools. The two schools offered six training courses for 236 enrollees of various tribes. Some went into Indian Service hospitals to become orderlies, and others entered central repair shops of the regular CCC to learn auto mechanics. Both groups were unable to complete their training before the end of CCC-ID. A few enrollees attended Army cooks and bakers schools which, needless to say, did not cease with the outbreak of the war.

Such educational activities would have become even more prominent had CCC-ID continued. The final "CCC-ID Handbook" contains a revised enrollee program dated March, 1942. New regulations granted permission for production supervisors to release enrollees from work for up to half an hour per day for "job instruction" at their projects. The "Handbook" additionally instructed enrollee program personnel to prepare the Indians for life off their reservation as a part of their vocational training. The enrollees should be advised on labor and management relations, which jobs required personal tools, and how to defray living expenses from the time they started work until their first paycheck. Such instructions may seem overly basic, but they were especially necessary for Indians to whom urban and industrial society represented a totally different world than reservation life.

The most promising portion of the new enrollee

program was a system to certify the participants' competency in various skills. Claude C. Cornwall, head of the enrollee program, planned to establish job specifications for fifty-three different occupations related to CCC-ID work. A card was to be made up for each enrollee listing the specifications for his particular task in CCC-ID, and his supervisors were to certify when he met each requirement. The enrollee would be given the card to indicate his work experience and proficiency when he left CCC-ID and applied for a new job.[8] The official correspondence of CCC-ID indicates that Cornwall may have put the new plan into operation at some reservations in 1942, but he did not have time to send the specification cards to all agencies before Congress closed CCC-ID.

CCC-ID first began placing numerous enrollees in private jobs in 1940. Previous to that time the organization had some success in finding employment for Indian youths, but they commonly obtained better positions in CCC and other relief programs, or found permanent jobs in the Indian Service. The depression provided little opportunity for enrollees to find private employment all during the 1930's. A CCC-ID report in mid-1940 indicated that the employment situation was improving. It showed that almost

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[8]"CCC-ID Handbook," Section VIII, The Enrollee Program (Revised March, 1942), pp. 5-6, United Pueblo CCC-ID Files, Federal Records Center, Denver, Colorado.

2,000 enrollees out of 7,300 in CCC-ID had left the organization for other work during the previous year. But even at this late date slightly less than 600 of the enrollees had secured private jobs. Around 1,000 of them returned to self-employment, and the remainder obtained positions in Indian Service.[9]

This first trickle of Indians entering the labor market became almost a flood by 1942. Indians at Work and CCC-ID records almost overnight seemed to be filled with examples of former enrollees who left the $1.50 per day paid by the conservation program and started earning $10.00 per day or higher. Indians from all over the West went to work in shipyards, airplane plants, machine shops, ordnance factories, and other types of war industry. Most of their skills had been learned in Indian CCC production or in the classes provided by the enrollee program and national defense training. The former enrollees typically served as welders, stone masons, sheet metal workers, mechanics, machinery operators, and truck drivers.

Indians from the most remote areas of the West joined the parade from the reservations to outside jobs. Hundreds of Navajos and other southwestern Indians helped build an $11,000,000 Army ordnance depot at Fort Wingate,

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[9]D. E. Murphy to John Collier, August 13, 1940, File 59226-36, Circulars and Memos, General Service, 112, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

New Mexico in 1941 and 1942. The sight of the wiry, long-haired Navajos tying steel and pouring concrete must have left the Army officers aghast. The picturesque Indians had to be coaxed to have their pictures taken for identification cards, and their habit of changing their names threw the payroll system into chaos. The white foremen started each day with full crews, but Navajos who felt that their boss was too loud or abusive slipped unnoticed into another work gang and quietly went on working. By quitting time some crews had swollen to a huge size, and others contained only a handful of men. But few questioned the colorful Navajos' skill or their willingness to work.

"Army officers and contractors at the project," one reporter wrote in 1941, "wondered where so many of the Navajo workmen learned to operate tractors, trucks and perform so well as skilled carpenters and stone masons. The answer," the writer continued, "is that the Civilian Conservation Corps program on the Reservation for the past eight years has enabled many Navajos so inclined to learn those occupations."[10]

The southwestern tribesmen continued to find off-reservation jobs during the succeeding period. When the Army finished the Fort Wingate project, it employed more Indian labor for the construction of the Navajo Ordnance

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[10]Gallup Independent, June 18, 1941 in File 4285-1937, Enrollee Program, Navajo, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

Depot at Bellemont, Arizona.[11] Numerous Navajos left their reservation in the coming period for the military services and jobs in war production, agriculture, railroads, and mining. Their experiences broadened their horizons and convinced them that the tribe must support education and training in speaking English after World War II.[12]

Meantime, CCC-ID officials at all levels faced an increasing struggle with rising prices and reduced funds. The CCC-ID allotment for fiscal 1941 dropped over $1,000,000 or around fifteen percent. In addition, the central office of CCC placed the per enrollee limitation at $830 during most of the final two years of the program. This new retrenchment meant more than merely halting nonessential spending. It became exceedingly difficult just to keep the CCC-ID program in operation in 1941 and 1942. Camp managers at boarding installations complained that they could not stay within their food budgets and still feed the men properly because of the rapidly rising prices. The Billings district office, which always emphasized the use of machinery on projects, could even begin to meet the $830 limitation. District Coordinator Tom C. White reported midway through fiscal 1941 that he would have to hire one additional en-

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[11] F. W. LaRouche, "War Comes First in Navajo Life," Indians at Work, X (Numbers 2-6, 1942-1943), 18.

[12] Robert W. Young (ed.), The Navajo Yearbook, 1957 (Window Rock: Navajo Agency, 1957), 238.

rollee for every three then employed during the next six months to meet the demands of the central office. White mentioned that he had been unable to recruit enough enrollees during the past summer because so many Indians had entered war plants, found local jobs, or joined the armed services.[13] Even reservations which normally employed little machinery found short funds and rising prices a frustrating problem. In addition, the draft and the activation of reserve officers removed key supervisory leaders at all levels and disrupted CCC-ID even more.

Murphy had few means to alleviate the growing problems. He told camp managers that the enrollees must be fed adequately even if this required dipping into funds for production equipment and supplies. The perplexed CCC-ID Director also asked all boarding units to reduce the number of camp personnel to a bare minimum at the outbreak of the war, and to keep everyone busy during working hours. The central CCC office tried to economize by requiring all enrollees to attend national defense training classes during off-duty hours. Production went on a full forty-hour week at that time, and travel to and from work no longer counted as duty time.[14]

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[13]Tom C. White to John Collier, December 9, 1941, File 58839-1936, Educational, Welfare, etc., General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[14]D. E. Murphy to Superintendents and all CCC-ID Personnel, December 30, 1941, File 3400-1937, Enrollee Program, Billings District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

After Pearl Harbor a touch of pathos surrounded the efforts of Murphy and other CCC-ID leaders to continue somehow the program despite all the problems. Murphy, for example, pleaded with Fred Verity of the Oklahoma City office to keep the camp at Fort Cobb, Oklahoma in operation even though enrollment had fallen off badly. The Director felt that the camp could still prepare youths for national defense jobs, and he hated the prospect of terminating the excellent enrollee program at Fort Cobb.[15] A month later Collier ordered the extension and education divisions to assist the enrollee program in the repair of all privately and government owned farm machinery at the reservations. He hoped that the Indians would thus boost their farm output and learn to maintain the equipment themselves. He also requested CCC-ID foremen to substitute wagons for trucks, pickups, and other motorized machinery wherever possible.[16]

Such extraordinary efforts to continue CCC-ID represented something more than the officials' selfish desire to retain their jobs. Murphy and the other leaders now saw widespread and tangible results from CCC-ID for the first time, and they realized that the Indians, after years of

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[15]D. E. Murphy to F. L. Verity, February 24, 1942, File 466-1937, Enrollee Program, Oklahoma City District, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

[16]John Collier to Superintendents and to Personnel, Extension, Education, and CCC-ID Divisions, March 2, 1942, File 79633-1937, Enrollee Program, Supervisory Letters, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

economic privation, had a chance to assume a higher standard of living. Abandoning the enrollee program clearly aroused the most regrets. Even after CCC-ID had been ordered to close, Walter Woehlke, an assistant to Collier, sent out copies of the "Training Specifications" that Claude Cornwall had prepared for the new enrollee program. Woehlke told the superintendents: "Just because CCC has been eliminated from our present program, it does not follow that the training of eligible Indians should not go on." He requested that the reservations form new classes and continue the enrollee program sessions as a general agency function.[17] The dislocations of war and subsequent appropriation cuts for the Bureau, of course, doomed all such hopes.

In the brief time between the outbreak of World War II and the closing of CCC-ID, the program shaped its activities to support the war effort. A few CCC-ID projects helped develop camps at military posts in early 1942. The enrollees planted victory gardens at their own camps, attended national defense classes, and purchased war bonds and stamps. Many left the organization to enter war production or the military. Approximately 6,400 of 11,000 Indians in the armed services at the end of 1942 were former enrollees. At least 8,000 others were engaged in war pro-

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[17]Walter V. Woehlke to Superintendents, July 31, 1942, File 58839-1936, Educational, Welfare, etc., General Service, 346, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

duction.[18]

The liquidation of CCC-ID started on July 2, 1942 when Congress appropriated $8,000,000 to terminate the entire CCC program. The legislation stated that the buildings and various other property of CCC would be transferred to other federal agencies, state and local governments, or non-profit organizations. Congress stipulated that the Army, Navy, and Civil Aeronautical Administration would have first choice in the transfer of all property of CCC.[19]

The few available records after July, 1942 show that Bureau officials encountered many frustrations and delays in disbanding CCC-ID. Murphy and the rest of his office went to Chicago when the federal government moved the entire Indian Bureau to that city sometime in mid-1942. Only Collier and a small office staff remained in Washington during the rest of the war. On July 10, 1942 Murphy directed the field officials to stop production and lay off almost all the enrollees and supervisory personnel. The CCC-ID Director retained a few employees who safeguarded the property and administered its transfer to other agencies of the federal government.

If the records of closing the Billings district

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[18]New York Times, December 22, 1942, p. 12; "Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C. C. indian Division," p. 35, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, NA, RG 75.

[19]Statutes at Large, LVI, Part 1, 569.

office are at all indicative, the reservations and regional headquarters experienced many troubles in terminating CCC-ID. The large amount of equipment the Billings office had built up was scattered on various reservations throughout the northern Great Plains when Murphy halted project work. Military representatives were painfully slow in selecting what property they wanted and slower still to notify CCC-ID when and where to ship the items. Transfers of the property involved much paperwork, and officials of the armed services and CCC-ID could not comprehend each other's administrative procedures. Tom C. White, head of the Billings office, suddenly left in the middle of the liquidation process to become a superintendent in Minnesota. Malcolm Long, a former district engineer who had earlier been released from CCC-ID, reluctantly consented to replace White.

Long inherited endless problems in his new job. He could not locate some of the equipment listed in the district records, and he found that other items had never been entered in the property files. When ordered off duty after two months, he volunteered to serve as a dollar-a-year man. "I would rather straighten out the mess for nothing," he stated, ". . . than try to turn it over to someone else. . . ."[20] Long finally managed to close out

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[20]Malcolm G. Long to John Collier, January 30, 1943, File 4929-1938, Tom C. White closing file, General Service, 345, CCC-ID, NA, RG 75.

the Billings accounts only after a copious use of affidavits of property loss to cover missing items.[21] CCC-ID thus closed under much the same confusion that had prevailed at its founding in 1933.

The story of Indian CCC in its final years was a mixture of frustrations and successes. The reduced funds and per enrollee limits of 1938 and 1939 seemed to harm the program only slightly. Indeed, CCC-ID probably reached its greatest production efficiency during these two years, and the enrollees enjoyed a larger share of funds than ever before. The participants also benefited from the greatly improved enrollee program which really became active in 1938 and 1939. The emphasis of CCC-ID during the period after 1937 turned from production to education and off-duty activities. This tendency came at a most opportune time. The approach of World War II and a revived economy enabled several thousand former members of CCC-ID to apply their enrollee training and national defense classes when they secured jobs in industry or entered the armed services.

CCC-ID in the final years seemed to be largely a captive of forces over which it had no control. The various fund reductions were merely one part of a general retrenchment policy of the Roosevelt administration. National defense training stemmed more from the growing danger of war

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[21] Ibid., July 20, 1943.

than any interest in helping CCC enrollees obtain employment. Certainly the decision to abolish the entire CCC program reflected an abrupt and complete loss of national interest in relief measures as all attention turned to the war effort. Perhaps discontinuing the regular CCC was justifiable, but the liquidation of CCC-ID came when the program was producing its best results and was most needed as a road to a better economic life for the Indians.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The closing of CCC-ID camps ended a conservation and rehabilitation program that had played an important role for nine years in the lives of many Indians, and over 85,000 enrollees had participated from 1933 to 1942. The organization had spent approximately $72,000,000 on over seventy reservations.

Variation marked nearly every feature of Indian CCC. Its administration and operations had been influenced by both the Indian Bureau and the regular CCC. Some of the enrollees were well adjusted to white culture, and others lived almost completely within their own cultural pattern and heritage. Work ranged from menial to highly technical. This chapter reviews and judges the personalities, policies, and goals that most influenced the unusual program and the participants.

Relations between the regular CCC and the Indian relief organization were quite peculiar. Although the cantankerous Robert Fechner often criticized Daniel Murphy and other officials, the CCC Director's "bark was worse

than his bite." The feuding between Fechner and Indian CCC never degenerated into personalities, and neither Murphy nor his associates ever hinted that they received less than their fair share of CCC funds from the parent organization. Fechner's influence with President Roosevelt and the popularity of CCC made him a powerful figure. He had the potential to seriously harm Indian CCC or even to incorporate it into his own organization. The fact that he willingly allowed the Bureau to operate a separate program with CCC funds speaks highly of the Director's character and personality.

Moreover, Fechner's office frequently initiated policies that were most needed in the Indian conservation program. This was rarely true of production, for Indian CCC generally could hold its own in this area. But the Bureau fell short in safety, enrollee training, and other off-duty activities. The first impetus for achieving the human goals of CCC typically came from the parent organization, and the Indian Bureau altered the new policies to fit its own special conditions.

The second major influence on Indian CCC was the Bureau itself. For all practical purposes, the program was a division of the Office of Indian Affairs--since nearly all the important leaders were career Bureau men. These individuals knew the needs for forestry and range improvements, and they used CCC on projects never possible with

regular appropriations.

The influential role of John Collier during the formation and first work season of Indian CCC rapidly diminished after 1933. The Commissioner doubtless had a major part in reducing the opposition to the enrollee program and the transfer of education director Robert Patterson to Phoenix. He later decided the enrollees would receive most of the national defense training. His strong influence on the Navajo and Pueblo operations showed a concern for the tribes' over-all conservation programs rather than Indian CCC itself.

After 1933 administration of the program fell to Daniel Murphy. No one seemed to become wildly enthused about Murphy's achievements, but none of the numerous Indian or white critics of the Bureau ever raised any charges against him. Indeed, simply avoiding the many controversies during Collier's administration was something of a feat in itself. The competent Murphy vastly improved the production and administrative procedures before 1937, and afterward he gave more attention to improving off-duty activities, especially the enrollee program. Throughout his tenure, Murphy furnished a rather slow but successful type of leadership.

The most important factor in the effectiveness of Indian CCC was the superintendents, the men solely responsible for the local programs. They submitted the plans for

projects, kept the records, filed the reports, dispensed the money, and made the final decisions. A superintendent's support could insure the success of CCC on a reservation, and his neglect doomed the organization to certain failure. The power of agency heads and variations in their ability largely account for the strong contrasts in the effectiveness of CCC. It was quite common for one reservation to develop and carry out an excellent program, while another nearby would fail miserably.

The record of Indian CCC in achieving Collier's major policies was most uneven. The organization seldom contributed to the Commissioner's much-heralded idea that the Indians would revive their old tribal governments and share in the decisions of Bureau officials. There is little evidence that superintendents ever gave the local Indian leaders a real voice in selecting projects and naming supervisors. Agency heads sometimes technically fulfilled the self-government policy by submitting CCC affairs for the deliberation of Indian councils. But the superintendents normally had already made the decisions, and the Indians' approval was perfunctory.

The policy of giving Indians employment preference produced some surprising successes. The Minneapolis district started with seventy percent white supervisors in 1933 and had only thirty percent in 1937. Indians everywhere increasingly took over as foremen, truck drivers, machine

operators, welders, and mechanics. It became fairly commonplace by the late 1930's for an agency to have Indians in all supervisory positions except perhaps for a project manager and trail locator. Employment preference was least successful in the more technical positions because so few Indians were qualified as engineers and foresters.

There were huge disparities in the ability of Indian CCC to raise the productivity of the land and make the reservations self-supporting. The program definitely produced its best results on unallotted reservations with extensive range resources. Fencing off tribal land to keep out whites' cattle, developing new sources of water, and range restoration acted as important supplements to other relief measures of the New Deal. Throughout the period the Bureau secured relief cattle for the Indians or loaned money for the same purpose. Collier also encouraged the Indians to form their own cattle associations. These organizations obtained high-quality registered bulls and sponsored auctions of surplus stock. Leasing land to white cattlemen was strongly discouraged as the associations increased their holdings. As a result of CCC and the other programs, the Indians made startling gains in beef production. In 1933 they had sold only $263,095 worth of cattle, while their receipts rose to $3,126,326 by 1939. During the same period ownership approximately doubled as 17,000 Indians possessed cattle in 1939.[1]

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[1]"Hard Riding Indian Cowboys Combine Old Skills with

Indian CCC made less dramatic though significant contributions to reservation forests before mid-1942. Indian crews built 10,000 miles of truck trails and 3,200 miles of foot and horse trails. Additional fire protection projects included 1,200 bridges, 7,500 miles of telephone lines, and 95 lookout towers. The enrollees' work in controlling blister rust and pine beetles covered 700,000 acres. Some 70,000 acres were reseeded, and a similar area was improved by thinning and removal of unproductive growth. Indian youths had saved an undetermined though sizable quantity of timber by fighting numerous forest fires. Indian forests unquestionably were better managed and protected from fires at the close of the program, and they brought increased revenues in the wartime revival of the lumber market.[2] For example, the forestry division sold 600,000,000 feet of lumber for $1,835,000 in fiscal 1941 and made similar sales all during World War II.[3]

Indian CCC was least effective on the numerous reservations that had been unwisely allotted and lacked resources to support their human population. Such agencies

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Modern Methods to Make Cattle Business Pay," Indians at Work, VIII (December, 1940), 7-10.

[2]J. P. Kinney, Indian Forest and Range, A History of the Administration and Conservation of the Redman's Heritage (Washington, D. C.: Forestry Enterprises, 1950), 278-279.

[3]Annual Report of the Secretary of Interior, 1941 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 428.

were common all over the West but particularly so in the northern Great Plains. The land there was suited only for grazing, but the allotments were too small to permit this. Crop farming was extremely difficult. Poor soil, drought, and insects wrecked nearly every attempt to raise crops during the depression.

The ineffectiveness of CCC on such reservations is seen in a 1937 study of a representative agency, the Lower Brule, in South Dakota. Fifty-five of the ninety-six families had been uprooted from their allotments by Indian CCC and other relief programs and forced to live in wretched, temporary hovels near the agency. Approximately fifty percent of the Indians' income was derived from relief, while all forms of agriculture accounted for only eighteen percent of their earnings.[4]

In essence, Indian CCC could make the Indians self-supporting only if they had adequate potential resources for the purpose. Otherwise, the program could do no more than keep the poverty-stricken from starving.

Any evaluation of the effectiveness of rehabilitation in Indian CCC must be somewhat guarded. Such major goals as improved morals, changed attitudes, increased comprehension, and better adjustment to modern life are most

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[4]Allan G. Harper, "Salvaging the Wreckage of Indian Land Allotments," in Oliver LaFarge (ed.), The Changing Indian (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942), 89-95.

difficult to measure. Moreover, the impact of production activities cannot be separated from formal efforts to rehabilitate the enrollees. Some foremen doubtless were more effective in realizing the human goals of CCC than were inept camp managers.

Certainly, Indian CCC could not provide immediate solution for all the participants' problems. A sixty year old enrollee who did menial work in CCC for a few weeks departed from the organization with little more employment skills than when he joined. The alcoholic Indian was unlikely to stop drinking and start buying necessities for his family because a CCC official told him it was the moral thing to do.

Even the most idealistic Indian CCC leaders recognized that they could not produce miracles in human behavior. They understandably gave most of their attention to the younger, brighter, and better educated enrollees. It is not surprising, therefore, that the more capable youths were most apt to be promoted to foreman, sent to a district training center, or assigned to a skilled job. Probably a majority of the highly able enrollees would have eventually been successful without CCC, but their participation eased them through a time when finding jobs was most difficult. Most Indian youths were at a crossroads in life. They could have given up during the depression and become completely apathetic. Service in CCC gave them an oppor-

tunity to mature, to learn new skills, and to select an occupation.

What has happened to these younger enrollees since Indian CCC closed is not fully clear. Much research would have to be done on the ex-participants' subsequent careers before a definitive answer could be made. The wholesale exodus from reservations after 1940 strongly indicates that Indian CCC most benefited those individuals who took jobs in major cities or in the Indian Bureau.

This seems particularly true of the former enrollees in areas where Indians and whites were highly intermingled. J. M. Jackson, former principal foreman at the Kiowa agency and currently a highly active farmer, cattle feeder, and feed mill owner, thinks that virtually none of the former members of CCC has prospered at farming in the Anadarko, Oklahoma area. In fact, he knows of only two who have personally handled their own land since 1942. Those who remain in the community generally eke out a living by leasing their allotments or working at low-paying odd jobs. The former enrollees who have really prospered now work in factories in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Wichita, Kansas City, or urban centers on the West Coast.[5]

In many respects the same conditions that stifled Indian economic progress before and during the depression

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[5]Personal interview of J. M. Jackson, Anadarko, Oklahoma, June 27, 1966.

have never been removed. Local white prejudice, leasing of allotments, shortages of capital, and lack of ambition have hampered those Indians who remained on their own reservation. Indians, like whites, find it hard to climb the ladder of success when no ladder exists. Hence, a program designed to improve the Indians' land and their use of it had its greatest effect by allowing many to assume life in urban society--for better or worse.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROJECTS COMPLETED, 1933-1942

To protect forest and range lands.

91 No.	Lookout towers
63 No.	Lookout houses
7,522 miles	Telephone lines
70 ea.	Foot and horse bridges
9,789 miles	Truck trails
33 No.	Radio stations
3,081 miles	Horse and man trails
1,315,870 A.	Insect pest control
1,163 No.	Vehicle bridges
3,697 miles	Firebreaks
14 No.	Airplane landing fields
325,147 W-dys	Suppression of forest fires, presuppression prevention, etc.

To improve forest and range lands.

263,129 A.	Eradication, poisonous weeds
294 No.	Corrals
12,320 miles	Fencing
53,868 A.	Forest stand improvement
5,699,119 A.	Timber estimating

To develop land resources.

1,742 ea.	Impounding dams and large reservoirs
7,564 ea.	Small reservoirs, water holes, and springs
13,409 miles	Contour furrows and ridges
1,505 miles	Terracing
771,260 L. Ft.	Erosion control and water spreading devices
48,560 ea.	Check dams, permanent

36,923 ea.	Check dams, temporary
6,870 No.	Water control structures other than dams

[From "Final Report of E.C.W. and C.C.C. Indian Division," pp. 58-59, File 32114-44-344, General Service, CCC Files, Box 131, National Archives, Record Group 75.]

APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF PERMANENT IMPROVEMENTS MADE ON RESERVATIONS UNDER INDIAN CCC, 1933-1942

AGENCY	BUILDINGS AND PLANT	LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS
Blackfeet	$ 50,950.87	$ 889,435.88
Carson	25,711.46	584,372.46
Chemawa	249.35	41,290.16
Cherokee	22,024.65	460,884.51
Cheyenne & Arapaho	8,662.44	416,000.93
Cheyenne River	45,862.06	1,497,788.05
Chilocco	- -	75,726.58
Choctaw	792.75	31,008.47
Colorado River (1)	4,640.71	83,524.34
Colville	28,343.08	1,630,181.65
Consolidated Chippewa	71,627.64	954,226.36
Consolidated Ute	26,273.68	457,890.19
Crow	98,299.24	695,851.51
Crow Creek	10,186.48	475,230.94
Five Tribes	91,253.64	1,676,306.12
Flandreau	494.75	31,643.36
Flathead	45,483.73	813,503.41
Fort Apache	104,136.88	1,429,778.98
Fort Belknap	36,649.23	595,513.11
Fort Berthold	13,485.70	498,423.15
Fort Hall	11,094.63	402,302.76
Fort Peck	31,050.18	1,220,138.42
Fort Totten	16,298.25	152,285.86
Grand Ronde-Siletz (2)	8,013.38	55,112.21
Great Lakes	89,265.96	734,871.38
Hoopa Valley	4,723.35	461,331.80
Hopi (3)	22,307.00	Included in Navajo Totals
Jicarilla	13,835.78	232,204.18
Kiowa	37,019.52	613,393.32
Klamath	22,664.11	178,799.36
Menominee	19,837.94	135,196.29

AGENCY	BUILDINGS AND PLANT	LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS
Mescalero	17,894.97	623,544.28
Mission	3,943.53	890,135.48
Navajo	290,436.28	6,451,649.72
New York	4,000.24	260,180.61
Northern Idaho	1,871.27	187,656.94
Osage	5,664.77	718,814.35
Pawnee	12,919.15	505,963.88
Phoenix Sanatorium	- -	1,890.13
Phoenix School	3,391.12	14,946.34
Pierre	12,923.95	68,738.23
Pima	14,019.99	222,201.21
Pine Ridge	39,121.85	1,563,594.81
Pipestone	5,691.00	125,591.09
Potawatomi	21,169.88	402,485.96
Quapaw	12,073.48	116,872.22
Red Lake	37,861.15	460,846.85
Rocky Boy	42,087.62	346,234.31
Rosebud	64,551.47	1,355,589.39
Sac & Fox	3,938.87	49,365.80
Sacramento	303.78	173,663.91
San Carlos	39,624.33	1,455,997.62
Sells	54,440.72	2,022,565.19
Seminole	4,530.73	164,316.52
Sequoyah	- -	22,073.63
Shawnee	6,165.11	396,544.22
Sisseton	11,264.64	216,803.97
Standing Rock	42,945.66	1,287,507.85
Taholah	27,031.94	694,515.63
Tomah	13,173.01	104,631.47
Tongue River	35,725.90	549,621.77
Truxton Canon	20,786.54	440,972.46
Tulalip	3,794.12	46,830.47
Turtle Mountain	26,864.66	537,400.42
Uintah & Ouray	47,843.99	597,626.72
Umatilla	1,822.23	36,188.17
United Pueblos	109,022.29	1,840,883.45
Warm Springs	44,587.44	534,576.47
Western Shoshone	9,772.19	238,698.19
Wind River	61,772.69	968,238.63
Winnebago	30,311.91	422,853.58
Yakima	48,059.22	651,364.06
	$ 2,217,792.23	$ 44,063,482.24

The above figures do not include maintenance, or cost of fire suppression and pre-suppression, rodent, weed, blister rust eradication, and similar projects.

(1) Figures for June 30, 1941.

(2) Figures are for 10/31/41, date on which work closed at this unit.

(3) Report of traveling auditor for period ended May 31, 1942.

[From "Final Report," ibid.]

APPENDIX III

EXPENDITURES BY INDIAN CCC

Fiscal Year	Amount
1933 and 1934	$ 9,539,051
1935	11,074,432
1936	9,345,276
1937	8,227,406
1938	7,965,523
1939	6,940,163
1940	7,038,388
1941	5,990,431
1942	5,776,150
1943	750,463
Total	$ 72,647,283

[From "Civilian Conservation Corps Program of the United States Department of the Interior," Conrad Wirth to Harold Ickes, January, 1944, Box 131, General Service, 344, Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division, National Archives, Record Group 75.]