



Merchants need Indians for border town business

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And their new ideas sometimes agree, but often disagree, with the old concepts.

Unlike those of the white population who would write off the Indians as unfortunate, but economically important savages, people like Dave Allen are working.

Allen, a VISTA volunteer who has established a community center for Gordon Indians, is working in "grassroots planning." With Sioux accounting for 80 per cent of Sheridan County's poor and over 90 per cent of the Gordon police department's arrests, he has plenty to work on.

Having instituted an Alcoholics Anonymous program in the town, Allen is trying to help overcome a lot of other problems of the Nebraska Indian.

"THE YOUNGER INDIAN kids scare the hell out of me," he said. "They are already defeated, they don't rebel. They regress."

"White society has defined the Indian role, and this causes major emotional problems."

General acceptance in the border town community is another problem. "The only reason the Indian is accepted in Rushville is for his money . . . the Indians were run out of town by condemnation action on their houses."

"They eliminated the problem by wiping them out, sending them back to the reservation."

Small town police forces provide other troubles, he said. "There is police brutality against the Indians here," Allen stated. "The police enter property without warrants. I would say Indian civil rights here are being violated. And there are lots of claims in the Indian community of police brutality."

BUT BEYOND THE PROBLEMS of alcoholism, youth attitude, community acceptance and police, another area was cited by Allen — a complication which should be helping the Indians.

Allen said that historically "white Christians had descended upon them, and Christianity means nothing to them."

"Their Native American Church does exist underground," he said.

Why does it remain? "(Christian) missionaries did not approve of smoking and drinking, yet look at the perversions committed in the name of religion," he said.

AS TO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, Allen feels the Indian is subject to a different form of prejudice. Unlike the relationship of white and black America, "the whites and the Indians believe their role is determined."

"No one would march or protest. That method is foreign to settling problems here."

Though Allen may disagree with many other whites in western Nebraska on the state of the Indian, he agrees with most of them when he talks about a way out of the rural ghetto.

"I think the Indians are the most qualified to solve their own problems," he said, suggesting cooperatives and "red" capitalism.

"Around here there are whites who are interested in Indian lore, but have never seen an Indian."

Few towns, of course, have programs as organized as those in Gordon. But the western Nebraska areas can claim no exclusiveness in failing to adapt to Indians and trying to force them to adapt to towns.

As Pine Ridge Reservation director, Lay has watched many Indian families move to metropolitan areas, become disillusioned or weary of the social pressures in the cities and return to the reservation.

Enos Poor Bear, president of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, is one who came back — and he's glad he did. Having lived several years off the Pine Ridge Reservation, including seven years in Chicago, he returned in 1960.

"I prefer living here," he said. "The city is no place to raise children."

Actually, the reservation isn't much better, unless the head of the family has employment or education (or both).

"I've been in the outside world," he added, "and like everywhere it has its ups and downs."

WHATEVER THE ELECTED tribal leader has gained or lost during his life, he claims he has never lost the pride that is often associated with the history-book Indian.

"They didn't take my pride away," he said. "There aren't enough white people on this continent, or in the world to take my pride away."

Another Indian who tried it off the reservation is Sterling Snake, treasurer of the Winnebago Tribal Council on the Winnebago-Omaha Reservation in northeast Nebraska.

According to Sterling Snake, the BIA had located Indians in jobs off the reservation, and shipped them off even if they weren't interested in leaving.

"I AND MY WIFE were moved off the reservation," he said. "It is good, if you want to leave. But I didn't want to move off."

"We had Polish neighbors; I worked 12 to 14 hours a day; nobody wanted to even talk with my wife," he explained. "So she moved back to the reservation and I followed."

The long hours are not unusual for the Indian seeking a job. According to Birgit Kills Straight, public information officer for the OEO at Pine Ridge, \$8 per day from sun-up to sun-down is average for migratory laborers.

"There are no jobs available on the reservation," Kills Straight said.

AND WHEN THE INDIANS go off the reservation, things aren't necessarily any better.

"A typical Indian in the cities doesn't have a chance," Kills Straight said. "He's treated like in the 1920's when the Negroes were all treated like Amos and Andy."

"He cleans the streets and gets a pat on the back," he said. "Very few Indians make it."

Kills Straight claimed that there is outright discrimination in urban areas. And he singled out Rushville, Gordon, Alliance and Scottsbluff as being among the worse.

Everyone says there is discrimination. Most agree the Indian has been broken and made subservient to the government. Many blame the paternalism of the whites for making an unbelievable situation intolerable.

The problems appear endless — loss of reservation land to whites, lack of funds to take advantage of economic resources on the reservation, lack of economic resources, lack of education, lack of pride, lack of understanding, and infantism.

What is the answer?

"The solution," says Supt. Lay, "is going to have to come from the Indians, and not be injected by what I do. They will have to find a way to retain pride and still live in a society in which they have to be self-sufficient."

"We as non-Indians must not demand they give up anything that is Indian," he said. Whites should help salvage that part of the Indian culture which is meaningful, he added.

While the Indian needs to "pull himself up by the bootstraps," as some out West will say, others conclude that the white Americans at least owe him a pair of boots to hold on to.

Current Movies

Times Furnished by Theater. Times: a.m. light face; p.m. bold face

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LINCOLN
Cooper/Lincoln: 'Romeo & Juliet', (M) 7:00, 9:30, Sat & Sunday 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30.
Varsity: 'Play Dirty', 1:24, 3:30, 5:30, 9:14. 'Sneak Preview', 7:40.
Stuart: 'World of Fashion', 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 'Joanna', 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15.
Nebraska: 'Faces', 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30.
State: 'Duffy', 1:00, 3:05, 5:10, 7:15, 9:20.
Joyce: 'The Magic World of Topo Gigio', 7:00, 9:30, '1001 Arabian Nights', 8:15 only.
84th & O: 'Cool Hand Luke', (M) 7:30, 'Harper', (M) 9:30, 'Arizona Bushwacker', 11:25.
GOAAA
Dundee: 'Funny Girl', (G) every eve at 8:00, Wed., Sat. & Sun., 2:00 & 8:00.
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