

AROUND THE CAMPFIRE

by Dr. Dean Chavers

A way of life has almost died, and few have even noticed. This way of life was a reaction to conditions which were oppressive, and which sought to make the conditions better. It was not a way of life with clear leadership, and consequently the leadership was easily bought off.

The way of life was the style of confrontation, militance, occupation of land and buildings, takeovers, and assertiveness of the Indian movement of the 1960's. Social historians, in fifty years, will probably conclude that such a movement was inevitable. Given the frustration of the newly urbanized Indian populations, the despair of the reservation Indians, and the fact that over 50 percent of both were unemployed, something was bound to happen.

Compounding this situation was the long-standing government policy of suppression of tribal governments, banning any practice of traditional Indian religions, forbidding the speaking of Indian languages, and similar acts. A totally repressed, largely landless, jobless, frustrated, and angry Indian population was ripe for a social movement.

And a social movement occurred. The first glimmer of this movement was the founding of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) in 1961. Within five years, there were other, similar movements underway all across the U.S. They were characterized by the idealism of their goals, the youth of their leadership, and the urbanization of most of their members. Some spread to Indian reservation areas, but most were restricted to off-reservation areas, such as college campuses, urban Indian centers, and social welfare nonprofit agencies.

These movements had real effects. They helped to bring about the reviving of tribal

governments which had been largely dormant for several years. They inspired the rewriting of tribal constitutions to bring them up to date with modern times. They hastened the shift of operating government programs for Indians from the federal bureaucracy to the tribal Governments. They stimulated the formation of hundreds of advisory boards, planning commissions, nonprofit agencies, national Indian organizations, and consulting firms.

They brought health services to urban Indian populations. They brought at least some Indian materials to the curricula of schools and colleges. They loosened a few of the bonds of colonialism that federal bureaucrats had wrapped around Indian people securely.

But mostly they bought dollars. Whether these dollars were for job training programs, for supplemental education, for supplemental health programs, for meals for senior citizens, for rehabilitation for alcoholics, or for better opportunities for women, the dollars flowed. Straight out of Washington to the communities that were benefit from these dollars.

And they brought frustration. Thousands of parents were disappointed that the education dollars--80 percent of them--went to pay the salaries of the teachers and project directors that were hired to supplement school programs. Most of the job training funds paid for teachers and classroom supplies; the students benefited indirectly, from the education and skills training they received. But many of those trained for jobs are still unemployed; the job training programs could not address the attitudes of employers.

But the movements could not bring about real change.

Other than the people employed in the programs, there was little additional employment of Indians; the Bureau of Indian Affairs reported last year that somewhere between 31 and 46 percent of the Indian population was unemployed. Peter McDonald lost his try for a fourth term as Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council largely because unemployment on the reservation jumped from 39 percent to 72 percent in less than two years, after Reagan took office.

They could not bring about the development of jobs on the reservations themselves. The number of successful enterprises on Indian lands today is abysmally low. It is almost impossible to begin new ventures under Indian control, because capital, trained workers, skilled management, transportation, and numerous other things are in short supply.

And they could not bring about Indian control. The people who designed the federal programs--Congressional staffers, federal bureaucrats, consultants--had no interest in enabling Indian tribes to control their own destiny. Their interest was in solving "social problems." Some of them had the audacity to try to apply engineering skills and techniques to programs that were intended to apply to people.

Without thinking, in many cases, because they had to work to live, the leaders and potential leaders of the movements took jobs in these programs. Federal grant programs today probably employ at least 100,000 of the 300,000 employed Indians in the nation. There are over 150 federal Indian programs, according to the Senate Indian committee. Once employed, the leaders of the movement have to toe the line drawn by Washington. Criticism of

Washington these days is hard to find.

Thus has the Indian leadership been coopted by Washington. Any criticism of policies or actions is muted, because people are afraid they will lose their programs, and thus their jobs.

The idealism of the 1960's has been replaced by the cynicism of the 1980's. "Red Power" has been replaced by "Green Power." "Economic Development" has replaced the search for justice and freedom. The militant Indian movement of the 1960's has been killed by its own success, if success is defined as getting Washington to throw dollars at problems.

And since the movement has not been recognized as dead yet, there has not emerged a recognition of the need for an ideology and a way of life to replace it. When this recognition comes, the ideology is likely to be based on spirituality, not on political power, or on economic power, or on the power of education.

But the basic spirituality of Indian people is due for a renaissance, something that occurs in cycles. When the time is right, the new Indian spiritual leaders will emerge. It is only a matter of time.

THE DEATH OF A MOVEMENT

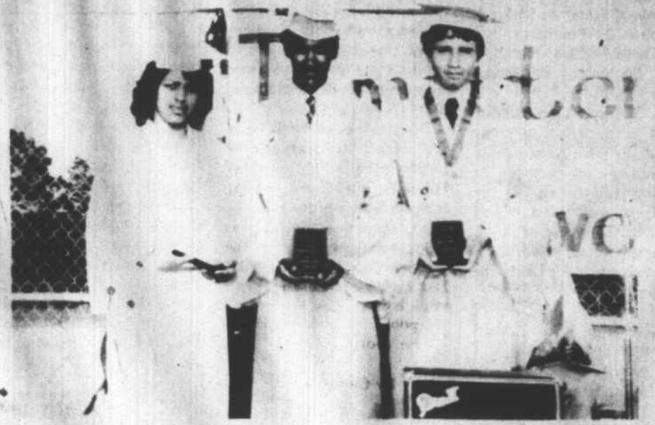
MEETING County Board Education

The Robeson County Board of Education met on Tuesday evening in regular session to discuss and act upon a 21 item agenda.

Among the action taken was the approval of the Garbage Contract to Porter Sanitation, low bidder.

Upon recommendation of Supt. Purnell Swett, the 7th and 8th grades will be moved from Oxendine School and these students will attend Prospect School beginning this fall. Kelly Sanderson, assistant principal at Pembroke Elementary School, was named principal of Oxendine School. Bill James Brewington, assistant principal of Pembroke Senior High School was named principal of Pembroke Junior High. Barry Hardin, principal of Pembroke Middle School, was named principal of Green Grove. Thomas Earl Locklear, Principal of Pembroke Junior High was named Principal of Pembroke Middle School.

Students Honored for Perfect Attendance



Three students were honored with plaques during graduation exercises at Magnolia High School on June 3 for having perfect attendance for all 12 years of school.

This is an outstanding accomplishment and the parents are to be commended along with the students.

left to right: Lorie Locklear, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Royce Locklear; Glenn Bell, grandson of Mrs. Rosie M. Chavis; and Bruce Bell, son of Mr. & Mrs. Luther Bell.

The students are pictured

Honored by US Academy

The United States Achievement Academy announced that Felecia D. Barnhill has been named a 1983 United States National Award winner in Mathematics. This award is a prestigious honor very few students can ever hope to attain. The Academy recognizes less than 10 percent of all American high school students.

Felecia, who attends St. Pauls High School, was nominated for this National Award by Miss Susan Beam, a mathematics teacher at the school. Felecia's biography will appear in the United States Achievement Academy Official Yearbook.

Felecia is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Barnhill. The grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Prentice Blanks and Mr. and Mrs. James Barnhill, all of St. Pauls.

Holds Pizza Party



On May 23, the students of Marianne Jarvies' fourth and fifth grade health class enjoyed a homemade pizza party. The students helped cook the pizza, salad, vegetables and dessert.

Each class was responsible for fixing its own table and

place setting. Mrs. Wallace's fifth grade students took first place for the prettiest table setting. Ms. Jarvies' fourth grade class took second place and Ms. Rebecca Lowry's fourth grade took third place. A good time was enjoyed by all.

NEW AND EXCITING DIMENSIONS IN VOLUNTEERISM

Gertrude Brewington, through her development of the YVA program, has brought a new and exciting dimension of voluntarism to young volunteers who are engaged, not only in Indian Affairs, but also in everything from working in the sheriff's office to assisting at the VA

hospital. In doing so she has broken down old barriers and improved community relationships throughout her wide region of activity. She's one

When Gertrude Brewington was a young girl growing up in Cumberland County, North Carolina, there was no high

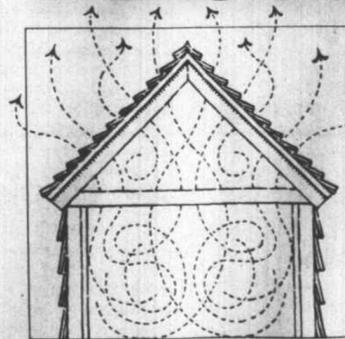
school for Indian children, the nearest one being 50 miles away. No matter the distance, she and her sister were determined they would attend. So their father scrimped and saved and bought a car of sorts. To help defray its cost, the parents of six other Indian families contributed a month-

ly fee for transportation. And so, daily, Gertie and her sister and friends made a 96-mile round trip to earn their high school diplomas. From childhood Gertie knew she was going to be involved in helping her people, most of whom lived on the cold edge of poverty. And through her long association with the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, she has done just that.

A year ago she became the director of the Young Volunteers in ACTION program in Raleigh. Today, with 481 volunteers between the ages of 14-22, her YVA projects serve Indian needs in 13 counties. Most of the volunteers are from Indian families, and they know better than anyone the kind of problems to be found in remote Indian villages where shanties line the dirt road, a muddy well supplies water for a half-dozen families whose children are semi-literate--far behind their class in reading and writing. Gertie had spent a great deal of time as a literacy tutor for Indian youngsters, and this was one area of volunteer training on which she concentrated. She knew it was essential to get past the obstacle of the isolated world in which so many of the children lived, not just behind the closed door of a shanty but behind the closed door of the mind. With the aid of her volunteers and their adult coordinators, she organized weekly meetings where the young people could gather to

socialize, learn crafts and dances and develop a sense of pride in their heritage. As she describes it, "Where once there were kids who would not lift their heads, they now 'take part.'" As for tutoring, just recently an Indian mother whose daughter was judged to be three years behind the class received a letter from the daughter's teacher saying, "I don't know what you're doing to improve Donna's reading and writing but her progress is remarkable."

HOW YOU CAN STOP YOUR COOLING DOLLARS FROM GOING THROUGH THE ROOF.



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