

Rosebud Indian Agency  
Rosebud, South Dakota  
November 18, 1944

TO HOLDERS OF INTEREST IN  
THE TRIBAL LAND ENTERPRISE

The Tribal Land Enterprise has now come into actual operation. It is a development of the thinking of the Rosebud people over a period of several years and the final plan of operation results from the collaboration of tribal officials, local agency officials, and officials of the Indian Office. The bylaws were approved December 15, 1943. Since this plan is an innovation, quite naturally, it could be expected that procedures would be slow and cautious. The first transaction submitted was that of Antoine Roubideaux, President of the Tribal Council. The board of directors approved this transaction January 19, 1944. The case was submitted to the Indian Office February 12, and the transaction was actually not completed and certificates approved until October. This indicates careful thinking as to details in order that mistakes may be obviated.

The Tribal Land Enterprise (TLE) plan has three general over-all objectives. The first is to remedy the situation of increasing fractionation of ownership interests. About 60% of Indian-owned land on the Rosebud Reservation is in heirship status. The number of heirs on different tracts runs all the way from one to over 150. Under the normal situation these fractionations become worse and worse as time goes on. The heirship situations through probate present a problem which faces all Indian reservations where allotments have been made. The Rosebud people resolved to really do something about it. The Tribal Land Enterprise offers that opportunity.

The second objective is to provide a means whereby individuals who own interests in land scattered in various parts of the reservation may bring those interests together into one tract of land in order that they may have an opportunity to set up an individual enterprise of their own and to actually use what land they have. This plan is entirely feasible under the Tribal Land Enterprise.

The third objective, and by all means, not the least important, is to make it possible to consolidate Indian lands into areas where the Indians make their homes and to bring the Indian land into solid blocks of Indian ownership. To this end tribal officials have set up what are known as "consolidation areas" and have outlined these areas on the reservation map.

In the operation of this plan, it is the objective of the board of directors of the Tribal Land Enterprise to protect the income interests of those who go into the enterprise and to provide for the protection of their ownership equities. In the appraisal of land, one of the important things taken into consideration by the board of directors has been the income history of the land involved, and to provide, in the operation of the plan, that the income received as dividends from certificates of interest shall approximate the income



the individual has received in the past from the rentals of this land. These dividends, of course, are not guaranteed. We have balanced our books as of October 1, 1944 and the dividends paid on certificates of interest are equal to the rentals previously received by the individuals on the land which has been placed under the management and operation of the enterprise. There is no reason to believe that this income will not be kept up to this level in future operations.

The attached tabulation will show 28,596 acres were placed under the operation and management of TLE up to Oct. 1, 1944, and that there have been issued 90,070 interests in TLE. This means that the land under the management and operation of the enterprise is appraised at over \$90,000 at the present time. It is felt this is an excellent showing for an enterprise of this kind which is just in its infancy. The opportunities under this enterprise are appealing to a great many members of the Rosebud Sioux tribe and its success will enormously increase the acreage which will come under the management and operation of the enterprise.

The Tribal Council and progressive members of the tribe are thinking of plans for the future of our returning soldier boys. Since land is our principal resource the economic use of land combined with available credit funds will offer a ready opportunity to these returning soldiers to develop livestock enterprises. Land consolidation through TLE fits into this program.

In its operation the board of directors hold themselves in the position of assisting any individual who has the desire to consolidate his land interests and land placed under the management and operation of TLE must be on an entirely voluntary basis. No pressure is exerted upon anyone who does not feel disposed to place his land interests in TLE. The records show that as of October 1, 1944, 99 individuals have become members of TLE. The board of directors have applications from approximately 200 additional individuals whose applications are pending, and applications are constantly being filed. Thus the management of TLE is confronted with an enormous task in the land consolidation program.

There is attached hereto auditor's report on accounts of The Tribal Land Enterprise as of October 1, 1944.

In order to augment this program the Tribal Council has adopted a resolution to use \$17,000 of tribal money in the purchase of land and the operation of TLE. This money will be made available on the provision that Section 28 of the Bylaws be amended to provide for authorization of TLE to purchase lands in excess of the valuation of \$1.00. Such amendment is to be presented for consideration at this meeting.

Approved:

C. R. Whitlock, Supt.

Clyde W. Minn, Land Field Agent

Yours very truly,

Joseph Henry, Chairman  
Board of Directors, TLE

Antoine Roubideaux, Secretary