

million was four times the size of the budget.

This year has been the best yet. The Siletz started a smokehouse that sells salmon to tourists in Depoe Bay. A medical clinic, serving Indians and non-Indians alike, has just opened. The tribe realized a longstanding dream and built 54 new houses, some with five bedrooms, bay windows and two-car garages.

More than almost any other tribe that has been restored, the Siletz have prospered. But even tribes that have not done as well say

coming back from termination has been a second chance at life.

"The significance of restoration is that this is the first time in American history that a major Indian policy actually began with Indian people," said Aida Deer, an educator at the University of Wisconsin who was instrumental in helping her native Menominee Indians regain their reservation in Wisconsin. "We achieved a very historic reversal of policy."

Given the history of

Federal policy, many Indians never thought they could get their tribal status or reservation returned, Ms. Deer said.

"The small tribes pulled this off, through strength and courage, and I think everybody was surprised," she said. "When termination occurred, what people forgot was that Indians wanted to be Indians."

Don Miller, a lawyer with the Native American Rights Fund in Boulder, Colo., said restoration has been a rare success story in Indian

country, but it should be placed in perspective.

"The tribes that were terminated have benefitted greatly from restoration," Mr. Miller said. "But, of course, this doesn't mean they got very much of their land back. Only a sliver."

Looking at the big new houses here in Siletz, Mr. Rilatos, who was born here in 1923, said: "We went from a million acres to a graveyard, to this here. We are just now seeing some light."

The Back Page

by carl shaw

Quite a story it is that is in the Nov. 25 edition of the *New York Times*. "Back From Oblivion, A Tribe Forges A Future" reads the headline. Reporter Timothy Egan's lengthy story traces the Siletz Indian Tribe of Oregon, its termination in the 1950's, restoration in 1977, to its new community of big homes and broad streets. "Unemployment is well below the national average," according to Egan's story and I am not so sure that any other tribe can make that claim if we are to believe BIA's annual labor force statistics report. The story goes on to say that drugs and alcohol are not allowed on the reservation and the budget, enriched by tribal businesses and a portfolio of outside investments, is showing a healthy surplus.

According to Egan, the Siletz tribe decided against paying out per capita payments and elected to put the money into a community trust, and invest for the future. The timber enterprise grew, as did a business that sells native plants to nurseries. Money was put into the stock market and last year, revenue of about \$2 million was four times the size of the budget.

< >

The story goes on to say that this year has been the best yet. The Siletz started a smokehouse that sells salmon to tourists in Depoe Bay. A medical clinic, serving Indians and non-Indians alike, has just opened. The tribe's realized a longstanding dream and built 54 new houses, some of them with five

bedrooms, bay windows and two-car garages. It is not the success of the tribe that surprises this writer, or even that it has done it following the federal government's shameful and disastrous policy of termination. The surprise is that we have a story about the successes in the *New York Times*. I wish more of the media would seek out those successes and print them. If they did, it would make my job a lot easier. Then we would not have so many unknowing members of the public out there who continue to believe that the typical Indian is in a drunken trance out on the reservation looking for a government handout. Unfortunately, some of the media perpetrate that illusion itself!

Siletz Tribe Receives National News Coverage



An NBC National News Team was here, in our small community of Siletz, December 11 through 14, taping the Siletz Tribal accomplishments. The news report, which will be run on the NBC nightly national news, was prompted by an article ran in the *New York Times* November 25. A news crew of 4 spent 3 1/2 days taping at the Siletz Community Health Clinic, Friday night BINGO, the Headstart Classroom, Siletz Tribal Smokehouse, Paul Washington Cemetery, the Indian Housing, Walt Klamath's sweatlodge and interviewing Tribal Chairman, Dee Pigsley.

The exact date of airing of the 3 minute segment is not yet known. We have been told that we will be notified when the date is set.