

Bi-cultural Learning Center Gets Off Ground in Maine

Four Indian tribes in Maine and the Maritime Provinces of Canada have seen their dreams for a bi-cultural learning center take huge strides toward reality.

Formally organized as TRIBE, Inc., the Indians last month signed a no-cost use permit for a former U.S. Job Corps Center in Maine where they will establish the experimental center.

The one million dollar center was vacated in 1969 as a result

of federal cutbacks and comes to TRIBE fully equipped, with complete residential and educational facilities for up to 124 students.

The all-Indian, non-profit educational corporation was formed in December of 1969 to alleviate the up-to-90 per cent drop-out rate of Indian high school students common throughout the United States and Canada.

Indian students have asked

that the center enable them to learn technical skills necessary for advancement without the destruction and degradation of their culture, history, language and values which occurs regularly in schools planned and administered by non-Indians.

As a first step in developing a specific curriculum for the new learning center, a 3-4 week educational workshop for Indian high school students will be held in August. In addition, a fall meeting is planned involving government and education officials from both countries.

TRIBE has received grants of \$45,000 from U.S. foundations and \$15,000 from individuals and private groups in both countries for development activities.

Plans for the center located in Acadia National Park, Mount Desert Island, Maine, have received the endorsement of the Teachers' Associations of Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island as well as from the citizens and towns on Mount Desert Island.