

Navajo Nation Chairman McDonald Urges Self Determination

An all Indian commission on Bureau of Indian Reorganization and operations was proposed last month by Peter MacDonald, chairman of the Navajo nation, at a National Tribal Chairmen's organization meeting in South Dakota.

He also proposed the convening within 60 days of an Elected Tribal Chairman Constitu-

tional Convention and demanded provision by the administration for revenue-sharing by Indian tribal governments.

"If we do not act now, for years to come we will be told: See. We offered Indians the opportunity to be heard, to shape their own destiny, to control their own affairs. They just aren't ready yet. They just don't want self-determination," MacDonald warned.

"We have never had more opportunity for Indian spokesmen to be heard and listened to—by the Administration, by Congress, and even by state and local officials. We have never had a better opportunity to stand on our own two feet and speak out for our people.... But ironically, Indian organizations have never been in worse shape.

"The NCAI's financial troubles are well-known. The propo-

sal made in Kansas City for a Tribal Leaders Organization has great potential—but it was so clearly connected in the minds of many with the old line bureaucracy and with tribal leaders who did not truly represent their people that it was defeated by two votes."

In conclusion, MacDonald said, "I noted the other day that the Department of Interior has brought back the Buffalo as its official sign. But the government of the United States has not put the Indian back on the nickel. Well, I don't want us to be put back on the nickel. I am tired of

nickels.

"I want the government to put the Indian on the dollar—and then I want the government to put the dollar on the Indian.

"And I do not want to wait until inflation makes the dollar worth a nickel. I want action now."

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