

Memo-- Regarding non-reservation Indians living in the Columbia River Gorge--

The following resolution was passed by the 41st Annual State Conference of the Oregon State Society of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, March 1, 1955, during their meeting in Portland, Oregon.

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WHEREAS, The government of the United States, in pursuance of the program of the development of the Columbia River, is building The Dalles Dam below Celilo Falls, and  
WHEREAS, The structure in pooling the river destroys the fishery which the Indians have reserved under treaty and have enjoyed for many generations, and,  
WHEREAS, Damages have been paid to reservation Indians using this fishery, and,  
WHEREAS, The resident Indians have received no payment of damages nor has any provision been made for housing, rehabilitation, care of the aged, education of the children, or any way left open for future subsistence or livelihood except to become objects of charity, and,  
WHEREAS, The resident Indians are the descendants of Army Scouts, who served as guides and friends to the early settlers and were never moved from their long abiding places to any reservation,  
BE IT RESOLVED: That the Oregon State Society of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, hereby deplore this grave wrong against a helpless, loyal people, and call upon the Congress of the United States to make prompt and substantial amends for this act of rank and unjust discrimination against the Indians whose homes are in the Columbia Gorge,  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That copies of this resolution be supplied the United States Senators and Representatives of Oregon and Washington and to Mr. Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, and a careful note be kept of their responses thereto.

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Since the adoption of the above resolution, the Portland Woman's Club and other civic groups are taking similar action.

The Wasco County Court is urging a Congressional grant to provide housing for displaced Indians. Because these Indians have no legal title to the land, the Army Engineers are only offering the appraisal figure of the homes and dryshacks in the Indian villages at Celilo Falls, Oregon, and Spear Fish, Washington.

The resident Indians at Celilo Falls, under the leadership of venerable Chief Tommy Kuni Thompson, ask to be housed in a separate village beside the river. They ask that the longhouse, worship pole, and the Chief's dryshack be moved, if necessary for their preservation.

These old "long-hairs" want to remain beside the bones of their ancestors (their cemetery on top of the high bluff overlooking the falls.) They want their worship pole restored and in its rightful place directly in front of the longhouse door. They want to live on in the old ways, "because they are best."

They ask that their own distinction between "home-folk and comers" be recognized by those in authority:--"comers" come and go to homes in other places; "home-folk" have always lived within the rocky confines of the Columbia River Gorge.

The Wy-am-pums blame the "comers" for much of the dirt and discord at the falls. They were deeply disturbed when vandals destroyed the little carved bird on top of pole. Not only was that bird a symbol of chieftomship, but it also carried their messages to the Almighty.

There is no official of the Bureau of Indian Affairs living in this area. Because they are wards of the Federal government, these people are not given protection by our state police. They would like help in establishing and maintaining an "old time Indian village" where they could welcome school children and courteous visitors.

Martha Ferguson McKeown