

*Copy for Coml Club Files,*  
United States Post Office

CLASS

June 22, 1922.

Hon. Charles H. Burke,  
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,  
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Burke:

I enclose clipping from Yakima paper, *Day* Secretary Fall had suspended the order for moving the Agency from Fort Simcoe on account of protest reaching the Department against the removal.

This is quite a surprise to me and I suppose is to everyone. We knew in a general way that a few Indians and business men from Wapato, who have personal axes to grind, had circulated a petition and got a number of Indians and others to sign it on the statement that their tribal funds were to be used and also reciting that Toppenish was not a fit place for the Agency on account of moral conditions, making reference to bootlegging in particular, but we took it for granted that your local Superintendent here, Don M. Carr, who is familiar with all the towns here, could tell you about local conditions better than some interested parties and I understand that when they brought this petition to Carr, he told them he could not sign it, and while conditions in Toppenish might not be ideal, he considered them as good as any town on the Reservation, and in one respect better, and while Toppenish had four drug stores, it was a generally well known, and accepted fact, that none of them had ever been suspected or accused of selling liquor of any kind and he knew of no store or hotel in Toppenish where it could be purchased, while at Wapato and other towns on the Reservations it was a common report, whether true or not, that liquor could be purchased by those who knew the ropes.

Now, Burke, you know I have no financial interest in this matter and no reason why I should give you anything but the exact facts and I am writing on the supposition that it is the moral condition that is causing the suspension, for as I remember it, we threshed out pretty thoroughly, the fact that Toppenish was much more centrally located, much more convenient and accessible both by railroad and wagon road, to all parts of the Reservation than any other place, and I am sure that when it comes to moral conditions we can make a much stronger showing.

Regarding educational facilities we have two large grade school buildings here and on September 1, we will open one of the most complete high school plants in the county, which is modern in every respect and includes manual training, domestic science and gymnasium departments, all completed at a cost of \$185,000.00, so you see we are well equipped with school facilities for a town



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of 3200 people. In regards to the church situation here in Toppenish, will say that the Methodists are building a new church which will cost \$35,000 when completed and this will be occupied by the Methodists and Presbyterians.

The Christian and Congregational churches combined have a good modern church and regular services while the Episcopalians have a neat little Chapel and a Rector that divides his time with this church and Zillah.

The Catholics have a good church property here, also a Parish house, and are talking of building a Catholic school and have the plans for it but have not commenced it. The Adventists have built a good church property here this Spring and hold regular services here, as well as the Lutheran, Christian Science and several other denominations.

We have a public library which is being well equipped and will be kept open daily and an annual Chautauqua held at a cost of about \$1500 each year, so I cannot see but what we are entitled to some credit for moral uplift and I personally know that the Mayor City Marshall, Justice of the Peace and Police Judge are all temperate moral men of good standing in the community and are doing all them can to make moral conditions better here and are succeeding better here than in any town in the County, and I have never met a better class of business men than we have here in Toppenish. And if Secretary Fall is suspending the removal on these grounds, we shall be pleased to have him or you appoint some Federal Judge or send your own representative here to have a hearing on this question, and see if we cannot make as good a showing for law enforcement as any town in the county.

In regard to the progress we have made, will say that we picked out five or six locations, and showed them to Mr. Carr, and told him to select the one he thought the most suitable and he selected 8 lots, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres of ground, in the very best part of our city and within two blocks of the Post Office and two blocks of the High School and we have purchased these lots at an expense of about \$3300 and raised about \$15,000 to erect a brick building according to plans and specifications presented by Mr. Carr and are now ready to carry out our part of the contract and feel sure that if you will send your own man here, or anyone satisfactory to you, we shall be able to show you conclusively that we have as good and law abiding citizens here as in any part of the United States and that we intend in good faith to carry out our part of the contract and hope the Government will not listen to irresponsible gotten out and circulated by men who have private axes to grind. *Patton*



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We are doing all we can to make moral conditions better here and we are willing to meet any reasonable requirements and shall be pleased to hear from you by wire or letter as to what is necessary to be done and we will meet the requirements. Thanking you in advance for an early and favorable response, with kind personal regards, I am,

Yours very sincerely,

J. A. White

P.S. 4 Forgot to mention 5 or 6 Clubs of Women here who are helping to keep the Moral tone up on Wall or near Stray Morocco Odd Fellows & other fraternal orders;

We can see a Marks notice send down a Petition having 5 Times the Number of Indians & White Names asking for its removal if it is necessary -  
Kindly wire me -  
Truly J. A. White