

February 28, 1961

Dear Mr. President:

The Association on American Indian Affairs has been concerned for several years over the Allegheny River (Kinzua Dam) Project in Pennsylvania which, as now being constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers, would inundate or otherwise ruin a substantial portion of the Alleghany Reservation in New York possessed by the Seneca Nation of Indians.

In terms of historical perspective, the tiny Alleghany Reservation is one of the last areas remaining in Indian ownership out of the great homeland of the Seneca Nation, one of the six members of the famed Iroquois Confederacy. The Reservation was carved out of that original domain and was permanently set aside for the Indians under the Treaty of November 11, 1794 (7 Stat. 44), Article III of which provides in part as follows:

"*** Now the United States acknowledge all the land within the aforementioned boundaries, to be the property of the Seneca nation; and the United States will never claim the same, nor disturb the Seneca nation, nor any of the Six Nations, or of their Indian friends residing thereon and united with them, in the free use and enjoyment thereof; but it shall remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase."

Relying upon this promise of protection by the Federal Government, the Seneca Indians have peacefully used and occupied the Alleghany Reservation to this day. Indeed, the 1794 Treaty, which was signed for the United States by Timothy Pickens, as the representative of President George Washington, is the oldest treaty of this Nation still in full force and effect.

In the absence of prompt action by you, as President, the sacred word of the United States will soon be broken. Notwithstanding the protests of the Seneca Indians, Congress has appropriated funds for the Alleghany River Project, and ground-breaking ceremonies for the Dam were held at Kinzua last Fall. In addition, the courts have ruled that the Federal Government has a legal (as contrasted with moral) right unilaterally to break treaties with Indian tribes. The last hope of the Seneca people thus lies with the Office of the President.

The 1960 Democratic Party Platform states with respect to American Indians:

"We recognize the unique legal and moral responsibility of the Federal Government for Indians in restitution for the injustice that has sometimes been done them. ***

"Free consent of the Indian tribes concerned shall be required before the Federal Government makes any change in any Federal-Indian treaty or other contractual relationship."

In a letter to this Association written during the election campaign, you personally reiterated that under a Democratic Administration, "There would be no change in treaty or contractual relationships without the consent of the Tribes concerned."

The clearcut incompatibility of Kinzua Dam and the 1794 Treaty creates a necessity for translating these noble principles into practical action. Let it not be said that in 1961 United States abandoned its "unique legal and moral responsibility" for Indians and, by abrogating a treaty without the free consent of the Seneca Nation, in fact worked a new injustice for which no restitution is possible. As is asked in the enclosed editorial from a recent issue of The New York Times, "Can't we stop in all our understandable hurry to right the wrongs of the big world, and do justice to a handful of people in one small corner of the earth?"

The Association, of course, is not in a position to pass upon the engineering or economic aspects of the Allegheny Project or upon the feasibility of substitute sites for the Kinzua Dam. We understand, however, that it is more than likely that the Conewango-Cattaraugus alternative project, designed by Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, former chairman of the T.V.A. and a distinguished engineer, might not only save the Seneca Reservation but also result in a very large saving of money to the United States. Accordingly, we urge that you direct the Army Corps of Engineers to cease working on the Kinzua Dam until an independent, impartial investigation of the merits of the alternative Conewango-Cattaraugus project is undertaken and completed. Moreover, in the event this objective study shows Dr. Morgan's proposal to be feasible, we also urge that you request the Congress to authorize it as a substitute for the presently planned Allegheny River Project.

Only in this way will we be doing justice to an Indian nation which has never broken faith with the United States.

Respectfully yours,

Oliver La Farge

Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York
For information: Phyllis Brociner - RI 9-1046

For Immediate Release
March 30, 1961

"The fight of American Indian tribes against the imposition of state jurisdiction is like boxing before the Marquis of Queensberry rules. The Indians have been unprepared for this fight because they innocently thought they had already won it."

This statement was issued today by La Verne Madigan, Executive Director of the Association on American Indian Affairs, upon the introduction in the United States Senate of Senate 1479 by Senators Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf of Montana, which provides for amending controversial Public Law 280 to require Indian consent and piecemeal transfer of jurisdiction, principles which the Association endorses.

The Association also indicated that Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr., informed its President, Oliver La Farge that the Interior Department is studying the effects of the law, which makes it possible for states to assume jurisdiction on Indian reservations without Indian consent, as a necessary preliminary to any Departmental effort to have it amended.

The statement explained: "Any objective study of Public Law 280 must end in an amendment to require that the consent of the Indians be obtained before states can establish their own jurisdiction on the lands of Indian tribes.

"Recurring bills in states such as South Dakota and Washington have been defeated. But it is predictable that similar legislation will be introduced year after year, as long as there is tribal land on which it would serve non-Indian interests to establish state jurisdiction," the text continued.

In both South Dakota and Washington laws were enacted by previous legislatures which did provide for Indian consent. In 1957, a South Dakota law required that every tribe hold a referendum, and state jurisdiction was overwhelmingly rejected. In Washington a bill of that same year provided that state jurisdiction could be established only at the request of the tribes.

The current legislatures of these states again considered and rejected jurisdiction bills, after considerable Indian opposition. In the state of Washington the bill reappeared in a special session after it had died with the adjournment of the legislature.

The Association presents its case forcefully: "Better law enforcement is needed on many Indian reservations, and there are conditions under which many tribes would seek it on their own initiative.

"However," the statement concludes, "the tribes of western Washington fear, and may have good reason to fear, that the current state jurisdiction bills are being prompted by those who wish to see an end to Federal protection of the Indians' property rights and fishing rights.

"In South Dakota the Sioux say they are subjected to brutal treatment by white law enforcement officers in town bordering their reservations, and they do not want to risk being similarly treated on their own reservations."

Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.
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FOR INFORMATION: Phyllis Brociner
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October 30, 1961

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Association on American Indian Affairs called upon the Interior Department to revoke the license of the Atomic Energy Commission to use land claimed by Alaskan Eskimos for nuclear testing and research. The text of the resolution was released today by Oliver La Farge, President of the organization.

The resolution questions the right of the Bureau of Land Management of the Interior Department to dispose of land which is subject to native claims.

The Association's Alaskan Policy Committee headed by Dr. Henry S. Forbes of Milton, Massachusetts, has been studying the native rights issue in the forty-ninth state, in response to request for counsel from Eskimo leaders.

The protest was aroused by a series of nuclear explosions proposed for the Cape Thompson area of Alaska, known as Project Chariot. The Bureau of Land Management licensed the A. E. C. to use the land, which is subject to claim by the Eskimos of Point Hope, Noatak, and Kivalina Villages.

Recalling the Alaska Territorial Act of 1884, the resolution reiterates the promise that Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts "shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use and occupancy, or now claimed by them."

The resolution further states that after 77 years the land, hunting and fishing rights of Alaskan natives still remain undefined and unextinguished; that therefore these rights are protected under law and cannot be disposed of by administrative fiat.

(more)

Project Chariot has been criticised on different grounds by the Wilderness Society, the Alaska Conservation Society and the Committee on Nuclear Information. The Committee on Nuclear Information of St. Louis charged that the Atomic Energy Commission's calculations on fallout in this area were highly inaccurate.

The CNI contended that the Project Chariot explosions would contaminate the food chain in the Arctic region resulting in a concentration of Strontium 90 in the Eskimo's bones.

The Atomic Energy Commission responded quickly with a counter argument that there would be no danger from radio-active fallout, claiming that its scientific studies confirmed this view. However, the A.E.C. has assured the Association on American Indian Affairs that it is continuing its investigation, and plans to explore every possibility.

The Association's Health Committee headed by Dr. Carl S. Muschenheim of New York, has been following closely this phase of Project Chariot, and will issue a statement when all the information is in.

The text of the resolution follows:

Whereas under the Alaska Territorial Act of May 17, 1884, the United States promised that Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts "shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use and occupancy or now claimed by them," and

Whereas the 1884 Act further provided that the final disposition of Native rights and claims should be the subject of future legislation by Congress, and

Whereas seventy-seven years have passed and the land, hunting and fishing rights of Alaskan Natives still remain undefined and unextinguished, and

Whereas in the absence of Congressional action, the Natives have land, hunting and fishing rights in Alaska that are protected under law and thus cannot be disposed of by administrative fiat, and

Whereas the Bureau of Land Management of the Interior Department has licensed the Atomic Energy Commission to use land subject to claim by the Eskimos of Pt. Hope, Noatak and Kivalina Villages for research leading to a nuclear explosion known as Project Chariot,

Now therefore, the Executive Committee of the Association on American Indian Affairs protests the Interior Department's sanction of this invasion of Alaskan native rights and urge the Department to revoke the license of the Atomic Energy Commission to use for nuclear testing or research leading to it the land subject to claim by the Eskimos of the above-named villages.

For Release MAY 8, 1962

TALK BY PHILLEO NASH, COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS, NEW YORK CITY, MAY 7, 1962

Although I have been in office only a little over seven months, it has been an extremely crowded period. So I really welcome the opportunity to back off here in a somewhat more cloistered atmosphere and cast an appraising eye on our present situation in Indian affairs. In the next 40 minutes or so I would like to consider this with you under three major topics: first, what we are trying to accomplish through our present Federal programs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs; second, the more important program actions that we have already accomplished or gotten well under way in the last six or seven months; and, third, the outstanding challenges or tasks that I feel we should be tackling in the period ahead.

Let us start off with the Task Force Report approved in broad outline by Secretary Udall last July and based in large part on recommendations made by Indians to the Task Force in numerous consultations held last spring.

In our report we members of the Task Force set forth three major goals for the Federal administration of Indian affairs. They are (1) maximum Indian economic self-sufficiency, (2) full participation of Indians in American life, and (3) equal citizenship privileges and responsibilities for Indians.

To reach these goals we must have properly oriented programs. In our study of the Bureau's operations last spring we on the Task Force found that the Bureau already has much of the authority it needs to accomplish these objectives. But we also found that there was need for an important shift in program emphasis. Too much attention, we felt, was being given to the purely custodial phases of the Bureau's work and not enough to the developmental aspects. So today we are giving additional emphasis to the development-oriented programs of the Bureau and making development the keynote of all our operations. This means not only development of physical resources--the soil, grass, water, timber, minerals and the like--but also the development of human skills and capacities. Thus we are talking about a wide range of Bureau programs: soil and moisture conservation, irrigation, forestry, range management, road construction and maintenance on the physical resource side; school operations, adult vocational training, adult education and employment assistance in the sphere of human development; and, on top of these, the more specialized programs such as industrial development, credit activities, and the development of tourism or recreational potentials on the reservations.

Over the past six or seven months we have been giving major attention to two preliminary needs in connection with this greater emphasis on the developmental aspects of our work. One is the need for financing of these expanded development programs; the other is the need for communicating with our own staff throughout the length and breadth of the Indian Service.

To give you a somewhat clearer picture of what we have in mind here, let me quote from the statement I made several weeks ago before the appropriations subcommittee of the House of Representatives:

"Development of the full economic potential of the reservation has two facets. One is the proper management of land, timber, water, range, livestock, minerals, and other resources....The other....is a program of economic development. By this, we mean full use of all the resources of a given reservation for maximum productivity. In the West, outside the

Indian reservations, a hundred years and more have brought together land, people, and capital to make effective contributions to the national welfare, bringing a high standard of living to the whole area. It is in the sense that this process is only beginning, or has never taken place at all, that Indian reservations are largely undeveloped. In this respect they resemble underdeveloped countries elsewhere in the world.

"Such economic development as has taken place tends to be rather one-sided. Until recently the trust status of Indian lands has prevented them from obtaining credit with which to develop them. Lands are leased which the Indians could more profitably operate themselves and so the full income potential is not realized to the Indians. Since 1867, not one irrigation project has ever been completed. With few exceptions the possibility of tourism is untapped. Small commercial enterprise and service establishments are nonexistent, or feebly developed.

"Over the years the Bureau of Indian Affairs has struggled to fill the economic gap. We have brought much technical skill and small amounts of credit to the reservations; but frontier conditions still prevail with respect to transportation; communications; housing; availability of power; and the supply of community, domestic and industrial water. The standard of living on Indian reservations is not likely to be significantly improved until these conditions have been corrected. To take the first step is the purpose of the (Bureau's) proposed Division of Economic Development."

Although we have had only limited funds which could be used in staffing for a greater emphasis on economic development during the present fiscal year, which ends on June 30, we have been taking advantage of this period to communicate a new sense of direction and purpose both to our own employees and to Indian tribal groups. Last October in Denver we held a nationwide conference of the Bureau's superintendents--the first of its kind convened by the Bureau in more than 20 years. It brought together 56 superintendents, 10 area directors, and most of our top staff in the Washington Office. We have also brought together in nationwide conferences at Washington or elsewhere our key employees engaged in employment assistance and adult vocational training, in education, tribal operations, agricultural assistance, road construction and maintenance, building construction, and budget and finance.

And we have also been meeting with the Indians on their home grounds. Just a few weeks ago, for example, the Deputy Commissioner, the Associate Commissioner and I made an extensive tour of the major Indian communities in western Oklahoma, holding conferences with all the tribal groups in the Anadarko Area and meeting with many Indian families in their homes as we motored from point to point. Tomorrow morning I am flying to Bismarck, North Dakota, for a similar tour of the reservation areas in that State and in early June I shall be having consultations of this type in the Indian communities of Minnesota.

And now where do we stand today in the way of program accomplishments?

Fundamental to everything we do in the Bureau is the education of Indian children. Yet it is an unfortunate fact that we have never had enough classroom facilities so that all Indian children could go to school. Over and beyond this, we have the problem of obsolescence, of antiquated, inadequate and unsafe facilities.

To overcome these two problems, we now have underway 32 school and dormitory construction projects which will provide 3,250 additional spaces and replace 3,814 spaces in unsafe or obsolete buildings. About half of these spaces should be

available by the opening of school next September. For the longer range our target is to expand the capacity of our school system and bring ourselves completely abreast of the growing school-age population by the end of the fiscal year 1965. And another part of our dual objective for that same year is to provide safe and sanitary facilities for all children attending Bureau schools.

In the field of adult vocational training, we have liberalized our eligibility requirements so as to include all Indians residing within the exterior boundaries of reservations regardless of the status of the particular lands on which they live; under former rules the training was available only to people making their homes on trust or restricted lands. And we have made it possible for Indians living near the reservations to qualify in cases where a denial of the service would have an adverse effect on our reservation programs. Along with this broadening in the potential scope of our vocational training program, we have also had an increase in the authorized amount of appropriations for the program from \$3.5 million to \$7.5 million. For the fiscal year which starts on July 1, we are requesting \$5.5 million for the financing of this program since it will take some time to gear up for the higher level of activity. In future years our plan is to request the full authorized amount of \$7.5 million.

Another important step we have taken in line with the recommendations of the Task Force is to make an increasingly greater use of Indian labor on our construction projects. The former practice of the Bureau was to have practically all of this construction work done by private contractors who usually have their own crews and make little or no use of Indian labor. This meant that the Bureau was spending many millions of dollars each year on jobs that could be performed by Indians and yet it was providing the people on reservations with only a minimal amount of badly needed work and on-the-job training.

In our Task Force consultations with Indian tribal delegations throughout the West we received many strong complaints about this and in our report we recommended a much greater use of Indian labor through what is known as the "force account" method. This involves having construction projects performed directly by the Government with the Bureau doing its own recruitment and putting work crews on the Federal payroll.

In the fiscal year that ended last June 30 the Bureau had only eight projects involving about \$1.5 million in its entire building construction program carried out by the force account method. In the present fiscal year we have twice as many force account projects involving some four million dollars and providing jobs for about 275 Indians and Eskimos. Next year we expect to have about the same amount in our building construction program. In road construction we have faced a special problem since the Bureau had disposed of most of the heavy equipment required for this type of work. In the present fiscal year's program, however, over 40 percent of our road construction work is on a force account basis and we estimate that it is providing jobs for about 400 Indian workers. While there are some types of projects that just about have to be performed under contract as a practical matter, we shall be making increasing use of force account in the future wherever there is a reasonable possibility to do so.

In the field of Indian credit, too, there have been encouraging advances. The most important step, of course, was the enactment of legislation doubling the size of the revolving loan fund originally established under the Indian Reorganization Act from \$10 million to \$20 million. Under this authorization an additional \$4 million was appropriated for the fund in the present fiscal year. On December 31, 1961, we had a cash balance in the fund of roughly \$6.3 million. While this is not enough to meet all Indian needs for financing from the Bureau, it does permit us to

take care of the most pressing needs and contrasts encouragingly with the "bare cupboard" situation that faced the Bureau on December 31, 1960. Today we have on hand applications from tribes for loans totaling over \$19 million for land purchases alone.

On the housing front we have had three important breakthroughs in the last eight or ten months that augur well for the future. The first was the approval of a housing project for the elderly at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota under the special program conducted in this field by the Housing and Home Finance Agency. The second was the launching of a low-rent public housing project on the same reservation under the program of the Public Housing Administration. And the third was the completion of an agreement between our Bureau and the Federal Housing Administration which greatly broadens the possibilities for FHA-insured loans from banks and other lenders to finance home construction and housing improvements on the reservations. All three of these developments are heartening.

But they will meet only a minor portion of the need because so few Indian families on the reservations have the kind of dependable income required to qualify for FHA-insured loans or even to pay the rents in partially subsidized public housing projects. To make really significant inroads into the tremendous problem of inadequate housing on the reservations, the most promising approach I see is a program of self-help making use of the Indians' own labor. We shall be giving increased attention to this in the period ahead.

In the field of Indian arts and crafts we have had two developments of major significance. One was an increase in the appropriations for the Indian Arts and Crafts Board which permitted some badly needed additions of staff personnel. The other, which has even broader implications, was the decision to establish an Institute of American Indian Arts, national in scope, on the grounds now occupied by the Bureau's boarding school at Santa Fe, New Mexico. This decision was announced last fall and our plans call for opening the new Institute this coming September. At the moment we are busily engaged at Santa Fe--making other school arrangements for the nongraduating student now enrolled there, having the physical plant remodeled to meet the new needs, and building up a faculty and administrative-maintenance staff for the forthcoming Institute. Although the new school will be located in New Mexico, its doors will be open to qualified Indian students with special aptitudes in arts and crafts from all over the country. A full high school course will be offered plus two years of post-high-school instruction. The curriculum will include not only the fine arts, such as painting and sculpture, but a wide range of indigenous crafts such as woodworking, silversmithing, leathercraft, beadwork, ivory carving and basketry. We are hoping eventually to create at Santa Fe a real showplace of Indian arts and crafts which will be of not only national but international interest.

And now how about the unmet needs, the unsolved problems, the jobs lying ahead of us which we have not yet really tackled?

The first one that comes to mind is the rather broad category of reservation economic development. While we have made a few gestures in this direction, our efforts so far have been in no way commensurate with the dimensions of the tremendous job that needs to be accomplished. As I see it, the task has three main phases.

The first involves assembling in the Bureau--chiefly at our field offices--an adequate staff of people highly qualified in economics and the social sciences who can devote their fulltime and attention to reservation economic development. For the fiscal year that starts July 1, we have requested funds to finance a substan-

tial number of such positions and we are hoping to get our staffing under way on a significant scale this coming summer.

The second phase is the task of formulating comprehensive plans for economic development, reservation by reservation. This, of course, is a job which will have to be accomplished chiefly by the Indians themselves; if the plans are to be worth the paper they are written on, they must be basically INDIAN plans, reflecting tribal thinking from the first fact-gathering stages through the final recommendations for specific action leading to greater economic development. Admittedly, there have been many clarion calls from the Bureau in the past for such tribal planning and the response to date has not been overwhelmingly impressive. But I believe our prospects are much better now for two reasons--first, because the tribal fears of imminent termination have been largely eliminated and, second, because we should be able to provide the tribes with far more expert and intensive help than was formerly possible in planning for economic development through the new staff we are hoping and expecting to recruit.

The final phase of the job involves working with tribal groups to streamline and modernize their organizational structures so they will be in position to take full advantage of the available opportunities for economic development. A large number of tribes are now operating under constitutions, charters and bylaws that were drafted in the latter 1930's and there is an enormous task to be done in bringing these documents up to date. In this field, too, we are hoping and expecting to expand our staff of qualified experts in tribal government during the coming fiscal year so that we will be able to help tribes with these problems on a much broader scale than was formerly possible.

Another closely related set of problems that faces us is the matter of Indian claims. Recently there has been quite a burst of activity in this field and a rather large number of tribes are now on the verge of coming into substantial sums of money. Secretary Udall has emphasized quite strongly his feeling that, wherever feasible, these funds should be used to finance reservation development programs rather than distributed per capita among the individual tribal members. In some cases, of course, this will not be feasible either because there is no reservation to be developed or because there is no cohesive or significantly functioning tribal organization. But where we are dealing with an adequately organized tribal group occupying a reservation with potentials for development, it seems to me we have no alternative except to insist that the funds be used very largely for development purposes. In many instances, the amount of these awards will be sufficient to launch programs that will provide tribal members with continuing benefits for years and even decades into the future.

But on most reservations the judgment monies alone will probably not be enough to finance the kind of economic growth that is needed to boost Indian living standards to an acceptable level. Over and beyond this, a great deal of thought and attention must be given to ways of attracting private investment or equity financing of reservation enterprises as well as credit financing through loans from private and governmental sources.

Another part of this economic development picture consists of the construction needs in Indian country. As a result of increased appropriations for construction work in recent years, the Bureau has been able to make considerable progress in enlarging and improving its reservation road system, its administrative buildings at agency headquarters, and its living quarters for employees. Yet the needs are still tremendous. Far too many Indian communities in the West are still inaccessible by all-weather roads. Far too many agency buildings constructed half a century and more ago are continuing in use. And far too many qualified and capable people

are hesitant about undertaking employment careers on Indian reservations because of the insufficiency of adequate housing and other amenities of living which are available in more highly developed communities.

And this brings up the question of the status of communities located near the reservations--the "peripheral towns," as they are sometimes called. What should be the economic, social and political relationships of these towns to the Indian communities on the reservations? Should we be moving in the direction of greater integration and ultimate elimination of all barriers and distinctions? Or should we be working toward a more comprehensive kind of cooperative relationship with Indian and non-Indian communities continuing to maintain their distinctive identities? These are the kinds of questions which leaders on both sides of the reservation lines will need to be examining with much care in the period ahead.

Finally, there is the need for a broad gamut of activities to improve the quality of education provided in Federal-Indian schools. We have the problem of irregular attendance, the problem of premature drop-outs before high school graduation, and the problem of English language capabilities. Without going into statistics, let me merely emphasize that all of these problems have reached serious proportions in many Indian areas and that remedial action cannot be delayed. But I am glad to report that our education personnel throughout the Indian Service are thoroughly alert to the difficulties and are devoting increased attention to these matters. As one example, the schedule of summer-school activities and conferences planned for the months ahead is highly impressive and will undoubtedly contribute greatly to the solution of these most urgently pressing problems.

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Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y.

RI 9-1046

April 16, 1963

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACT TO BENEFIT INDIANS

Indian Tribes throughout the United States will benefit from passage of the Youth Employment Act, according to Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, sponsor of the legislation.

In an article written for the Association on American Indian Affairs' newsletter, Indian Affairs, Senator Humphrey stated that in recruiting young men for the Youth Conservation Corps, special preference would be given to young men from "redevelopment areas." He pointed out that every major Indian reservation has been designated a redevelopment area.

"This program closely resembles the Civilian Conservation Corps of the Thirties, which many Indians regarded and still regard as one of the most valuable development programs ever undertaken on Indian reservations," Senator Humphrey said. "Many a Reservation Indian acquired skills and work habits in the CCC which have seen him through life since then."

Indian tribes will also be eligible to participate in the home town youth employment program, under Senator Humphrey's bill.

The legislation passed the Senate on April 10 and now awaits House action.

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5-24-64

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: Tribal Chairman

RE: INDIAN PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS

Lack of funds for sanitation facilities threatens to cripple the current public housing program for American Indian tribes.

The Public Housing Administration has approved "program reservations" for more than 3,200 low-rent and mutual-help housing units, with an estimated value of \$37,350,000.

These housing projects are scheduled for 49 reservations in 17 states (see list of projects below).

However, indications are that the Public Housing Administration will not authorize actual home construction unless funds are also available for water and sewerage facilities.

In most cases, this money is not available.

Responsibility for providing such facilities lies with the Public Health Service's Division of Indian Health. The Division of Indian Health states that it lacks special funds for the construction of sanitation facilities for most public housing projects.

Unless sanitation funds become available, the Public Housing Administration may withdraw the funds reserved for Indian housing projects and use them instead for urban projects.

To save the Indian housing program, the Division of Indian Health has requested a supplemental appropriation of \$2,200,000 for installation of water and sewerage facilities in connection with approved public housing projects, and \$200,000 for supporting staff.

The request must be approved by Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Anthony J. Celebrezze, before it can go to Congress for consideration.

When Indian tribes express their views to the proper government officials and to their Congressmen and Senators, action is very often prompt in coming. In a case such as this, it would be appropriate for tribal chairmen to express their position not only to their Senators and Congressmen, but also to President Lyndon B. Johnson and to the Honorable Anthony J. Celebrezze, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C.

PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM

<u>STATE</u>	<u>RESERVATION</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>RESERVATION</u>
Alaska	Metlakatla Alaska State Housing Authority	South Dakota	Cheyenne River Crow Creek Lower Brule Pine Ridge Rosebud Standing Rock Uintah & Ouray
Arizona	Colorado River Ft. Apache Ft. McDowell Gila River Hualapai Navajo Salt River San Carlos	Utah	
		Washington	Swinomish Yakima
		Wisconsin	Bad River Lac du Flambeau Oneida
California	Ft. Yuma		
Florida	Miccosukee	Wyoming	Wind River
Idaho	Coeur d'Alene Nez Perce		
Montana	Blackfeet Flathead Ft. Belknap Ft. Peck No. Cheyenne Rocky Boy's		
Nebraska	Omaha		
Nevada	Carson Colony Dresslerville Duck Valley Pyramid Lake		
New Mexico	Acoma Cochiti Jicarilla Laguna Mescalero Nambe Navajo Tesuque Zuni		
New York	Seneca		
North Carolina	Cherokee		
North Dakota	Ft. Berthold Standing Rock Turtle Mountain		

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"It is just beginning," wrote Guy Okakok, Eskimo leader of Point Barrow, Alaska, in a letter to Oliver La Farge, President of the Association on American Indian Affairs.

Mr. Okakok, Chairman of the recent Point Barrow Conference on Native Rights, wrote to "thank you men, as Association's members, for being the first ones to come in to help Inupiat (Eskimos) before it is too late," and to propose a continuing organization of Alaskan Eskimos.

The Association has pledged itself to stand beside the Inupiat in the assertion of their rights until these rights are won.

According to Mr. Okakok, an Inupiat Committee will visit every Eskimo village in March to explain the importance of asserting their aboriginal rights, and to answer the villagers' questions.

"The second step," he explained "will be to hold a second conference just like the first conference... And at this second conference the Inupiat will become perfectly united on the statement of their rights and needs. After that happens, they will be ready to speak to the government and politicians together."

The Point Barrow Conference, a three-day gathering of Eskimos from all parts of the State of Alaska, November 15-18, was sponsored by the Association on American Indian Affairs, and attended by La Verne Madigan, its Executive Director.

At this first Eskimo meeting in history, native delegates from remote villages formulated a statement of Inupiat Paitot, calling for a united Eskimo organization to protect aboriginal rights, and to work toward economic and social development.

The Eskimos call Inupiat Paitot "our land around the whole Arctic world where we the Inupiat live, our right to hunt our food any place and time of year as it has always been, our right to be brave independent people, like our grandfathers, our right to the minerals that belong to us in the land we claim."

Representatives of the Association on American Indian Affairs went to Alaska this summer in response to Eskimo expressions of alarm at sudden enforcement of hunting restrictions by the Fish and Wildlife Service, and at the proposed nuclear explosions in Project Chariot.

Executive Director La Verne Madigan, and Dr. Henry S. Forbes, of Milton, Massachusetts, Chairman of the Association's Alaskan Policy Committee, visited Eskimo villages throughout the State, and met with local leaders. This tour gave rise to the Point Barrow Conference on Native Rights.

"They came together because they had been sensing, since Alaska became a State, that their way of life was being destroyed, although they had never knowingly relinquished it," stated Miss Madigan.

"Their definition of their aboriginal rights in the statement Inupiat Paitot proceeded from the realization that these rights were being lost," she continued.

Miss Madigan explained that most of the Eskimos did not realize that their aboriginal rights are perfectly compatible with their rights as citizens, and "their lack of accurate information left the Eskimos helpless against misinformation."

She cited the portion of the Alaska Statehood Act which specifies: "The State of Alaska...shall be entitled to select, within 25 years after the admission of Alaska into the Union, not to exceed 102,550,000 acres from the public lands of the United States in Alaska which are vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved

at the time of their selection."

The Inupiat Paitot statement also takes issue with the Interior Department on Project Chariot, the experimental nuclear blasting of a harbor at Cape Thompson, Alaska.

"We deny the right of the Bureau of Land Management to dispose of land claimed by a native village, and urge the Interior Department to revoke the permit before the experiment is allowed to go any further," the statement read.

Both the Executive Committee and the National Health Committee of the Association on American Indian Affairs have issued similar resolutions.

A recommendation that the Atomic Energy Commission abandon Project Chariot or "shift the proposed experiment to some uninhabited and non-productive region in which the health and welfare of nearby population groups could not be jeopardized," was released by Dr. Carl Muschenheim, Health Committee Chairman, after the unexpected results of the Project Gnome blast in New Mexico on December 10.

Dr. Muschenheim emphasized that if observers cannot predict exactly what will happen in a blast equivalent to 5,000 tons of TNT, "the consequences of error in the tremendously larger Chariot explosion (200,000 ton equivalent) would be correspondingly much more serious."

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An official condemnation of termination, which has characterized Federal Indian policy for much of the 50's, was delivered to the Annual Meeting of the Association on American Indian Affairs last night by Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr.

"Termination...is not and cannot be a justifiable end of itself," Carver declared. "Naturally we want the Indian people to have full legal, economic and social opportunities, but we do not espouse the notion that this can be accomplished by the surgery of simply chopping off our programs."

He continued: "We must get far away from paternalism. We have the duty of promoting self-government under tribal constitutions... (and) freedom of self government includes freedom to make mistakes."

Carver committed the Interior Department to "some pragmatic way to help the Miccosukees" a band of the Florida Everglades which has been receiving aid from the Association for three years.

The audience of over 200 also heard Oliver La Farge, some-time adversary of governmental activities in Indian affairs, identify the needs of the Indians with President Kennedy's New Frontier.

La Farge, President of the Association on American Indian Affairs, called upon the new administration to eliminate "the cotton-wool resistance" at which bureaucracy is expert.

He explained this term as "...no outright defiance of orders, but delay, technical obedience without substance, and many other tricks."

He cautioned the high-ranking Presidential appointees "And always, as in bureaucracy, there are those who prefer the easy, authoritarian way of operating

more.....

or whose aim is to play safe, resist change, and let the wheel spin as it may while they hold to the security of their positions."

La Farge stressed that the Association sees no substitute for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "Whatever its faults may be, it is the most effective agency for the benefit of Indians that we could set up, and under good leadership, including the leadership in the Department of the Interior above it, it is most effective."

He pledged the cooperation of the Association which he said was "left no alternative but public opposition" in past years, and expressed the hope that the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Interior would "seed the Bureau with strong officials who think as they do."

The program also featured Sevarino Martinez, Governor of the Pueblo of Taos, New Mexico, who presented an appeal for the restoration to his people of their sacred Blue Lake area rather than compensation for the loss of it.

Martinez spoke in the Tewa language, which was interpreted by Paul Bernal, Pueblo Secretary.

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