

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
For Release August 27, 1968

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INDIAN TIMBER HARVEST SETS NEW RECORD HIGH FOR 1967

8289-68
AUG 23 1968

Timber harvesting on Indian reservations set records during the 1967 calendar year in terms of both cash and timber volume, a final tabulation by the Bureau of Indian Affairs shows.

Cash sales exceeded 900 million board-feet and provided gross receipts of \$17.9 million. This compares with a total of 527 million board-feet and \$10.7 million gross sales ten years ago, and about 802 million board-feet, with \$15.4 million in cash sales for 1966, and 811 million board-feet and approximately \$13 million in cash sales in 1965.

The 1967 sales provided an estimated 6,300 year-long jobs in the forest industries on or near Indian reservations.

Average stumpage price was \$19.85 per thousand board-feet.

In addition, Indians cut over 93 million board-feet of timber for their own use, valued at \$311,000, for house logs, corral poles, fencing, and fuel wood. Hogan logs on the Navajo Reservation, alone, account for about 1 million board-feet per year.

Over the past 50 years, 27.8 billion board-feet of timber, valued at \$261 million has been harvested from Indian tribal and allotted lands.

The Indian owners are working closely with the Bureau to improve forestry practices in the harvest of the timber, including replanting of cut areas, and regulating the amount of the cut to insure their tribes a sound, economic base on which they can draw forever.

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Indian Education

Newsletter

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Vol. I, No. 3.

Office of Programs for the Disadvantaged
U.S. Office of Education

July-August 1968

USOE SPONSORS NATIONAL STUDY OF INDIAN EDUCATION

The U.S. Office of Education has made available \$190,000 for a "National Study of American Indian Education."

This project is expected to provide the Indian leadership and officials of educational agencies that serve Indian children and youth with information concerning the educational needs of Indian pupils and the attitudes and expectations of Indian people regarding education. It will also provide Government agencies with information to help them in the allocation of funds in Indian education.

Dr. Robert J. Havighurst, University of Chicago, is the project director. Sub-contracts for field research have been let with the Arizona, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and San Francisco State Universities.

Basic Information

Completion of the first part of the study is expected by December. It will bring together in one document a compilation and analysis of all existing basic information concerning the education of Indian children in the United States -- in public, parochial, and Federally-operated Bureau of Indian Affairs schools.

Intensive Study

Twenty-five schools that are representative of the types that are concerned with Indian education will be examined. These include public schools that are on and off reservations, boarding schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs on and off reservations, public schools in States with Indian tribes which are not under Federal jurisdiction, parochial schools, and others. The geographic spread of the sample will be in proportion to the number of Indians residing in the respective areas.

Community Self-Study

About a half dozen Indian communities will be encouraged and assisted to conduct their own self study of the educational system as it relates to their overall life objectives. "Education is defined broadly as all the experience that helps children grow up to be competent adults."

Under contract arrangement with Indian groups, technical assistance from the study staff or other sources will be made available upon request. Project funds will be used as seed money for communities to mobilize other funds.

An important consideration in the selection of communities will be the willingness of the Indian community -- Indian and non-Indian (including public schools and BIA) -- to implement recommendations.

Indian Participation

To assure that Indian communities and individuals are involved at all levels in the planning and carrying out of the study, Indian members of the advisory committee to this study are working with the study staff.

The Office of Education has placed a high priority on the participation of Indian people in programs which affect them.

Indians will be employed and trained to perform various research roles, including the interviewing of parents and students. While assisting in a study which has implications for the future education of their children, Indian members of the communities served by the schools will become familiar with research techniques.

ALBUQUERQUE AIDS ARIZONANS

A Title I (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) project of the Albuquerque public schools seeks to improve relationships between the Navajo people and the schools which serve their children in the bordertown program.

The families of at least 150 Navajo students attending Albuquerque, New Mexico schools reside in the Arizona portion of the Navajo Reservation. These bordertown students live in dormitories at the Albuquerque Indian School operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and are enrolled in public schools.

Extended Teaching

Students who wish extra help or who are recommended by the school counselor meet with teachers for one hour week-day evenings. Teachers meet students on a one-to-one basis or in groups of two or three. Along with improvement in academic areas, a greater rapport is achieved between students and teachers.

Family Visits

To learn firsthand about the families and environment of the students, an inquiry team was sent to the Navajo Reservation to visit with four families. The team was comprised of a sociologist, anthropologist, psychologist, home economist, historian, and several educators.

Besides gathering data helpful in improving the educational programs for the children, the team also brought information about the children and the schools to the parents. As one grateful parent said "It is nice to hear about the achievements of our children."

To acquaint parents with the school life of their children, two families made two-day visits to Albuquerque.

Workshop and Library

A two-week two-credit workshop was held to help 40 teachers and bordertown staff members understand the culture and background of their Navajo students.

Based on a student questionnaire indicating reading interests, the dorm library was appropriately supplemented.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Arizona State University (ASU) is one of the major universities providing comprehensive educational services to Indian people. Its Indian Education Center (IEC) focuses on teacher preparation, secondary school programs, and research. Its Indian Community Action Project (ICAP), part of a six-university consortium, provides technical assistance and training to Indian tribes and groups.

Indian Education Center

Under the auspices of the College of Education, the Indian Education Center has established a curriculum in Indian education at both undergraduate and graduate levels. ASU is the only university which grants an M.A. degree in Indian education. One-fourth of the 196 students enrolled in 1968 were Indians.

The IEC initiated the first all-Indian Upward Bound program in the country to prepare 75 high school students from nine Arizona tribes for high school completion and college entrance.

The IEC provides assistance to tribal education committees, the State Department of Education, schools -- public, BIA, mission, and other agencies. Linked with the follow-up on Upward Bound, this cooperative effort involves students and their parents in defining their educational objectives and identifying available resources.

Indian Community Action Project

ICAP programs reinforce the effort of the Indian Education Center. Emphasis is placed on helping local reservation residents define their problems and mobilize resources to solve them.

Training programs prepare preschool teachers and teacher aides for Head Start projects. Considerable attention is given to the role of the community in preschool education.

ICAP staff meet regularly with the other five members of the consortium -- Universities of Montana, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, and Bemidji State College -- to exchange ideas and to develop plans for collaborative action.

AS CHIPPEWAS, THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE EDUCATION PROCESS

This article - a personal response to an identification with the Chippewa heritage and the Indians of Minneapolis - was written by Miss Claricy Smith, 23 year-old Chippewa from Minnesota, who joined the Indian Education unit July 1. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Miss Smith was reared on the Leech Lake Reservation. She has worked with Indian youth groups in training and conference activity and with employment and related problems of Indians in Minneapolis.

Mobility Conflicts

The business-industrial complex looms large upon the Minnesota Indian. For the most part he is aware of it, can speak about it in English, but can only react to it with confusion.

The Chippewa want to maintain their Indian identity whether they live in the city or on reservations. Mobility is high -- many Indians move freely between the city and the reservation. The problems of Indians adjusting to these two varied life styles are ever present and lead to continuous frustration. Success in any world -- work, school, community -- is limited.

Indian Identity

A frontal attack on these bicultural conflicts has been recommended and initiated by the Minnesota Indian people. They have recognized the value that pride in one's heritage can be to social and educational adjustment.

Young people want to say "I am proud to be an Indian" and know why. Their parents and grandparents want this important link with the past maintained as much as they want young people to be prepared for urban life.

In March, 20 Chippewa youth initiated seminars on Indian history, culture, and identity. They developed the format to relate their cultural heritage to the contemporary problems of Indians in Minnesota.

Minneapolis School Project

At the request of Indian young people and their parents, Minneapolis, with an urban Indian population of about 8,000, has developed a cooperative education effort. Chippewa Indian culture and history programs will be integral to

its success. The Minneapolis public schools have appointed a 10 member Indian advisory council to explore and develop the programs. The Indian Advisory Council is also setting up workshops on Indian education for Minneapolis school personnel. Young people are being encouraged to become active members of the task force, thereby capitalizing on experience from their earlier efforts. Indians also have been engaged in the planning of an Indian Upward Bound program.

Urban Indians

Today's urban Indian reflects the problems of assimilation. Feelings of alienation are not new -- they are all encompassing. Young Indians in Minneapolis have begun to realize that the basic "Indian problem" will not be solved without a realization of human dignity, responsibility and human freedom on the part of every Indian. And Indians must acquire this among themselves.

To meet this need the Indian community is actively encouraging special programs on Indian history and culture. But Indians want to be enabled to use their initiative and imagination in the development and implementation of such programs. They want to be the authorities on Indians.

Self-Determination

In such capacity, Indians will be able to learn and utilize fully the concepts of self-determination and self-fulfillment as Indians. They will have learned to play an important role in the educational process and to be true participants in twentieth century American life. And they will have gained, as Chippewa, the respect they desire.

PENOBSCOTS AND PASSAMAQUODDYS -- UNDER STATE JURISDICTION

Many of the 2,000 Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians of Maine live on State Reservations. They are not under Federal jurisdiction.

The Maine State Department of Education received responsibility for Indian education two years ago by state legislative action. Prior to that time, the State Department of Health and Welfare administered all Indian programs. Responsibility for other Indian programs has been transferred to a newly-formed Department of Indian Affairs.

Reservation Schools

The three public elementary schools on the reservations enroll 168 Indian children. Off reservation schools in towns neighboring the reservations enroll 100.

Because there are no secondary schools on the reservations, the State pays tuition for reservation-based students to any public or private school in the State. Few Indians complete high school -- seven in 1968.

Reservation schools are administered under statute in the same manner as schools in unorganized territories of the State. The State Board of Education functions as a local school board and the State Commissioner of Education as a local superintendent.

Education Upgraded

In the last two years considerable progress has been made in improving education for Indians. In a July 1968 referendum the people of Maine demonstrated sensitivity to

the needs of Maine Indians by voting four to one for increased water, sewage, and school facilities for Indians.

Teaching has been upgraded as a result of application of the State salary schedule to Indian schools. The Sisters of Mercy, who have staffed the reservation schools for over 100 years, have assigned their best and most experienced teachers to the three schools. Most have M.A. degrees and are experienced in working with the disadvantaged.

Federally-Supported Programs

Programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Act are reaching Indian youngsters in Maine.

The Title I project emphasizes remedial reading and provides help for children having difficulty with the English language. Individual attention is encouraged through a special classroom environment, under the supervision of an Indian Teaching-Sister.

Adult Basic Education is stressed. Parental participation is considered crucial to the development of the school child and the reservation.

The State Department of Education is working on bilingual and bicultural programs with the assistance of Wesleyan University.

INDIAN EDUCATION NEWSLETTER
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OPENING STATEMENT

Senator Walter Mondale
Subcommittee on Indian Education
October 1, 1968

We are meeting today to conduct the first public hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education since the tragic death of its late Chairman, Senator Robert F. Kennedy. During the six months of his chairmanship, Senator Kennedy devoted an enormous amount of time, energy, and personal concern to the work of this Subcommittee. In this short 6-month period, despite many other pressing concerns, including his presidential campaign, Senator Kennedy visited Indian schools and reservations throughout the western part of the United States, listened to dozens of Indian witnesses and talked privately with an even larger number of our Indian citizens. In that short period of time, his concern for the problems facing Indian children and adults became a national concern, and the question of the quality of educational programs for Indian students became a national issue. It was an extraordinary accomplishment. He pricked the conscience of the nation and significantly raised the hopes and aspirations of an entire minority group. He became in the process a symbol of compassion and vision for all of the poor and disenfranchised citizens of our nation. It was an act of political courage and conviction for which we are all deeply indebted, and it has left a burden of great responsibility on the Senators of this Subcommittee to fulfill his promise and achieve his goals.

It is highly appropriate that the hearings today should focus on what this Subcommittee has come to realize is perhaps the most fundamental problem facing Indian education -- the question of mental health. First, because Senator Kennedy through his experience on the Subcommittee gave it the highest priority. Secondly, because the American Journal of Psychiatry in its August, 1968 issue has devoted a special section to "The Mental Health of the American Indian." One of the authors in that special section, Dr. Harry Saslow, has previously appeared before this Subcommittee, and a second author Dr. Robert Leon will be testifying today. I would like to submit this special section on mental health for the record to be included in the official transcript following the opening remarks of the Subcommittee members.

I would like to briefly outline some of the major concerns of the Subcommittee and some of the information that has already been established in previous hearings. It has been rather well established that the basic policy of the federal government toward Indian tribes since the Allotment Act of 1887 has been one of coercive assimilation. This appears to at least have been the dominant policy dictated by Congress although there have been some variations in the actual administration of Indian Affairs. The Allotment Act of 1887 did tremendous damage, not only to the land base of Indian tribes, but also to the social and psychological viability of their way of life. By the 1920's the American Indian had not only lost 100 million acres of land but the hostile-dependency syndrome

had become well established on most reservations. Additional testimony has indicated that despite the reform movements of the 30's the general pressure of the dominant society on Indian cultures has been destructive. Discrimination, hostility and exploitation in varying degrees appear to be a common phenomena in towns bordering most reservations. On the reservation, government paternalism has been emasculating and oppressive. Dr. Forbes, an anthropologist and historian who has written extensively about the American Indian and other minority groups, has pointed out "Indian problems are generated by whitemen, and will go unsolved without change in white men. The white man cannot pretend to be the doctor, he is the sickness!" Perhaps this puts the matter too strongly but it deserves our most serious consideration.

Quite frankly the Subcommittee members have had some difficulty understanding what is happening on Indian reservations we have visited. There often appears to be a considerable amount of social disorganization and a general process of cultural disintegration. Alcoholism appears to be a widespread and serious problem. Broken families appear to be a fairly common problem. In addition, we have found high suicide, homicide and accident rates on many reservations. Many times it would appear that accidents, particularly automobile accidents, are masked suicides. The suicide problem which is particularly pronounced during the adolescent years has been noted several places, for example the Busby Boarding School in Montana, the Fort Hall Reservation in Idaho, the Quinault Reservation in Washington (in a 5-year period 20 adolescent suicide attempts, 10 of which were successful),

the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon, and the San Carlos and White Mountain Apache Reservations in Arizona. In addition to problems of cultural disintegration, alcoholism, accidents and suicides, we have also found very high unemployment rates on most reservations. Recent research has indicated that much of this unemployment is a function of psychological maladjustment and is really not unemployment at all, but rather something that could be better called idleness. Finally, and despite many pronouncements to the contrary, the ill-conceived termination and relocation policies of the 1950's are still with us in the 1960's and, rather than alleviating the problems, these policies aggravate and reinforce them.

As early as our first hearings in December of last year, the Subcommittee was deeply concerned about the mental health problems of those attending BIA Boarding Schools. The Association of American Indian Affairs made a very strong case in our initial hearings that the Boarding Schools for elementary school-age Indian children were highly questionable. Dr. O'Connell, testifying for the Association, established that:

1. There are approximately 9,000 Indian children 9 years of age and under in boarding schools.
2. Almost 8,000 of these children are Navajo children due in large part to a lack of roads on the reservation.
3. Navajo parents do not necessarily oppose boarding schools for their children but really have no choice when they do feel the schools are unsatisfactory.

4. There is almost universal agreement in the field of developmental psychology that early separation of a child from the family unit is a destructive influence.
5. Family relationships are more complex and more important to an Indian child than in white society, and crucial to his development of a sense of identity; thus separation from the family is potentially even more traumatic and emotionally destructive.
6. Boarding schools as they presently exist are totally inadequate as a substitute for parents and family -- and even with very substantial improvements can never be an adequate substitute for a home and family.

The painful reality of this problem has been brought forcefully to the attention of this Subcommittee by a very perceptive letter which was received from a teacher in one of the large boarding schools for elementary age Navajo children. Senator Kennedy was deeply moved by this letter, and I would like to share it here. It states that the boarding school is undoubtedly less expensive and more readily controlled than a large number of small day schools, and offers the student advantages such as a good diet and health and sanitation facilities; however, the problems it creates are vast, widely recognized, often bemoaned, but little has been done to eliminate them. The letter points out that most children in BIA boarding schools see their parents only on occasional weekends, if that often. At these times parents are "allowed to check out their children -- if the child's conduct in school warrants it." If the child has been a "problem" -- for example has run away -- parents are not allowed to take him until he has "learned his lesson". The letter points to an example where two young boys froze to death while running away from a boarding school trying to get to their home -- 50 miles away.

What is the result when children are taken away from their homes for nine months a year, from age six onward? The letter suggests family ties are severely strained and often dissolved; even brothers and sisters in the same boarding school rarely get to see each other due to dormitory, class and dining hall arrangements. The children become alienated from their relatives, their culture and much-admired traditional Navajo skills (legends, sandpaintings, rug weaving) and ultimately alienated from themselves.

The letter goes on to point out that a number of factors militate against ameliorating the trauma and loneliness: the size and impersonality of the school itself, some as large as 1200 elementary children in one institution; the lack of overnight guest facilities for parents who would like to visit their children, and in some instances lack of any encouragement on the part of the school for parental visitation.

The letter pin-points the dormitory guidance program as perhaps the most serious deficiency in the whole boarding school system "for these people are in charge of the children 16 hours a day, seven days a week. Yet they are under-staffed, under-programmed, under-supervised and over-extended. Each dormitory has only one teacher, and it is extremely difficult to find suitable personnel for these crucial demanding positions. Yet even the finest teacher could accomplish little, when they are responsible for 150 children. There is usually an aide on duty with the teacher but with trying to mend clothes, supply linens, check roll, keep order, fill out forms, prepare children for meals, bathing, school work and bed there is little

time to do more than keep the walls from being pulled down. How could this possibly take the place of the personal attention, affection and training that the children would have received at home?"

Perhaps the most poignant statement of all is the author's personal reaction to the children who grasp most hungrily at any attention shown them and who are starved for affection. "Unless you have lived with them over a period of time, and see the loneliness and the monotony of the daily routine, you cannot appreciate the tragedy of it all! Because of the shortage of personnel there is a pronounced tendency to herd rather than to guide. The boys and girls are yelled at, bossed around, chased here and there, told and untold, until it is almost impossible for them to do anything on their own initiative - except of course run away." Senator Kennedy on several occasions referred to this practice of separating Indian children from their families as "barbaric".

Dr. John Collier, Jr., based on the recent field work of one of his graduate students, has described a boarding school on the Navajo reservation that in many ways matches the worst practices of boarding schools 70 years ago. For example, "children are beaten, pervasive attacks are made against their cultural beliefs, classes start with the Lord's Prayer, and teachers advocate the free labor of Navajo girls in their homes, doing laundry, scrubbing floors, etc., all done by students after school time, 'to teach them the American way of housekeeping'".

Another problem area that was established in our initial hearings by

Dr. Harry Saslow, a clinical psychologist in residence for three years at the Albuquerque boarding school, was the serious inadequacies and mental health problems of the off-reservation boarding schools. A number of witnesses have testified about this problem. A large majority of the students have serious emotional or social problems before they ever come to school, and some of the schools are really juvenile detention centers with no provisions for rehabilitation. Dr. Saslow pointed out that there is no screening process for identifying the problems of these students when they come to the school. Even if there were, little or no provision is made for treatment, and there is little or no mental health staffing in any of the off-reservation boarding schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has recently advised us that there are no psychologists in the whole BIA school system and only 2 or 3 social workers. It is not surprising that the problems of many youngsters appear to get worse rather than better in the boarding school environment. Some students simply retreat into a shell and vegetate, "putting in your time" as the Indian students call it or "going AWOL" - running away from school if their problems or loneliness overwhelm them.

Very little academic progress is made by many of these students in an atmosphere that is usually authoritarian and repressive, in dormitories that are often barracks and horribly understaffed, with guidance counselors who are rarely professionals and usually disciplinarians. The tendency often appears to be for good teachers to leave while mediocre and poor teachers stay on, some eventually becoming administrators. There is also a tremendous amount

of shifting of students from school to school which testimony indicates is damaging. Not one boarding school in the whole BIA system even approaches providing a "therapeutic community" for its students.

Testimony has also established that many public schools are failing Indian children as badly as the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Dropout rates of many public schools run from 40% to as high as 100% (e.g. Alliance, Nebraska). Dr. Mindell at Pine Ridge has interviewed a number of Indian students and found a striking amount of repressed self-hatred. These phenomena appear to be common in a number of different Indian student populations.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of the mental health problem of Indian students in public schools was driven home to the Subcommittee by its visit to the Fort Hall Reservation in January of this year. I am told that Senator Kennedy's only remark after the event was "My God what have we done to these people?!"

The Subcommittee was told during its visit to Fort Hall that the suicide rate among teenagers was perhaps as high as 100 times the national average. No one really knew for certain but everyone could cite examples. We were told that suicides had occurred as early as eight years of age. Two days after the Subcommittee visit, a 16 year old Indian boy whom Senator Kennedy had met at a public high school just off the reservation committed suicide. He hung himself in the county jail where he had been placed without a hearing and without notification of his parents. Having been accused of drinking during school hours, he was referred to the police by his high school guidance

counselor. A large pipe extended across his cell; two other Indians from the same reservation committed suicide in the same cell by hanging from the same pipe in that same year. One of them was a 17 year old Indian girl from the same high school.

We have recently been informed that two additional members of the boy's family as well as his only close friend subsequently made serious suicide attempts. For the first time a study is underway of all Indian adolescents on the Fort Hall reservation; preliminary results suggest that thoughts about committing suicide and general discussion about violent death can be found throughout the reservation.

The scope and depth of this problem is staggering to the imagination. It is for this reason that we have called together today leading experts on mental health problems who have had considerable experience with Indian Affairs.

Gentlemen, we turn to you here, your counsel and guidance, in search of solutions for a problem the magnitude of which we are only beginning to understand.

Senator Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) today introduced legislation to return 28,700 acres of submarginal land worth about \$500,000 to the White Earth Indian Reservation in northwestern Minnesota.

The lands were originally owned by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. The Federal Government acquired the property in the mid-1930s at a cost of \$175,664 to retire it from private ownership, to correct land use maladjustments, and with the expectation that the lands would be made available for tribal use, Mondale said.

While the lands are best suited to forestry, Mondale said, timber cutting is restricted under the present ownership arrangement and return of the lands to the reservation is essential to full realization of the White Earth economic development program.

The Department of Interior has also recommended return of the lands to the reservation so that they can be managed with tribal lands as a tribal unit, Mondale said.

Mondale also noted that Congress has previously enacted legislation restoring similarly-acquired property to the Seminole Indians of Florida, and to the Pueblos and other Indian groups in New Mexico.

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Immediate Release Monday, November 24, 1969

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WALTER J. HICKEL

In accordance with the announcements I made last October 24 and 30, the Department of the Interior, in the public interest, is examining all feasible uses for Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. I petitioned the General Services Administration, which has custody over the Island, to delay any decision on its disposition until we could complete our study, and the GSA agreed.

Last Saturday, the Indian groups now staying on the Island requested a meeting with me under the conditions that I agree beforehand to transfer ownership of Alcatraz to them and to fund construction of a university on the Island for them.

I replied that I am available at any time to meet with their representatives to discuss their views on what should be done with the property, but without any conditions in advance of those discussions, just as we are examining the suggestions of all interested individuals and groups.

I am glad to pursue such discussions, even though it is not in my power to transfer ownership of the Island or to alter it in any manner. Alcatraz has been and remains under the jurisdiction of the General Services Administration. I am hopeful that the Indian groups will comply with the GSA's request that they move off the Island in the interest and safety of all concerned, and that discussions on the subject can be pursued in a proper manner.

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE

For Immediate Release

September 30, 1968

The first public hearings of the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education since the death of its late Chairman, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, are scheduled for tomorrow morning.

They are scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 1, 1968 in Room 4232 of the New Senate Office Building. Senator Walter Mondale (D. Minn.) will preside.

The hearings will focus on the mental health problems of Indian students. It is anticipated that the following problem areas will be considered: the severity and extensiveness of the mental health problem of Indian students; the almost complete lack of programs and services to deal with these problems; and the serious aggravation of the problems by the practices and environment of the schools that the students attend.

The Subcommittee has been highly critical of the placement of elementary school-age Indian children in large boarding schools (8,000 plus children in this category). Senator Robert F. Kennedy had often referred to this practice as "barbaric".

Attached is a list of witnesses who will testify.

1. Foster - UnAmerican Activities

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN EDUCATION

Washington, D.C.
October 1, 1968
9:00 a.m.

WITNESS LIST

1. Dr. Karl Menninger, M.D.
Chairman of the Board, Menninger Foundation
Senior Consultant, Stone Brandall Center, Chicago, Ill.

2. Dr. Robert Leon, M.D.
Professor and Chairman of Department of Psychiatry
University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas

and

Dr. Harry Martin, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology (Sociology)
University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas

3. Mr. William Byler
Executive Director
Association of American Indian Affairs, New York City

and

Dr. Daniel J. O'Connell, M.D.
Psychiatrist and member of the faculty of the Harvard
School of Public Health, Cambridge, Mass.
Executive Secretary of the National Committee on Indian
Health of the Association of American Indian Affairs,
New York City

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STATEMENT OF DANIEL J. O'CONNELL, M.D.,
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, NATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON INDIAN HEALTH OF THE ASSOCIATION ON
AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS, INC. BEFORE THE
SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN EDUCATION
OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
PUBLIC WELFARE.

October 1, 1968

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I wish first of all to thank you for the opportunity to appear once again before this subcommittee.

My name is Daniel J. O'Connell, and I am a psychiatrist working with the Association on American Indian Affairs. During the past two years the Association has been conducting a survey of the psychiatric needs of the Indian people. In December of 1967 we had the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee as it launched its investigation into problems in Indian education. At that time we pointed to the situation of early separation from the family setting which is the usual accompaniment of the educational process for so many Indian children. Eighty-three percent of Navaho children, ages six through nine, for example, live at boarding schools or off-reservation boarding dormitories. At that time we lay emphasis on the psychological hazards which may well result from premature separation from the family setting, and urged that a major effort be made in the direction of phasing out of boarding school placement for Indian children in the primary years and that one objective of this Subcommittee be to explore means of providing local schooling for the very young.

We also called attention at that time to the serious mental health problem existing at the boarding high schools. Indeed, the term "boarding school" is something of a misnomer for many of these schools, since at least in the East, it tends to be associated with an optimal rather than an inferior educational experience. Many of the boarding schools, parti-

cularly at the high school level, have come to serve as residential placement centers, to which youngsters are sent because of familial, social, behavioral or emotional problems. Placement away from the home or community setting is employed as a means of resolving or relieving these problems. The schools, themselves, however, lack the orientation or facilities to provide the kind of rehabilitative-therapeutic services which would be needed to aid the youngster in coping with the personal or familial crisis which led to his placement at the boarding facility in the first place. The schools are thus forced ⁱⁿ to the role of holding institutions, where the goals of the formal education process are thwarted by the unresolved problems which led to institutionalization in the first place.

The Association on American Indian Affairs has indeed been gratified by the effective efforts of this Subcommittee in elucidating the many problems of Indian education and, and in particular, ^{we highlight} ~~to highlight~~ the mental health aspect of these problems through its reaching out to clarify and to understand the impact on individual Indian children of the educational systems to which they must relate.

We would at this time like to place emphasis on certain general considerations of Indian education and certain aspects of contemporary Indian life which relate to the problem of Indian education. If Indian education has been a failure, it has not been because of lack of effort or dedication on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. While at some stages in the history of Indian education in our country, de-Indianization and complete cultural assimilation has been the stated policy, at other times, and particularly recently, there has

been a genuine attempt on the part of some segments of the BIA educational system to identify and foster tribal culture and values as an aid to positive psychological development. This latter approach, unfortunately, has never enjoyed wide application in Indian Education, but it is by no means new to it, and there are current attempts within the Bureau to extend its efforts in this direction. In considering the dilemma of Indian education, it is not sufficient to focus attention solely on the administrative and teaching functions--nor is it fair to place the sole responsibility for its failures on the teachers and administrators.

To understand the failures and to suggest remedies, we must look beyond these functions to the entire context of contemporary Indian life to which they must relate. Here we would place emphasis ^{on} in the need to view environment in its total reality. Indian education has failed to bear fruit because it has not offered an experience which could be integrated within the expectable life pattern of most Indians; because the school system itself (like other administrative interventions into the lives of Indian people) adds to the psychological and social disruption which the Indian child endures; because the conditions of economic deprivation and psychosocial disintegration ~~which are~~ prevalent in many Indian communities place these communities beyond the grasp of a standard modern American educational enterprise, ^{as it is} ~~which is~~ based on certain values, assumptions, expectations and motivations which are part of the input of family, pupil, teacher, administrator and of the entire community in a middle-class American school system.

Without now attempting to review once again the entire range of problems in Indian education and the sorry toll taken among the Indian people themselves by the monumental environmental problems which they face, we would prefer this morning to highlight a few general aspects of Indian administration bearing on the soundness of Indian societal life and the ~~task~~ task of Indian education. Hoping not to appear glib or smug, we would suggest that in our administrative attempts to alleviate problems, we have, in no small measure, intensified these problems. First of all, the schools themselves must be included in any cataloging of the potentially damaging experiences faced by Indian children. This is not because of malevolence or misfeasance on the part of school administrators or teachers, but stems rather from the often unrecognized conflict between the larger contemporary American culture of which the school is the apostle and ~~the~~ interpreter and the native culture which has been the definitive developmental influence upon the child in his pre-school years. Dr. Harry Saslow, who is already known to this Subcommittee since he also appeared before it in December of 1967 is one of many investigators who has identified this problem. He states: "The culture shock of having to renounce, with the ~~g~~ beginning of school, much of what has been learned before school undoes the pattern of trust and personal worth developed up to that time." Another authority in the field, Dr. Bernard Spilka at the University of Denver, sees the problem in a similar light. He writes, "The school system contributes toward the feelings of alienation by virtue of the abruptness of change in culture that it presents and by its concentration upon the defense of that culture."

Both of these observations appear in Dr. Saslow's report included in the symposium on the Mental Health of the American Indian sponsored by the Association on American Indian Affairs which was held at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in May of 1967 and was published in the American Journal of Psychiatry in August of this year. I am ~~submitting~~ submitting a reprint of this symposium which I would hope could be included in the record of these proceedings.

Whatever the scope of the problem of cultural shock inherent in the situation of an Indian youngster entering school, the damage will be magnified a hundred-fold when he is removed totally from the home and community and placed in a boarding school. Furthermore, when a child is removed from his home for social reasons, and many boarding school placements are made for social reasons, the problems within the family may ~~rk~~ well be intensified by the administrative solution effected. Let us say, for example, that one or both parents have a drinking problem. In order to protect the children from a situation in which they may suffer neglect or even abuse, ~~we~~ we remove them from the ~~home~~ home and place them in a boarding school or in a foster home. We have then taken a family on the verge of disintegration and pushed it over the brink. The removal of the children ~~also~~ ^{may well} removes the motivation to overcome the problem. The impact of the loss of the children only aggravates the emotional problems of which the excess drinking was symptomatic, and we may well have set into motion a downward spiral from which this family may not recover.

I have mentioned foster care placement in addition to boarding school

school placement. Both loom large in any consideration of the experience of the Indian community today and we would submit that a detailed consideration of the problems of child welfare is germane to any inquiry in depth into the dilemma of Indian education.

In our earlier testimony we related some facts and figures on the extent of boarding school placement. I would offer here a few figures on foster care and adoptive placements to illustrate the extent of administrative disruption of Indian family life, however well meaning.

In the States of North and South Dakota approximately 17 times as many Indian children as white children are in foster home placement. In Montana Indian children are placed in foster homes at ten times the national foster-home placement rate. In Minnesota the rate of placement of Indian children in foster homes is 24 times the national rate, and one out of every 67 Indian children is adopted in that state as compared with one out of every 1,111 children for the country as a whole. 15

These figures are cited, not to impute malevolent intent to those administering services to Indian families in crises, but to illustrate the scope of the problem of family break-down and to suggest that in our well-meaning efforts to serve these families, we only intensify the pace of their disintegration.

In ~~xxxxxxing the~~ viewing the problem of Indian education, Indian welfare, and Indian life in general, we would call for a basic shift in perspective. Rather than the administrative model which seeks to resolve a family crisis through removal of the most vulnerable members, we would suggest a medical-epidemiological model. First there is a need to identify the extent and the particulars of the ^{psychosocial} ~~psychological~~ breakdown which we would attempt to modify.

Then, viewing the particular community or the particular family as the object of our intervention, we ~~would~~ would seek to apply a therapeutic-rehabilitative intervention, the object of which would be to assist this particular family or this particular community toward reintegration.

When we speak in terms as broad as these, naturally we will touch on aspects of Indian life broader than the scope and function of the school system. Such an approach calls for ^{congruent} ~~urgent~~ planning which would include economic and community development as well as educational, welfare, legal and health services.

But for these other aspects, as well as in education, there will be certain common features. There is, first of all, the ~~need~~ need to recognize the very great differences ~~be~~ among Indian tribes and communities, with respect to cultural determinants, degree of cultural survival and status of psychosocial integration, that is the "health" of the community as a viable social unit. For some Indian communities a primary task will be to preserve the heritage of the past and the cohesive social forces which that heritage fosters, while at the same time effecting ^a social and economic transition which will prepare the tribe for the opportunities and challenges of a technological age. For other tribes a major task will be to reintegrate the disintegrated social elements in their community. ^{No} ~~The~~ single approach is going to be applicable to all Indian tribes and communities. There is as well a need for maximum involvement of the Indian people to be served in the decision-making process which is to affect their lives so radically either in educational or other programmatic interventions.

We would suggest that Indian education needs to be considered in the larger context of Indian child welfare in general. It is the total environment of the child that the educator must address himself to if he is to understand the children he would educate and be successful in reaching them. We would support the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in ^{its} ~~the~~ contemplated investigation of problems in Indian child welfare, and would hope that any such investigation would attempt to delineate the problem in relation to the quite distinct environments of the different tribes and localities, that approaches to providing remedies be based on the model of providing rehabilitative ~~services~~ ^{crisis} services to families and communities in ~~cases~~ rather than extending the baleful practice of the wholesale separating of Indian children from their home or community ~~in~~ environment.

Finally we do not wish to cast ourselves in the role of presenting new thoughts or unique insights which purport to hold the solution to the dilemmas of Indian education. I would quote from a report commissioned by the Interior Department itself, the substance of which is echoed in our remarks this morning: "The first and foremost need in Indian education is a change in point of view. Whatever may have been the official governmental attitude, education for the Indian in the past has proceeded largely on the theory that it is necessary to remove the Indian child as far as possible from his home environment; whereas the modern point of view in education and social work lays stress on upbringing in the natural setting of home and family life. The Indian ~~an~~ educational enterprise is peculiarly in need of the kind of approach that recognizes this principle; that is less concerned with a conventional school system and more with the understanding of human beings.

The methods must be adapted to individual abilities, interests, and needs. Indian tribes and individual Indians within the tribes vary so greatly that a standard content and method of education no matter how carefully they might be prepared, would be worse than futile"

As may well have been recognized, the source from which I am quoting is the Merriam Report, entitled The Problem of Indian Administration submitted to the Secretary of the Interior in 1928, a document which has lost little of its timeliness in spite of diligent attempts over the past forty years to administer away the problems which it so lucidly identifies.



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