

Indian Affairs

September 18, 1945

Mr. Joseph Bruner
Box 174
Sapulpa, Oklahoma

Dear Joe:

I am in receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant and copy of Resolution on the Bushfield Joint Resolution and the Morse and Gordon Bill now pending in Congress, together with carbon copy of your letter addressed to Senator Bushfield.

What you say is all very interesting and I assure you that I appreciate having heard from you and obtaining an expression of your views.

The thing I am most seriously concerned with at this time is just how we are going to get the hundreds of claims of the Indians investigated by a Committee of Congress within one year? Many of these claims would require the undivided attention of the Committee for at least a year. I do not know of any members of Congress who can afford to neglect every other interest of their constituents, and of the country, and give their undivided attention and exclusive time to one, or even all, of the claims of the various tribes of Indians. You are aware of the fact that these claims have ancient backgrounds and difficult complications. The matter of having Congress investigate them is being considered, and so far as I know, every man in Congress who has had any experience in such matters and is familiar with the magnitude of the problem, is inclined to the belief that the claims of the Indians will never be adjusted if left to the investigation of Congress, or a Committee to be appointed by Congress.

I wish you would give me the result of your deliberate consideration of this problem. I am so anxious to solve the problem in the best and quickest way possible, and I want the benefit of your mature judgment in the premises.

Sincerely yours,

SCHWABE COLL

George B. Schwabe, M. C.

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Joseph Bruner, President,
Sapulpa, Oklahoma
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Yuman, Arizona
Winslow J. Couro, 2nd Vice-President,
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Galt, California
Rev. Garfield Driver, Asst. Chaplain,
Little Eagle, S. Dak.

The American Indian Federation

(INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF OKLAHOMA, MARCH 31, 1939)

*A national non-partisan, non-sectarian educational
organization to teach the fairness and economic
justice of a final settlement between the
Indians and the Federal Government.*



HEADQUARTERS

BOX 174

SAPULPA, OKLAHOMA Sept. 3, 1945.

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

John W. McCracken, Chairman,
Nowata, Oklahoma
O. K. Chandler, Secretary,
Miami, Oklahoma
Judge N. B. Johnson, Claremore, Oklahoma
Mrs. Juliette Riggs, Tulsa, Oklahoma
S. R. Lewis, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Mrs. R. C. Farris, Tulsa, Oklahoma
William M. Newton, Muskogee, Oklahoma
H. C. Walkley, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Ben Carpenter, Skiatook, Oklahoma
Walter Colbert, Norman, Oklahoma
L. M. Burgess, Paradise, Montana

Hon. George B. Schwabe, M. C.,
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Congressman Schwabe:

For your information and consideration I enclose two resolutions by the Administrative Board of this organization, together with copy of a letter to Senator Bushfield of South Dakota, all touching Indians, Indian property and the relation of both to the federal government through it's bureau of Indian affairs.

Reservations, isolation, segregation and race-prejudice have had a thorough trial in our government's dealings with the Indian citizen and have proved a dismal and costly failure, both to the Indian and the government. Indians want an early and final settlement with the government, and the right to use their individual property as other citizens use theirs - without government supervision and interference, the only source through which competency and self-sufficiency can or may be established in the Indian. This is not a new thought. It is as old as the race of man and as true today as the hour when the Lord closed the gate of the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve and forced them to live thereafter by the sweat of their faces.

Congressman, as you know, H. G. House, T. A. Chandler, S. E. Wallen and others of similar bent, have held forth at Muskogee under Republican and Democratic administrations until the so-called "rich Indian" of the Five tribes is almost exclusively of the past - great estates in the matter of dollars have dwindled to nothingness under the very eye of the bureau. On the other hand, the "poor Indian" with only his original allotment at bureau disposal - where directly under it's supervision - has become reduced as a landowner; that portion of his allotment with any worthwhile agricultural value is GONE, and the remainder, if the original allottee be now deceased, is involved in heirships almost impossible of determination and liquidation. Truly, there is nothing left but weighing the worthlessness of the bureau, settlement of Indian claims and giving into the hands of every Indian control of his individual property, together with his God given right of retaining or disposing of it as suits HIS interests, as HE sees them.

SCHWABE COLL

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SAPULPA, OKLAHOMA

- 2 -

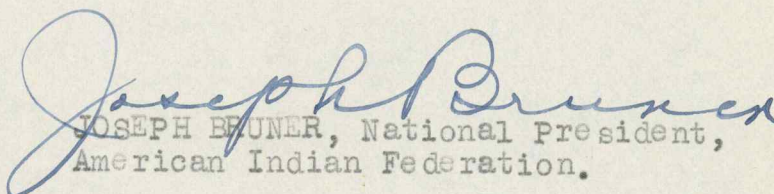
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L. M. Burgess, Paradise, Montana

Mr. Indian - without his Indian bureau guardian - has shouldered a gun and carried a bomb to the four corners of the world in a genuine effort to extend to all mankind the full enjoyment of the "four freedoms". Don't you think Congressman, that his contribution towards the winning of World Wars I and II, alone entitled him to the enjoyment of FREEDOM at HOME from government supervision and direction by people less capable than himself, and a final settlement with his guardian-government? I trust that you do and that you will use your influence and energy in seeking such right for him, through the Congress, at an early date.

Thanking you, and with the kindest of personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely,


JOSEPH BRUNER, National President,
American Indian Federation.

JB/c
encls.

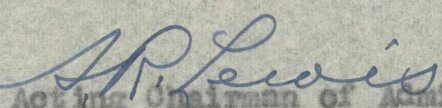
SCHWABE COLL

R E S O L U T I O N

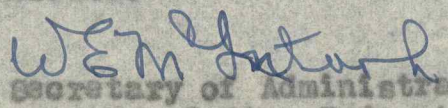
BE IT RESOLVED by the Administrative Board of the American Indian Federation, duly assembled in the county courthouse, Tulsa county, city of Tulsa, Oklahoma, that after full and careful consideration we unanimously endorse and approve Senate Joint Resolution 79, by Hon. Harlan J. Bushfield, United States Senator of South Dakota, providing for the creation of a joint committee of the Congress to investigate Indian affairs with the view to curtailing Indian bureau functions and paying Indian claims, with the proviso: That the life of the said joint committee shall not extend beyond one year from and after its creation or approval by the Congress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be promptly mailed to senator Bushfield, Washington, D. C., all members of the Oklahoma delegation in Congress and all members of the Senate and House Indian committees of the Congress.

Adopted this 23d day of Augst, 1945.


Acting Chairman of Administrative Board,
American Indian Federation.

ATTEST:


Secretary of Administrative Board,
American Indian Federation.

SCHWABE COLL

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Administrative Board of the American Indian Federation, duly assembled in the county courthouse, Tulsa county, city of Tulsa, Oklahoma, that after careful study and consideration of the provisions of S. 1313, by Senators Wayne Morse and Guy Cordon of Oregon, providing for the removal of restrictions on the property and moneys belonging to the individual enrolled members of the Klamath Indian Reservation in Oregon, liquidation of tribal property and distribution of the proceeds thereof, thus conferring complete citizenship upon the Indians of this reservation, we unanimously endorse the proposed legislation as long delayed justice on the part of the Congress in the administration of the affairs of the Indian citizen, particularly those whose tribal estate has been individualized and whose tribal claims against the federal government have just recently been settled. The Indian has long since proved himself capable, under the same opportunity and environment, as other races. To perpetuate supervision over his affairs, primarily in the interest of jobs for the bureau, is denial of liberty and freedom of self-determination for which Indians have fought and died on every battlefield where the American flag was raised in the recent world conflict. The Indian is entitled to liberty of action and full enjoyment of each and all the four freedoms - AT HOME.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be promptly mailed to Senators Morse and Cordon as an expression of our appreciation of their action in the cause of justice and economy - fair-dealing with the Indians and economic justice in the conduct of government. We also direct that copies of this resolution be mailed to each member of the Oklahoma delegation in Congress and members of both the Senate and House Indian committees of the Congress.

Adopted this 23d day of August, 1945.

S. R. Lewis
S. R. Lewis, Acting chairman,
Administrative Board,
American Indian Federation.

ATTEST:
W. E. McIntosh
W. E. McIntosh, Secy., Administrative
Board, American Indian Federation.

CHINABE COLL

Sapulpa, Okla., August 25, 1945.

Hon. Harlan J. Bushfield
United States Senator
Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator Bushfield:

I wish to commend you for the introduction of Senate Joint Resolution 79 into the Congress, proposing the creation of a joint committee of the Congress for the purpose of investigating Indian affairs with the view to lessening bureau activity and payment of Indian claims. Payment or settlement of Indian claims would leave nothing for the bureau to do except create excuses for its perpetuation. The Indian has long since outgrown any worthwhile function the bureau can or may perform for him and there is nothing left but final settlement and closing shop.

Enclosed is a resolution by the Administrative Board of this organization unanimously approving or endorsing Senate Joint Resolution 79, with the proviso that the life of the committee created thereunder shall not extend beyond twelve months from and after its creation. Seeing the Indian and looking into his wigwam is not necessary. He has no wigwam and has been seen until he is sick and tired of being seen and investigated. The mote is not in the Indian's eye anyway. A careful examination of the eye of his bureau-guardian will readily reflect the why of the downfall of the Indian - if the Indian has really fallen down. To make such investigation will require little or no travel and expense- the work may be easily completed within twelve months. Surely the Indian is entitled to this consideration from a government borrowing its fundamental provisions from his and erecting them upon lands once his home, which government he has defended with his life in every war in which it has engaged since its creation. In support of the Atlantic Charter, the four freedoms, democracy and liberty ABROAD, his blood today stains the soil of every American battlefield of World War II. Is he not entitled to liberty AT HOME and a final accounting with his guardian-government within the shortest time possible?

Again I commend you for striking directly at this so-called Indian problem. Indian claims and the uselessness of the Indian bureau is all there is left of this Indian business. Settle with the Indian and kick the bureau out of existence and you will have rendered a great and lasting service to the Indian and removed from the back of the taxpayer a heavy and worthless burden.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

JB/c
encl.

Joseph Bruner
JOSEPH BRUNER, President
American Indian Federation.

SCHWABE COLL