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AUTHOR Senese, Guy Blaise
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ABSTRACT

Christian (1880-1900) and Progressive (1920-1940) reforms affected the U.S. government's attempt to acculturate and educate American Indians. Religious groups supported the Dawes Allotment Act (1887), which allotted parcels of land, previously tribally held, to individual Indians. This led to de-tribalization, loss of cultural identity, and loss of Indian land. Commissioner Morgan established the first uniform course of study and began the gradual shift from sectarian, mission schools to government-managed schools. Day schools were adopted in policy because of economic advantage over boarding schools. Progressive reform attempted to reverse policies that encouraged Indian de-tribalization and cultural dissociation. The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) (1934) repealed allotment of lands; encouraged Indian arts, culture, and community; and encouraged replacement of boarding schools with day schools. This period saw defeat of the Bursum Bill, which proposed giving legal Pueblo land ownership to white squatters; a boost in educational appropriations effected by the Merriam Report; John Collier's attempt to create an educational program that helped strengthen tribal political and cultural solidarity; and Indian bilingual education, which grew equally from Merriam Report recommendations, IRA educational provisions, and efforts of educationists who attempted to implement the approaches of social science and progressive education. (NQA)

THE LITTLE WHITE SCHOOL HOUSE: THE IMPACT OF PROGRESSIVE REFORM ON THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, 1895-1940

BY

GUY BLAISE SENESE

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THESIS

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Head of Department

Committee on Final Examination†

Chairman

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FOREWORD

Between the turn of the century and the Second World War, movements to reform the Indian Service worked to shape the policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These reforms caused changes in policy which affected the U.S. government's attempt to acculturate and educate the Indian.

There are two major reform periods: the Christian reform or old reform of the 1880s and 1890s, and the Progressive, secular or new reform of the 1920s and 1930s. These movements culminated, in turn, in the two most important pieces of Indian-related legislation. The old reform was responsible, to a large extent, for the Dawes Allotment Act (1887), which served to allot parcels of land, previously tribally held, to individual Indians. The new reform served to attack the evils which came as a result of Dawes; detribalization, loss of cultural identity, and especially, the loss of millions of acres of Indian land as a result of heirship confusion and land sale by allottees. The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) (1934) resulted from this second period of reform.

The IRA was, first, an attempt to redress the loss of land which occurred through allotment; but, in addition, it attempted to reverse policies that once encouraged Indian de-tribalization and cultural dissociation. The IRA both repealed the allotment of lands and acted to encourage Indian Arts, culture, and community through educational policy changes. In addition, it further encouraged the replacement of the boarding school with the day school.

It appears on the surface that these changes were a direct attack upon the Bureau and the Education Service's traditional policy to assimilate

the Indian into white culture. Indeed, many of the new reformers were optimistic about encouraging the rebirth of Indian societies and community ideals within a context of the larger polity. Their thinking was influenced by cultural scientists such as Franz Boas, who argued for toleration of disparate life styles and languages. They claimed that no culture was inferior to that of another, only different; uniquely suited to its own environment. However, the reformer's dream, expressed in New Deal social and educational policy, lost much of its revolutionary radiance. The realities of public policymaking in the era of recovery through social engineering turned the new reformer's design into a "progressive" strategy for continued assimilation, and developed programs which would alleviate the economic and social burdens of the "Indian Problem."

Several themes arose throughout the period discussed in this study. The land question, social welfare, and the Indian educational problem are the overarching issues. These have traditionally been the major concern for the Indian Service. The land question dates back to Columbus. It was an open sore for which the government previously had a ready cure. However, with the military defeat of the Indian, a new set of difficulties arose. Now, managerial solutions would have to be sought for problems which were no longer basically military. Now, also, there began the task of dealing with the gulf between Indian and European culture, and the government had the burden of welfare for a dispossessed people. Within these questions of land, education and welfare, some subthemes arise in the context of the early Christian reform, and continue somewhat altered in the second period after the first World War.

The early reform period was a Christian humanist attempt to assimilate the Red Man and save his soul. Educational policies of Commissioner Morgan

emphasized the need to fit the Indian for his assigned role as a hardworking, Godfearing farmer. The Day School was first discussed as a way to help alleviate dissolution of communities, but was adopted in policy to keep costs down.

The second wave of reform came partly in response to those who saw the day and boarding schools as workhouses where children performed sweatshop labor on a diet of bread and coffee, in return for schooling which did not prepare them for life on either the reservation or in town. However, these new reformers differed from their predecessors. They were influenced by Progressivism and by the changes in cultural and social science. This group sought a renaissance of Indian culture and community. However, just as the early day school was institutionalized because of its economic advantage over the boarding school, so, too, were the new reformer's dreams of community and culture "sold" to the Bureau. Bicultural education would raise the sagging spirit of the Indian and fit him better for the ultimate goal--assimilation. Retribalization of land would likewise help insure the economic independence of the Indian. These programs were conceived by visionaries like John Collier as a way to liberate the Indian spirit from the white influence and manipulation. However, when he became Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Collier himself realized the extent to which this aim would need to be expressed in terms of the traditional goals of the Indian Service and modified to fit those goals.

Characteristically, the fruit of New Deal Indian Educational Policy--Bilingual-Bicultural Education--was a further example of a program conceived to liberate and encourage Indian culture, yet was expressed through the Bureau as a better way to teach English. The failure of Indian bilingual education underscores the inability of the European American to understand

and tolerate Indian cultures within the context of traditional "American" goals. At the heart of America lay a national purpose, assimilation, which could not accept or coexist with, much less learn from, native American cultures.

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PART ONE: THE OLD REFORM

CHAPTER I

THE "INDIAN PROBLEM" OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN REFORMERS

For centuries the European American has sought a solution to the Indian "problem." From the time the first river valley was explored for its riches in fur; ever since the first ploughs were set to soil, the Indian was a problem and a force to be dealt with. Alliances, treaties, and trading pacts were made and broken. It took the European invaders about 200 years to completely reduce Indian material resistance. The native American became a physical and spiritual exile in his own land, and powerful tribes such as the Oglala Lakota became, by 1890, dependent on government for their mere survival.

There is nothing uniform about the way the government set about its policies of providing for the survival of its wards, and facilitating their "inevitable" assimilation into the stream of the American populace. Although the Indian standard of living was materially lower than the European American, the standard varied from tribal group to group. This depended mainly on length of Indian-White contact and the economic base upon which the tribe could depend. The situation of Plains tribes, dependent for survival upon the herds of buffalo, differed greatly from the Pueblo groups in Northern New Mexico, who continued to rely upon their traditional agricultural base for survival and cultural cohesion.

Throughout the nineteenth century, these peoples, who varied so greatly in social and economic life, were viewed as a single lawless

impediment requiring, if other means were unsuccessful, military subjugation. They were fought, and when defeated, were moved often to areas deemed unfit for habitation by whites. This late nineteenth-century Wyoming territory daily reveals a sense of the attitude commonly taken toward the Indian "race."

> The rich and beautiful valleys of Wyoming are destined for occupancy and sustenance of the Anglo-Saxon race. The wealth that for untold ages has lain hidden beneath the snow capped summits of our mountains has been placed there by Providence to reward the brave spirits whose lot it is to compose the advance guard of civilization. The Indians must stand aside or be overwhelmed by the ever advancing, ever increasing tide of emigration. The destiny of the aborigines is written in characters not to be mistaken. The same inscrutable arbiter that decried the downfall of Rome, has pronounced the doom of extinction upon the Redmen of America. The attempt to defer this result by mawking [sic] sentimentalism is unworthy of a great people. The government may discourage but it cannot prevent this expedition. It may discountenance but it dare not retard. . . . Western men have a style of coming at results by short and direct means. If these Indian treaties have got into such a tangled knot that they cannot be untied, the sword of the pioneer will cut them.[1]

Indeed, the Indian was overwhelmed by means short and direct. The Red River War of 1874-1875 effectively stopped the Southern Plains Indians. The Lakota Sioux fought their last battle at Little Big Horn in 1876. The surrender of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce signalled the end of Indian military response. Chief Joseph declared that he would "fight no more forever" and, with the exception of Geronimo in the 1880s and other sporadic rebellion, his words became prophecy for all the American Indian people.

Subdued by military force and dependent in large measure upon the federal government for subsistence, the Indian refused to disappear into the mainstream of American society. His condition became the object of a reform movement that engaged the emotion and energy of many people. These reformers believed that the growing "Indian Problem" could not be countenanced by a civilized people. With effort and support, Christian men and women could bring the problem within sight of solution.[2]

The Department of the Interior was created in 1849 and with this the Indian Service passed from military to civil control. The U.S. civil government assumed administrative responsibility for the Indian.[3] Attempts at Indian social reform had gained little momentum until one event galvanized the sympathies of the nation to the treatment of the Indian; this was the removal of the Ponca tribe from their home in Nebraska to the indian territory in 1876.

The Ponca were renowned for their friendly help to the early Nebraska settlers, and when news of their forcible removal became known, there was a storm of criticism. The Philadelphia American chastised Interior Secretary Schurz who ratified the policy. Referring to a dinner given in his honor, it wrote that "all of the napkins that will be needed will not avail to wipe out the fact that he forced a tribe of peaceful Indians to leave their homes . . . there is not Champagne enough in Boston to make the action seem creditable, to him or any thoughtful persons who respect rights more than reputations."[4] Shurz defended himself by saying that the best place for all the Indian tribes was the Indian territory.[5]

Stimulated by the Ponca case, a number of loosely organized groups of Christian men and women became concerned about the plight of the Indian. These groups attached themselves to the variety of causes which they believed important to Indian welfare. In 1879 the Central Indian Committee of the Women's Home Mission Society was founded in an informal basis and in 1882 submitted a bill to Congress through Senator Dawes of Massachusetts. The petition asked: (a) that treaties be maintained scrupulously until the Indians decided they be changed; (b) that common schools be set up on the reservation for the normal and industrial education of every child; (c) that land be allotted in severalty to all Indians who wanted it--160 acres in fee

simple, inalienable for 20 years; and (d) that all Indians be given full rights available to citizens under the Constitution.[6]

This idealistic plea garnered great support from churches and ministries, and from their educated flocks in the East. The plea for allotment of lands in severalty became the cornerstone of subsequent Indian reform groups in the late nineteenth century.

Another strong and politically influential group was the Indian Rights Association. They had great success as a lobby in Washington, and they, too, carried allotment as a key to the lock on the "Indian Problem." The evangelical reformers wished to individualize the traditionally tribal Indian; and this individualism can be seen closely allied to the Puritan work ethic. They wanted to eliminate tribal ownership of land and to substitute this with individual holdings. At its root this move was an attempt to inculcate the values of hard work, thrift, and individual ownership. This was the shortest path to salvation.[7]

In 1887 the Indian Rights Association published a statement in support of the Dawes Act, which would ratify the allotment of lands in severalty to individual Indians. It stated:

> Congress has at last inaugurated a definite and comprehensive policy in regard to the Indians. . . . The policy which tempers the danger of ultimately radical changes with the wise safeguards of conservative restrictions; which would help the Indians to become independent farmers and stockmen by making them individual land holders; which looks to the gradual breaking up of the reservations on which the Indians are shut from all wholesome contact with our civilization; which loosens the fatal tribal bonds by bringing the Indians under our laws and making the way broad for their entrance into citizenship.[8]

The Daws Act was passed that same year.

The policies of the government were surely shaped by these reform groups in the years following the military defeat of the Indian and leading

to the Dawes Act. Perhaps the most influential association of reformers was the Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian. Much of the shape of Indian policy in the early twentieth century can be attributed directly to the gospel according to Mohonk.[9]

All of the groups which met at Mohonk had a strong religious orientation and a powerful influence on policy. Although from its inception in 1883 until 1900, the conference had no official recognition; it exerted a powerful political influence on the Board of Indian Commissioners. This was done by word of mouth, by the vigorous press releases and widely circulated annual reports, and through its association with other Indian reform groups. By these combined efforts the Lake Mohonk Conference became what its promoters had intended--a dominant force in the formulation of Indian policy in the last decade and a half of the ninteenth century.

The Mohonk Conference participants were formed by the era and the environment from which they arose. Their conclusions about the Indian question and its solution reflect the intellectual trends of the time: Social Darwinism, the Protestant work ethic, rugged individualism, and Christian missionary zeal. The Indian was conceptualized as an immigrant. With the tide of foreigners continuing its assault on our shores, what better candidate for citizenship than the first Americans?[10]

Mohonk was not simply the expression of an exaggerated Christian jingoism. The Christian progressives who attended Mohonk fell in the context of the larger social religious thrust, often referred to as the Social Gospel. This movement accepted the "premise that social justice and Christianity were synonymous . . . emphasizing the humanity of Christ, especially his concern for the poor and destitute."[11] Ironically, Mohonk leads directly to the allotment of lands, which caused the Indian, who was culturally

unprepared for individual ownership, to lose 100 million acres of land over the next fifty years. Indeed, Senator Dawes himself said that without the Christian reformers and Social Gospelers of Mohonk, there would have been no Dawes Act.

The influence of the Social Gospel did, however, represent a change in the presiding Christian ethic of individual regeneration. It emphasized a more equitable social order, and reform became the path to this new brand of salvation. Under the powerful influence of Henry George's vision of a cooperative society, presented in Progress and Poverty, Protestant thinkers began to reassess their role as shepherds of the flock. George insisted that the problem of poverty could be solved with the help of God and the cooperation of men. Thus, economics and religion attained a novel harmony for a new social age.[12]

For the first time, Indian reform began to take on the characteristics of social engineering. Under the influence of the Indian Rights Association, the Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian, and others the politicians began to take a stronger stance and to exert a greater influence on the lives of their wards. Yet, a curious dichotomy began to appear in reform thought and action. On one hand the men at Mohonk advocated the rewards of individual work and salvation--the Puritan ethic. The Dawes Act was passed and made the Indian an individual land holder for the first time in his history. On the other hand, though their sincereity and earnestness cannot be doubted, they had little apparent understanding of the culture and consciousness of the people they were trying to help. They appeared to believe that the Indian owned a mind, blank and plastic, ready and eager to incorporate the knowledge and culture of the white man. These "Friends of the Indian" neither understood the nature of, nor did they really believe in,

the humanity of their "friends." At the same time, however, the reformers thought that the Indian life and beliefs retained a certain nobility, the inherent goodness of all things wild and natural. Mohonk Conference notes of 1901 indicate they recongized the importance of native "industries." "They are valuable as a means of profitable occupation, and natural expression; and valuable to the nation as specimens of art 'rare and indigenous.'"[13]

Religious reform was based upon two functions of Indian identity. These are the Indian land and the Indian culture. The Dawes Act became a reality, not only in response to reformers' demands, but as the Act which served to feed Western land hunger. With the exception of the Five Civilized Tribes, it gave the president the power to make Indians landowners in severalty and U.S. citizens. Heads of families received a quarter section; single men 18 and over, and orphans, 80 acres; those under 18, 40 acres.[14]

It is interesting to note what Senator Dawes had to say about the bill after it became law. He commented that he did not favor giving land to Indians who were unprepared to work it. Speaking at Mohonk in 1887, eight months after the law was passed, he said:

> President Cleveland said that he did not intend, when he signed this bill, to apply it to more than one reservation at first. . . which I thought very wise. But you see he has been led to apply it to half a dozen. The . . . greed of the land grabber is such as to press the application of this bill to the utmost. The greed and hunger of the white man for Indian land is almost equal to his hunger and thirst for righteousness.[15]

Thus criticized by its author so soon after ratification, the Dawes Act stood as the signal achievement of the nineteenth-century Christian reformers. One question remained. Why did Dawes push this bill through without specific legal guarantees against this "greed and hunger of the land grabber"? After land, education--as a medium for cultural and social change--was next on the docket of reform-minded citizens. Francis Paul Prucha writes:

> The Christian Reformers faced the Crisis in American Indian Policy with honesty and the best of intentions. With singleminded devotion to their cause they brought forth their panaceas--land in severalty, law, education, and efficient administration--and by united effort trimuphantly won their way in Congress. With typical reformer's zeal they swept criticism and opposition aside, for they knew that they were supremely right. So much more tragic then, was their ultimate failure.[16]

These were the early beginnings of the educational path which church reformers followed to win the mind of the Indian to the "American" way of life. These early efforts set the dissonant tone which was repeated again and again until the New Deal, when for a brief time a strained harmony was struck between the Anglo and Indian cultures.

Notes

[1]Henry E. Fritz, "The Humanitarian Background of Indian Reform" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1956), p. 314.

[2]Francis Paul Prucha, American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian 1865-1900 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), pp. 132-133.

[3]U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Indian Policies--from the Colonial Period through the Early 1970s (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1973), p. 7.

[4]Fritz, p. 358.

[5]Ibid., p. 358.

[6]Prucha, p. 135.

[7]Prucha, p. 153.

[8]Ibid., p. 227.

[9]Larry Burgess, The Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian (New York: Clearwater Publishing Co., 1975), p. 1.

[10]Ibid., p. 14.

[11]Stanley Caine, "The Origins of Progressivism," in Lewis Gould, ed., The Progressive Era (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1974), p. 13.

[12]Ibid., p. 12.

[13]Burgess, p. 15.

[14]Fritz, p. 386.

[15]Ibid., p. 388.

[16]Prucha, p. 403.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL MORGAN'S EDUCATIONAL REFORMATION: "THE SWEETS OF REFINED HOMES"

> It is of prime importance that a fervent patriotism should be awakened in their minds. The stars and stripes should be a familiar object in every Indian school, national hymns should be sung and patriotic selections read and recited. They should be taught to look upon America as their home, and upon the United States as their friend and benefactor. . . . They should hear little or nothing of the "wrongs of the Indians" and of the injustice of the white race.[1]
>
> --General Thomas J. Morgan
> Commissioner of Indian Affairs

General Morgan set out to organize the educational program for the Indian during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Education was the tool by which the Indian could enter into American society and compete on an equal footing for a place in the social and economic fabric of American life.

Morgan wished to organize a "comprehensive system of training and instruction" which would enable the Indian to redefine his role in relation to White society. He wanted to make the Indian a model citizen who could begin to enjoy "the sweets of refined homes . . . together with the pleasures that come from literature, science and philosophy and the solace and stimulus afforded by a true religion."[2] Morgan's comprehensive system was the first uniform course of study established for all the Indian schools. On each of the culturally diverse reservations, Indian children were faced with the same textbook, curriculum and program of industrial training.

While Morgan pushed his new program and worked to improve the quality of teachers in the Indian schools, he also argued for the destruction

of the reservation system. He forbade the use of native languages in school and insisted that only English be spoken. Assimilationist educational policy was thus fashioned to help encourage the success of the land allotment policy. Education for assimilation was as vigorously supported by the Christian reformers as was allotment, and Morgan worked closely with the Lake Mohonk Conference and helped to carry out its leading proposals.[3]

Morgan believed that the reservation system was an anachronism; that it had no place in modern civilization. He thought that through education the Indian could be taught to abandon his tribal, communal ways. Indians should be educated as Americans, not Indians, and his training should work to encourage the disintegration of the tribes rather than their segregation. He believed that if you began with the young, old habits would easily give way to industry and love of learning. Morgan thought that women as well as men could benefit from schooling; that they could be lifted from a plane of "servility and degradation" to a point where "their husbands and men generally will treat them with the same gallantry and respect which is accorded to their more favored white sisters."[4]

Morgan continued to outline the basic task expected of the Indian boarding school. He wrote:

> The period of rising and retiring, the hours for meals, time for study recitation, work, and play, should all be fixed and adhered to with great punctiliousness. The irregularities of camp life, which is the type of all tribal life, should give way to the methodical regularity of daily routine.[5]

Morgan wished that children acquire a "taste for study and a love for work"; thus their "day of redemption will be near at hand."[6]

With Morgan at the helm, the federal government began to steer a firm course toward finalization of an Indian policy of detribalization and assimilation of the Indian. Morgan's leadership institutionalized this policy further. In addition, Morgan acted to remove federal support for private, sectarian

Indian schools; thus began the gradual shift of the responsibility for Indian schooling from the sectarian, mission school to the government-managed school. A 20 percent cut in federal contracts to sectarian schools was called for in 1895. This looked clearly to the complete termination of federal support for these schools, and the shift to government acceptance of the responsibility to educate the Indian.[7] In reality, however, support was only reduced but never completely withdrawn and contracts with mission schools continue to the present.[8] The development of the Federal Indian school derived from the trend set by Commissioner Morgan. His Uniform Course was not only the origination of a standard curriculum but also the beginnings of a uniform bureaucracy to administer the educational designs of the Indian Service.[9]

Although it did indeed provide the blueprint for the future, the Allotment period did not give birth to federally supported Indian Education. Attempts to educate the American predate the allotment of lands in severalty. During the years following the military defeat of the Indian, when the reservations were organized, those who initiated Indian policy believed that it was cheaper to feed them than to fight them and that the great hope of the Indian lay in the education of their children. The Industrial Boarding Schools put these beliefs into practice. It is perhaps significant that Captain Pratt, who began the serious training school movement, was a Presbyterian Army officer who took 72 Cheyenne, Kiowa, Arapaho, and Comanche captives to be imprisoned at Fort Marion in Saint Augustine, Florida, and determined to train them for industrial occupation.[10]

The government made other effotts at segregated education before Pratt began the famous Carlisle Boarding School (alma mater to Jim Thorpe) in ~~Pennsylvania in 1879. The first boarding~~ schools were opened in the

1840s, run by the government in cooperation with the missions. In 1819 a "civilization fund" appropriated ten thousand dollars to provide an elementary education service to the Indian. As early as 1794, the earliest programs were provided by a treaty authorizing funds for education of the Oneida's, Tuscarora's, and Stockbridge's.[11]

The first substantial funding began with Pratt's Carlisle in 1882; next, Haskell and Chilocco (1884), Stewart, Sante Fe and Carson (1890), Pierre (1891), and Flandreau (1893).[12] By the turn of the century, 25 boarding schools opened off the reservations.[13]

Following these early efforts to train the Indian for a trade came the unified attempt, during Morgan's era, to tame his savagery, save his soul, and to inure the Red Man to the White way. Culture clash was inevitable and the shock produced has reverberated throughout the history of Indian-White relations in the modern era.

The Indian has been misunderstood by the White man since contact; cultural differences carried the deepened onus of poverty, disease, and psychic dislocation. A Presbyterian health nurse at Ganado, Arizona, wrote, just after the turn of the century, complaining:

> "Navajo babies tumble in the dirt with puppies and kittens and are fed on pan bread, coffee, mutton, and even green melons. Now, through our weekly baby conferences, the mothers are learning to keep them clean and warm, to give them canned tomatoes, and goat's milk, and to be proud of a gain in weight . . . they have waited a long time for someone to teach them this better way."[14]

Obviously, she failed to understand, as did most humanitarian, denominational, and governmental groups, the extent to which Indian dietary and health problems were due to poverty rather than savagery.

At the turn of the century, many saw the Indian floundering in a pit of spiritual as well as physical decay. Indian morals were clearly substandard

in relation to Whites'; their dances lewd and heathen; their use of drugs, such as peyote and alcohol was roundly condemned; and the custom where pubescent girls were given for trial by prospective husbands was considered child prostitution.[15] Indeed, if the Indian had any chance to walk the Jesus road, he would need to alter these uncivilized and sinful habits.

Education became the panacea for these perceived moral and social ills, as well as a means of moving the Indian to his place within the White economic system. While the Indian lost his hold on the land--one hundred million acres between 1887 and 1934--he lost hold of his cultural inheritance as well; and, indeed, his grip upon himself as an Indian.

During Morgan's term, Herbert Welsh wrote of the commissioner's reorganization of the Indian Service: "To him [Morgan] must be accorded the credit of great improvement of the government school system."[16] "The American Indian must take his place with all possible speed in the common life of the American People. One alternative is presented to him, --and to us on his behalf; he must take our education, religion, law, land, --in fact, life, becoming one with us; . . . absorption or extermination are the only alternative."[17]

This appeal was written as part of a report to upgrade the Indian Civil service; to improve the quality of its agents, and to reform the spoils system by which unscrupulous agents had taken to lining their pockets with federal Indian funds. Yet, this idea of reform referred only to the quality of the governmental bureaucracy, not to the quality of Indian life on the reservation. Welsh's report included a discussion of the "Ghost Dance" which swept the plains in the 1880s, when the tribes were looking for the Messiah that the missionaries had promised; who would surely deliver them from the bad dream that had become their life--to the return of the buffalo, and for

the White to disappear back across the plains. Welsh saw needed change only because the present agent, Royer, was unable to control this "Messiah Craze." Welsh wrote that the "battle" at Wounded Knee (a slaughter of Indian women, children, and old people, which came in response to their refusal to disperse from such a dance) was the result of an unfortunate change of agents. The new agent had arrested the band's leader, Big Foot, and put him in the guardhouse but then "weakly released him and allowed him to escape."[18]

The Indian Rights Association appealed to President Benjamin Harrison to improve agents, and to extend the Civil Service law to the Indian Service. In this way a major religious reform group saw the "battle" at Wounded Knee merely to be the result of maladministration. Similarly, reform groups viewed the challenge of Indian education as an administrative problem, a problem the solution to which lay in extending bureaucratic control further into the regime of the Indian school.

The effort to establish consistent bureaucratic response to the variety of Indian problems did not end with the commissionership of General Morgan. Rather, the mold of Indian Educational Administration was not broken but merely retooled throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The argument surrounding the effort to educate the Indian moved from <u>what</u> should be to <u>where</u> it should be done. The content of Indian Boarding School curriculum was not the object of concern to those who followed Morgan. Rather, they questioned the propriety of the Boarding School itself. In its place, critics of the Boarding Schools proposed the Community Day School, an institution which would be the fruit of the next controversy over the most efficient way to civilize the Indian.

Notes

[1]General Thomas J. Morgan, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The Education of American Indians, p. 10.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Francis Paul Prucha, American Indian Policy in Crisis, p. 146.

[4]Morgan, pp. 1-5.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 9.

[7]Theodore Fischbacher, "A Study of the Role of the Federal Government in the Education of the American Indian" (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 1967), p. 279.

[8]Ibid., p. 281.

[9]Ibid., p. 315.

[10]Ibid., p. 299.

[11]U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Indian Policies--from the Colonial Period through the Early 1970s (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, June 1973), p. 7.

[12]Margaret Szasz, "Education and the American Indian--the Road to Self Determination, 1928-1973" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1974), p. 10.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Davida Woerner, "Education Among the Navaho" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1941), p. 102.

[15]G. E. E. Lindquist, The Red Man and the United States, with foreword by Charles E. Burke, Commissioner of Indian Affairs (New York: George Poram & Co., 1923), pp. 65-76; 287, 391.

[16]Herbert Welsh, "The Murrain of Spoils in the Indian Service," paper presented to the National Civil Service Reform League, Baltimore, Maryland, December 1898, p. 3.

[17]Ibid., p. 2.

[18]Ibid., p. 5.

CHAPTER III

DAY VERSUS BOARDING SCHOOL: WHO PAYS FOR ASSIMILATION?

Commissioner Morgan established the theme of uniformity for government Indian Education policy. In addition to the standardized curriculum, the segregated boarding school became the accepted mode of instruction. The 25 off-reservation schools were the front line in the war on Indian ignorance and savagery. However, a new argument was developing in support of on-reservation community day schooling.

During the years between the turn of the century and 1926, the fortunes of the day school supporters waxed and waned in response to public and governmental perceptions regarding the function of the day school. Some analysts view the day school as the beginning of a progressive policy of Indian community development. It appears clearer that the day schools were advocated as economically superior to the boarding schools, and a preferred method for further assimilating and detribalizing the Indian. If there is any hint of tribal reformation in the day school campaign, it lay in the plans of a minority of reformers who saw the possibilities of the day school for the return to tribal solidarity and community.

In 1895 the National Education Association began to make clear its ideas on the education of the American Indian. The Association reported in that year:

> Untill a quarter of a century ago the only means used for solving the Indian question were the few philanthropic men and women missionaries among them. After a long time they finally stepped aside, and the [schoolmistress] stepped in, . . . and she accomplished in a short

> time, and in a far better way what the bullet could not accomplish during all the years that had passed. . . . Let there be no doubt that an education which inculcates the tastes and establishes the ideals of current American civilization constitutes the proper first step in the work of civilizing the Indians.[1]

There was little to alter the tenor of the position of the National Education Association (NEA) and its representatives. H. B. Frissell, principal of the Hampton Indian School addressed the association. He claimed that while we all celebrate the fact that slavery is gone forever, in some ways we lament its passing. Under "favorable conditions", it was more successful than the reservation for the training of a "barbarous race." "Slavery brought the colored man into close contact with his white brother, training him in habits of work, giving him a knowledge of the white man's language and religion."[2] Frissell spoke of Americans' attitude toward the Indian. He said that people still prefer annihilation over assimilation. He quoted an old Montana man he had met, who said, "'Are you one of these that is trying to tame the Indians? Well, I'll tell you how I tame 'em. There's a well in my backyard, and there aint no water; but there's seven tame Indians in it.'"[3] This colorful if somewhat lopsided view of the general American attitude toward the Indian serves as a strong indication that the white American at the turn of the century had little sympathy for, or understanding of, the complicated "problem" of the American Indian. Men like Frissell, Pratt, and others believed their segregated educational plan would best prepare the Indian to become American wage earners or farmers in the mold of their white "brothers."

Francis E. Leupp was one of the earliest administrators who took umbrage with the off-reservation boarding school system. His criticism did not, however, attack the basic goals of assimilation toward which the boarding schools worked. Rather, he claimed that they failed to assimilate the Indian successfully and to do so inexpensively. Though he was at first critical of the

fact that Indian culture and nobility is destroyed by the off-reservation boarding school, his principal consistent argument was that they were "expensive failures."[4]

Leupp was appointed by Theodore Roosevelt for his "peculiar fitness" for the job of commissioner; a position he held from 1904 to 1909. During those years he champions the day school and wears a self-assigned badge labelled "progressive." It was not long before he broke with the Mohonk group, even though he had been closely associated with them earlier.[5] He first rejects their goal to strip the Indian of his unique qualities and to remake him into the image of a white man. Indeed, Leupp appears to appreciate the Indian's physical and cultural heritage. Yet it soon becomes clear that the emphasis in his policy was essentially "that Indians would be more effectively molded into willing, patriotic citizens by friendly educational practices."[6]

Others in the Indian educational service also saw the day school simply in terms of its effect on teaching the Indian civilized life. For one reservation teacher, the day school was a place where the child could absorb the life style of the white teacher and her family, as they go about their work of cultivation and orderly housekeeping.[7] This worker said she consulted 30 other teachers and all but two agreed with her ide that the day school had the potential to be a powerful influence. By imitation, the Indian would certainly model the white way.[8]

There was a frequent contradiction which arose from the arguments of Indian educators at the beginning of the day school period. For example, Calvin W. Woodward, Director of the Manual Training School at Washington University, wrote that he noticed the failure of Indian students returning to the reservation from the Boarding School. He said that the best achievable

success in Indian education was to turn children away from the traditions of their ancestor's tribes, thereby completing the depopulation and final extinction of the tribes. This plan, he said, "should be carried out relentlessly; every child should be withdrawn and none should ever be allowed to go back [to the reservation]." Yet, at the same time, Woodward said, "this result, which is the logical outcome of the government boarding-school, cannot be condemned too strongly."[9] It would mean the complete destruction of the tribes. He believed "Americanization" to be the only legitimate goal of proper education, yet lamented the outcome of what would be taken as a "successful" program of training.

Clearly, the fundamental paradox position plaguing Indian education as an arm of reform begins with this period. Total assimilation and tribal annihilation is encouraged, yet reformers balked at the kind of cultural genocide which this policy would initiate. It sought the end of the Indian problem, yet could not cope with the moral consequences of racial or cultural obliteration.

The day school provided a partial solution to this dilemma. Francis Leupp saw it as a means to preserve Indian bloodlines and tribal identity while educating him for American citizenship more thoroughly and economically. However, the preservation of culture was clearly sacrificed in pursuit of economic advantage. Leupp was able to say, at an NEA roundtable conference, that he dreamt of abandoning the boarding school in favor of the day school. From this he envisioned a great community school system which would one day merge into the public school fabric of American education.[10] Community schooling would occur in concert with the hope that "we ease [the old-fashioned Indians] down the steps to the grave; but as they pass away, other generations come in after them whom we can steer aright because we can begin while they are still young enough."[11]

Later, Leupp says:

> That is, where the Day School is doing great work, it is right under the nose of the old Indian. Of course, there is still, among some of the old Indians, a very great opposition to education, or what we style education. The old fashion Indian wants his child to follow the old Indian ways, and believes they are better for it. We have to put the school proposition on a very practical ground with him. First we appeal to his instinct for self protection. We say, "The white people are coming, they are here." After we appeal in that way, if he still resists, we say plainly that his children must go to school long enough to learn the simple things, whether he likes it or not. And if he still does not listen to the words of the Government, we send the policeman or the soldier out to show him that we mean business.[12]

Leupp's main criticism of the boarding school was that it was an "educational almshouse" and he proselytized the Day School to the public, primarily on the grounds that it was less expensive. Leupp claimed the cost of educating a child in the Boarding School to be $250.00 per child, compared to $50.00 for the Day School.[13] The degree to which Leupp supported tribal solidarity through the day school or any other means, for that matter, was confirmed in an article he wrote: "The Red Man Incorporated." In this piece Leupp argued to incorporate the Choctaw and Chicasaw tribes in Indian territory as a joint stock company. He said this because the tribes were leasing valuable coal-bearing land to other parties, who had begun extraction of resources. Leupp proposed the incorporation not only as a way to prevent the sale of their lands, but as a way to encourage the dissolution of Indian tribes and to "absorb their persons and property in the great American conglomerate . . . [that] from their ancient to our modern economic basis these people would have been led so gently that they could hardly tell what guided them over the gulf. That is the consummation toward which we are all working."[14]

In this way Leupp remained close to the assimilationist spirit of the "Friends of the Indian" and other nineteenth-century reformers. The day

school was another strategy for achieving "consummation," and was sold to the public by appeal to its economical aspects. Other dividends would be "the good things in connection with these schools--bathhouses . . . practical home cooking, . . . children going back and forth to school, cleanly clad, . . . the Lord's Prayer; patriotic songs; the sound of the school bell and the daily floating of the flag; [these influences] unobtrusively drawing children and their parents together nearer to civilization . . . "[15]

Notes

[1]Dr. W. N. Hailman, "The Next Step in the Education of the Indian," paper presented to National Ecucation Association Meeting, Denver, 1895 (St. Paul: Pioneer Press, 1895), p. 6.

[2]H. B. Frissell, "The Indian Problem," paper presented to National Education Association Meeting, 1900, Charleston, South Carolina.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Theodore Fischbacher, p. 306.

[5]Mark W. Sorensen, "Progressive Policy in American Indian Education: Francis E. Leupp, Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1904-1909" (Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1975), p. 32.

[6]Ibid., p. 35.

[7]C. C. Covey, "The Reservation Day School Should be the Prime Factor in Indian Education," paper presented to the National Education Association, 1901, p. 901.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Calvin Woodward, "What Shall be Taught in an Indian School?", paper presented to National Education Association, Detroit, 1901, pp. 904-05.

[10]Francis E. Leupp, transcript of National Education Association round-table conference, University of California at Los Angeles, 1907 (in Bulletin of NEA, 1907), pp. 1015-1021.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Francis E. Leupp, "The Red Man, Incorporated," in Colliers, January 9, 1909, p. 20.

[14]Ibid.

[15]J. J. Duncan, "The Necessity for More and Better Equipped Day Schools," paper to National Education Association, 1905, p. 594.

CHAPTER IV

BOARDING SCHOOLS VICTORIOUS: COMPLACENCY AND A SECOND WAVE OF CRITICISM

With the appointment of Robert G. Valentine as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1901, there was a return of interest in the boarding school, especially for the vast and remote Navaho reservation. Valentine, a former private secretary to Leupp, placed emphasis upon using the boarding school to deal with the problem of educating a semi-nomadic people.[1] To some extent, the emphasis shifted from the day school back to the boarding school in response to "special problems" in dealing with groups which appeared more resistent to cultural assimilation. Regardless of which way the pendulum swung between day- or boarding-school emphases, the years between 1910 and 1925 saw the birth of a new group of reformers. They responded to a host of new abuses aflicting the Indian Service, most of which had arisen from the allotment of lands in severalty and problems related to conditions on the reservations and especially within the schools.

In 1916 another attempt was made to put a Uniform Course of Study into effect. As it had with Morgan, this attempt flew in the face of extreme tribal, cultural diversity.[2] For the first six years of school, the new system followed the standard curriculum of the white public school. Vocational training was emphasized in the latter years; educators were disturbed that the Indian was not prepared to enter the competitive industrial and agricultural arena. These "training programs," however, were used to help keep the Indian schools financially solvent. Daily operations, such as the laundry,

food service and maintenance were operated under the aegis of these "programs." An hourly breakdown of pupil activity shows that this labor or "application" of their industrial training came to at least twenty hours a week during the first and second year of high school.[3] These "application periods" appear in consistently gross disproportion to the training hours received for their accomplishment. The reformers of the 1920s cited these figures and attacked the regime of these newly styled "vocational" schools. A system of forced labor had grown up in a public boarding schools where tuberculosis, malnutrition, and trachoma ravaged the overcrowded buildings.

This situation continued unchanged even after the Department of the Interior voiced disgust over a situation where the large proportion of boys and girls return to their reservations from the boarding schools and "fail to put into practice what they were taught at the schools."[4] Yet in 1919 Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells urged that we press on with the "industrial class work" which produced this failure. He urged further that the Indian schools must continue to build character, morals, and encourage the discrimination between right and wrong.[5] In addition, he . . . asuaged any fears that equipment and materials might be inadequate in the schools, when he wrote that "good books and equipment are a great aid, but they are not always essential. A good teacher can accomplish wonders without them"; though he went on to say that "there is about an Indian school a great deal of institutional work and in the necessity for doing this the instruction of the pupil is apt to be forgotten. Even here with proper methods much of the necessary work can be made of more value for instruction than at present."[6]

In 1917 Sells created the administrative proviso whereby school attendance could earn students a certificate of competency for land acquisition.

This meant that the holder of a certificate could claim his patent in fee with schooling posted as evidence of the ability to administer to his or her property. In this way more land could be allotted to more Indians sooner. Later critics claimed this policy helped further set the stage for mass dispossession of land as it fell into the hands of inexperienced young men and women whose only educational preparation for proprietorship was three years of laundry and clothes repair on a diet of black bread and coffee.

In a letter to graduate Belle Peniska of Carlisle, Sells wrote to congratulate her for her diploma and the acceptance of her patent in fee:

> I send you this certificate of educational competency, feeling that you have earned such recognition. . . . High minded, sweet tempered home keepers are the bringers of strength and virtue to social welfare. Hold fast to your highest ideals; they will be among your best friends in any work you do. Should you acquire any land hereafter, be careful in its management, and feel free to consult this bureau, if you desire, about any matter affecting it.[7]

Sells saw that his policies serve to effect the dissolution of tribal bonds, interracial barriers and that they would help absorb the Indian into the general population.[8] His policies did not, however, go unscrutinized. In 1919, a congressional committee investigated the Indian Service's new programs of educational and "half-blood" land competency. Sells scrupulously defended his position. He urged Congressman Kelly in this way:

> If you were to visit one of the Indian non-reservation boarding schools, and I hope you may, you will be proud of the fact that you are a member of the Indian committee. No man with red blood can come in contact with Indian boys and girls in the vocational schools of the Indian bureau without being proud of the fact he is an American.

However, when pressed on the extent of the Bureau tests to determine competency, Sells said that they do not inquire into individual cases except to determine that the Indian in question is not "an imbecile." He also reiterated the basic bureau goal to discourage tribal association and relations.[10]

Further criticism began to come from disclosures that there were serious attendance problems in the Indian schools, especially in the Southwest. In response to this, another move was made to establish the boarding school and to consolidate its authority within the government. In 1920, the School Appropriations Act carried a rider that minimum attendance criteria be set for the schools.[11] Furthermore, Congress reacted to the disclosure that 10,000 Indian children in the Southwest were not enrolled in school, and enacted a compulsory education law. This law was a repetition of an 189[illegible] Act, but proved more effective. It resulted in an enrollment drive which filled schools to capacity and greatly increased school attendance. Yet, to effect this change, truant agents had nearly to resort to kidnapping.[12] The August 1924 issue of "School and Society" reports that Secretary of Interior Hurbert Work would act to enlarge the capacity of existing boarding schools to accommodate about 1,000 additional children in 1925. The new compulsory education law caused the already meager facilities to be overtaxed.[13]

The new generation of reformers acted in response to the host of problems which arose as a result of the Dawes Allotment Act (1887) and the social and educational policy which worked to support it. The lack of health care, sanitation, insufficient diet, child labor; the returned student problem, where schooling inadequately prepared the Indian for reservation life; overemphasis upon routine vocational tasks; sham competency requirements; and a complete lack of attention paid to indigenous Indian cultural values in art, music, religion, and language; these all worked to arouse criticism. This new generation became seriously concerned with Indian culture and saw in its genius an alternative to the life way of the Western-European American. For the first time, reform fervor was fueled by the perspectives of the progressive cultural and social science. This interest, as well as the growing

awareness that Allotment period policies were bankrupt, branded the new period with its peculiar progressive-scientific appearance. However, the traditional goal of Indian assimilation would not change easily even as the work of the new reformers began to impinge on policy in the recovery years of the New Deal.

Notes

[1]Davida Woerner, "Education Among the Navaho," p. 56.

[2]Theodore Fischbacher, "A Study of the Role," p. 316.

[3]U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Department of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916), p. 9.

[4]U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1917), p. 334.

[5]U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), pp. 14-15.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Indian Affairs, Conditions of Various Tribes of Indians, 66th Cong., 1st sess., 1919, p. 57.

[10]Ibid, p. 56.

[11]Fischbacher, p. 391.

[12]Ibid., pp. 268-69.

[13]School and Society, "Indian Schools," vol. 20, no. 502 (August 1924):174.

PART TWO:- THE NEW REFORM

CHAPTER V

THE PROGRESSIVES AND THE SECULAR INTELLIGENTSIA

It is useful to view Progressivism as both a popular political movement with foundations in traditional American values of industry, democracy, technology, and as an intellectual movement with an investment in the new science. The roots of Progressivism are deep in both the old Protestant work ethnic and in the profoundly secular new sciences of Sociology, and Anthropology. These seemingly contradictory sources of the American Progressive movement during this period determine the fundamental character of its relationship to the new reform in Indian affairs. The paradox of the Progressive mind is reflected in Indian policy from the start. It helps us view the way in which idealist fervor is welded to the gospel of efficiency to produce a streamlined chariot of mercy.

Progressivism has been described as partly an effort to define and alleviate the great social problems, both domestic and foreign, which were created by the rapid changes of urbanization and industrialization.[1] This general mobilization of political and social force expressed itself in different voices with variant recipes for change.

The old reform consisted in the efforts of a variety of concerns: Christians intent on assimilating the Red Man to the Jesus road; women's groups with similar aims but who raised the problem of Indian ignorance and ill health for all to bear in conscience; educators who fought for the

method of schooling best suited for the Indian and who waged their battle in the war of the Day versus the Boarding School. These early activists prepared the ground for a journalistic outcry during the twenties. The muckraking was profuse and Indian ills were described in vivid detail. It is sometimes said that the progressive mind was a journalistic sensibility.

The critical journalism of the time took on the peculiarly secular tone which identified many of its positions, yet the progressive intellecutals had their roots in a variety of soils. Their idealism was less guided by a tradition of Christian humanism than by an alliance to a growing "gospel of efficiency" and a belief in democratic self-determination. However, democratic ideals were often strained in competition with the equally traditional virtues of competition and entrepeneurship. All the while, the cry for improvement was pushed one way toward the establishment of a planned policy and another toward conservation of the traditional value of laissez faire. All this was expressed through the medium of the Christian passion for righteousness and humanitarian spirit.[2] In this complex manner, competing drives and holdover traditions acted to make progressive Indian reform more confused in intent and charged with more contradictory elements than was the old altruistic Christian reform movement.

If the progressive reform viewed the Indian in a new light, a great credit for the illumination extends to the effect of the fledgling science of Anthropology and its development of a new conception, a new definition of aboriginal peoples, and their culture. Anthropology helped to alter permanently the intellectuals' understanding of the American Indian. Prior to 1925 most thought the Indian was a dying race, destined to extinction by war, disease, intermarriage, and failure to breed.[3] Indeed, many of the reforms directed toward Indian welfare were designed to ease this passage to

obliteration, rather than to bolster and encourage the growth of the "Red Race." However, under the influence of Franz Boas, a generation of anthropologists began to elucidate a novel conception of race and civilization. Prior to this time the most common conception of man held that different races and peoples were at different levels of civilization and were related by comparison from most to least civilized. The notion of the primitive was strictly pejorative and served to a pass negative judgment, for example, on the Hottentots by comparison with "advanced" Western European culture.

Boas argued that culture and civilization were separate objects. He stated that alien, supposedly inferior cultures are in fact "on a different equilibrium of emotion and reason which [is] of no less value than ours."[4] Western European ethics cannot be used to denigrate the actions in another culture. For example, to the traditional Inupiat "Eskimo," it would be an indefensible breach of filial duty not to kill an infirm parent.[5] Boas's work rocked the foundation of this monistic, qualitatively graduated cultural understanding. Boas simply denied the notion of inherent racial superiority or inferiority.

Ruth Benedict worked to further articulate this revolutionary concept of culture. She became critical of the materialistic foundation of white European culture. In addition, she attacked racial myopia in a time when civilization had thrown diverse peoples into intimate contact.[6] Benedict warned against the temptation to make quick judgments of culture based on observations of custom seen through the clouded lens of one's own belief structure and habits.[7] She argued that we all operate from the framework of our own institutions and thus we may easily fall into error regarding judgments of an ethical nature.

The social thinkers who were involved in the new Indian reform heeded this message. One of their first complaints concerned the treatment of Indian religious custom by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In concert with the awakening interest in aboriginal societies, there was also a growing fascination with Indian art as the expression of a pure and untrammeled culture. This novel concern in Indian cultural institutions continued to profoundly effect the White intellectual community. The post-World War I artist and the social scientist both began to discover the purity and beauty in the designs of the indigenous Indian expression.

Indeed, some of the first critical rumblings of the new era of reform came not from benevolent social clubs but from among the ranks of artists who had moved to Taos, New Mexico, from New York's Greenwich Village. The Taos Art Movement saw the formal purity in Indian art; and the beauty of the New Mexico Highlands served to inspire their own work. Influenced by the new social sciences, the political activism of this group and that of other intellectuals began to leave a deep mark upon the reform consciousness of the day. It helped raise the public awareness toward the dignity and importance of the Indian peoples and their heritage.

During the 1920s, criticism of the Indian Bureau came into view of the public and the goverment by those who were influenced by Progressive ideals and the cultural sciences. The time was indeed ripe, not only for reform but for an emergency effort to save the Indian from further, perhaps total, disintegration. By the end of World War I, the Indian suffered increasingly from disease, short life expectancy, malnutrition, and the effects of a stagnant repressive school system.[12]

Yet the issue which galvanized reform during the 1920s was not the immediate question of health or education. It was, again, the land: an issue

which arose when the climate of opinion was ready for reform. The Bursum Bill of 1922, an Act to quiet title to land within Pueblo Indian land grants, proposed to give legal land ownership to white squatters on Pueblo lands, and to force the Indians to prove ownership of their lands. Establishing such proof would have been difficult, if not impossible, for the Pueblos would need to clarify ownership through three periods of occupation--Spanish, Mexican, and American. The Bursum Bill, like the Dawes Act before it, bore witness to the land hunger of those who lived near the reservations.[13] As with the Ponca case, the controversy which arose around the Bursum Bill served to catalyze a growing interest in Indian rights and welfare. It came at a time when Indian rights advocates recognized the effects of the disasterous Allotment Act.[14]

Those people who involved themselves with the Bursum conflict formed an advance guard of intellectuals who addressed the question of tribal sovereignty and cultural homogeneity. Their arguments, expressed in popular journals of the day, set the pace and tone for the new era. Just as the work of the Christian reformers culminated in the allotment of lands, the effort of this generation became associated with the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), which put a virtual end to allotment in severalty. Yet while this new reform exhibited perhaps a higher awareness of the dignity and sovereignty of Indian people, as the movement acted to impinge on policy in the 1930s, an assimilationist criterion was often used to support its recommendations. Compared with the policies produced from the old religious reform, the new era set a new frame around the same picture. The clear vision of a new reform became a distorted image as it rolled through the press of policy formation.

Notes

[1]Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., "The Progressive Era and the Reform Traditional," in Mid-America, vol. 46, no. 4 (1964):227.

[2]Ibid., p. 249.

[3]Oliver La Farge, ed., The Changing Indian (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942), p. 167.

[4]Franz Boas, "The Mind of Primitive Man," in the Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 460.

[5]Ibid., p. 459.

[6]Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 10.

[7]Ibid., p. 9.

[8]Lawrence Kelly, The Navaho Indians and Federal Indian Policy, 1900-1935 (Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1968), p. 179.

[9]Gordon McGregor, "Indian Education in Relation to the Social and Economic Background of the Reservation," in Oliver La Farge, ed., The Changing Indian (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942), p. 118.

[10]Davida Woerner, "Education Among the Navaho," p. 107.

[11]Ibid., p. 126.

[12]Margaret Szasz, Education and the American Indian, p. 12.

[13]Ibid., p. 13.

[14]Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

REFORM IN THE JOURNALS: THE "PROGRESSIVE MIND" AND THE MERRIAM REPORT

The Bursum land bill was a hot item for the Muckrakers when it appeared on September 11, 1922. By December 6, 1922, The Outlook magazine had published an article condemning the bill. They mention the fact that the bill (which would allow white settlers to claim that land they squatted on illegally) would deprive the Indians of land they had lived on for hundreds of years.[1] The bill also exhibited some of the "back-to-the-land" spirit so apparent in Progressive, Populist politics. The Progressives felt that the federal government was meddling too deeply into local affairs. Thus, the Bursum Bill stated that the jurisdiction of land claims courts would move from the federal to local courts. While this move appealed to states righters, it obviously put the courts much closer to white vested interests.

John Collier, a leading voice and future Commissioner under Roosevelt, wrote in the Sunset magazine of the failure and corruption of the Indian Bureau. He claimed that the Bureau harrassed the critics of the Bursum bill and had threatened suits of libel, jail sentences, and future exclusion from all Indian reservations.[2] He was critical of the weakness of Commissioner Charles Burke, who had claimed that under the tyranny of Secretary of the Interior Albert A. Fall, the Indian office was helpless.[3] Fall had helped author the Bursum bill.

The Sunset was at the forefront of the critique of the Bureau and Collier was a frequent contributor. Only six times between November 1922 and June 1924 did the magazine fail to print an ariticle critical of the Indian Bureau.[4] Collier contributed five Bursum-related articles.

Bursum was the main, if not the sole, issue brought to public attention in the magazines. The prestigious Forum carried an interesting debate between Mary Austin and Flora Warren Seymour. Mrs. Seymour echoed the nineteenth-century assimilationists; she argued that the Indian would indeed recoil if the buffalo were returned and the prairies were once again unbroken. She says, "If some sentimentalists had their way, Indians of the younger generation, . . . would go back to their old picturesque dances and worships."[5] Mary Austin replies that while it would indeed be impossible to return to the state of nature, this is no reason for the Indian Bureau to serve a white and not an Indian constituency. She mentions a book which was written by G. E. Lindquist, and was forwarded by then Commissioner of Indian Affairs C. Burke. The book, she said, The Red Man in the United States, is not primarily about Indians at all, rather it is a study of the progress of Christian missions among the tribes. The book attempts to discover whether we have made the most of our Indians for our own welfare and for theirs; and queries to what extent we have made good Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists of them.[6]

The opposing strains of reform criticism exemplified in these debates begged the question of what it meant to be and Indian. Mrs. Seymour saw no turning back to pre-contact days; therefore, criticism of any Bureau efforts to help the Indian are unwarranted; time and civilization march on. On the other hand, Austin said the Indian was wronged by its benefactor, the government. Her supposedly more progressive stand asserted that the

Indian lived protected by a special dependency relationship to the government. This lack of ability to define the Indian lay at the root of the difficulty that different reformers had in agreeing on their goals. However, deep as these differences ran,they were insufficient to stall the momentum of criticism in the journals.

The attacks continued. Many writers, like M. Clyde Kelly, a member of the U.S. House from Pennsylvania, saw the inequity of providing welfare to the poor overseas, while the Indian starved at home.[7] Criticism of poor living conditions continued apace with the Bursum controversy. In "Let 'Em Die!" Walter Woehlke, a critic associated with the Taos Art Movement, let fly a broadside on the trachoma epidemic (a preventable, parasitic eye disease that leads eventually to blindness) which ravaged the boarding schools. Ninety percent of the children suffered from this ailment.[8] John Collier, along with his constant attacks on the allotment policy, and Bursum, also began criticism of the trio of Indian health problems: tuberculosis, trachoma, and syphilis. In addition, Collier voiced his disgust at the way the whites encouraged the Indian to lose their race memory, art, and religion. Indeed, he was later to make the restitution of Indian culture the hallmark of his commissionership.[9]

Truly, the press and in particular the popular magazine helped give momentum and voice to Indian reform. However, the individual magazines were not always consistent in their editorial stands regarding the "Indian Problem." For example, the Outlook roundly condemned the Bursum bill for unfairly disenfranchizing the Indian of his birthright. Yet on another occasion, the Outlook supported Commissioner Sells's 1917 competency policy, whereby more land would fall into the hands of inexperienced Indians and thus eventually wind up for sale. The Outlook declared it better that some

gain land and fail with it, than deny to the majority the right to the full benefits of ownership.

Contradictory approaches to Indian questions were echoed in the attitude of then Commissioner Charles Burke. In the foreword to the Lindquist book, which Mary Austin mentioned, Burke writes, "The Indians' spirituality is nourished by traditions as ancient as his racial infancy. Many of these are as beautiful and as worthy of historic preservation as the finest fancies of classic mythology."[10] Yet Burke said a few years later that, "the old men [assembled in a Pueblo council, were] . . . half animals through their pagan religion."[11]

The muckracking continued as the journals proceeded to define progressive reforms. Clearly, the fundamental critical achievement of the movement was this "business of exposure."[12]

More and more we can see Indian policy taking shape under the pressure applied by the intellectuals through these journals, yet the greatest influence of the intelligentsia of the twenties would not be felt until the era of the New Deal. Policy changes came slowly in the twenties, and what changes did occur, did not often coincide with the critic's ideals of Indian cultural and political sovereignty.

In 1925 the Department of the Interior reported its warning that if we do not educate the Indian properly, he would continue his tribal customs.[13] By 1931, the Department extolled the use of native art and craft; it said that teachers should encourage children to bring their tribal culture to the classroom, and that the old uniform course should be discontinued. Some substantial changes had occurred in Indian school policy statements. Yet, the changes were basically cosmetic. Educational policy was turned more by the pressures of depression economics than by intellectual or

educational innovation.[14] Indeed, just as in Leupp's day, the boarding schools of 1931 were discouraged in favor of the day schools, because at the day school the children will be closer to home and that they will mix with white children.

The growing force of the reformers of the twenties did change policy and bring more attention to the Indian political, social, and educational problems. As these changes were recommended into policy, however, their success was measured mainly by the extent to which they helped to encourage economic independence and eventual assimilation: Art and crafts were to encourage cottage industry, not cultural memory. The day school was not as much an attempt to accentuate community solidarity as a way to keep down costs and expose the red child to the habits of the white teacher and her family.

There can be no doubt about the assimilationist policies of the Bureau during the twenties and early thirties. By 1932 it reported that:

> We are not out to capture any more Indians, and our aim is to qualify those Indians under our care, and their children, to take their place in the competitive system which surrounds them. That means the ultimate breaking up of the reservation system and its artificial islands in our civilization.[15]

The educational architects of the Bureau continued to mourn the resistance of the traditional Indian to the blandishments of white cultural teaching. "Because of a racial tendency toward dominance of the tribe by the old people, it [was] difficult to make education stick."[16]

Despite the fact that Indian policy was slow to change in the 1920s, the evidence shows that a shift began to occur near the end of the decade. The clamor set up by the new reform began gradually to find its political expression. There was the report of the "Committee of One Hundred" which outlined many shortcomings of the Bureau. This Committee was a group of

concerned citizens who convened especially to review the Indian problem. Later, in response to mounting press and public pressure, and operating under the threat of a Senate investigation, Interior Secretary Hubert Work turned to another group of independent experts for a report on Indian conditions. The Merriam Committee was formed through the Brookings Institution and led by educator Lewis Merriam to study the Indian Service and reservation conditions.

The Committee was outraged at reports of child labor and sub-standard health conditions in the schools.[17] Commissioner Cato Sells had excused this, claiming that the great amount of daily routine work in the schools was necessitated by insufficient moneys allocated to run the school. Other writers have in fact stated that this "child labor" was "considered educational experience . . . [and] . . . was necessary; for Congress appropriated very small funds for school upkeep, and school superintendants were forced to make schools as nearly self-sufficient as possible."[18]

Yet, Congress, at the height of the progressive era, was in no mood to be tolerant. In 1927, at the Congressional Subcommittee Hearings on Indian Affairs, committee members were angered at reports of children attending school two or three hundred miles from home. In the later hearings of 1931-1932, Navaho Dane Coolidge testified to the practices of "kid-catching," or kidnapping, for the purpose of maintaining attendance records.[19] In 1927 the Senate Survey of Indian Conditions heard testimony that corporal punishment was used at the newly renamed Leupp boarding school. An informant testitified as follows:

> I have seen Indian boys chained to their beds at night for punishment. I have seen them thrown in cellars under the building. I have seen shoes taken away from them and they then were forced to walk through the snow to the farm to milk. I have seen them whipped with a hemp rope, also a water hose.[20]

The Merriam report was especially concerned with these reports that came out of the schools; for although the Committee reported on a variety of social conditions on the reservations, the educational service was its avowed top priority:

> The fundamental requirement is that the task of the Indian service be recognized as primarily educational . . . so that they [the Indian] may be absorbed into the prevailing civilization or be fitted to live in the presence of that civilization at least in accordance with a minimum standard of decency.[21]

It is important to note that until this statement by the Merriam Committee, no one had issued an official policy recommendation which proposed an alternative to assimilation. The possibility that the Indian could be fitted to live side by side with the white was new to the Indian Bureau.[22] At the same time, the Merriam report must be understood as a policy recommendation and not as policy.

The education section of the Committee report was the responsibility of W. Carson Ryan, an educator who brought the latest ideas of Progressive education to the Committee. One of his first plans was to dismember the Uniform Course of Study first implemented by Commissioner Morgan and re-instituted in 1916.[23] Ryan recognized the need to individuate not only Indian educational curriculum from the white schools, but within this, to distinguish curricula from tribe to tribe. He was sensitive to the intertribal differenced in language, culture, and environment.[24]

The Merriam Report was important for altering the tone of Indian education from a military, standardized curriculum, to a more flexible model with room for change and variation. In addition, it effected a boost in educational appropriations from three million in 1929 to twelve million in 1932. The discovery of conditions in the reservation and boarding school caused a renewed interest in the reservation day school.[25]

The Merriam Committee report was the signal achievement of the Rhoads, Scattergood Commissionership. They served to separate the era of boarding school sweatshops and religious persecution of the years prior to and including Burke, from the new radical aspirations of John Collier's "Indian New Deal." However, the implementation of Merriam recommendations remained a problem. Though the report advised the development of tribal community ideals, and that the drastic differences between the tribes be respected, yet its recommendations did not vault quickly into policy. The heritage of assimilationist thought removed much of the force from the Merriam report's novel suggestions for co-existence.[26]

The Bureau was criticized for unresponsiveness and ill-defined guidelines with respect to the administration of its offices and the implementation of Merriam Committee recommendations. One of the main stumbling blocks to the acceptance of the Merriam Committee's suggestions stemmed from accusations that the Indian Bureau was not responsive to the field reports coming into the office in 1931. Senator Thomas of Oklahoma accused the Bureau of not reading the reports at all. Further accusations occurred when Thomas discovered that the Bureau had not even spent the money appropriated by Congress.[27]

Although the Merriam report offers a change in tack with regard to the social welfare question, there is scant evidence that its recommendations or the policies which followed differed in an important way form the argument that the Indian should be trained to take his place in the larger white culture.[28] There is some evidence, however, that the Merriam Committee was willing to accept the notion of Indians living alongside white communities; and this does present a substantial change from formal assimilationist policy statements of the past. However, this is but a small part of the recommendation of the Merriam Committee. Still, the social reform efforts which had

helped to form the Merriam Committee continued; and there was a change in the tone if not the substance of policy. The leadership of the Bureau shifted from strict to progressive assimilationists--from Burke to Rhoads. This in turn led to the tenure of the more radical John Collier, a man who had a great part to play in the theory and practice of reform in the twenties, and who now would shift the direction of the Bureau under his interpretation of the Merriam Committee's guidelines and his singular vision of Indian cultural and political sovereignty.

Notes

[1]"The Pueblo Indians with Their Backs to the Wall," The Outlook Magazine, December 1922, p. 591.

[2]John Collier, "No Trespassing," Sunset Magazine, March 1923, p. 14.

[3]Ibid., p. 15.

[4]Randolph C. Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform 1922-1934," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 32 (1) (July 1945):337.

[5]Flora Warren Seymour, "Our Indian Problem--The Delusion of the Sentimentalists," The Forum, 71 (3) (March 1924):273.

[6]Mary Austin, "Our Indian Problem -- The Tally of the Officials," The Forum (March 1924), p. 283.

[7]M. Clyde Kelly, "The Indian and His Master," Sunset Magazine (December 1922), p. 17.

[8]Walter V. Woehlke, "Let 'Em Die!", Sunset Magazine (July 1923), p. 14.

[9]John Collier, "America's Treatment of Her Indians," Current History Magazine (August 1923), p. 773.

[10]Charles Burke, foreword in G. E. E. Lindquist, The Red Man and the U.S., pp. 65-76.

[11]John Collier, The Indians of the Americas (N.Y.: The New American Library, 1947), p. 151.

[12]Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1955), p. 185.

[13]Report of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1925), p. 19.

[14]Report of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), pp. 84-85.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Report of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 19), p. 19

[17]Lawrence Kelly, The Navaho Indians and Federal Indian Policy, 1900-1935, p. 179.

[18]Gordon McGregor, "Indian Education in Relation to the Social and Economic Background of the Reservation," in Oliver LaFarge, ed., The Changing Indian, p. 118.

[19]Davida Woerner, "Education Among the Navaho," p. 107.

[20]Ibid., p. 126.

[21]Frances Paul Prucha, Documents of U.S. Indian Policy (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), p. 219.

[22]D'Arcy McNickle, Native American Tribalism (New York: London Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 92.

[23]Margaret Szasz, p. 32.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Harold E. Fey and D'Arcy McNickle, Indians and Other Americans (New York: Harper Brothers, 1959), pp. 88-89.

[26]The Problem of Indian Administration, Lewis Merriam Director, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1928), p. 548.

[27]U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Indian Affairs, Hearings before the committee of the United States Senate on Indian Affairs on H.R. 15498, 71st Cong., 3rd sess., 1931, p. 8.

[28]Proceedings of the National Research Conference on American Indian Education, Herbert A. Aurbach, ed., p. 36.

CHAPTER VII

APOTHEOSIS OF THE NEW TOLERANCE: JOHN COLLIER'S "INDIAN NEW DEAL"

The Merriam report stated that education was the most fundamental concern of the Bureau. Through education, the Indian could begin to understand better the demands of White culture and technology. This concern had also been implicit throughout the history of Indian educational policy. Reform efforts began, with Merriam, to apply pressure for a different policy direction. It became more important to stress that the Indian retain his cultural wisdom; or at least that a benevolent policy of non-interference be instituted. If the Indian school was not directed to teach Indian culture, it was also directed not to interfere with tribal life ways. Through the influence of the anthropologists and the new cultural science, anti-tribal, pro-White indoctrination in the schools began to fall into disfavor with the Bureau. Indian culture became a value heretofore unrecognized by the administration. No one had more to do with the beginning of this subtle shift in attitude than John Collier.

While it is not the central concern here to follow the career of any one reformer or administrator in the Indian Service, it is important to sketch at least an outline of the growth of John Collier. More than any other figure, Collier passed from a reformer's position in several key issues of Indian welfare and land policy, to become the main architect of a new age in Indian affairs--the Indian New Deal. It is important to examine Collier's background and the development of his thought in order to achieve a better understanding

of the shape of New Deal Indian Education Policy. For it was formulated through the effort of a man who had perhaps contributed more energy to the reform of the twenties than any other.

As a young social worker in New York, Collier was one of the reform-minded intelligentsia who reflected a concern with the maintenance of indigenous culture, even as it is pressed by the dominant society to adapt. His belief in cultural hegemony and community ideals was applied to American Indian peoples, both during his years as a muckraker and leader of the Indian Defense Association, and later as he led the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As a writer and thinker, Collier's ideals helped alter policy from outside the Bureau. Later, however, his belief in Indian cultural and political sovereignty was institutionalized under very different recommendations than that of the ideal of maintaining Indian indigenous community. In fact, it appears that these progressive policies were accepted through the Bureau by this set of arguments: (a) that through a program of Indian health and morale, we might spare the nation the disgrace of complete categorical genocide; (b) by educating the Indian in his cultural and linguistic traditions early in his schooling, we will be better able to accomplish the task which until now has failed--teaching the English language and American values; and (c) by re-establishing Indian morale and by putting his vocational and academic education on the right track, we may possibly be able to make the Indian a self-supporting American; to take him off the financial back and emotional conscience of the American people.

These wishes derive from the effect of continued Christian influence. They also extend from both the new cultural science and from the economic depression in the wake of a prosperous era.

John Collier's work reflects both the spirit of the flush progressive twenties and the managerial economic planning of the New Deal recovery programs. As a social worker on the lower East Side of New York, he attempted to do community organization among diverse immigrant groups, and was also interested in training social workers for community organization and in the regulation of the growing cinema industry.[1] In New York much of his work as a staff member of the Peoples Institute was an effort to encourage imigrant groups to retain their cultural identity, their clothing, cuisine, customs, and especially, language.

In 1919 Collier went West to do community organization in California. This attempt withered due to charges of Bolshevism in the climate of the Red Scare.[2]

During his tenure in both New York and California, Collier was implored by associates to turn his attention to the condition of the Indian. He believed at this time, however, that Indian culture was irretrievable and that their glory years were behind them.[3] Most of the attempt to channel his efforts came from his friend Mabel Dodge (later Luhan), a wealthy New York socialite whose saion had become a meeting place for many of the radical progressives of the twenties. Lincoln Steffans, Walter Lippman, John Reed, Emma Goldman, and William Haywood were all part of this group. Collier became acquainted with Dodge during his New York years and it was through her that the influence of these radical progressives began having its effect.

Curiously, these thinkers, who would set so much of the tone of the left wing radical progressive movement had little faith in reform politics. They thought rather, that America, like Russia, was on the verge of a "cooperative commonwealth."[4] Further, many of them believed as much in the power of the pen and the palette as in the muscle of the proletariat. Strongly affected

by the Midwestern literary renaissance and by the development of art in Europe, this group believed that art, especially the undiluted expression of the common folk, had the revolutionary power of armies and the cultural adhesive with which to mobilize the spirit of a people. Dodge's interest in the American Indian reflected the interest in his culture and art at least as much as his social welfare. It was this emphasis, one with roots in aesthetic as well as revolutionary fervor, which branded the sensibility of John Collier.

After the failure of his California venture, Collier took his family to the Sonora Mountains of Mexico. He wanted to spend a year camping in the wilderness, so that he might forget the bitterness of his failure. He wished to foreswear his life in the public service. At this time he received a letter from Mabel Dodge urging him to detour his journey through New Mexico. She invited him to visit Taos and to meet the Pueblo people. Collier agreed, and his detour lasted eleven years.[5]

It Taos, Collier became entranced with this vision of a people living in perfect community and in harmony with nature. Yet, their way of life was endangered from all sides; it was this threat which Collier sought to blunt. He came to believe that the Pueblo's communal life-way nurtured human personality and potential in a manner now lost to Western culture. Collier believed the age of industry and machine technology had depersonalized mankind. He wrote that " . . . the deep cause of our world agony is that we have lost that passion and reverence for human personality and for the web of life and the earth which the American Indians have tended as a central, sacred fire since before the Stone Age."[6] He goes on to say:

> The final factor is that for more than a century the best minds of the Occident have accepted as fundamental the isolation of the individual . . . yet . . . harried into the wastes, secreted there for lifetimes, and starving, still the Indian grouphoods, languages, religions, culture systems, symbolisms, mental and emotional attitudes toward the self and the world, continued to live on.[7]

Collier began again his concerned struggle for community solidarity and ideals, yet he found a formidable opponent in Albert Fall, Interior Secretary under Warren Harding; the battle began.

A dispute had developed between the Navaho tribe and the government. Oil was discovered on their land, so Fall collaborated with the Indian Bureau to develop the "Indian Omnibus Bill." This bill would dissolve tribal lands by individualizing tribal assets; pay individuals their portion of the total, then would quit claim all government responsibility to the tribe. This would allow the government to scrap hundreds of existing treaties and would pay in a pittance for the great Navaho oil reserves. This bill was shelved only through the last-minute efforts of Robert LaFollette, and it stayed there until Fall was run out of office by another infamous oil issue--the Teapot Dome scandal.[8]

During this time another bill was proposed by Fall which was of immediate interest to the Pueblos. Collier was invited to a meeting at which the Fall-sponsored Bursum bill would be discussed. The bill would not only attempt to legally transfer title to tribal lands over to white squatters but, in addition, it attempted to bring the internal affairs of the Pueblo "city states" under the jurisdiction of the U.S. District Court. In effect, since Pueblo internal affairs were guided almost solely by religious traditions, this authority would mean the establishment of a legal basis for control of Indian religious practices.[9]

The tribal council of 1922, to which Collier and a few other whites such as Stella Atwood, and Mary Austin were invited, was convened to discuss the bill. This All-Pueblo Council was the first such since 1680. Pueblo solidarity, and the influence of Collier, Austin and others, who denounced the bill in the journals, helped defeat Bursum and with it died the Fall Indian Omnibus Bill.[10]

The Indian Defense Association, with Collier as executive secretary, was born out of the conflict over the Bursum Bill. Progressive economist Robert Ely, writer Hamlin Garland, and future New Deal Interior Secretary Harold Ickes were all members of the association.[11] During the twenties Collier and the Defense Association kept steady pressure on the Bureau for social and political change. The General Federation of Women's Clubs joined with them to help apply force to recommendations.[12]

The Indian Defense Association formulated the major goals which became keystones of later social policy. Just as the Christian reform of the 1880s and 1890s culminated in the Dawes Allotment Act, the new Reform would be associated with the Bursum issue, a beginning struggle for the repeal of land allotment. As the earlier reform sought to Americanize the Indian through land, social, and educational changes, there now occurred the beginning of an attempt to revitalize traditional tribal community ideals. The Indian Defense Association articulated an argument to rejuvenate Indian culture, traditional manufacture, and tribal ownership of land. These goals are much the reflection of progressive thought as John Collier would reformulate it for the Indian Bureau.

During the years that Collier worked with the Indian Defense Association, there was little evidence of any great change in Bureau policy toward Indian tribal solidarity. The Bureau reported in 1925 that the future well-being of the Indian lay in his ability to adapt; that he would absorb our civilization with school or without it.[13] Even as late as 1932, one year before Collier's appointment to Commissioner, the Secretary of the Interior reported that our aim is to terminate the relationship of the Indian with the federal government.[14] The Interior Department leadership must have acutely felt the fierce economic pressure both from the expense of Indian welfare and

education and from its knowledge of the unexploited resources of Indian lands.

The call for Indian independence was a move to economically liberate the government from the Indian problem. This same need was expressed differently in the spirit of the New Deal, and it filtered throughout the vision of the reformer who would be Commissioner--John Collier.

President Roosevelt was discussing the commissionership when he said:

> You have a man from Arkansas [Merrit] I have heard a lot of protests about him from women's organizations, Indian rights associations, and reformers generally . . . and Harold Ickes, here, does not want Merrit. He doesn't believe he can work with him. He wants Collier.

The fact that Harold Ickes got Collier testifies to his influence. Ickes, Roosevelt's Interior Secretary, wielded great power in the New Deal administration. He had established his reputation as a trust buster in Chicago after the war. He had gone after and gotten Insull and Big Bill Thompson. This "dour battler against evil," also exhibited a "softer side where beneath his tough facade lay a man deeply concerned with friendless groups such as Indians."[16] He was an early member of the Indian Defense Association.

Collier, Ickes choice for commissioner, had been influential in Indian affairs for ten years. His momentum and the wake it left behind, resulted in high feelings about him. He was either distrusted or loved. His appointment was unilaterally praised by neither white nor Indian. Nevertheless, the strong support of Ickes make possible Collier's lasting impression on Bureau policy.

Beginning in 1933, Collier began the attempt to realize his dreams of resurgent Indian community. With the help of Ickes, Collier began to dismantle the remaining boarding schools. Indians would now attend the public school.[17]

Collier began the groundwork for a progressive social policy. His effort represented a good example of the positive social planning which is characteristic of the New Deal. He attempted to weld his unified philosophy of Indian cultural values to a firm base of classic New Deal social reconstruction. However, the uniformity of his dream goes directly against the grain of many groups of highly diverse peoples. The Indian, always a people of great social and cultural diversity had become even more fragmented, due to the effects of poverty, social disintegration, and assimilation.

In 1933 Collier helped institute school programs which he hoped might foster Indian racial heritage and identity. Art and crafts were encouraged and the day school was praised as the vehicle which would provide a center for Indian community growth.[18] Indian religion became, as far as the school was concerned, a sacrosanct institution. There would be no interference with tribal religious practice. Only a few years before the Bureau had termed Indian rites pagan and pornograhic.

In 1934, at the beginning of Collier's Indian New Deal, Interior Secretary Ickes reported that through fifty years of the "individualization" of the Indian, he was robbed of economic initiative by the breakdown of his spirit.[19] Thus, an effort to boost morale would benefit Indian economic rehabilitation. The argument, that we raise morale to restore Indian economic independence, is the crux of the only persuasive method to put Congress on a path toward radical change in Indian policy. It said that we reduce our economic responsibility to the Indian. To do this the Indian must be revived socially and spiritually, and only then can we begin to hope for a change in their economic status. Collier's vision of a resurgent Indian community could occur only against the backdrop of New Deal economic engineering.

This renewed interest in Indian culture as a way to revive Indian spirit and economic resolve is perhaps peculiar to the policies born of the new reform. Yet, like the first period, changes in educational and social policy are inseparable from the land question.

The defeat of the Bursum bill was a victory for Collier and his cohorts. He was greatly concerned with the problem of Indian land use and inhereitance. Indians lost millions of acres when land was transferred after the owner's death, and white squatters continued to be a problem even after the defeat of Bursum. Collier valued traditional Indian values of democracy and equitable land use.[20] He interpreted the meaning of Indian democracy broadly and this breadth often became troublesome, since different Indian groups had very different histories of governance and rules for property. Yet Collier, in his design, and through his experience with Pueblo life, believed that a renewal of Indian sovereignty, of tribal hegemony, would be the beginning of recovery for all Indian societies. This is not to say that Collier was insensitive to tribal differences. He believed, however, that the basic goal of any community is growth through democratic self-governance. In a climate of recovery politics, this appeal to democracy, to constitutional rights, and for a program of economic rebirth, proved highly persuasive to a government ready for sound social experiment.

The developing program of Indian agrarian self-help, coupled with careful planning, exemplifies recovery programming. Collier's administration reflected the economic experimentation of the New Deal recovery, although its spirit was forged of reformer's fervor, Christian ideals, traditional American values, and prosperity.[21] These social experiments were anathema to conservative opponents, yet there were none who could argue that it was imprudent to have the Indian off the back of the government and the taxpayer.

The twofold push for spiritual and economic rehabilitation continued. The problems of heirship land, and the failures of allotment, were addressed by the Wheeler-Howard Act. The Act was an attempt (a) to repeal the land allotment provisions of the Dawes Act, (b) to encourage tribal corporate land ownership, (c) to abandon the boarding school, and (d) to encourage cultural identity through a program of community education. These recommendations resulted from the power of the Merriam Committee report and the persuasion of the journalistic reform. Collier, however, was at first suspicious of the Act. It had followed many of his recommendations, yet did not directly argue for restoration of Indian community, only non-interference in their cultural affairs.[22]

However, it had been Collier who led the Senate subcommittee on a strenuous tour of the reservations as an argument for Bureau reform and to gain support for Merriam recommendations. Collier guided subcommittee activist Burton Wheeler on an attack, first to oust Commissioner Burke, and then Burke's replacement, Rhoads, because Rhoads and associate Scattergood had been slow in effecting the acceptance of Merriam recommendations. Collier helped draft the Wheeler-Howard legislation and in 1934 it passed, a year after Collier became Commissioner.[23]

The Act was a culmination of Collier's dream of revitalized Indian autonomy. The Indian tribes would incorporate and would operate as democratic units. The land grab brought about by heirship lands problems would cease. Allotment lands would pass from the hands of individuals to the tribal corporations. Cultural values would be encouraged through renewed tribal pride and prosperity and communities would develop around the community day school.

Collier's early experience was with the Pueblos of New Mexico. They were a relatively stable people with a history of democratic governance and

who had been highly receptive to the attack on Bursum bill.[24] Collier was sure that all Indians would welcome Wheeler-Howard, now the Indian Reorganization Act. Yet, by 1934, many reservation Indians were mixed blood, assimilated Indians. They did not welcome the Wheeler-Howard Act (IRA). Many were happy with their allotments and resented being segregated into tribal units. Many were from tribal groups whose tradition of government was very different from Collier's monolithic vision of perfect community.[25]

Still, Collier pressed on with his programs and increasingly turned his attention to the development of cultural community. The land battles never really ceased during the first years of Collier's term and the Indian Reorganization Act.[26]

During that period, Collier found time to keep alive the push for Indian cultural rebirth. Yet his recommendations were often characterized as extentions of the economic recovery program. For example, in 1935 the Indian Arts and Crafts Board was founded, and it was supported as a way to develop a cottage industry and create price and label protection for the Indian artist. A renaissance in aesthetic sensibility had occurred near the time of the First World War. Artists such as Robert Henri, Lewis Aiken, and others had discovered the beauty of the New Mexico Highlands and the strength and simplicity of Indian art.[27] This interest was reflected during the New Deal as a value which could also be exploited to increase the economic independence of the Indian. There were other such examples of such social engineering programs, and the Interior Department reported applause for the effectiveness of such "practical" programs as the Indian Arts and Crafts Board.[28]

Just as indigenous art became a means of boosting Indian self-sufficiency, so did Indian culture, and especially language, become a new

target for the social scientist. Bilingual, bicultural programs were proposed as a way to effect a recovery in Indian self-awareness and to increase educational success. Tribal deterioration was a fact that could not be ignored by Collier's administration.[29] However, the attempt cannot be separated from the wish to eventually make the Indian "bilingual, literate, yet proud of their racial heritage, to become completely self supporting."[30]

Educational policy, like land reform, was developed as a "progressive" way to rid the government of the financial burden of the Indian. Many of these progressive programs which were described as part of an enlightened attitude toward Indian culture were, in fact, institutionalized as part of a sophisticated program of social engineering. They were accepted into policy because they were shown to be cost effective and sound methods for rebuilding the morale of a dependent and dying people, not because Americans were looking for an actual resurgence of tribal cultural sovereignty.

The dreams of the new reformers and John Collier were themselves altered to fit the social planning of the Great Recovery, and also worked to provide an alternative to assimilation that would be compatible to the reformers and at least to some of the Indians. The Bureau's education division was charged to carry out the Reorganization Act's provisions for cultural education.

Willard Walcott Beatty was chosen to head this division. Beatty was a "progressive" educator who would institute a bilingual policy for Indian education in order to attack the problem of Indian illiteracy and resistance to acquisition of both English language and American values.[31]

Collier's vision of indigenous culture was expressed through a notion of a unified Indian tribal whole, with underpinnings of language, art, and folk traditions.[32] Beatty organized and argued for bilingual, bicultural

education program was an attempt to bridge the gulf. An examination of Beatty's cross-cultural experiment continues the story of the dissonant paradox of the Indian in the white man's training program.

Notes

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[7]Ibid., p. 15.

[8]Ibid., p. 145.

[9]Ibid., p. 147.

[10]Ibid., p. 149.

[11]Kenneth R. Philp, "John Collier and the American Indian 1920-1945 (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University Press, 1968), p. 28.

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[22]Lawrence C. Kelly, "John Collier and the Indian New Deal: An Assessment," in Janet Smith and Robert M. Kvasnicka, eds., Indian White Relations--A Persistent Paradox (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1976), p. 231.

[23]Randolph C. Downes, "A Crusade for Indian Reform 1922-1924," in Mississippi Valley Historical Review 32 (1) (June 1945):352.

[24]Lawrence C. Kelly, "John Collier and the Indian New Deal," p. 234.

[25]Kenneth R. Philp, "John Collier and the Controversy Over the Wheeler-Howard Bill," in Janet Smith and Robert M. Kvasnicka, eds., Indian White Relations--A Persistent Paradox (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1976), pp. 171-194.

[26]Francis P. Prucha, ed., Documents of U.S. Indian Policy (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), p. 229.

[27]Paul A. F. Walter, "The Santa Fe Taos Act Movement," in Art and Archeology 3 (6) (December 1916) (Washington: The Archeological Institute of America): p. 330.

[28]Report to the Secretary of the Department of Interior by the Committee of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 135.

[29]Thomas Weaver, ed., Indians of Arizona: A Contemporary Perspective (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1974), p. 47.

[30]Oliver LaFarge, The Changing Indian, p. 168.

[31]Report of the Commissoner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Department of Interior (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 129.

[32]John Collier, Indians of the Americas, p. 66.

CHAPTER VIII

NEW REFORM DESIGN IN EDUCATION: WILLARD WALCOTT BEATTY AND BILINGUAL AND BICULTURAL EDUCATION

John Collier chose Willard Walcott Beatty to orchestrate the administration of the educational service through both the government day and boarding schools. He was charged to help put the schools in compliance with Merriam Report recommendations, and to develop a program sensitive to the cultural needs of Indian pupils. Beatty professed to introduce the Indian to the white culture without destroying tribal traditions in the process, despite inherent contradiction of this endeavor.

Beatty expressed the desire to teach the Indian the English language during the first few years of Collier's term, to give him "the power to speak, read and think in English."[1] "The children of the nomadic hunter or herdsman" must be taught to appreciate the value of a "fixed abode."[2] The responsibility of this reeducation must certainly fall with the education division and the school.[3]

Collier's belief in the value of Indian cultural community was expressed through his desire to create an educational program that helped strengthen tribal political and cultural solidarity. Indian bilingual education was part of this plan, and grew equally from recommendations found in the Merriam Report, from educational provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act, and from the efforts of educationists such as Beatty, who were concerned to implement the novel approaches of social science and "progressive" education.

Beatty appeared sensitive to the deep gulf which existed between Indian and European-American language and world-view. He did not, however, argue that Indian language and culture should be stressed in school for its own sake, that is, to strengthen community and tribal traditions. Had he done so his program could be identified to extend directly from Collier's original vision of a resurgent Indian community. Again the policy clouds the prophecy. Bilingual education is proffered only partly as a method of "increasing pride in race and culture, which is necessary for worthy achievement [for] what is equally important [is] an increased desire to learn English!"[4] Beatty goes on to say that the child's use of his native language in school is more likely to lead, if used in connection with English, to a greater mastery of English.[5] Thus, English language acquisition, is the foremost criterion offered as an argument for teaching native languages. Beatty believed that it was possible and desirable to use native languages to help them take their place in White society.

Later, he attacked the problem of Indian consciousness, perception, and world-view, both as expressed in language and in behavior. Those who worked among the various tribes had known for many years that the structure of the Indian understanding of his world was very different from that of the European American. While trying not to over-simplify this issue, a fair example of this might be the "Indian" conception of time. In "Education for Cultural Change," Beatty addressed the "problem" of the Indian time perception. Beatty referred to "the Great God Time" to which all of the White world bows. He encouraged the Indian to do the same, to join in our worship and to "become accustomed to our clockwork civilization."[6] For Beatty, a greater understanding of Indian cultural consciousness led not to improved ways to foster traditional tribal world-perception, and

behavior; rather, to better methods of educating for the elimination of these traits.

The purpose of the new bilingual program became simply the attempt to deal with the problem of trenchant indigenous tongues which, though officially unrecognized, were as tenacious as Polish, Czech or Welsh, and likewise refused to disappear naturally. Beatty's programs, though they made an attempt to introduce native language primers and to teach native tongues side by side with English, were basically an attempt to improve linguistic performance in English. His work to acculturate the Indian to white time-conception exemplified the direction of his fundamentally assimilative policy. Some thought that the attempt to place the Indian in an equal footing with the white man was not simple patronizing; rather, it was a sound program of social reconstruction. However, these programs were conceived in an effort to enable the Indian to live in both an Indian and a white world, not to strictly limit his choices. Yet, more often than not, this left the Indian dangling between two worlds; for so much of the Indian world view is enextricable from the parameters of his culture and tradition, and especially language.

Anthropologist Edward Sapir was one of the first to make this identification of world-view with language. For Sapir, language is not simply a group of signals, but a complex conceptual framework which is the means of expressing a native speaker's cognitive understanding of his world.[7] For example, Navaho language represents an "importantly different mode of thinking," which lies at the heart of what it means to be Navaho.[8] The Indian child is acculturated in many ways; his bodily expression, beliefs, relations with family and others, and fundamentally through his mode of expression--language.[9]

Some have argued that we should not equate the loss of these Indian languages with the loss of the consciousness and the thought they express.

For, "just as Cornish, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish nationalism can be expressed in the English language, so too can Indian tribal consciousness survive the loss of Indian languages."[10] Those who would make this claim fail to see the great gap between Indo-European language bases, such as those mentioned, and Indian languages, which are the expression of a world-view conditioned by a radically different conceptualization of the fundamental processes of nature.

The notion of identifying language inseparably with world-view is perhaps most closely associated with the name of Benjamin Lee Whorf. Through his study of Hopi language, Whorf further elaborated the theory that, in a very important sense, language creates our thought, rather than that thought is merely expressed through language. This linguistic relativism gains special significance when applied to native American languages which are so markedly different in form, content, and use from Indo-European tongues.[11] The seeds of Whorf's ideas can be found in the work of Boas, Humboldt and others who pioneered developments in modern anthropology and linguistics. Though Whorf's ideas gained great notoriety, they also aroused much controversy. In fact, the notion that language shapes thought touched off a linguistic debate which continues until the present. Those opposed to Whorf have claimed that since the fundamentals of human experience are more similar than diverse, the shapes of linguistic thought are not disparate enough to be important.[12] Yet Whorf and his students believed that the linguistic differences were the most important factor by which to illuminate whatever differences do exist, and can therefore tell us more than any factor about the operations of perception and cognition. Linguistics and the study of meaning are the truest gauge of a cultural psychology.[13]

Whorf thought that through the study of language one can begin to understand the difference between Hopi and European conceptions of time.[14] The Hopi "thought world" is analyzed in terms of "eventing" and time is expressed without strict regard to past, present, and future. It implies that "existents" do not "become later and later all in the same way; but some do so by growing, like plants; some by diffusing and vanishing; some by a procession of metamorphosis; some by enduring in one shape until effected by violent forces."[15]

Sapir restated this notion that language fundamentally outlines consciousness by showing how environmental interest influences the vocabulary of a language.[16] The numerous words for snow in arctic tribal languages are simple evidence for this.

These absolutely fundamental differences in Indian and White language created a dilemma for attempts to teach the Indian English. English literacy appeared to be the way to help the Indian compete in White society. At the same time, many Indians did not want to abandon their traditional languages, and many Bureau policymakers hoped to encourage tribal language for the salutary effect it had on English language competency. They believed that "instruction in Indian languages [allowed] the Indian child to avoid the choice formerly forced upon him of choosing between a non-literate, backward Indian would and a literate, progressive, but alien white world."[17] In other words, the Indian was being encouraged to be neither white nor Indian, but somehow a mixture of both. However, if it is true that "language [is] the medium through which culture becomes perhaps, most truly articulate," then how can the Indian transfer his unique world view, his traditional inheritance, from the medium of an Indian language to that of an Indo-European?

John Collier and other reformers believed that the inscrutable Indian mind was "an inward state, a feeling apart . . . sacred, . . . a feeling having nothing to do with the outer accouterments of feathers or blankets . . . "[19] Yet, under Collier, Beatty was able to introduce an educational program which served to accelerate English language acquisition and adoption of American values and European world-view. There was little room to develop values which the tribes had traditionally passed to their children. The skills and activities taught the Indian child had once borne a direct relationship to the tribal life way.[20] Yet Beatty envisioned the great alteration in this life way; the Indian needed to pass muster in the American social and economic army. No educational plan was responsible without provision for this inevitable change. Yet, Beatty did not question to what extent or with what speed the Indian himself chose to make passage into the white world. His programs were devised within the exigencies of New Deal Recovery planning. Indeed, while Beatty tried to ease the Indian's passage into white society, he did not consider that "while education and assimilation might be related, they are in principle and in actuality two far different social processes."[21] Beatty could not envision a multicultural, multilingual society; a culture within a culture, operating to effect a recovery in its own terms and in balance between its traditions and the dominant society. Yugoslavia is perhaps a good example of a government with nationally recognized linguistic minorities. It is difficult to imagine, however, American sentiment encouraging a similar policy; an alternative to the traditionally accepted American values and virtues, expressed through nationally accepted minority languages.

Unlike other national minorities, the Indian people did not possess the power or the minority cohesion to effect a true self-determination. They

were unable to completely coordinate their interests and efforts due to a complex of political problems: successful attempts to sow the seeds of political division, from within and without, local cultural variations, poverty, and other factors, reduced the ability of the Indian people to cohere for action in their own self-interest.

Indeed, their interests had often greatly diverged, and this fact was used continually throughout history to divide and conquer. Social scientist Murray Wax comments on this issue of Indian political power in relation to education policy:

> The "problem" of Indian education requires a decision as to how we wish to live in this country and what our inhabitants are going to require of each other in order to have a harmonious kind of coexistence. This more than an issue of values, it is also a matter of power--and one of the reasons why the schools have come to the Indians, in the way they have, is a matter of relative powerlessness. Had the Indians been stronger, the schools would have had to come to them in terms of their native language (as, in a very few cases they did). Had the Indians been stronger, the schools would have had to come to the Indians in such a fashion as to permit local control (by the Indian tribe) of those schools; but the Indians were not that strong.[22]

Truly, the program of bilingual education conceived through Beatty's office was another species of the usual educational policy for the Indian--a further attempt to assimilate.[23] Indian policy in reality became, once again, more closely allied with the traditionally accepted attitude toward Indian destiny. The effects of policy came a far cry from the direction which was initiated by the vanguard of w reformers. The designs of the New Deal bilingual, bicultural education grams differed only in detail from earlier attempts to socialize and assimilate the Indian people.

Notes

[1]Willard Walcott Beatty, in Indian Truth, M. R. Sniffin, ed., vol. 15, no. 5, May 1938, p. 4. Published by the Indian Rights Association (honoring fifty-four years active non-partisan work for Indian civilization and citizenship).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Willard Walcott Beatty, "Education for Action," selected articles from Indian Education 1936-1943, published by Education Division, U.S. Indian Services, 1944, p. 147.

[5]Ibid., p. 148.

[6]Willard Walcott Beatty,"Education for Cultural Change," selected articles from Indian Education 1944-45, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1953 (Chilocco, Oklahoma: Printing Dept. Chilocco Indian Agricultural School, 1953), p. 131.

[7]Thomas Weaver, ed., Indians of Arizona: A Contemporary Perspective (Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1974), p. 15.

[8]Clyde Kluckholn and Dorothea Leighton, The Navaho (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1946), p. 267.

[9]Thomas Weaver, p. 153.

[10]Wilcomb E. Washburn, The Indian in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 261.

[11]Harry Hoijer, "The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis," in Harry Hoijer, ed., Language in Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 93.

[12]Franklin Fearing, "Conceptions if Benjamin Whorf in the Fight of the Theories of Perception and Cognition," in Harry Hoijer Language in Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 57.

[13]Benjamin Lee Whorf, "Thinking in Primitive Communities," in John B. Carroll, ed., The Selected Writings of Benjamin L. Whorf (published jointly by The Technology Press of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1956), p. 73.

[14]Benjamin Lee Whorf, "An American Indian Model of the Universe," in John B. Carroll, ed., The Selected Writings of Benjamin L. Whorf (published jointly by The Technology Press of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1956), p.57.

[15]Benjamin Lee Whorf, "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language," in Leslie Spier, A. Irving Hallowell, and Stanley Newman, eds., Language Culture, and Personality--Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir (Minosha, Wisconsin: Edward Sapir Memorial Publishing Fund, 1941), p. 84.

[16]Edward Sapir, "Language and Environment," in David Mandelbaum, ed., Selected Writings of Edward Sapir (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1958), p. 91.

[17]Wilcomb Washburn, "Indian in America," p. 262.

[18]George Herzog, "Culture Change in Language Shifts in Pima Vocabulary," Language, Culture, and Personality--Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir (Menosha, Wisconsin: Edward Sapir Memorial Publishing Fund, 1941), p. 74.

[19]Davida Woerner, Education Among the Navaho, p. 171.

[20]John W. Friesen, People, Culture and Learning (Calgary, Alberta: Datselig Enterprises, Ltd., 1977); p. 115.

[21]Murray Wax, in Herbert A. Aurbach, ed., Proceedings of the National Research Conference on American Indian Education, panel discussion: Relations to and Commentaries on Background Presentations II and III (Kalamazoo, Mich.: The Society for the Study of Social Problems, 1967), p. 68.

[22]Ibid., p. 69.

[23]Guillermo Bartelt, "Two Approaches to Acculturation, Bilingual Education and E.S.L.," in Journal of American Indian Education, May 1979, p. 18.

EPILOGUE

Much of the character, if not the substance, of New Deal Indian educational and social policy derived from the vision of a determined group of reformers and intellectuals. As a leader and chief theoretician of this group, Commissioner John Collier brought the visions of these people closer to reality. He believed the communal institutions of the Southwestern Indian to be an alternative to "the troubled, frustrated, but struggling Aryan individualized consciousness."[1] For a brief time the Indian relationship to White society was recognized from a different vantage point. The new reformers were not simply concerned with health and social welfare of the Indian. For the first time the loss of indigenous Indian culture was perceived not simply as the desiccation of a quaint set of aboriginal traits, but as a species of genocide. The Indian cultures became examples of "genuine" social health, of an integrated vision of life.[2] Under the influence of the new social sciences, Indian life ways became an idealized alternative to fragmented, de-personalized "Aryan" culture.

However pure the reformer's dream may have been, it was not seriously tolerated as an alternative Indian destiny. The programs which were accepted by the administrative establishment, even during Collier's term, were supported only to the extent which he could project their value for producing economic independence and eventual assimilation of the Indian. Although the Indian Reorganization Act helped slow considerably the transfer of Indian land to white control, the idea of a society within a society, of a people rebuilding an alternative existence within the context of disparate

American value and belief systems, was never seriously considered. It was to remain the broken hope of the new reformers and, in particular, of John Collier.

The most obvious policy extension of the new reform was the beginning of bilingual, bicultural education. Yet these plans were formulated to encourage a more effective English literacy program; to create an efficient early context for the transmission of civilized "values" to a "profligate" people.[3] Biculturalism in education fared much the same. Cultural diversity is sometimes alluded to as the by-product of a democratic society. Indeed, John Collier believed he saw fundamental democratic spirit during his experiences with the All-Pueblo Council. He attempted to encourage this quality and many of his political moves, some of which resulted in the Indian Reorganization Act, were attempts to insure Indian self-determination.[4] Yet many of the New Deal policies were tolerant of racial and cultural diversity only as long as they were consistent to national aims of economic recovery, and traditional goals of the eventual submission of the Indian into the goals within the American social and economic fabric. True self-determination had no place in the engineering of the "Indian New Deal."

In any case, the second World War brought an end to Collier's experimentation. Whatever small advances were introduced at this time were reversed after the war. With the beginning of the Relocation Programs of the 1950s, Indians were subsidized for removing from the reservation to the cities, as the government redoubled their efforts to erode the reservations, and to melt the Indian into the greater populace.[5] By 1968 the Kennedy Report stated that many of the recommendations of the Merriam Report of 1929 were "yet to be accomplished."[6]

The bilingual programs were largely abandoned and bicultural curriculum materials, which had made an attempt to include reference to the realities of reservation and tribal life, were left to collect dust in storage. The attempt to introduce Indian culture to the curriculum were "mere cross-currents" which served to "obscure the true direction of the mainstream"--education for assimilation.[7]

It was useless, perhaps, to believe that the greater goals of American culture, which resound so clear from the Wyoming territorial newspaper cited at the beginning of this paper, could have been significantly altered by any American reform movement--even though so much of the shape of government Indian policy was forged in the heat of forty years reform fervor. Yet Reform movements differed from each other in few important ways. They were poisoned from the start. White evangelists or white intelligentsia, each oiled the machine of assimilation in a trivially different way.

Ruth Benedict, a pioneer ethnographer and student of Franz Boas once asked an elderly Californian Indian how his people believed the world was created and how they accounted for the people of the world. His reply is a powerful reminder of the white man in the world of the red:

> "In the beginning, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life. They all dipped in the water," he continued, "but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. It has passed away."[8]

To it, another may be added: that in the affairs of the Indian, "the white man cannot pretend to be the doctor. He is the sickness."[9]

Notes

[1]Kenneth R. Philp, "John Collier and the American Indian," p. 88.

[2]Edward Sapir, "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," in David Mandelbaum, ed., Selected Writings of Edward Sapir (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1958), p. 318.

[3]John W. Friesen, People, Culture and Learning, p. 40.

[4]Lynne Hulsizer, "Region and Culture in the Curriculum of the Navaho and the Dakota" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1940), p. 16.

[5]Margaret Szasz, Education and the American Indian, p. 3.

[6]Theodore Fischbacher, "A Study of the Role of the Federal Government in the Education of the American Indian (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 1967), p. 384.

[7]Ibid., p. 475.

[8]Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), pp. 21-22.

[9]Vine Deloria, "Panel Discussion" in Herbert Aurbach, ed., Proceedings of the National Research Conference on American Indian Education, p. 13.

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