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THE TOMAHAWK.

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"Truth before Favor."

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FISH OR CUT BAIT.

At the first meeting of the Indian Committee of the House, a few days ago, the officials of the Indian Bureau requested an appropriation of \$165,000 for the "support and civilization of the Chippewas of Minnesota." Mr. John Carl, member of the Legislative Committee, General Council, Chippewas of Minnesota, Hon. Halvor Steenerson, M. C., Hon. Clarence B. Miller, M. C., Hon. Harold Knutson, M. C., and Attorney Webster Ballinger, appeared for the Chippewas. The Chippewas have filed a strong protest against further appropriations from their tribal funds; they want the said fund segregated and apportioned, per capita; the passage of a Jurisdictional bill, permitting the Indians to bring suit against the United States in the Courts and to recover sums amounting to some \$25,000,000 for unfulfilled treaty stipulations, etc. And from what we can learn of the proceedings of the first meeting of the House Committee the Indian office got considerably the worst of the deal, the specious contentions offered in justification for the enormous appropriation requested failing to withstand the withering cross fire of the opposition. The officials of the Indian Bureau objected strenuously against the appropriation of \$1,000 for the June 14th celebration and when taken to task for their objection and their justification therefore they stated that "the Indians objected to this appropriation," and when asked by Congressmen Hastings and Miller to name the particular Indians who objected Mr. Merritt, the Assistant Commissioner, mentioned the name of James I. Coffey, and when pressed to name any other additional Indians who objected stated that the Superintendent of the White Earth Agency, John H. Hinton, also objected. The Indian office failed to score on this point and it is probable the usual appropriation of \$1,000 for purpose mentioned above will stand.

The officials of the Indian office were asked concerning the Linnen-Wadsworth report of the so-called investigation held here and on other Minnesota reservations during the past summer and to this interrogatory Mr. Merritt informed the members of the House Committee that the said report was "confidential" and intended for the uses and purposes of the Indian office only. Finally when pressed by members of the Committee for a perusal of the said report, a hurried consultation was carried over the telephone with Commissioner Sells and which resulted in the Indian office finally consenting to permit the Committee to investigate said report.

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CHIPPEWA MATTERS AT WASHINGTON.

Special to THE TOMAHAWK.

Washington, D. C.—The members of the House Committee on Indian Affairs are slowly getting an insight into the affairs of the Chippewa Indians of Minnesota. The Indian Appropriation Bill for the fiscal year commencing June 30, 1919, is now under consideration by that committee. The Indian Bureau has submitted estimates for an appropriation of \$165,000.00 out of the trust funds of the Indians to be used during the next fiscal year for the alleged, but in reality the grotesque purpose, of their "support and civilization." Congress has for years been led to believe by reports from the Indian Bureau and statements made to the committee by its officers that the appropriations from the trust funds asked for annually by the Indian Bureau and amounting to between \$160,000 and \$185,000 was all the money

employees of his bureau conducted what he called an investigation. Think of a man or department of the government investigating its own alleged improper acts, by its own employees and asking sensible men to accept the findings as a fair and impartial statement of the conditions existing. Congressman Miller pointed out that no matter what the findings made by the agent of the Commissioner were they could not be accepted, particularly in view of the Commissioner's opposition to an investigation to be conducted by a Congressional committee. Mr. Miller's remarks before the House Committee should be read by every person of Chippewa blood in the State of Minnesota.

The Indian Bureau has asked that the appropriation of \$1,000 for the celebration at White Earth be omitted as this was a wasteful use of the trust funds of the Chippewa people. Congressman Miller insisted upon the reinstatement of this item, pointing out that the Indians desired it and that the annual celebration, so far as he was

advised, was desired by all, or practically all of the Indians. That item will be reinstated, thanks to Congressman Miller. Congressman Steenerson, another friend of the Chippewa Indians, also appeared before the committee and expressed the view that the appropriation out of their trust funds should either be eliminated or greatly reduced. Congressman Volstead was also present but in view of the statements made by Congressman Miller and Congressman Steenerson did not address the committee, but the committee understood clearly Mr. Volstead's position. The committee then inquired of the Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs as to the total amount of money expended annually for the alleged support and civilization of the Chippewa Indians of Minnesota. The Assistant Commissioner could not furnish the information at that time, but agreed to do so at a later day. When that report is submitted it will show expenditures out of the trust funds of the Chippewa people and out of the public funds aggregating between \$700,000 and \$800,000 per annum. There are less than 12,000 members of the Chippewa Tribe. Between 6,000 and 7,000 were allotted on the White Earth Reservation. Assistant Commissioner Merritt admitted last winter at a meeting of the Senate Committee that at least 90 per cent of those allotted on the White Earth Reservation were competent people. Thus there are, according to the Indian Bureau's computation, between 600 and 700 Indians on the White Earth Reservation that are considered incompetent by the Indian Bureau. There are between 4,000 and 5,000 that were allotted or reside off the White Earth Reservation. The standard of intelligence of those allotted off the White Earth Reservation will compare favorably with those allotted on the White Earth Reservation. Therefore, according to the Indian Bureau's computation, there are between 400 and 500 incompetent Indians off the White

Earth Reservation. Thus, according to the Indian Bureau's own figures, there are less than 1200 incompetent members of the Chippewa Tribe. For the support and civilization, so-called by the Indian Bureau, but in reality for the unwarrantable interference by Bureau in the affairs of less than 1200 members of the tribe, it is annually costing the Chippewa people and the Government of the United States about \$500,000. The average cost for the support and civilization per 1,000 Indians in the various States of the Union is less than \$10,000, or about \$10 per head. When you stop to consider the enormous appropriations made for the alleged support and civilization of the Chippewa Indians of Minnesota, and compare them with the appropriations made for other Indians of like status, the situation is monstrous. Congressman Hastings, a member of the Committee from Oklahoma, during the hearing inquired of Assistant Commissioner Merritt whether the report of the investigation made by the Indian Bureau had been furnished to the representatives of the Chippewa Indians. Mr. Merritt replied that it had not. Congressman Hastings then inquired whether it was available for the use of the committee. Mr. Merritt replied that the report was considered confidential and for the use of the Indian Bureau only. Then Congressman Hastings expressed his views about an investigation the results of which were kept secret. The result was that Mr. Merritt retired and consulted with Commissioner Sells over the telephone and returned and stated to the

committee that the report would be turned over to the committee and could be printed as a part of its hearings. How much of the real report will be thus turned over to the committee, and how much will be expurgated or suppressed, remains for conjecture.

The Chippewa matter then went over until a later day at which further hearings are to be had when the committee has the information requested of the Indian Bureau. It can now be authoritatively stated that no more patents will be issued to the State of Minnesota by the Interior Department for lands ceded by the Chippewa Indians to the Government under the agreement of 1889. The departmental officers have erroneously issued to the State of Minnesota patents covering 700,000 acres of land, much of which was covered with valuable stands of timber, and was in the act of issuing patents to the State covering 700,000 acres additional, when the General Council, through its attorney, entered a vigorous protest with the Department. The matter dragged along for several years, the further issuance of patents to the State covering lands ceded by the Indians to the Government under the agreement of 1889 being suspended. At last it is conceded that this was all error, that the swamp and overflow acts under which the departmental officers thought the land passed to the State, never applied to the land ceded. The General Council has thus saved to the Chippewa Indians several million dollars, and has saved to the Government of

the United States several million dollars in claims the government would have been compelled to pay had patents been issued to the last 700,000 acres. This is only one of the many things the General Council has accomplished for the Chippewa people with the use of the little sums of \$6,000 and \$10,000 recently appropriated by Congress. It illustrates the necessity of continuing and strengthening the General Council so that it may safe-guard the rights of the Chippewa people and protect them from the Indian Bureau.

John Carl, the member of the Legislative Committee here was taken ill with the Spanish influenza about two weeks ago and was sent to the Providence Hospital in this city. He has been very ill, but is now improving.

B. L. Fairbanks and Frank D. Beaulieu, of White Earth, other members of the Legislative Committee, have arrived here.

Jim Coffey and his gang are here. No one knows what they are after. Congressman Miller when before the House Committee, paid his respects to Jim Coffey. The members of the Committee now know Coffey and it is useless to say that he will accomplish no good for the Chippewa Indians and that his visit here will only result in evil to the Chippewa people.

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CHRISTMAS, 1918 TO THE YEAR 1919

(Written for THE TOMAHAWK, by Warren Upham, Archaeologist, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn.)

At the dawning I hear Angels sing,
An old song, for all the people they bring;
Merry Christmas requires that we lift
Thanks to God, for His Great Christmas gift;
And His Promise of Peace gives good cheer,
To have Faith, Hope, Love, through the New Year.
WARREN UPHAM.

that was being expended by the Bureau for the "support and civilization" of the less than 12,000 persons of Chippewa Indian blood residing in Minnesota. This fallacy is being now, as the result of the efforts of the General Council, exploded. The imposition of the Indian Bureau is being laid bare.

At a recent hearing before the committee Congressman Clarence B. Miller, the stalwart friend of the Chippewas, appeared before the committee, and in plain but forcible language served notice upon the Indian Bureau that the existing conditions among the Chippewa people must be brought to an end. He told the committee that the trust funds of the Chippewa people were being squandered and wasted for the benefit of the Indian office employees. He served notice that these appropriations must cease. He called attention to the fact that a year ago a similar appropriation was stricken from the bill while it was under consideration on the floor of the House, that when the bill went to the Senate the Indian Bureau officials secured the reinstatement of the item upon the solemn assurance that a thorough and complete investigation of the affairs of the Indians would be made before the convening of this Congress so that the present Congress could deal with the matter intelligently. He pointed out that after the Indian Appropriation Bill containing that item had become a law a resolution was introduced in the House for a Congressional investigation of the situation, that the resolution was referred to the House Committee on Rules and that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in person appeared before that committee, opposed the resolution and succeeded in preventing an investigation being made by a fair and impartial tribunal. This was an act of bad faith and indicated clearly that the Indian Bureau did not desire a fair and impartial investigation that would disclose the true facts. Mr. Miller pointed out that subsequently the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, through one of the

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