



Edited by Wassaja (Dr. Montezuma's Indian name, meaning "Signaling") an Apache Indian.

Vol. 4, No. 2

ISSUED MONTHLY

May, 1919

#### CONFERENCE

Of the Society of American Indians, at  
Minneapolis, Minn., Oct. 1st to 4th,  
Inclusive

The Society of American Indians will hold their Annual Conference at Minneapolis, Minn. The war is over and there should be no excuse for non-attendance. One excuse has been that not enough time has been given for the notice of the Conference. You have now six months to get ready for the next meeting. Great many Indians have not taken any interest in the Society of American Indians, because they have heard that the Society was ruled by the Indian Bureau. If that has been the case, it is not so now. The Society is working for the Indians and not for the Indian Bureau. If you want to find out the truth of the above statement attend the meeting. It is the expectation of the Society to make this the largest gathering in the history of the Indian race, if not the greatest of importance.

In the past we have discussed minor points on Indian matters, but at the coming meeting we shall attack the monster that lives upon us as outlawed creatures. There is no use of going around the bush any longer. The Society feels the necessity of striking at the root which handicaps the Indians. We believe thoroughly that we are in position to take care of our own affairs without the crippling aid of the Indian Bureau. We believe that the public is our friends, and

that if they knew how we have been mismanaged they will come to our aid. One of the objects of the meeting will be to create public sentiment. Another object is to bring all Indians from every tribe together so that they may know what is going on and that we may all unite and work to gain our freedom and citizenship.

All Indians should stand together. The object is great. The Indians have been silent pertaining to their interest. This meeting will give them a chance to express themselves. Congress is ready to hear what we have to say. No better time can be given us than at this very hour, when the world is seeking for justice for every race. A few Indians at the Conference may do some good, but in hundreds and thousands of Indians, that will mean power and greatness. So let all Indians who have the welfare of their people at heart get ready to be at the Conference. Every tribe in the United States ought to send a delegate. Have the tribe pay his expenses. Most of us will defray our own expenses. We should have a large delegation from Oklahoma, where Indians are financially able to attend. Their interest is the same as Indians elsewhere. We can depend on the Minnesota Indians, and also from Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota. It will be a regular Indian meeting. Make it a point to come.

#### "LET MY PEOPLE GO"

This little pamphlet has the ring which sounds the keynote of abolishment of the Indian Bureau and freedom and citizenship for the Indian race. Buy copies and scatter them to your friends and where they will do the most good. 10c a copy. 3135 So. Park Ave., Chicago, Ill.

## "WASSAJA"

Vol. 4, No. 2

MAY, 1919

Subscription, 50 Cents a Year

Single Copies, 5c 100 for \$2.00

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO  
CARLOS MONTEZUMA, M. D.

3135 S. Park Ave. Chicago, Illinois

## NEWS FROM LAVEEN, ARIZONA

DEAR DR. MONTEZUMA:—

We Indians here are having a hard time about the allotments. They took ten of our Indians to Sacaton because they sowed wheat on their old lands and not on their allotted lands. We are not allowed to plant wheat this year on our old lands and that is why they are taking these Indians to Sacaton. They will take all of us over there some time, and we do not know what will then be done with us.

The Indians do not want to fence up their allotted lands as they are poor and have no money to buy the wire to put around their lands, no money to pay taxes with every year, and they are afraid they will lose their lands.

There is not an Indian here who is making \$700 a year on his farm. That is why they think their lands will be taken from them. They do not know how to farm because the farmers never tried to show them how to do that kind of work. The farmer sits on his chair and makes money from the government.

I never saw a government farmer go amongst the Indians to give them a good start. That is the reason these Indians never realize anything from their farms.

They do not know what citizenship is. Do you know what are the rules for the agent at Sacaton and the farmer here at Maricopa Reservation? I heard they will put every man in jail at Sacaton for not fencing their allotments.

These Indians are not afraid to be put in jail for trying to sow some wheat for their families. Here they see their children suffer with hunger.

Your friend,

x x x

## A JUST COMPLAINT

DR. MONTEZUMA:

While I have it in mind I'll ask you this: We Indians, the Sacs and Fox's of Oklahoma lease our lands, thinking we own it. But when the money is paid it is changed into a check bearing the Indian Agent's name. By rights it ought to bear the owners name and given to him at once.

But instead of that it remains in the Indian Office or in some bank for two or three months, and we Indians make four or five trips, thinking every time the money will be forthcoming. But nothing is there, and the traveling expenses eat up most of the money.

You know some Indians come a long distance for their money, and when they finally receive it the money does no good, for it is all owed because he had to borrow capital to live on while waiting. If the Indian received his money when due he would not be in debt: That is the way we are treated, we Sacs and Fox's of Oklahoma.

x x x

## THE TRICKY AGENT

Camas Prairie, Mont.

I bought a horse from a white man because I had some money at the Agency, and my Agent would not pay for the horse, so that made me ashamed of myself. I guess the white man thought I was fooling him, but I got the money all right.

My Agent told me I didn't need the horse, but at the same time, I did need it to do some farm work. Do you think my agent is helping the Indians? I don't think so. He did the same thing to Mary Cooper. She has some money at the Agency.

Yours truly,

x x x

## NEWS FROM THE WEST

As an island is defined as a tract of land entirely surrounded by water, so an Indian reservation may be described as a tract of land entirely surrounded by thieves.

Too often the Indian superintendent, or agent, becomes the agent and co-partner of those who would plunder the Indians, rather than attend to his duties as administrator of the affairs of the Indians.

The blundering, wabbling, oft-times treacherous, administration of Indian affairs, conducted from the seat of power three thousand miles away, is the most sickening, discouraging, disgusting failure in the history of the American government.

While the superb, natural sense of honor of the Indian has led him to scrupulously observe every treaty and obligation ever entered into, the Government has left a trail of broken treaties, broken promises, repudiated pledges—hundreds of years record that would disgrace a king of the Cannibal Islands.

Whatever of relief has been obtained for the Indian has usually been through an appeal from department red tape to the ears and heart of the people. We Indians can find very few white friends that are willing to break bread in the wick-i-up; who feels the throbbing of the Indian's heart, who understands him, and who loves him for his virtues.

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### GIVE THE INDIAN A FAIR CHANCE

(From "American Indian Magazine.")

For more than two hundred years the White race has had organized societies and used Government supervision over the persons and property of our Indians, all of which segregated them tribally, restrained their liberty and prevented their coequal chances for civilized development.

The Society of American Indians is a dernier pioneer organization of educated members of the race in an effort to overcome themselves the degenerating handicaps of this specializing and restraining oversight.

Let us all help, and, as citizens, jealous of our boasted democracy, demand that our nation shall end this baneful political autocracy, and they, too, shall have a like and common fair chance to become respected, and citizens in this—once all theirs—land of their nativity.

### RACE EQUALITY

DEAR DOCTOR:

The only material differences between the races come from lack of opportunities in one case and abundance of opportunities in the other. Select a half dozen normal, healthy boys from each of several nations—say, the United States, France, Scotland, Germany, China, Japan, India, Africa and Arabia. Put them through our best schools and colleges, taking no notice of their origin or color, keeping them under the same teachers and classes with the other students and making them, out of school life the same in every particular, and when they have finished their course, there will be no racial differences in ability, though there will be some in personal quality, as there is in every graduating class of every institution.

If Louisiana gives ten dollars for the education of every white child to one dollar for the education of each Negro child, as she does, in God's name on what grounds can she keep asserting the inferiority of the Negro?

If, with some training at Carlisle, sixty young Indian men can go into the great factory of Mr. Ford and soon become the equals in earning to his other workmen and get the same wages, is not the potency of equal opportunity as a producer of equal ability established beyond a peradventure? Make a fight along this line, for this is the only way we can hope to win. You have

pushed this view a lot, but it needs constant pushing. You and thousands of others are the proof. Somehow the Bureau's plan to have only Bureau Indians must be knocked out. Our time is now with the new Congress. x x x

### AS TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

DEAR DOCTOR:

I am glad to know Eastman is now "in the saddle." I hope we will now have less of the "salvation" bunk, cutting out the political and church stuff. Why should the churches have anything to do with it, anyway? The Indians need to be freed from the missionary graft as well as the political. They should be as free to choose the forms of their worship as anyone else. As things are now, though an Indian who would go into a white man's church and take things as souvenirs or to add to his collection, would be arrested, a white man—tourist or scientist—can take things from Indian altars and not be regarded as a thief. And what would the white man say if the government should oblige him to send his children away to a boarding school and oblige them to have their heads stuffed with a form of religion absolutely different from their own? Let the Indians go—not only politically but spiritually.

Speaking of the Pueblo Indian, for I know them best, I find the Christian religion can teach him nothing he does not already know as to honor and morality. Though we no longer say "the only good Indian is a dead Indian," we insist the only good Indian is the one who apes the white man. Personally I am disgusted with our fanatical egotism, and quite understand the remark of an Indian friend. He was governor of a village in which a dance was being held. As usual, there were many white people present—tourists, scientists, teachers, the ever-present Catholic priest, etc. The governor had to keep open house for everyone; but was he impressed by the presence of all these superior beings? Not a bit. He had known them all his life, and his remark to me at the end of the day was, "White man gives me bellyache."

Every race has something of value to contribute—and everyone should be free to

use or to reject what he finds useful or useless—but I would suggest that the Indians open schools of instruction for the white man in honesty and morality—and give a special course in courtesy. x x x

### ON THE RAIL

Dr. Eastman and the writer boarded a Northwestern train Wednesday, May 14th, for Green Bay, Wis., in behalf of a cause that involves the body, mind and soul of every Indian in the country. In a modern phrase, "a rush over the line," where Indians are to be seen here and there. Here, on the morning of the 15th, we were reinforced by the Rev. Father Phillip Gordon, Dennison Wheelock, Esq., and his iron horse entertained us. The weather was cold and dismal. The ground was soaked from the night's rain squalls. Nevertheless, the iron horse was equal to the emergency. There was a cause ahead, and not anything must stop it. After a hurried whirl around the beautiful city of Green Bay, we made a bee-line scot for Oneida, a distance of about fifteen miles in a westerly direction from Green Bay, where we were refreshed by genuine Indian hospitality. On our way we saw the nakedness of once the forest and the home of the wild game. It is well to mention that the Oneida tribe were the first Indians who were allotted by the Dawes' bill of 1887. These Indians can vote and are citizens, but some of them are still tied to the Indian Bureau. At two o'clock we turned into the yard of the Methodist church, where many other iron horses turned, loaded with Indians.

In the cause for freedom and citizenship by the abolishment of the Indian Bureau, we Indians must all unite and be of one mind on the matter; the churches of all denominations must help us. The same motive must prompt the Christian people as it did for the black race, to free the Indian race from the corrupt and enslaving system of the Indian Bureau. At two o'clock Dennison Wheelock called the meeting to order, and while the rain poured, the thunder crashed and lightning flashed, the three Indian guests made their plea, as though between life and death.

Father Gordon presented our mission and explained the position of the Indian in sight of the world, the abusiveness and arbitrary methods of the Indian Bureau, the expenditure of the Indian's money without their consent or knowledge, and spoke of the Indian boys who volunteered their services in the great world war.

Dr. Eastman, president of the Society of American Indians, explained his stand in the Society. He was emphatic in his expression to have the Indian Bureau abolished. He contended that the Indian is not so bad as the world takes him to be. Logically he portrayed how the Indian has become what he is today, and blamed it to the wrong principles of the Indian Bureau.

Wassaja went off, and you cannot blame him,

for he has been loading up for forty years. He told his friends that he came to ask their support for the Indians who do not enjoy freedom and citizenship. We must have money to carry on the work of the Society of American Indians, whose work is to have the Indian Bureau abolished and to enlighten the public as to the needs of the Indians. Your membership fee of \$2 will aid the Society to educate the public. Discord, factions and differences will be the Indian Bureau's weapon to weaken our cause with the reservation Indians.

The meeting closed with happy hearts and hand-shaking. On our return to Green Bay we held a spirited meeting in a Presbyterian church. Friday we went to Shawano, from which place we had expected to go to Keshena, on the Menominee reservation, but were stopped by order of the Indian Agent. This Agent has an Indian wife and should have more consideration for the Indian race. We had a meeting anyway in the hall of the Catholic school, and in spite of the rain we had a splendid attendance. On Saturday we went to Lac du Flambeau, and from there by auto to the U. S. Government Indian school. The school ground is a beautiful place, nearly surrounded by lakes. From Supt. Balmer down, the Indians received us as friends and not as outlaws. In the afternoon we rolled on the grass of the school campus, Indian fashion, and witnessed a May Day tournament in our honor, which, to say the least, was hugely enjoyed by us. The boys' and girls' gymnasium exercises were put through by the physician of the school, who recently returned from the army, full of life, and the school is fortunate to have such a helper. About forty small boys, with several weeks' training, showed us how they could drill, shoot and march.

The writer, Father Gordon and Dr. Eastman made spirited addresses at the meeting. Father Gordon drew a comparison between the government officials in the Indian service, and illustrated his point by mentioning our experience with the superintendent at the Menominee reservation and the open-arm hospitality we were receiving at the hands of the official employes of the school. Dr. Eastman advocated the abolishment of the Indian Bureau for the best interest of the Indians.

After the memorial meeting we enjoyed music and dancing in the banquet room. We shall always remember the Lac du Flambeau Indian school and the interest manifested in our mission. Early next Sunday morning we reached Odawah, where we were met by Mr. Daniel Morrison, an active citizen of Odawah, who conveyed us to St. Mary's school, where the faithful sisters had breakfast ready for us. We had a well attended meeting here. Father Gordon explained our mission and pointed out that our words are for those who are interested in the Indian race. Dr. Eastman pleaded that the Indian is not a type of a savage but a man endowed with great principles and a reverence for that which is good in all things. Space does not permit us to say anything more. The trip was highly educational.