



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

Vol. 4, No. 10

ISSUED MONTHLY

January, 1920

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

An Indian greeting is just a grunt. He takes it for granted that you see he is alive and therefore, it does not require any further explanation to convince you that he is otherwise. Indians never had a New Year holiday. One day was the same to them as any other day.

Fellow readers, WASSAJA wants you to know that he is alive at his post and WISHES YOU ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Starting upon the New Year we are on the same trail that we took some four years ago. The great object still remains ahead, and we shall push on with the help of God until we reach the end of the trail.

WASSAJA believes that there is no higher object than to help the fallen and strengthen the weakness of humanity by just means. When we speak for the best interest of the Indians we are speaking for the best interest of the country. We would be unworthy were we to oppose the good policies of the United States Government. That leads us to say, that we oppose the Indian Bureau because it is a **BAD POLICY** of the govern-

ment against the Indians of the country and a black spot in the history of our government. We believe in liberty, and that is why WASSAJA is acting as a "small voice" in behalf of the Indian race for their freedom and effectual citizenship. To accomplish this end, the paramount duty of every Indian and friends of the Indians is to work, might and main, to have the Indian Bureau abolished, so that the Indians may be free and that they may enjoy the rights and privileges of American citizenship. Let us see to that the Indian is put upon the political platform. That is the happy New Year's greeting and plea to its readers from WASSAJA.

FREE THE INDIANS, HER PLEA

BY AGNES SHEA

The Constitution of the United States says that "all men are born free and equal." And since we are now engaged in a great war for the democracy of the whole world, why not show our sincerity and begin right at home by giving our first Americans absolute freedom. It is hardly necessary to say that I refer to the American Indians. The theory of our government regarding our Indians is all right, but it does not

WASSAJA

VOL. 4, No. 10

JANUARY, 1920

SUBSCRIPTION, FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR

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work out in practice and the Indian suffers much. No man, or body of men, were created to dictate the policy or outline the method of living for another race or body of men. The plan of our government for the supervision and care of the Indian is such that requires the highest type of missionary spirit to carry out effectively, and from personal observation and knowledge through work among the Indians and living on their reservations and in the west, I can positively say that such a spirit does not exist in the service. There is little or no sympathy for the Indians among the rank and file of those employed in the Indian Service. When one race of people have power over another, the opportunity to work for a selfish interest invariably is taken advantage of.

I know the arguments advanced by those unwilling to recognize the ability of the Indian regarding citizenship; and I know, too, the arguments used for the protection of the Indian against scheming land "sharks," and I also know that the Indian is no more protected, if he is as much so, against that particular class of citizens (I wonder how worthy of citizenship such white men are) as he would be were he absolutely free and having the full rights of citizenship. I also know that some of the Indians have those rights, at least to a degree.

The Indian school is utterly a failure as at present conducted under the supervision of our government. There is scant sympathy between teacher and pupil, and the entire plan is sadly in error and a detriment to the Indian children.

I make this plea just now especially, for it is the psychological time to give the Indians their absolute freedom and right of citizenship. They are ready to become citizens and much more so than was the colored race after the close of the civil war. Many of the young Indians are enlisted in our army and navy and they are all willing to do their part and are doing it, at least to the

same degree according to their ability as are the rest of the people of the United States. Again, this is the opportune time, because the employes of the Indian Bureau could be transferred to other departments where they only are needed, but where they would be loyal and faithful in their duties.

Pages have been written and voices raised in pleading the cause of the American Indians, both among their own race and ours, until their cause has become tiresome to the selfish politician, uninteresting to the indifferent and hopeless almost to themselves. With a feeling born of knowledge of the intense injustice of keeping the Indians longer as wards of our government, which not only greatly retards their progress and development, but robs them of that independent manhood and womanhood that crushes the spirit, kills every ambition, and holds them in a position of semi-servility. I make this plea for their absolute unconditional freedom, which will give them their right of citizenship in the United States.

A thousand examples of injustice might be cited, but since our government may not be accused of criminal action and no tangible evidence may be brought against those intrusted with the work in the Indian Service this question has ever been set aside. The theory reads so beautifully, the political "plums" so numerous, and the opportunity for selfish advancement so great, that the Indians have become, as no doubt they long have been, simply a political issue. Charity begins at home. While our boys are fighting for democracy "over there" LET US SWEEP OUR OWN DOORSTEP CLEAN.

ALL INDIANS TAKE DUE NOTICE**What Do You Think of This Autocratic Superintendent of the Rosebud, South Dakota, Agency?**

Rosebud, South Dakota, November, 12, 1919.
TO ALL FARMERS:—

There will be a special meeting of the Tribal Council at Rosebud, Tuesday, November 18th. The Council desires to take action on a number of irregular meetings that have been held by unauthorized persons on the reservation. It is desired that each precinct have a meeting on Saturday, November 15th; You will please advise the various precinct chairman to call this meeting for this date.

You should advise the Indians that a number of unauthorized persons, some of whom apparently attorneys, are trying to get themselves appointed as representatives of the Indians in the Black Hills Claim matter, are agitating the question of holding meetings and sending delegates

to Washington. The question of getting this claim before the Court of Claims is well understood by the Indian Office and Congress, but it is unnecessary for anyone to go to Congress or Washington at this time. Whenever this bill finally passes Congress, meetings will be called and delegates selected for the purpose of a joint meeting like the one that was held at Crow Creek.

Please advise the Indians that this reservation has the best organized Tribal Council of any Sioux Reservation and that for these agitators to try to hold unauthorized meetings will simply result in confusion, and if rival delegations are authorized and sent to Washington, it may result in Congress delaying or possibly taking no action in the matter whatever.

All Indians in each precinct should attend the meeting on the 15th and set forth any matter they desire brought before the general council meeting at the agency on the 18th. I have been informed that dances are being held at various places on the reservation and that agitators are there trying to collect money and getting Indians to sign their names to papers on which nothing appears, except these names, and that afterwards these names are attached to any sort of communication they desire to use.

Please advise all Indians that any camp holding these unauthorized dances or meetings in the future will be dealt with in annuity payment, and if necessary to stop this, I will withhold annuity payment from such person. Please explain to the Indians that I do not want to dictate what they shall do or say in this Black Hills matter, but I do not propose to allow any further agitations of this matter by the class of people who have been carrying this on during the past summer. Very respectfully,

(Signed) CLAUDE C. COVEY, Supt.

On the face of the above letter, it appears that the Tribal Council of the Rosebud Agency is controlled by the Superintendent. When the Indians cannot hold a meeting of their own on their own land and home without an authority from the Superintendent, is not that autocracy? Read the above letter and judge for yourself. Just think, we have laid down our lives for freedom, even all of that, right here on Rosebud Agency, "unauthorized dances and meetings in the future will be dealt with annuity payment, if necessary will withhold annuity payment from such persons." Such penalty is not law, but a tyrannical edict, which the Indian Bureau approves. Indians are ruled by fear and regulated by a gang that knows no law but "do as I tell you." This agent would not dare to write this letter to American citizens, and have it pass through the post-office. It is a threatening letter and he would be liable under the Postal Act Law. This letter is printed to show the attitude of the Superintendent of this agency to the Indians under him.--(Editor.)

THE COLLAR INDIAN VS. THE BLANKET INDIAN

That's the way it looked to an observer at the recent meeting of the Society of American Indians in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The convention was "set up" in Chicago, we learned, at a meeting of the Executive Council of the "Metropolitan" tribe. A fusion ticket of the Metropolitan and Chippewa tribe was elected on the

platform of one plank—"Down with the Indian Bureau." Spellbinders are to be sent to Washington. The theme of all filibustering was, "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death." Judging from records in the Indian Office, and from investigation, the inference is "Give Me Liberty" to get contracts and powers of attorney and court fees, etc., and "death" refers to the lot of the blanket Indian when the Indian Bureau is out of the way.

Congress has had the Indian Bureau in its teeth for several years and is shaking it to death. It is interesting to note that a great mass of facts commendatory to the Indian Bureau are shaking out and the reducing process is going on in a most satisfactory manner.

We are heart and soul with such leaders as Rev. Sherman Coolidge, Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin and the young men who tried to speak for the blanket Indian's rights, but we cannot indorse an organization that is interested only in an Indian who can take care of himself.

May the day soon come when our conservative and constructive leaders of the race will rally to uplift the needy members of the race, bringing not liberty only, but justice and showing brotherly concern and responsibility.

R. D. HALL, in Y. M. C. A. Bulletin.

We are surprised and amazed that he, whom we have esteemed and counted as a friend of the Indian race should make such false statements, "that the convention of the Society of American Indians at Minneapolis was "set up" in Chicago. Spellbinders are to be sent to Washington. To get contracts and power of attorney and court fees, etc., etc." The above article shows bitterness and unlike the man. Truth and sincerity are not there. It is unmanly and unchristian like to attack the principles on which the Society of American Indians are working for the best interest of their race. He does greater injustice to himself than to the Indians.

—THE EDITOR.

LEASING 30,000,000 ACRES OF INDIAN MINING LAND

There is a great stir among Indians about leasing their mining land. Naturally there would be, because the Indians knew nothing about it, when it passed as a rider with the Indian appropriation bill. It appeared to be backed by a great financial force. These men do not believe that great wealth underneath Indian land should remain

idle. The country demands that the mineral land should be worked for the best interest of industry. The Indians have no use for such rich layers underneath their grounds. So, it is a blessing that Congress gave the authority to the Secretary of the Interior to lease 30,000,000 acres of Indian mining land.

The Indians are dumbfounded. They do not know what to say. If there is wealth underneath their grounds, they want it themselves. Leasing their land for mining purposes is like taking their land away from them. If there is any money there he wants that money himself. He believes that he can work the mines as well as the white people. Leasing the top of his land to cattle men and now leasing the bottom part to others, he wants to know where he gets off at? Another thing that does not look right to the Indian, is what right has Congress to give the whole authority to the Secretary of the Interior to lease their land without their consent? It appears like stealing from the Indians when they did not know anything about it. If the Indians did not own the land, it would be all right, but the Indians DO OWN THE MINING LAND. The Indian is a man. As such he should be treated as a man and no longer as a ward of the government. The Indians who own the mining land should be consulted before any lease is granted. The financiers may applaud the bill passing, but we Indians think it is unjust.

WOULD BUILD A HOME FOR CHILDREN

The "American Indian Christian Teepee Mission Building Fund" will be pleased to receive donations, in any sum, to help build a home for poor Indian children, so that they may have a home and be able to get their secular education in near-by public schools. Send all donations for the cause to

REV. RED FOX SKIUHUSHU,
Box 171, Toppenish, Washington.

A CORRECTION

In the November issue of WASSAJA we stated that Mr. John Carl was elected Vice-President of the Society of American Indians. Please let it be known that it was Mr. Theo. H. Beaulieu instead.

ON, STRAIGHT ON TO FREEDOM

On to freedom my dear brothers,
Freedom in your native land—
Let us stand and fight for freedom—
And let us conquer ere we drop it
This great fight for the red man.
Let us see that we're victorious
For the freedom of our land,
For our fathers here before us,
Free men in our native land,
We're a mighty race of people
Owning every foot on which we stand.
On to freedom, oh my brothers,

This was once our father's land—

Let us fight till we have conquered
Freedom for the Indian man;

Let us work and let us struggle
Till we win throughout the land,

All that we have asked is freedom
And equal rights on which to stand—

Freedom in a free man's land,
Absolutely free from the Cato gang.

Let us struggle on, my brothers,

We know this fight is justified,
Let us think of our own fathers,

How they fought and bled and died,
Fighting for their native country,

And the honor of their tribe,
And we know their cause was just.

For they fought and bled for us;
Then let us see that we are doing

All they'd expect of us to do,
And keep up the shout of freedom,

Till we are rid of that Bureau crew.
Let us uphold our native rights,

On the highways and in the dells,
And use our wits to "bust" the office

Of that great "joker," Cato Sells.
Let us go right on, my brothers,

We can win our battle now,
If we will but "pull" together,

Now is the time to "push" the plow.
We should be free in our own country

And not held bound by any plan
Our walks of life should be our own—

Not handed out by a Bureau gang.
This is but a struggle, brothers.

For our rights as men on earth,
We're only asking for our freedom,

In this great country of our birth.
Let us see that we are doing

Everything that we can do
To put to rout that greedy crowd,

Rightly named the Bureau crew.
Cato Sells, the prince of masters.

In his so-called humane scheme,
Tells the public how he loves us—

Just another "heap pipe dream."
Let us win our battle, brothers,

With the power we have in hand,
Rid the country now and ever

Of that accursed Bureau gang;
Now, Mr. Cato don't you think,

Your Indian schemes are on the brink
Of utter ruin and fast decay,

When Indian freedom wins the day?
It will win, you bet. —WANDA SHORT.