



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

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THE ONLY WAY TO GET THE INDIANS OUT OF THE CONTROL OF THE INDIAN BUREAU, IS TO GET THEM OUT OF THE CONTROL OF THE INDIAN BUREAU

WHAT WE SHOULD REALLY DO FOR THE INDIAN

Explained by the One White Man Who, Red Men Agree, Knows Most About Them

"Americanize him, by giving him citizenship, close up the Reservations and force him to live with White People, and in 10 years the problem will be solved," says Gen. Pratt—Denounces those who encourage the Renaissance of Indian Art.

"Lo, the poor Indian, doesn't half express it. Driven forcibly from his ancient home, corralled on a reservation, robbed of his rights and finally reduced to a state of practical peonage, he is deliberately kept in a state of savagery and denied the privileges of citizenship and the protection of the courts in the land which originally belonged to him."

This is what the white brother has done for the Indian, in the opinion of Brigadier-General Robert H. Pratt, who for 25 years was head of Carlisle School, and who, the Indians themselves say, knows more about them and their problems than any other paleface living. He has been in St. Louis attending the convention of the Society of American Indians, and during his visit talked to a Post-Dispatch writer about the wrongs of the Indians, and what he believes should be done about them.

It was a crime in the first place, he said, to segregate them on reservations, and it is a greater crime to keep them there, maintaining them in tribal ignorance and barbarism, encouraging them in their savage customs and traditions, and denying them the rights and opportunities which we extend to every foreigner who comes to these shores.

"My solution of the problem is simply this," he said: "There are in this country about 3,000 counties. There are 330,000 Indians. That is a little more than 10 to each county. I would distribute them throughout these counties, finding them homes and occupations. In 10 years the Indian problem would have disappeared.

"The Indian, unlike the negro and Japanese, is assimilable. There is no prejudice against him. He can marry a white woman and settle down in a white community, meeting white people on the basis of equality. And, indeed he should, for he is the real aristocrat of America—the blue-blood of his country.

"He is good material for citizenship, and for industry—far better, in fact, than many of the European immigrants which we accept in such large numbers. There are now more than 1,000 Indians living in various parts of the country, practicing medicine and law, teaching in schools and holding important positions in the business world. I might re-

WASSAJA

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mark that there is one in the United States Senate.

"All the Indian wants is as fair a chance as we give to the foreigner who comes from over the seas. The way to do this is to abolish that monstrous system which is named the Indian Bureau, give Indian youth a chance to enter the public schools, and encourage them to leave the reservations and become a part of the general population.

"Did it ever occur to you," asked the venerable General, "that the Government discourages the Indian from doing the very thing which we are demanding of foreigners, namely—become Americanized? Not a day passes but that some public speaker or writer warns our immigrants to become Americanized and adopt our ideals. Yet the Government is ruthlessly preventing the Indian—the first American of all—from doing that very thing.

"Indians are encouraged to stay on reservations, to remain with their tribes, to hold on to their tribal customs and traditions.

Gen. Pratt's criticism of the Indian Bureau, that division of the Department of the Interior which governs the Indians, was unsparing and bitter.

"It is a cruel and senseless system," he said. "It has no interest except that of perpetuating itself, and maintaining jobs for its 7,000 employes. Instead of educating the Indian, it encourages him to stick to his war paint and feathers. Instead of making doctors, teachers and business men, it makes blanket weavers, basket makers and bead workers."

He included the Bureau of Ethnology in this condemnation. "It has worked actively for 40 years," he said, "to prevent the escape of the Indians from tribal life to citizenship. It revels in war dances and ghost dances, in Peynote seances and all the other Indian peculiarities. It encourages these customs, because they are the meat on which ethnology (the science of races) lives."

And while on the subject the General added his opinion of those sentimental persons "who encourage the so-called 'renaissance of Indian art,' and thus would have the Indians evolve from nomadic game hunters to miserable basket weavers and makers of other curios, instead of becoming useful and happy citizens—and this simply to gratify their own artistic and scientific whims and fancies."

It is all very picturesque and pretty to see the Indian squaw working at her basket or blanket, crooning Indian songs, until one

learns that the basket or blanket weaver is making \$5 to \$7 a month, and probably is hungry, Gen. Pratt said.

"Those very people who can grow most eloquent now about the wrongs done the red man in stealing his land and driving him out of his home, know the least about the present vicious system of victimizing him by keeping him in poverty and ignorance," he declared. "Our interest in the Indian is confined to the pretty schoolbook stories of Pocahontas and the like, and does not extend to the 330,000 human beings that our Government is wronging every day that it keeps them on reservations."

Contrary to the idea of some average citizens, an Indian may leave the reservation any time he gets ready. The Indian Bureau, however, according to Gen. Pratt, discourages this at every opportunity, advising young Indians to remain with their tribes.

The purpose of the bureau in doing this, he said, is simply to perpetuate its own existence, because if the Indian should go out and become a part of the general population, taking up occupations and business, and becoming citizens, the need for the bureau, with its 7,000 jobs, would disappear.

There are between 85 and 100 agencies, he said. The agents in charge are practically supreme. They can give orders, and the Indians may obey. He told of a recent alleged instance in which two intelligent young Indians complained to the agent that they were being deprived of their water rights. The agent promptly locked them up, he said.

The agency system, he declared, offers numerous opportunities for graft and abuse, and these opportunities are not lost. The agents have charge of the issuance of Government rations to Indians who are incapable of supporting themselves. The rations which the Indians actually receive are almost always so meager as to keep them constantly hungry, he said.

He told of how Dr. Carlos Montezuma, an Indian, who is a graduate of Illinois University and a practicing physician in Chicago, recently visited members of his tribe on a reservation, to confer with them on improving their condition. Dr. Montezuma was arrested at the order of the agent.

"These agents are czars," he said, "with almost absolute power over thousands of helpless men, women and children. The system is irresponsible. The agents are constantly changing. For that matter, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Secretary of the Interior change with every few administrations."

Gen. Pratt said that the Government treaties with the various tribes, providing for the maintenance and establishment of public schools, have been shamelessly violated, just as other Government promises to them have not been kept. The Government has not established the number of schools which it pledged itself to establish, and the ones in

existence are, for the most part, of wretched quality, he said.

He exhibited a report which he once made on the situation, pointing out that the Government was spending about one-tenth of what it had promised to spend on schools. Four entire tribes—the Utes, Shoshones, Ban-nocks and Northern Arapahoes—with 1,300 children of school age, had no school whatever at that time, and the Navajos, with 3,000 children of school age, had an average school attendance of 10 children.

The Indians' land and water rights are constantly being encroached upon by adjacent white settlers, who, he said, give the excuse that the Indians won't work the land, so they will. Even now, he said, an effort is being made to induce the Mojave Apaches to move from their reservations on the Verde River, in Arizona, to a poorer country in the Salt River Valley. Incidentally, Gen. Pratt remarked, a dam which the Government promised this tribe 12 years ago has not yet been built.

Of course, not all the Indians are poor. Some have large incomes from the sale of land and from oil discoveries. This, Gen. Pratt said, has been a doubtful benefit. It encourages them to idleness, and gives them the means of gratifying their appetites without the necessity of work.

He is a strong advocate of the "outing system" for Indian boys and girls, and says it should be the first step in Americanizing the Indians. It consists of placing Indian boys and girls in the homes of selected white families during vacations, with the privilege of attending the regular public schools.

In hundreds of instances, where this has been practiced, he said, the boys and girls have quickly adapted themselves to their new surroundings, learning the English language and conforming to the customs and ideas of white people. Many of these "outing" products now are in business and the professions, making good, he said. In the majority of cases, he suggested, such "outing" pupils should be placed on farms.

He mentioned the familiar Sunday supplement story exploited by some newspapers of the Carlisle graduate who, upon leaving school, returns to the tribe, resumes his his blanket and moccasins, and relapses into tribal semi-barbarism.

"The fact is," he said, "that most of the Carlisle graduates are now out in the world, living as happy and useful citizens. It is true that some have gone back to the tribal life. That is natural, and is the logical result of the system pursued by the Indian Bureau.

"When the young brave returned from Carlisle with his new ideas and his civilian clothing, what happened? Why, the very thing you would expect. The old chiefs gave him one long, disapproving stare, and told him to go way back and sit down. And he hid his derby hat behind him and went back and sat down, just as would happen if a young

white man came back to his folks and tried to get them to give up all their old notions and adopt his new ones.

"That illustrates the need of getting the Indians out among the whites. That will bring the quick disintegration of the tribes, and the absorption of the Indians by the general population."

He said the adaptability of the Indians to new conditions was shown during the war, when 17,000 Indians were in the service. It was he, he said, who prevailed upon the War Department to abandon the plan to form Indian regiments, and induced the department, instead, to distribute Indian soldiers among the white regiments. As a result, he said, the Indians won their proportionate share of commissions, and were made noncommissioned officers in the same proportion.

As an instance of the ousting of the Indians from their lands, he said, the Government treaties with the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, Choctaws and Seminoles, provided that they should occupy their lands "as long as grass grows and water runs." Several years ago, however, the railroads wanted to go through, white men desired to buy part of the lands, and the Indians were persuaded to sell them.

The Indian Bureau, he said, had used numerous expedients to induce the Indians to remain on the reservations, such as establishing irrigation systems, giving them blooded cattle, and making large loans. "All these things," he said, "are simply bribes to them to remain in savagery, foregoing the privileges of American civilization, to which they, perhaps more than any other people, are entitled."

—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN INDIANS CONFERENCE AT ST. LOUIS

This was the ninth annual meeting of the Society. Indians from Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska, South Dakota, California, Montana, Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Washington, Nevada, Kansas, Iowa, and Washington, D. C., were at the meeting. The Society had more representatives from different reservations than any previous gathering, even though the attendance of Indians were not so many. To offset the number, the Society had the stalwart supporters, viz.: Gen. R. H. Pratt, President Sloan, Secretary Bishop, Honorary President Rev. Coolidge, Rev. Gordon, Mr. Tincker, Mr. Tibbet and Captain Parker.

The most notable feather of the conference was that we were of one mind, and that as an Indian organization we must stand together. Reservation Indians told their stories of what their people have to contend, and asked the Society to help them. They related facts that were pitiful, cruel and unjust. These Indians cannot get any help on a reservation, so they came to the Society of American Indians at their own expense.

The conference heard from veteran workers in behalf of the Indians. They hit on the same key note of abolishing the Indian Bureau. There was not one person at the conference who spoke in support of the Indian Bureau system.

As an Indian would say, "The City of St. Louis did 'heep good'." The Society members were welcomed to the hospitality of the city as though they were kings and queens. The Governor, the Mayor, the city officials, the press, the Publicity Bureau, the Commercial Club, the Woman's Club, the educational institutions and churches, one and all of the citizens of St. Louis, opened their hearts, and gave the Society all the possible opportunities of laying down the great cause of freedom and citizenship for the Indian race.

Just at the moment when the Society was in a dilemma for Indian celebrities, Miss Tsianina and Chief Silvertongue appeared on the scene, and the Society gave entertainments that were hard to excel.

Mr. Hatfield, of the Publicity Bureau, has gained a warm place in the Indians' hearts. He gave the Society one continual whirl from the time we landed in St. Louis until the close of the meeting. He escorted and introduced us into the very life of the city. The Society cannot thank him too much for the part he took to make the conference a success.

No one can do anything without the Press. It is the newspapers that must come to the aid of the Indians before they can obtain their freedom. If the Press of the country will serve the Indian people as the Society of American Indians received from the St. Louis papers, surely the Indians will have the right of way to Congress, and the Congress will make them free.

The Society of American Indians, with greater emphasis, reiterated their stand relative to the abolishment of the Indian Bureau, and the bestowal of citizenship to the Indians within the borders of the United States.

GEN. R. H. PRATT IS 80 YEARS OLD

Gen. R. H. Pratt was born in New York State on the 6th of December, 1840. In his youth he moved to Indiana, where he learned a trade, and later entered the Civil War. After the war he enlisted in the regular army. He was stationed in the West to guard the settlers from Indians. While at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, he was ordered to accompany Geronimo's band of Indian prisoners to St. Augusta Barracks, Florida. It was while stationed there in charge of the Apaches that he discovered that an Indian was a man, not unlike any other human being. Imbued with this noble idea regarding the Indians, and having a great personality as a soldier, he conceived the idea that if the Indian had the same opportunities as the Caucasian race the result would be the same. Of this, the public at that time, had not the slightest hope. He accepted the best outlook for the Indians.

He received authority to take a few Indian children to Hampton Institute. Later, at that school, he again had a better vision for the Indians. He entertained that the Indian children needed a better environment. The next place we see him is before President Grant and other high officials of the Government, where he presented his inspired ideals before them. Since Carlisle Barracks, Pa., was not in use, that place was mentioned to him to try out his experiment.

The next thing was to get the Indians to attend the school. He and his faithful wife, and other philanthropic friends, started out to the wild and wooley West for Indian children. He was certain of some of his Apache friends, but to get more they went to South and North Dakota. Twenty-three, and running up to sixty-seven, Indian children was the nucleus of the once-renowned Indian Industrial School.

The school became famous while under the charge of Gen. Pratt. But sad to state, he was relieved from the great institution he founded, and where he expected to see his last day.

It goes without saying that Gen. R. H. Pratt is the greatest living friend of the Indians, or ever will have. No man has ever stood for the Indians as Gen. Pratt has. Whenever the Indians' fate was at stake, the Indians could rely on Gen. Pratt.

No man can be happier on his 80th birthday than Gen. R. H. Pratt. His heart's desire in behalf of his children—the Indian race, is coming closer and closer. The total freedom of the Indians from the Indian Bureau system and bestowal of citizenship to the race he has sacrificed his life. May God spare Gen. R. H. Pratt for many years to come.

"LET MY PEOPLE GO"

and

"ABOLISH THE INDIAN BUREAU"

Now is the time to do something practical for the Indian people. If you cannot do it personally, the next helpful thing to do is for you to procure, all you can, copies of "Let My People Go" and "Abolish the Indian Bureau," and send them where they will do the most good; scatter them far and wide. If thousands will do that in each state, just imagine what influence it would have. It would be like seeds; they would take roots, and the public would know something about the Indian's plight.

If there were books or pamphlets on the subject we would be glad to refer them to you, but there is none that we know of. "Let My People Go" and "Abolish the Indian Bureau" are the only pamphlets touching on the vital solution of the so-called Indian problem. "Let My People Go".....10c a copy "Abolish the Indian Bureau".....15c a copy

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