



July 2022

Summary of Action Taken Following Delegation Trip to Washington, D.C on Behalf of the Three Affiliated Tribes, May 9 (no year given)

Leslie D. Polk

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers>

Recommended Citation

Polk, Leslie D., "Summary of Action Taken Following Delegation Trip to Washington, D.C on Behalf of the Three Affiliated Tribes, May 9 (no year given)" (2022). *Usher Burdick Papers*. 30.
<https://commons.und.edu/burdick-papers/30>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Usher Burdick Papers by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

North Dakota
UNDER THE DOME
By Leslie D. Polk

RELEASE MAY 9

WASHINGTON---Fort Berthold reservation Indians got favorable action on one bill, promises of more than they'd expected on another, and ran into difficulties on a third bill during hearings recently before the House Interior Committee. The tribal council was represented by Martin Cross, New Town, its chairman, William J. Deane of Emmett and the council's attorney, O. R. Schulte of Stanley.

Here's what was accomplished:

1. A bill to provide that \$3,942,448 of the Indians' money held in trust for them by the government be given them on a per capita basis was favorably reported. This is money paid them for land the government bought for Garrison reservoir. Another \$218,354 of accumulated interest will be used for tribal government. Previously, the Indians received a total of \$9,911,249 in per capita payments of up to \$1,000 and in direct payments from the government for the land.

2. A bill to authorize members of the Berthold tribes to acquire trust interests in tribal lands in the reservation was amended tentatively to give them direct title to the land they buy--more than they had asked. Under the plan, the council would buy land owned by nonresidents and sell it to tribe members to increase individual holdings. The committee must vote on the amendment. The bill originally provided that the Secretary of Interior would hold title to the land in trust for the Indian owner.

3. A bill to give Indians grazing, fishing and hunting rights on land between the Garrison water line and the boundary of land taken by the government was delayed. Hearings will resume May 17.

The last bill is designed to give the Indians the right to graze their livestock close to water on land purchased by the U. S. for Garrison reservoir, but not now covered by water. While Garrison Dam was being built, the Indians had permission of the Army Engineers to use the land for grazing. In 1954, however, the Army began to lease the land. Under the contracts, 67,000 acres were leased of the total Army purchase of 152,000 acres of Indian land for the reservoir. The

leases are for five years and the Army gets \$25,459.42 a year.

In testimony, Lawson Knott of the Real Estate division of the Department of the Army, said that at one time the Army "considered leasing the entire area to the tribe." "However," he said, "they did not seem to be prepared to take over the responsibility."

Eighty-eight percent of the land is now leased to Indians or Indian permittees. Under questioning, Mr. Knott conceded 12% is leased to white persons and some of the Indian permittees may also be white although he could give no figures.

Behind the legislation, of course, is the Indians need to get their livestock to water. If the bill is passed, they would be permitted to do so without leases. Under the present arrangement, a possibility of strife is present because white ranchers holding a lease would have to cross Indian land to get their stock to the leased area. Fences are not feasible in this Missouri bottom land and stock of the Indians and whites can get mixed up, another cause for strife.

The Indians had not expected these difficulties. "We did not anticipate any thought of leasing back the land," Cross told the committee. Deane said he had asked Army representatives in the original negotiations if "whey they take the land, can I take my horse to water at the river?" He testified they told him, "Yes, it's yours. It'll be the same."

Rep. Otto Krueger, who was at all the hearings, sent a message to the tribes this week. He told them, in regard to the bill for distributing tribal funds, "I hope that you will use your money well." In his advice, he urged them to make provisions "for the education of the younger members of your tribes."

* * *

CAPITOL CALLERS: Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Morrison, Bowman; L. A. Jorgenson and G. E. Schnitt, Williston; Douglas C. Fink, Jamestown; R. B. Hendrickson, Valley City; Mr. and Mrs. T. Vic DeForest, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Alsop, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph M. Ivers, Mrs. H. W. Ludevick, Mrs. William F. Graves, Fargo.

-the end-