

INDIAN FELLOW NEWS

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SEMINAR ON INDIAN EDUCATION

by Jeanne Halliday

The American Indian Associates are highly responsible for a seminar held last August at the Western Washington State College in Bellingham. Other sponsoring agents were the American Friends Service Committee, the Western Washington Inter-Tribal Council, the American Indian Women's Service League, ~~and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.~~

The seminar topics mainly concerned themselves with Indian education. The idea was to show teachers in our school systems that Indian students face unique situations (common only among Indians) both when they enter and during school life. If more teachers could understand ~~that these situations exist~~ and if they could take it upon themselves to help Indian students to overcome these barriers the results should be a lower dropout rate among Indians.

One example was given by a seminar instructor, Phil Claymore who is an Indian man currently employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Educational Division. He told of how when he first came to the Marysville area near the Tulalip Reservation the figures for Indian students were appalling. Practically 1/3 (125) of the student body in the primary grades were Indian children but there were only 10 Indian students in high school. What happens to Indian students? Why only 10 in high school? Why should so many drop out? Questions like this were answered in detail at the seminar. Since Mr. Claymore has worked in the Marysville area the figures for junior and senior high students in school have doubled. His methods are those of persistence and patience. He made continual visits to families pointing out the necessity of good attendance in school. Once a child has good attendance he can apply himself to his studies more easily.

The real problem for Indian children is at the kindergarten stage. If they can get off to a good start in school then a crucial and major step in their education has been successfully completed. That is why pre-schools, co-op groups and enrichment classes for Indian children between the ages of 3 and 5 are of vital importance.

There were 16 teachers who attended this credit course held at Western Washington State College. Most of them were from Western Washington, one came from California and another from Utah.

The American Indian Associates will be making more formal attempts to further Indian education through teacher understanding. They hope to have this same type of seminar available to teachers in their own school district on a two day basis. If the seminar goes right to the teacher then all teachers would have the chance to learn of the existing situation.

Anyone who would like to join forces with the A.I.A. may attend their monthly meetings held at the Indian Center in Seattle, 1900 Boren Avenue. They meet on the second Monday of each month which will be on October 11 at 8:00 pm.

MAORI'S AND THE AMERICAN INDIANS

by Dorothy Lombard

Although we had visitors to the Indian Center from all over the world during the summer months, perhaps the most interesting was Ina Te Uira, a Maori native from Pukekohe, New Zealand. She is a social worker among her Maori people. Ina Te Uira was touring the United States and she visited reservations in Minnesota, Arizona and other states. She remarked that during her travels she had been on the lookout for clubs of all Indian women who are active in community affairs. She was delighted to find such a group here in Seattle, the AIWSL. Mrs. Te Uira is going to ask the Maori League of Women if they would like to become pen pals with the AIWSL as their work and goals are very similar. Unlike the American Indians, the Maori do not live on reservations. Of a total population of 2 1/2 million in New Zealand, 175,000 are Maori's and they are becoming more and more active in community affairs.

To be able to qualify for work among Maori natives one must be knowledgeable of both the languages and the customs. The dialects vary from tribe to tribe and in some areas women are not allowed to work. It's interesting how similar Maori's and our American Indians are.

AIWSL MAKES PROGRESS

The American Indian Women's Service League can indeed be proud of their progress made since they first started six years ago. They now have the Indian Center that they dreamed of.

The AIWSL contributes a considerable percentage of the Indian Center support. The AIWSL not only donates financially but many of their members give a total of approximately sixty hours per week to help the Indian Center staff. The AIWSL Salmon Bake has been an annual event for sometime. This is also held to help support the Indian Center. Each year at Christmas the League women busy themselves by preparing boxes filled with food, clothing and toys for over 200 Indian families. Once a year they sponsor a social dance in Seattle. This dance is held so that Indians who attended boarding schools will have a chance to see others for a reunion to talk over old times. Occassionally the AIWSL has been asked to help sponsor the Thunderbird basketball team for the Seattle All-Indian Invitational Basketball Tournament.

In the fall many extra hours are spent at the Indian Center working on school clothing. Before it can be given away the clothes need to be separated and sized, the quality is also determined to be sure that they are suitable for school wear. On the first Sunday of each month from October through May the AIWSL members cook and serve a potluck dinner at the Indian Center. Proceeds from these dinners are generally used to aid the Indian Center. Rummage sales are held periodically at the Indian Center; these are sponsored by the AIWSL.

The AIWSL sponsors the first Indian teen club in Seattle, they call themselves the AIYAC's. They have been in existence for over two years. Also an AIWSL committee started a study hall program that is held at the Indian Center. Volunteer tutors assist students of all ages with their homework. Now a group from AIWSL is working in co-operation with the Plymouth Congregational Church and the Indian Center to start the Indian Center Pre-School.

All of these worthwhile projects have taken place in the short time of six years. Indian people are very capable of helping themselves. All they needed was a well organized group like the AIWSL which is willing to except the advice of others, carry on group discussions and work together.

To be an officer in this club is very important because the officers have many permanent projects to care for. At the September, 1965 meeting an election was held for Vice President and Secretary. Georgiana Whetung is the new Vice President and Helen White Eagle is the new Secretary; each will serve two year terms. In the previous year the elections were held for 1964-1965 officers; Joyce LaChester was elected as President and Betty Kennedy as Treasurer. However Mrs. LaChester did resign during the summer because she moved to Portland, Oregon. An emergency meeting was held and they appointed Zena DeLorm as their President for the duration of this year. Congratulations to the new officers who now have the honor of upholding the club responsibilities and standards, which is not an easy job to do.

Judging by the progress made in the past there is certain to be more in the future. The AIWSL invites others to join their club and pay their dues of \$1.00. This entitles you to receive the Indian Center News. You need not be a resident of Seattle to join. The next meeting will be at the Indian Center on October 14 at 7:30 pm.*****

INDUSTRIES TURN TO INDIANS FOR PRECISION WORKERS adapted from News Release from the Bureau of Indian Affairs - Sept. 10, 65

A large-scale electronics assembly plant has opened on the Navajo Reservation and a trend toward Indian employment in precision industries has been solidly established.

More than 200 Navajos will be trained on-the-job under a contract between the Semiconductor Division of Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corporation of New York and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Recruitment is on a reservationwide basis. A further series of on-the-job training programs is anticipated in the near future, with eventual employment projected at 800.

The 50 Navajos already on the job, trained under a program financed through the Area Redevelopment Administration, "learn quickly and have a high productivity level" according to Fairchild spokesmen. In exploring the possibilities, Fairchild representatives admitted they had some early doubts concerning the ability—and reliability—of Indian workers. A check with other firms that employ Indians proved to the satisfaction of Fairchild that Indian workers are precise, accurate and willing.

What is happening on the Navajo Reservation is also taking place in other Indian areas. New uses—economically productive uses—of Indian land are being sought to breathe new life into many communities by providing employment opportunities for the reservation Indians. *****

AN INDIAN PROPHECY

By Paul E. Orth, Pavilion, B. C.

The re-birth of the Indian race of Canada and North America which we witness now, with the Indian birth-rate far outstripping that of any other ethnic group, can be termed the great miracle of our time.

The general public is inclined to relate the unexpected rejuvenation of our Indian population to an enlightened government policy, in particular to vastly improved medical care. Although this assumption appears to be based on reasoned thought, it should, however, be borne in mind at the same time that Indian seers and prophets of past centuries had a distinct fore-knowledge of the things to be. As far back as pre-Columbian times, before any white man had set foot on the Americas, they foretold the coming of the white man; they foretold times of hardship and suffering for "The People" -- a term which many Indian tribes apply to themselves in their native language -- and they finally foretold the resurrection of the Indian race from seemingly unescapable, everlasting, racial death.

The great message of the Indian revival has been handed down by word of mouth; it is engraved on rocks in silent mountains, where the Golden Eagles circle, and it is alive in the minds of the wise, old men, the loyal guardians and keepers of the Indian Spirit, of a world view and philosophy of life which is so vastly superior to the soul-destroying materialism which is rapidly engulfing the world of to-day.

Harmony with Nature, the Universe, the God, is the foundation upon which the Indian Spirit is based. It is the life-giving, constructive force which has rendered the Indian societies undestructible through the centuries, even though the white man's civilization had pronounced sentence of death upon them. The Canadian or North American Indian knows in his heart that he must hang on to the Indian Spirit with the grip of death - - - or face extermination through assimilation.

THE CANADIAN INDIAN IS HERE TO STAY - - - IT IS WRITTEN.

I have spoken.