

But to answer your question, we generally say around 100.

Mr. SMITH. About how many Indians are there?

Mr. REIFEL. For those for which the Federal Government assumes responsibility for the tribe, for instance, like my own, it would be something in the neighborhood of 450,000 to 500,000. Now as to Indians in the United States, this is something else. It is estimated that west of the Mississippi River there are probably 2 million people of Indian descent.

Mr. SMITH. Did you have an Indian name?

Mr. REIFEL. Yes; my Indian name was Lone Feather.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Anything further?

Mr. MADDEN. I want to commend the gentleman for his statement. That statement you made is the most illuminating statement as far as so-called civil rights justice is concerned to a great segment of our population that I have heard in all of the testimony that I have heard on this bill.

Mr. REIFEL. Thank you, Mr. Madden.

Mr. MADDEN. In other words, this legislation, if enacted into law, would be more or less a kind of Magna Carta for the Indians. Isn't that right?

Mr. REIFEL. That is right.

Mr. MADDEN. Now, don't you think it is fair—the chairman mentioned Mr. Aspinall—why is it that the committee that Mr. Aspinall is chairman of didn't take up legislation that would cure these injustices 1, 5, 10, or 15 years ago, or his predecessors on that committee?

Mr. REIFEL. I wouldn't be able to answer that question. There has been, of course, recognition, as I mentioned in my statement, of the Indian tribes as separate nations, being dealt with as separate nations, and they had sovereignty, and on that basis these tribes were organized and the tribal courts came along and these courts became courts of last resort, and not too much of a problem arose. Now the Indian leadership finds it a problem to deal with. In the programs supported by the Federal Government, for instance in education, we are not having the number of young men and women finishing high school, going to universities and colleges, coming back as lawyers; they are beginning to understand that there is this limitation in our present system.

Mr. MADDEN. In other words, the people are becoming more educated?

Mr. REIFEL. That's right. I think this is now being surfaced.

Mr. MADDEN. Now don't you think it is very fair, legislatively speaking, with the wonderful statement you have made regarding the part of this bill pertaining to Indian rights, and with the almost unanimous endorsement of the Indian population over the Nation and the tribes, don't you think it is fair that if there is anything so devastating that Chairman Aspinall or any other Member of Congress would think that this legislation pertaining to the Indians should not be passed in this way, don't you think that the fairness of 435 Members of Congress when this resolution gets down there can vote it down, if there is something so devastating that will hurt the Indians?