

Mr. REIFEL. Thank you, Mr. Delaney.

Mr. DELANEY. I have supported what little legislation has been proposed, and I certainly will go out of my way on every occasion to support legislation giving them the rights they are entitled to.

Mr. REIFEL. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Latta.

Mr. LATTA. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that this is one of the finest statements we have heard made to the committee. Did you hear Mr. Aspinall's testimony before this committee this morning?

Mr. REIFEL. No, sir.

Mr. LATTA. He indicated not one, but he said tribes of Indians were opposed to this, that there was more than just one. Perhaps you would want to check this out with him and see whether or not there are other tribes that he has knowledge of who are opposed to this, other than the one tribe in New Mexico.

I would also like to ask you how the crime rate on an Indian reservation compares to the crime rate generally in the United States?

Mr. REIFEL. The minor offenses that are covered by the tribal courts, I suppose, would—I am just going back over my experience—would be not too unlike any group of disadvantaged, distressed people in a community, because, as you are probably aware, up in Alaska we have as high as 80 percent unemployment among the Alaskan natives.

And generally on the Indian reservations throughout the United States, something like 40 percent of the people are unemployed. And when you have this kind of depressed economic situation, you have social conditions that deteriorate accordingly.

So you will have a pretty high incidence of minor law violations. Now, the major crimes that are covered by the Federal Government are probably no greater or no less than the general public. That is murder, rape, and assault with a dangerous weapon and so on.

Mr. LATTA. As a matter of fact, you really don't know.

Mr. REIFEL. That is right.

Mr. LATTA. I don't know either, and that is the reason I asked the question. I heard the major crime rate on the Indian reservations was lower than it was generally in the United States, and I would just like to know.

Mr. REIFEL. I would agree with that assumption, but it would just be an assumption.

Mr. LATTA. And just one further question, Mr. Chairman. You indicated that you are glad to see the matter of prohibiting the freedom of religion stricken in this bill? Did you make a comment like that?

Mr. REIFEL. I said the provision was made definitely for some of the tribes—take the Pueblos, for instance—it is in the nature of a theocracy. To the extent that they would legislate in the area of religion they may do so, because of the deference that is paid these tribes that still practice this.

Mr. LATTA. The only question I raise now is on page 13. The language reads "No Indian tribe in exercising powers of self-government shall: (1) make or enforce any law prohibiting the free exercise of religion," et cetera.

I just wondered whether or not that might conflict with the statement you just made?

Mr. REIFEL. This is in the section that—