

Yakima Indians, they proceeded to do something to bring the Wheeler-Howard Act to the Indians through a deceitful scheme, which apparently worked.

In about the year 1941 the Indian Bureau, its representatives and its tribal council started and continued their underhanded methods to induce the Yakima Indians to adopt the provisions of the Act of August 9, 1946. The provisions of this act were never properly and honestly explained to the Yakima Indians in general, for if they had been the act would have been rejected just as overwhelmingly as the Wheeler-Howard Act was.

The Yakima Indians did not realize the effect of this act until recently, when the tribal council which was established under the provisions of this act commenced to exercise its authority.

The Yakima Indians now find themselves in the hands of a tribal council dominated by the Indian Bureau, which tribal council is squandering the monies belonging to the Yakima Indians.

We, the undersigned, representing the majority of the Yakima Indians, respectfully beg your assistance in obtaining repeal of Public Law 706.

HATTIE PURVIS HOPTOWIT,
MINNIE MCCOY WHITEFOOT.
(and 46 others).

In all of the Congresses, with the exception of one or two, since the 82nd Congress, legislation has been before the Congresses for its consideration, and hearings having been held on several bills providing for the repeal of the Act of August 9, 1946.

We direct your attention to House Committee hearings of March 12, 13, 18, and 20, 1959, on H.R. 1176, 86th Congress, Serial No. 7, page 93, captioned, "Appendix", the Committee note follows:

"(Committee Note.—The following letter from Mr. E. J. Wilton, Chairman, Yakima Indian Association of Washington State and the attached exhibits have been submitted as a general refutation of the statements made by Mr. James B. Hovis, Yakima Council Attorney and members of the Tribal Council, before the House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs on March 12, 13, 18, and 20, 1959, with reference to hearings on H.R. 1176, 86th Cong.)"

For convenient reference, a complete copy of the printed hearings before the House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs on H.R. 1176, 86th Congress, Serial No. 7, is furnished. (The hearing referred to is in the files of the Committee.)

The witnesses, on March 4, 1968, who testified in opposition to the repeal of Section 7 of said Act of August 9, 1946, claim that the retention of said Act has caused the members of the Tribe to work together peacefully, harmoniously and prosperously for more than 20 years without successful interruption, when in fact the enactment of the said Act has proved a hindrance to progress.

The Yakima Reservation is one of the most productive reservations in the United States. The Yakima irrigation project is perhaps the most productive of all Indian irrigation projects, yet, for the most part, these irrigated lands are leased to non-Indians. The latest official report on the Yakima Indian land use, available to me is for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1945, which records that the Indians operated 12,141 acres and non-Indians operated 67,703 acres. I do not believe that this situation has changed materially. Such stagnation and lack of progress is largely due to the enactment of the Act of August 9, 1946, and the archaic system of procedure in the election of tribal councilmen. Once elected as councilmen, such election usually follow a continuance to serve for life, followed by the election of their sons and grandsons.

At the hearing on S. 1764, March 4, 1968, the Tribal Council witnesses, also Commissioner Bennett, constantly inferred that the Yakima Tribes are in favor of retaining the said Act of August 9, 1946, when the fact is that the enrolled members of the tribe has never had the opportunity to vote as to its acceptance or rejection.

The overwhelming vote in favor of retaining the said Act claimed by the Tribal Council witnesses is usually by votes taken in the General Council, tallying 137 votes for retaining the Act and 3 votes against.

The issue as to whether or not the Yakima Tribe favors the retention of the said Act has never been submitted to the enrolled of the Tribe.

Such votes at 137 to 3 in the General Council are also illegal, because quorums were not present and voting. A quorum in the General Council is 250 to start with, thereafter 175 members must remain in attendance for legal business.

The only occasion which the members of the Yakima Tribes have been the opportunity to vote on any proposition was on the matter of whether or not they