

HFP - Dan Spiegel
"Indians"

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

March 31, 1972

Miss Ada Deer
Chairwoman
Menominee Voting Trust
Box 71
Keshena, Wisconsin 54135

Dear Miss Deer:

I was greatly encouraged to learn that you are involved in the development of a proposal for legislation that would reinstitute the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, returning the Menominee people to their legal status as "Indians", and that would repeal the termination Act of 1954. This reform is long overdue, and I pledge my full support.

The termination of the Trust on the lands and of services to the Tribe and individuals was generally viewed as a precipitous action on the part of Congress in responding to a claims judgment resulting from apparent Government mismanagement of Menominee affairs. The Kennedy Administration in 1961 proposed that this termination be delayed, to permit the development of effective plans for forestry management and for the provision of essential services to people that could not be adequately supported by the local economy.

The Menominee people, I believe, are united in recognition of the need to restore the Federal Government's commitment and responsibility to the Menominee Indian Tribe, to the protection of their land resources, and to the reaffirmation of the legal rights of the people. You may be assured that I will do everything possible to see that this is accomplished.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

Hubert H. Humphrey

MEMORANDUM

March 31, 1972

Sent

TO: Joe Cerrell
FROM: Dan S.
SUBJECT:

This is a statement on the Menominee Indians that was prepared by an expert in this area for us. Humphrey is not visiting them and needs this statement. It should be released as soon as possible from Milwaukee. We will not do a Washington release. McGovern and Muskie, both, have made statements on the Menominees.

The Menominees are in an area west of Green Bay, and an effort should be made to get this message up there to various media.

STATEMENT BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FROM
MISS ADA DEER, ~~CHAIRMAN~~, MENOMINEE VOTING TRUST
KESHENA, WISCONSIN

Chairwoman

I AM PLEASED TO HEAR THAT YOU ARE DEVELOPING
LEGISLATION TO REINSTITUTE THE MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF
WISCONSIN TO RETURN THE MENOMINEE INDIANS TO THEIR LEGAL
STATUS AS "INDIANS;" AND TO REPEAL THE TERMINATION ACT OF
1954. THIS REFORM IS LONG OVERDUE, AND I PLEDGE MY SUPPORT.
~~OF COURSE, I CANNOT COMMENT ON LEGISLATION WHICH HAS BEEN
DEVELOPED, BUT I AM WITH YOU IN PRINCIPLE, AND YOU WILL
HAVE MY SUPPORT WHEN THE TIME COMES.~~

MENOMINEE TERMINATION IS ONE OF THOSE MISTAKES OF THE
PAST WHICH WE NOW HAVE A CHANCE TO CORRECT. IN 1954, IT
WAS TIME FOR CONGRESS TO PAY FOR DAMAGES ASSESSED BY THE
COURT OF CLAIMS BECAUSE OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT OF
MENOMINEE AFFAIRS. SOME OF THE MENOMINEES AND MANY MEMBERS
OF CONGRESS FELT THAT IF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT HAD BEEN
THAT BAD, THE "MANAGER" OUGHT TO BE FIRED, AND THAT
TERMINATION OF THE TRUST ON THE LANDS AND TERMINATION OF
SERVICES TO THE TRIBE AND TO MENOMINEE INDIVIDUALS WAS THE
WAY TO DO IT. MANY KNOWLEDGABLE MENOMINEES AND THEIR
FRIENDS WERE SURE THAT TERMINATION WAS PREMATURE.
NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS DONE AND AFTER SOME DELAY, IT WAS

ABOUT TO BECOME FINAL ⁱⁿ 1961 WHEN JOHN F. KENNEDY BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THERE WAS STILL A LITTLE TIME TO CORRECT THE ERROR, AND ON APRIL 10, 1961, ALMOST EXACTLY 11 YEARS AGO, THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED THAT TERMINATION BE DELAYED FOR AT LEAST 3 YEARS, WHILE THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNTY ADMINISTRATION, AND FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FOREST ENTERPRISE WERE TRIED OUT. HAD THAT PLAN BEEN ADOPTED, IT WOULD HAVE QUICKLY BECOME CLEAR THAT FOREST ENTERPRISE COULD NOT SUPPORT THE COUNTY; AND THAT THE DEMANDS FOR HUMAN SERVICES FROM THE COUNTY WOULD BE SO GREAT AS TO THREATEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE FOREST ENTERPRISE. BUT, IF THIS CONDITION BECAME APPARENT THE LANDS WOULD HAVE BEEN PROTECTED IN TRUST; AND THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT HAVE LOST THEIR LEGAL STATUS AS "INDIANS." UNFORTUNATELY, THAT PROPOSAL WAS NOT ADOPTED.

HISTORY IS NOT ALWAYS SO GENEROUS AS TO GIVE US A SECOND CHANCE. IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO SAVE THE MENOMINEE FOREST AND PEOPLE, BUT WE MUST MOVE DECISIVELY. THE MENOMINEE PEOPLE BOTH ON AND OFF THE RESERVATION AND ^{the} ~~THAT~~ STATE OF WISCONSIN ARE, I BELIEVE, UNITED IN RECOGNITION OF THE NEED AND HAVE A REMEDY. LET US ACKNOWLEDGE OUR MISTAKE OF 20 YEARS AGO AND ACT SWIFTLY TO CORRECT IT.



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