

APPROVED  
AUG 13 1954

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Let A Day  
8/20/54

AUG 12 1954

My dear Mr. President:

On August 9, 1954, the Executive Clerk notified this office that S. 2745, "To provide for the termination of Federal supervision over the property of the Klamath Tribe of Indians located in the State of Oregon and the individual members thereof, and for other purposes", had been received at the White House and requested reports and recommendations as to the approval of the bill.

This measure is one of the more controversial Indian "termination" bills developed in response to House Concurrent Resolution 108. In the accompanying House Report No. 2483 factual data relating to the Klamath Tribe are set forth on pp. 3-5, a history of S. 2745 is set forth on pp. 5-7, and a section-by-section summary is set forth on pp.7-11.

As indicated in the House Report, opposition by some members of the tribe was expressed to S. 2745, as introduced. These opposition elements were apparently responsible for the amendment of the bill by the addition of sections 5 and 6. These sections provide for an appraisal of all tribal property, after which each adult member of the tribe or family head shall immediately either (1) elect to withdraw from the tribe and have his or his family's tribal interest converted into money and paid to him, or (2) remain in the tribe and participate in the tribal management plan contemplated by the bill. The degree to which tribal assets will be liquidated under this scheme is of course unknown at this time, but it can be assumed that the approximately one million acres of valuable tribal land, plus other considerable assets of the tribe, will be appreciably reduced in order to satisfy those members electing to withdraw from the tribe. The greater the number withdrawing from the tribe, the less chance there will be for effective management of the remaining tribal assets on behalf of those who elect to retain their identification with the tribe. It is the expressed intention of the Congress that all actions under sections 5 and 6 be completed within four years, and since the basis upon which individual Indians can make a decision will not be forthcoming in less than a year, and may take two years or longer,




the necessity under the language of the statute for individual Indians to make a decision "...immediately after the appraisal of the tribal property..." puts a burden on each adult or family head for making a decision which will affect his or his family's welfare for all time.

This decision would be difficult enough if all the facts for making a decision were available, but under the terms of the bill, these facts will not be available until all individuals who elect to withdraw from the tribe have signified their choice. After the number renouncing their tribal membership becomes known, it would then be possible to have a fairly firm idea of the kind and extent of residual tribal resources which would be available for joint tribal management. This knowledge would be basic to estimating the relative advantages of casting one's lot with the tribe, or leaving it.

In spite of these considerations, it is apparent that both the official tribal delegates, and representatives of the "opposition" group have approved the bill as amended by sections 5 and 6, and both groups have been freely consulted in developing the bill, as amended.

The Department of the Interior recommends approval of the bill and the Department of Justice interposes no objection to its approval. The Bureau of the Budget recommends its approval.

Respectfully yours,



Assistant Director for  
Legislative Reference

The President

The White House

Enclosures

