

UP FROM DUST AND DARKNESS

-By Lew Barton-

Chapter 2: INDIANS OF NORTH CAROLINA (Cont.)

Legal technicalities and subtleties have created two distinct groups of American Indians, one group "GI" and the other not, and because of this, a good many people are and have always been sincerely confused as to who is an Indian and who is not. Right here in North Carolina, for example, only one group, the Cherokee of mountainous western North Carolina are federally recognized in the sense that they are enumerated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs which holds in trust their lands (which make up their Federal Reservation), "Reservation Indians," or "federally-recognized Indians," have some advantages that non-reservation Indians, such as the Indians of Robeson and adjoining counties of North Carolina, have not. For example, the Federal Government, through HEW, is responsible for their health and education.

But not even the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D. C. would dare say there are no Indians other than the Cherokee in North Carolina. In fact, here's exactly what the BIA DOES say about non-reservation Indians in the State of North Carolina (as borrowed from its book entitled, *Indians of North Carolina* [p.7]).

OTHER INDIAN GROUPS

Indians other than the Cherokee live in North Carolina but they are without a special relationship to the Federal Government. These include an estimated 31,000 Lumbee Indians who live in Robeson and adjoining counties, 2,000 Halifax Indians in Halifax and Warren Counties, an estimated 2,000 Indians in Waccamaw communities in Columbus and Brunswick Counties, and an estimated 3,000 Coharie Indians in Sampson and adjoining Counties. Questions concerning these groups should be addressed to the Executive Director, North

Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, Lumbee Regional Development Association, P. O. Box 637, Pembroke, North Carolina 28372.

It is a strange and ironic situation, is it not? The "special relationship" spoken of by the BIA, often hinges upon whether or not a state or ever existed between a particular Indian group and the U. S. Government, for example. Or it may be based upon some special treaty between the United States and that particular tribe, signed in an effort to stave off impending war. Whatever the basis for BIA recognition, however, these were all individual agreements between the United States and one single group, as a rule. There were several thousand of these treaties in all; and according to U. S. Indian Claims Commissioner Brantley Blue, every single one of them has been broken somewhere along the line. So maybe in some ways, we are better off because we have no such treaty. At least we are not under BIA domination, and can do whatever we please with our own lands, those among us who are fortunate enough to have them. On the other hand, there are those among us who have no such lands; and they could be expected to favor reservation life. One hitch there, according to the U. S. Department of the Interior, is that we have no lands suitable for reservations.

In a very real sense, however, the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina ARE recognized by the Federal Government and at a level even higher than the U. S. Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Indian Affairs. We are recognized as Indians by both the General Assembly of North Carolina AND the Congress of the United States. Such recognition as it is, that is.

In an Act Relating to the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina, passed by the Congress of the United States June 7, 1956, the highest and

greatest lawmaking body in the world lauds us and applauds us for our splendid history, officially designates us as Indians, but then quickly speaks out of the other side of its mouth, saying that "nothing in this act" is to be construed as meaning that we shall have any consideration whatever "because of their status as Indians." Talk about Indian-giving! Here is probably the most wretched case of it in American history! In this case, the Congress of the United States not only practiced discrimination on the basis of race, or more precisely, a minute segment of a race, but also made its discrimination the law of the land. Should not Congress also obey its own laws, especially when it is creating a new law? We don't even have the same rights as other non-recognized tribes, not if some department of the Federal Government such as ONAP really wanted to make an issue of the matter!

This controversial law of the land reads as follows:

Public Law 570-84th Congress Chapter 375-2nd Session H.R. 4656

An Act Relating to the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina

Whereas many Indians now living in Robeson and adjoining counties are descendants of that once large and prosperous tribe which occupied the lands along the Lumbee River at the time of the earliest white settlements in that section; and

Whereas at the time of their first contacts with the colonists these Indians were a well-established and distinctive people living in European-type houses in settled towns and communities, owning slaves and livestock, tilling the soil, and practicing many of the arts and crafts of European civilization; and

Whereas by reason of tribal legend, coupled with a distinctive appearance and manner of speech and the frequent recurrence among

them of family names such as Oquadin, Locklear, Chavis, Drinkwater, Bullard, Lowery, Sampson, and others, also found on the roster of the earliest English settlements, these Indians may, with considerable show of reason, trace their origin to an admixture of colonial blood with certain coastal tribes of Indians; and

Whereas these people are naturally and understandably proud of their heritage, and desirous of establishing their social status and preserving their racial history: Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. That the Indians now residing in Robeson and adjoining counties of North Carolina, originally found by the first white settlers on the Lumbee River in Robeson County, and claiming joint descent from remnants of early American colonists and certain tribes of Indians originally inhabiting the coastal regions of North Carolina, shall, from and after the ratification of this Act, be known and designated as Lumbee Indians of North Carolina and shall continue to enjoy all rights, privileges, and immunities enjoyed by them as citizens of the State of North Carolina and of the United States as they enjoyed before the enactment of this Act, and shall continue to be subject to all the obligations and duties of such citizens under the laws of the State of North Carolina and the United States. **Nothing in this Act shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians.**

Sec. 2. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed. **Approved June 7, 1956.**

What's wrong with this law specifically? One may ask. Is it the name, Lumbee? The name has nothing to do with it. The following words are what's wrong with it: "Nothing in this Act shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians."

Until the administration of former President Richard M. Nixon, Watergate notwithstanding, there were absolutely no benefits on the Federal Government level for any Indians other than the federally-recognized Indians. Say whatever else you feel you must about him, he is the only President to give the non-reservation Indian a real status. He did so by establishing the Office of Native American Programs, or ONAP. Some body won't like me for saying so, but the simple historical truth is that Mr. Nixon did more for the American Indian

than any other President in history, bar none. He may have wronged others. But he blessed us. And honesty compels me to say so.

The enemies and ill-wishers of the American Indians have always used one sure-fire, never-fail weapon or strategy against us. And it has been more deadly and more devastating, in a very real sense, than even the alleged deliberate spreading of small pox germs among us.

That formula for our destruction is and has always been simply this: **Set Indian Against Indian.**

The U. S. Department of the Interior, through its Bureau of Indian Affairs, the National Congress of American Indians, certain Cherokees and others, has effectively brought that Indian vs. Indian weapon into play against us once more. The Jordan-Rose Bill to rid the Lumbees of racial discrimination has been defeated to date.

And the law of the land, Public Law 570, 84th Congress, Chapter 375, 2nd Session, H. R. 4656, still continues to make racial discrimination against the Indians of Robeson and adjoining counties of N. C. not only legal but mandatory, in its literal interpretation.

Continued next week

Our own people fought against both attempts to change the bill. Our own blood brothers, the Cherokee Indians, fought us tooth and nail. The Congress of American Indians, which stood by us so stalwartly during the Save Old Man campaign, opposed us in our attempt to gain simple justice and non-discrimination for our people. Why? The guess I would venture is pure greed, which also includes jealousy. We can't blame that on "the white man," nor "the black man," either. We must lay that monumental failure at the doorstep of the Red Man.

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Continued next week

Business Seminar Planned

The Economic Development Project of Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. will conduct a Business Seminar on Oct. 26, at 7:30 p.m. The seminar will be housed at Pembroke Housing Authority's Locklear Court Community Center-located adjacent to Lowery's Ball Park in Pembroke. Guest speaker for this important occasion will be Mr. Jerry Dodson, Executive Director of North Carolina Office of Minority Business Enterprise.

According to Gary Deese, E. D. Project Director, the purpose of the seminar will be to provide minority businessmen with a spectrum of the many services that OMBE provides. OMBE was established to assist minority owned businesses. OMBE will initiate programs of financial assistance, procurement assistance and educational/information services to minorities and disadvantaged people in North Carolina.

Mr. Dodson's presentation will thoroughly elaborate and explain what programs OMBE has in operation: 1) Technical assistance (planning and referral); 2) Management guidance (education and training); 3) Market analysis; 4) Venture capital (financing); 5) Contract procurement (local, state and federal).

In conclusion, all minority businessmen in Robeson County are encouraged to attend. The concepts learned from this seminar will greatly assist, if applied, each businessman in the operation of his respective business. Hope to see your there.

Gospel Sing

The Disabled American Veterans of Robeson County will sponsor an annual gospel sing on Nov. 6, 1976 at the Pembroke Elementary School. The Scott Sisters will be among the featured singers. The singing begins at 7 p.m. Admission is \$1.50 with children under 12 and senior citizens admitted free. Every one is invited to attend.



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(BY MAIL)



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One cash refund per family/void wherever prohibited, licensed, restricted, or taxed. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. Offer expires January 1, 1977. Refund request must be made on this official order form. C.C.S.R. 976

October 30, 1938-Orson Welles popular actor, causes a national panic when he produces a radio dramatization of H.G. Wells' "The War of the Worlds" over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

VOLE FOR CARNELL LOCKLEAR ROBESON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN

Dear Friends:

"The Board of Education is a very important body because it helps shape our leaders of tomorrow. If we have a strong Board, then we will have strong leaders in the future. If we have weak leaders, then our children in turn become weak.

"I will not tell you I can bring heaven to the Robeson County Board of Education because I cannot do that. I am not going to make promises that I know I cannot deliver. The platform I deliver to you. I know I can deliver if given co-operation among other board members.

"I promise if elected I will work for all children, all schools, all teachers, all principals, not just one or two. I will always be candid with everyone. I will work very hard to run our schools in a businesslike manner because our school system is a business. The board handles taxpayers' money and to me, my friends, that is the most important factor, to be sure the money is used as it is intended and nothing else.

"Here is part of my platform:

"(1) To fight for communication between the school board and the communities because many people in the communities do not know anything about their school board and how it functions.

"(2) A strong affirmative action plan for the staff and the administration.

(3) Have a good representation of all races in the department of administration within the Board of Education.

"(4) A good qualified Indian Superintendent because 60 percent of the enrollment is Indian; twenty percent is Black and twenty percent is white.

"(5) Better utilization of the Indian

Education Act monies. Example: Special programs for students with special talents. In doing this we can help to develop creative talents that our children have.

"(6) Teach our youngsters about their heritage. Example: Go to the state board of education to fight to get our heritage taught in our schools.

"(7) Be sure and fight to see that all schools are accredited by proper agencies.

"(8) Fight to see that all schools are on the same standards.

"(9) I will visit each school, talk to the children, principals and teachers to see what kind of problems they are having. If any problems occur, work to solve them at the next meeting.

"(10) I will fight to have a good strong reading program all through school. If a child can read he can find a way to a prosperous life, besides, he or she has that RIGHT.

"Friends, these are some important issues I want to help accomplish. And I can with your help because they are fair and simple. I think a person running for Public office should have already proven themselves to be responsive to the needs of people. And the board of education is concerned with people. I have helped solve all kinds of problems for people. The board has problems now and with my leadership and my platform many of the problems can and will be solved.

"Please give me a chance. I am a MAN OF ACTION. Will you please keep me in ACTION? I need your vote of confidence on Tuesday, November 2, 1976. Thank you."

Nov 2, 1976

HE HAS BEEN RESPONSIVE!

