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THE WHITE HOUSE

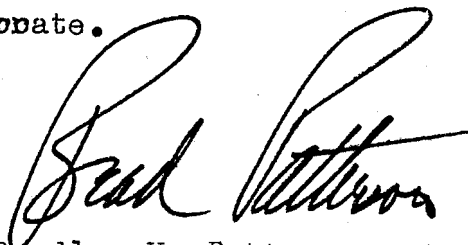
WASHINGTON

September 22, 1976

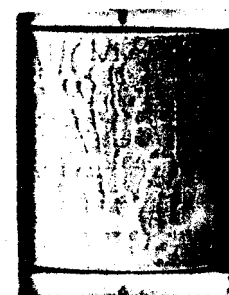
NOTE TO SUPERINTENDENT DEMERY

Per our conversation.

Please send me back a draft response if you think the White House should reply. We are clearly not interested in intervening in any internal tribal political squabble, nor in giving any aid or comfort to any AIM faction, but just as emphatically it is important that local government business and decision-making be "in the sunshine" with fiscal and budgetary and audit information available to all voting members of the electorate.



Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.



Indians for a Democratic Government

White Earth Indian Reservation, Box 265

White Earth, Minnesota 56591

Edward J. Martin, Chairman,

Lawry, Minnesota 56521

September 16, 1976

Mrs. Rosalie Ballant, Secretary
White Earth, Minnesota 56591

President Ronald R. Ford

President of the United States

White House

Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President

Our committee is an informal group of unaffiliated

members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, we are also residents

of the White Earth Indian Reservation, Minnesota. Our committee

has been active intermittently during the past six years

in the purpose of bringing about a truly representative

executive Business Committee which would abide by and

protect our constitution and By-Laws. It is the failure

of unwillingness of our elected officials to fairly and

impartially carry out their duties under our constitution,

now is asking the dues of our grievances, that is,

being the association and counsel of the most powerful

executive officials in the United States our President.



Richard H. Frank

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Sept. 16, 1976

is a group. Citizens and that payers of the United States
and include members of the Shipyard Industry Minutemen, we
are not a group of friends, we are not a group of political
positions or political and leaders. Our group is composed of
representative, mass-action of the entire reservation
community, our members are self-employed business people
retired persons, laborers and the unemployed. And we are
all Shipyard Indians.

During the past six years our group has supported
and campaigned for the election of Mr. John Faring of
Sylaburwah, Minutemen, to the Reservation Business
Committee. During that period of time we have supported
Mr. Faring in five reservation elections, losing each of three
elections, our candidate has campaigned on a platform
calling for open and public meetings of the Reservation
Business Committee, fiscal integrity and public accounting;
in addition to public involvement in the operations of the
reservation affairs, fair and equal opportunities and the
part of all reservation residents to take part in and
benefit from reservation resources and programs.
On the basis of this platform, our candidate has drawn
at least 50% of total resident and non resident vote in
each of these elections. However, because of the political

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976



maneuverings and outright fraudulent election practices

of the incumbent Reservation Business Committee and

Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, our

candidate was deprived of the office to which he was

fairly elected at least twice.

Mrs. Foley was ultimately seated as a precinct

Committeeman on the Business Committee as a result

of the reservation election held in June of this year.

Having finally been seated on the committee, Mrs. Foley's

attempts to gather information regarding financial

accounting, pressing for open and public meetings of

the committee, public involvement in the decisions

of the committee, in a word, all of the principals upon

which the campaign and in which the majority

of the reservation residents support him, have been

completely and utterly frustrated. Our candidates,

being only one voting member among four, has no

more information to-day regarding the reservation

financial and activities of the committee than he was

able to obtain in the six years of his candidacy. Our

candidate's attempts to obtain this information have

ended as a result of the refusal of a small clique

President Donald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976

The committee's members who have possession of all

files, records and accounts of the committee, to turn them

over to the newly elected Business Committee Chairman

and to locate these records and files in a central

location and to make the same available for inspection

from by all interested residents of the community.

It is this present state of affairs which has

arise in each of us a sense of utter frustration

and hopelessness and which prompts us to seek

the assistance of you, our president.

Our attempts to obtain a favorable resolution of

our grievances and to obtain answers to our many

questions regarding reconstruction during the

past six years have not been unimpressive nor

have our efforts lacked a great deal of hard work and

personal effort on the part of our members.

In 1973 members of our committee sponsored and

initiated petitions for the removal of two members

of the Reconstruction Business Committee on the basis of

allegations of authenticity and mishandling of reconstruction

files, in addition to other specific charges. On June

9, 1973 these petitions were duly removed upon the then

Chairman of the White Earth Reconstruction Business Committee,

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976

this procedure being provided for under the Revised Constitution and By-Laws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. The Business Committee failed to take any action on these petitions. The committee having failed to act, the petitions were then forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior on July 11, 1973. The Secretary of the Interior also failed to act and sent the petitions back down to the Area Superintendant of the Minnesota Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Bemidji, Minnesota.

Neither the Department of the Interior nor the local Bureau of Indian Affairs Superintendant made any investigation into the allegations and charges made in these petitions. At a meeting on October 15, 1973 with the Superintendant of the Minnesota Agency members of our committee were told that nothing could be done and that our group would have to bring about the changes we sought through the political process provided for under our constitution. This we attempted to do by conducting a strong and vigorous campaign on behalf of our candidate, Mr. La Voy during the elections of 1974. It was this same incumbent member of the

Richard Gerald R. Ford

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Business Committee against whom we circulated the petition for removal in 1973. Our efforts to seek redress of our grievances concerning the elections of 1974 are well documented in United States District Court, District of Minnesota, Third Division, Civil 6-74-223. The result of our two year battle to obtain relief from our complaints resulted in the total denial of our allegations and the dismissal of our action.

We have also attempted to press the Reservation Business Committee for public information concerning federal grants and allocations to our reservation and for public accounting of the expenditure of these various funds and allocations. To our total chagrin we recently learned from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Agency in Bemidji that our Reservation Business Committee had withdrawn and spent approximately \$83,000.00 of reservation program funds during the years 1972 and 1973 for the purpose of instituting a reservation administration program. Of that total, it appears that approximately \$30,000.00 was expended for salaries of the Committee members. The Committee members campaigned for and were

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976



ected to non-salary positions on the committee. At the fact that they paid themselves salaries out of reservation monies was neither made public nor were the local residents given an opportunity to express their opinions as to whether their elected officials should or should not be salaried.

Members of our committee have complained bitterly both publicly and privately concerning the expenditure of the Business Committee of Revenue Sharing funds. As a result of our complaints and requests for an accounting, the Office of Revenue Sharing finally conducted an audit of the Business Committee's Revenue Sharing account for the period February 9, 1973 to February 28, 1975. During that period of time, the Business Committee expended approximately \$100,000.00. Audit Report No 76-5. Issued December 3, 1975, concluded that the entire expenditure was in violation of the provisions of the revised Constitution and by-laws of the tribe in addition being in violation of Revenue Sharing regulations. On February 19, 1976, the office of Revenue Sharing served a letter of non-compliance on the then Chairman of the

President Gerald R. Ford

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pt 16, 1976.

reservation Business Committee in which the committee was given 60 days to comply. To our knowledge the Business Committee has not responded to the requirements of this compliance letter and continues to receive and expend Revenue Sharing monies.

The above is an example of the substantiation and documentation that we have been able to obtain regarding our complaints against the Business Committee. Our constitution and By-Laws requires an annual audit of all reservation accounts, but we have no information as to whether any audits have been performed during the past six years. Our constitution and By-Laws requires the Business Committee's Secretary Treasurer to maintain a minimum Fidelity Bond. Our Secretary Treasurer is the Chief financial officer of our committee and yet all evidence points to the fact that he is not bonded and continues to expend tribal monies without committee approval and without the knowledge and consent of people he is elected to serve. Our constitution and By-Laws requires public notice of all committee meetings and that the public be provided an opportunity to attend meetings of the committee and take part in committee decisions. For six years this has not been the case. Decisions regarding our affairs and the expenditure of our monies have been in secret and

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept. 16, 1976

is too often made by a minority of the committee and for their own personal and political and the gains of their political supporters.

During the past six years the taxpayers of this country have showed up their good faith and benevolence in an effort to assist us in improving the economy over our reservation, our lives and that of our children by granting us tens of thousands of tax dollars in ever increasing amounts. These monies, regardless of whether the source be Revenue Sharing, Anti-Poverty Program monies, use Improvement monies, etc., we feel, have been given us in trust to be spent for our collective benefit and not to be spent at the whim and caprice of a small group of individuals who have for too long given or denied those benefits to the majority of the reservation population by way of personal and political favoritism.

All too often, the present business committee has threatened, cajoled, individual persons and stifled their right of free speech and free political activity by the threatened loss of Business Committee sponsored employment to self and family. All too often the present Business Committee has given lip-service to the federally legislated doctrine of Indian self-Determination on one hand and yet on the other denied actual Indians their rightful benefit of the principal of Indian preference. All too often the present Business Committee

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Sept. 16, 1976



has expounded upon their various and innovative accomplishments on behalf of the reservation population for the news media and bureaucrats and yet we see no visible improvement in our lives or in that of the reservation economy.

If and when the Congress concludes that enough tax monies have been funneled to the reservation which would have been sufficient to create and sustain a permanent healthy economy, and cuts off the flow of tax monies, nothing will be left because nothing has been created. It is this which we fear the most. We remember all too well the poverty and hopelessness of our reservation economy prior to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. We realize that the seemingly bottomless horn-of-plenty does have its limits and that the false economy which our Business Committee likes to take credit for having created will vanish as quickly as have our personal constitution rights have in the hands of our unfair and dictatorial Reservation Business Committee.

In conclusion Mr. President, we request, as Indian citizens and tax payers that the Reservation Business Committee be made to account to us and the American tax payer. We ask that our petition for the removal of the present Secretary-Treasurer of the White Earth

President Gerald R. Ford

Page 11. eleven.

at 11/1976

Reservation Business Committee, presently being circulated
to be presented to the Business Committee shortly, be-
lieved by yourself as a mandate to purge our reservation
the cancerous growth of the deprivation of our personal
economic and Tribal rights which we have suffered
for so long. We ask that the General Accounting Office
immediately audit accounts and records of all reservation
monies received during the past six years. We ask that
the ^{Fed} Bureau of Investigation investigate and evaluate
possible illegal expenditures of Federal Tax monies
expended by the Reservation Business Committee during that
period of time. We ask that the Secretary of Interior require
the removal from the committee of those individuals found to be
guilty of malfeasance and dereliction of their elective duties
and to conduct and supervise free and open reservation
elections to fill any vacancies on the committee.

We make this request to you, Mr. President, with a deep sense
of responsibility and the knowledge that if this our final
act in opposition to an isolated case of tyranny and
oppression is unsuccessful then the American Indian
will truly have lost its final battle, ironically not
to the white man, but to his own.

With deepest regard,

Sincerely,

Rosalie Bellecourt
White Earth, Minnesota. 56591

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

See folder

"Revenue
Sharing"



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

B. V. Bellcount

you & got head

AIM being told

to get off the Chippewa

Paul



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

WC ~~I Rebel General~~

non-compliance

£ 100,000 in A.S.

10/11 2 payments

1/11

Probably criminal practices
May refer to Justice letter

Wrote TC in Feb
using funds for illegal uses.

No response.

New letter 2/14
Special assignment
request

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

No funds going in Oct.

B/A suspended --

no copy

No deal with a B/A

T.C. got a copy of the
audit

i.e. Reubin Roth

Chas. W.E. B.C.

Public documents.

Law requires Budget documents
to be made public
except expenditures.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TC ~~submitted~~ this law
~~Ad~~ In consequence a law
is still law.

Walt under F.O.I.

Ad

James Tully

Have they been refused
info from the local level?

Adm Hearing; probably
that will be public
Remains money may be forfeit

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Walt Harris



Edwin Demery
Superintendent
P.O. Box 1127
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

cc: BIA: Commissioner Thompson
Justice: Civil Rights
Division
Office of Revenue Sharing
(Treasury)



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 13, 1976

NOTE TO JEANNA TULLY

Thank you for your phone call of the other day and for sending me the materials about Revenue Sharing.

May I suggest, please, that you send a follow-up note on behalf of both of us to Mrs. Bellcourt (and send me a copy) since I hesitate to draft a letter here which deals so directly with your own regulations and which bears so closely on an active disciplinary case which your office is handling.

Please advise Mrs. Bellcourt on what her rights are to get access to the audit reports, tell her what you can about the disciplinary proceedings re the Tribal Council.





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

MINNESOTA AGENCY
THIRD FLOOR, FEDERAL BUILDING
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA 56601

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Administration

October 8, 1976

Mr. Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.
Assistant Director
Presidential Personnel Office
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Patterson:

This pertains to the request for Presidential assistance and counsel advanced by a small number of Minnesota Chippewa tribal members from the White Earth Reservation formed under the name, Indians for A Democratic Government, and your response of September 13, 1976, to its Secretary, Mrs. Rosalie Bellecourt.

This informal group is not affiliated with or a part of the American Indian Movement; in fact, they are said to be more anti than pro AIM. This group has raised objections to certain actions of their governing officials and have expressed dissatisfaction with the performances of some elected officers. They have encountered some adversities in their efforts to make changes in the reservation leadership and in some administrative procedures, as Mrs. Bellecourt describes them, but they should not expect that changes will occur with their first effort. Petitioning for the removal of any elected official is provided for in their governing documents and they are correct in pursuing this method of forcing changes in leadership, if it is the only way to change an unpopular direction or conduct.

Tribal governments are encouraged to adhere to their documented rules of authority and responsibility and we do encourage their dealing openly and with regard for all persons' rights. If and when this organization's petition is filed with this office, it will be given all due process and respect, for both the petitioners and those being petitioned against. We expect to deal fairly with any requests for audits or investigations where we are permitted to function and will work to remedy any problem area where our involvement in tribal affairs is not restricted.



We are returning the original letter Mrs. Bellecourt wrote.

Sincerely yours,

Edwin F. Demery

Superintendent

Enclosure

~~RECEIVED~~
RECEIVED

THE WHITE HOUSE

SEP 27 1976

WASHINGTON

Minnesota Agency

Bemidji, Minn.

September 22, 1976

NOTE TO SUPERINTENDENT DEMERY

Per our conversation.

Please send me back a draft response if you think the White House should reply. We are clearly not interested in intervening in any internal tribal political squabble, nor in giving any aid or comfort to any AIM faction, but just as emphatically it is important that local government business and decision-making be "in the sunshine" with fiscal and budgetary and audit information available to all voting members of the electorate.



Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.

cc: Justice/Civil Rights Division
Treasury/Office of Revenue-Sharing
BIA: M.T.



Pb return the original letter

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

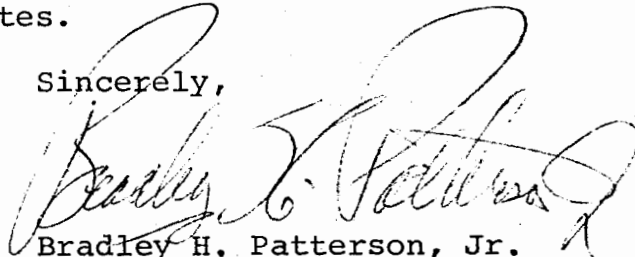
September 23, 1976

Dear Miss Bellcourt:

The President has asked me to thank you for your long and thoughtful letter.

I'll try to have a further response to you when I have more information. We in the Government must be careful not to intervene in internal Indian tribal political debates and processes, but with equal certainty I can say that we believe that all local Governments should do their business "in the sunshine" so that the local political and decision-making processes operate with full information to their electorates.

Sincerely,



Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.
Assistant Director
Presidential Personnel Office

Miss Rosalie Bellcourt
Indians for a Democratic Government
Box 265
White Earth Indian Reservation
White Earth, Minnesota 56591



10th
9/20/76

Indians For a Democratic Government
White Earth Indian Reservation. Box 265
White Earth, Minnesota 56591

Bernard L. Martin, Chairman,
Callaway, Minnesota 56521

September 16, 1976

Mrs. Rosalie Bellcourt, Secretary
White Earth, Minnesota 56591

President Gerald R. Ford
President of the United States
White House
Washington, D. C.



Dear Mr. President

Our committee is an informal group of enrolled members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, we are also residents of the White Earth Indian Reservation, Minnesota. Our committee has been active intermittently during the past six years for the purpose of bringing about a truly representative Reservation Business Committee which would abide by and uphold our Constitution and By-laws. It is the failure and unwillingness of our elected officials to fairly and impartially carry out their duties under our Constitution, which is seeking redress of our grievances, that is seeking the assistance and counsel of the most powerful elected official in the United States our President.

WHITE HOUSE
MAIL ROOM

1976 SEP 20 AM 10 56

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept. 16, 1976



As a group. Citizens and Tax payers of the United States and enrolled members of the Chippewa Tribe of Minnesota, we are not a group of cranks, we are not a group of political spoilers or political sore losers. Our group is composed of a representative cross-section of the entire reservation community, our members are self-employed business people retired persons, laborers and the reemployed. And we are all Chippewa Indians.

During the past six years our group has supported and campaigned for the election of Mr. John LaVoy of Naytahwaush, Minnesota, to the Reservation Business Committee. During that period of time we have supported Mr. LaVoy in five reservation elections. During each of these elections, our candidate has campaigned on a platform calling for open and public meetings of the Reservation Business Committee, fiscal integrity and public accounting; in addition to public involvement in the expenditure of all reservation monies, fair and equal opportunity on the part of all reservation residents to take part in and benefit from reservation resources and common property.

On the basis of this platform, our candidate has drawn at least 50% of both resident and non resident vote in each of these elections. However, because of the political

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976

Maneuverings and outright fraudulent election practices of the incumbent Reservation Business Committee and Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, our Candidate was deprived of the office to which he was fairly elected at least twice.

Mr. LaVay was ultimately seated as a precinct Committeeman on the Business Committee as a result of the reservation election held in June of this year.

Having finally been seated on the committee, Mr. LaVay's attempts to gather information regarding financial accounting, pressing for open and public meetings of the committee, public involvement in the decisions of the committee, in a word, all of the principals upon which he campaigned and in which the majority of the reservation residents support him, have been completely and utterly frustrated. Our candidate, being only one voting member among four, has no more information to-day regarding the reservation finances and activities of the committee than he was able to obtain in the six years of his candidacy. Our Candidate's attempts to obtain this information have stymied as a result of the refusal of a small clique

President Gerald R. Ford

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of the committee's members who have possession of all files, records and accounts of the committee, to turn them over to the newly elected Business Committee Chairman and to locate these records and files in a central location and to make the same available for inspection by all interested residents of the reservation.

It is this present state of affairs which has caused in each of us a sense of utter frustration and hopelessness and which prompts us to seek the assistance of you, our president.

Our attempts to obtain a favorable resolution of our grievances and to obtain answers to our many questions regarding reservation affairs during the past six years have not been unimagrative nor have our efforts lacked a great deal of hard work and personal expense on the part of our members.

In 1973 members of our committee sponsored and circulated petitions for the removal of two members of the Reservation Business Committee on the basis of Malfeasance of authority and mishandling of reservation monies, in addition to other specified charges. On June 13, 1973 these petitions were duly served upon the then Chairman of the White Earth Reservation Business Committee,

President Gerald R. Ford

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this procedure being provided for under the Revised Constitution and By-Laws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

The Business Committee failed to take any action on these petitions. The committee having failed to act, the petitions were then forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior on July 11, 1973. The Secretary of the Interior also failed to act and sent the petitions back down to the Area Superintendant of the Minnesota Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Bemidji, Minnesota.

Neither the Department of the Interior nor the local Bureau of Indian Affairs Superintendant made any investigation into the allegations and charges made in these petitions. At a meeting on October 15, 1973 with the Superintendant of the Minnesota Agency members of our committee were told that nothing could be done and that our group would have to bring about the changes we sought through the political process provided for under our constitution. This we attempted to do by conducting a strong and vigorous campaign on behalf our candidate, Mr. La Voy during the elections of 1974. It was this same incumbent member of the

President Gerald R. Ford

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Business Committee against whom we circulated the petition for removal in 1973. Our efforts to seek redress of our grievances concerning the elections of 1974 are well documented in United States District Court, District of Minnesota, Third Division, Civil 6-74-223. The result of our two year battle to obtain relief from our complaints resulted in the total denial of our allegations and the dismissal of our action.

We have also attempted to press the Reservation Business Committee for public information concerning federal grants and allocations to our reservation and for public accounting of the expenditure of these various funds and allocations. To our total chagrin we recently learned from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Agency in Bemidji that our Reservation Business Committee had withdrawn and spent approximately \$83,000.00 of reservation program funds during the years 1972 and 1973 for the purpose of instituting a reservation administration program.

Of that total, it appears that approximately \$30,000.00 was expended for salaries of the committee members. The committee members campaigned for and were

President Gerald R. Ford

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Sept 16, 1976

elected to non-salary positions on the committee. Yet the fact that they paid themselves salaries out of reservation monies was neither made public nor were the local residents given an opportunity to express their opinions as to whether their elected officials should or should not be salaried.

Members of our committee have complained bitterly both publicly and privately concerning the expenditure by the Business Committee of Revenue Sharing funds. As a result of our complaints and requests for an accounting, the Office of Revenue Sharing finally conducted an audit of the Business Committee's Revenue Sharing account for the period February 9, 1973 to February 28, 1975. During that period of time, the Business Committee expended approximately \$100,000.00. Audit Report No 76-5. dated December 3, 1975, concluded that the entire expenditure was in violation of the provisions of the Revised Constitution and by-laws of the tribe in addition to being in violation of Revenue Sharing regulations. On February 19, 1976, the office of Revenue Sharing served a letter of non-compliance on the then Chairman of the

President Gerald R. Ford

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Reservation Business Committee in which the committee was given 60 days to comply. To our knowledge the business committee has not responded to the requirements of this compliance letter and continues to receive and expend Revenue Sharing monies.

The above is an example of the substantiation and documentation that we have been able to obtain regarding our complaints against the Business Committee. Our constitution and By-Laws requires an annual audit of all reservation accounts, but we have no information as to whether any audits have been performed during the past six years. Our constitution and By-Laws requires the Business Committee's Secretary Treasurer to maintain a minimum Fidelity Bond. Our Secretary Treasurer is the chief financial officer of our committee and yet all evidence points to the fact that he is not bonded and continues to expend tribal monies without committee approval and without the knowledge and consent of people he is elected to serve. Our constitution and By-Laws requires public notice of all committee meetings and that the public be provided an opportunity to attend meetings of the committee and take part in committee decisions. For six years this has not been the case. Decisions regarding our affairs and the expenditure of our monies have been in secret and

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Sept. 16, 1976



all too often made by a minority of the committee and for their own personal and political and the gains of their political supporters.

During the past six years the taxpayers of this country have showed up their good faith and benevolence in an effort to assist us in improving the economy of our reservation, our lives and that of our children by granting us tens of thousands of tax dollars in ever increasing amounts. These monies, regardless of whether the source be Revenue Sharing, Anti-Poverty Programs, monies House Improvement monies, etc., we feel, have been given us in trust to be spent for our collective benefit and not to be spent at the whim and caprice of a small group of individuals who have for too long given or denied those benefits to the majority of the reservation population by way of personal and political favoritism.

All too often, the present business committee has threatened, cajoled individual persons and stifled their right of free speech and free political activity by the threatened loss of Business Committee sponsored employment to self and family. All too often the present Business Committee has given lip-service to the federally legislated doctrine of Indian Self-Determination on one hand and yet on the other denied local Indians their rightful benefit of the principal of Indian preference. All too often the present Business Committee

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has expounded upon their various and innovative accomplishments on behalf of the reservation population for the news media and bureaucrats and yet we see no visible improvement in our lives or in that of the of the reservation economy.

If and when the Congress concludes that enough tax monies have been funneled to the reservation which would have been sufficient to create and sustain a permanent healthy economy, and cuts off the flow of tax monies, nothing will be left because nothing has been created. It is this which we fear the most.

We remember all too well the poverty and hopelessness of our reservation economy prior to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. We realize that the seemingly bottomless horn-of-plenty does have its limits and that the false economy which our Business Committee likes to take credit for having created will vanish as quickly as have our personal constitution rights have in the hands of our unfair and dictatorial Reservation Business Committee.

In conclusion Mr. President, we request, as Indian citizens and tax payers that the Reservation Business Committee be made to account to us and the American tax payer. We ask that our petition for the removal of the present Secretary-Treasurer of the White Earth

President Gerald R. Ford

Page 11. eleven.

Sept. 16, 1976



Reservation Business Committee, presently being circulated and to be presented to the Business Committee shortly, be viewed by yourself as a mandate to purge our reservation of the cancerous growth of the deprivation of our personal economic and Tribal rights which we have suffered for so long. We ask that the General Accounting Office immediately audit accounts and records of all reservation monies received during the past six years. We ask that the ^{Feds} Bureau of Investigation investigate and evaluate possible illegal expenditures of Federal Tax monies expended by the Reservation Business Committee during that period of time. We ask that the Secretary of Interior require the removal from the committee of those individuals found to be guilty of malfeasance and dereliction of their elective duties and to conduct and supervise free and open reservation elections to fill any vacancies on the committee.

We make this request to you, Mr. President, with a deep sense of responsibility and the knowledge that if this our final act in opposition to an isolated case of tyranny and oppression is unsuccessful then the American Indian will truly have lost its final battle, ironically not to the white man, but to his own.

With deepest regard,

Sincerely,

Rosalie Bellecourt
White Earth, Minnesota, 56591