

WELFARE STATE IN ACTION



A PICTURE of Indians of the Six Nations picketing the White House probably attracted no more than a curious glance. But the next time you are traveling in a part of the country where there is a major Indian reservation, give it more than a curious glance. Give a thoughtful look. There, but for the grace of God, sit you, or we.

But for the grace of God — and the independence of a lot of ancestors who figured they would work things out for themselves rather than look to the government to take care of them.

The Indians were not given as much choice about it. For more than 170 years — though considerably less in the case of some tribes which were less tractable than others — the all-providing guardian of the reservation Indians has been the United States government. In any case, since well beyond the memory of any living elder, the reservation Indian has been the beneficiary of a cradle-to-the-grave Welfare State administered in Washington.

What is the result?

In Mississippi, the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger and Daily News* recently looked to the Choctaw Indians, whose reservation is there, for an answer. A missionary called the Choctaws the most poverty-stricken group in the nation. The only serious challenge we can think of to that statement might come from those who would claim that the distinction belongs to some other reservation tribe. This condition has been developed under generation after generation of management of economic affairs by federal "experts." It is to such management as this that the welfare enthusiasts want to turn over the entire American economy.

The missionary critic said the adult Choctaws average a second grade education. An Indian Agency official said this wasn't so, that the Choctaws have a fourth grade average. The federal government, from the beginning, has been responsible for providing education for the reservation Indians. This is the same govern-

ment which the federal aiders say must plunge into all American public education at once, to save it from "disaster."

The last school census showed some 91,000 Indians of school age. A third of these were in public schools, off the reservations. Nearly 8,000 were in mission schools. About half of the rest were in federally provided schools. On the Navajo reservation alone, in the Southwest, there were 15,000 school age children not in school. School facilities were not available for them. It is to the federal government, which has had the responsibility for reservation schools from the beginning, that the federal aid enthusiasts now want the whole country to look for money and example in providing adequate schools. What an example!

The tuberculosis death rate among the Choctaws is put at five times the national average. The infant death rate is termed three times the national average. The federal government is and has been responsible for hospitals and medical care for the reservation Indians. The welfare staters want to turn over the health of the entire nation to the mercies of a bureaucracy with a record like this.

These are, to be sure, examples from the worst of the Indians' experience. Many Indians, either in groups or individually, now live just as well as anyone else. But they haven't done it under the care and feeding of the federal government! These are the ones who have succeeded in taking over the management of their own affairs or who have left the reservations or who have been so fortunate as to have oil turn up under their tribal lands.

Take a long and thoughtful look at the tribal groups which have continued to depend on the wisdom and benevolence of federal paternalism. You will see what all America would be like a few generations from now if the welfare state planners should succeed in taking over.

Let's not let it happen. Let's chuck the Welfare State, with its "security" and its "benefits," into the ash can where it belongs. Let's go back to the principles and practices of individual initiative. They built a nation out of a wilderness. They can keep the nation going forward to ever greater heights of freedom and progress. • • •

From *The Indianapolis Star*, March 21, 1959.

PROPHETIC INTIMATIONS

A modern lesson from the French Revolution

IT IS THE TEST of an enduring classic that it has the ability to maintain an underground life during periods when its spirit or its morality or its lesson is not in fashion. Andrew Dickson White's *Fiat Money Inflation in France*, which has just been republished again by the Foundation for Economic Education with an introduction by Henry Hazlitt (128 pp. \$1.25 paper; \$2.00 cloth), is such a classic. Both its spirit and its morality are old-fashioned, and its lesson (though inexorable) has been honored more in the breach than in the observance. But it has always come back, a source of indisputable fact and wisdom for the discerning.

This time the republication of *Fiat Money Inflation in France*, with its many prophetic intimations, promises to have a major impact. The battle for and against inflation rages in Washington, with the tide seemingly running strongly against the stalwart few who object to the notion that governments are instituted among

men to serve as grab-bags. In the country at large, however, the whole rigmarole of "social democratic" economics (interventionism, Keynesian spending, the sacrifice of all other values to the fetish of full employment) commands less intellectual prestige than it did a few years back. And in Europe, where the social democratic ideas have raged through country after country like a plague, a real libertarian revival seems to be taking place in government itself. As is generally known, the ideas of Mont Pelerin Society libertarian professors have been dominant in West Germany for almost a decade. More recently these ideas have crossed the Rhine: Charles de Gaulle has been taking his economic cues from Mont-Pelerinian Jacques Rueff, whose program calls for a stabilized and convertible currency, a balanced budget, fewer subsidies, and a relaxation of trade controls — in short, an end to inflation itself.

The "movement of ideas," then,