

# The New York Times

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

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Numerous incidents might be cited to illustrate how actions of the Indian Bureau have caused friction. Commissioner Myer believes that much of the frictions are developed by certain tribal lawyers, and he has promulgated a set of presently controversial regulations to control fees, alleged "ambulance-chasing" or solicitation of cases, terms of contracts and other relationships between tribes and the lawyers they seek to engage.

### Restlessness Reported

On the other hand Mrs. Ruth M.

### Proposed Rules Resisted

The principal current issue arises out of the promulgation by Mr. Myer of proposed regulations governing the contracts that lawyers may make with Indian tribes to act as their counsellors.

This action is being made the basis of attacks on the Administration's sincerity in applying fundamental Indian policy. Individuals and associations on Indian affairs contend that the proposed restrictions on lawyers, with other activities by Mr. Myer that are regarded as arbitrary, would set back fifty years the policy of leading the Indians to self-rule.

Some also are trying to blow the dispute up into a 1952 political issue; for the Indian, while he may be a ward, is a citizen with voting rights that make him a factor in several Western States.

The dispute over the rules has served to sharpen the attacks on Mr. Myer on the grounds of his personality and administrative techniques. ....

### Indians' Stand on Choosing Counsel

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

We want to thank you very sincerely for your editorial of Oct. 15 criticizing the attempts of Indian Commissioner Dillon Myer and Senator Pat McCarran to prevent us from using our own money to hire our own lawyers, James E. Curry of Washington and former United States Senator E. P. Carville of Reno, on terms agreed upon between us, to handle the dispute between us and the Government about certain lands.

We know that many injustices occur in our democracy. However, they almost always happen in secrecy. Once the light of public opinion is turned on them they are almost always corrected. That is why we are confident that the attempt of the bureau to de-

Bronson, a Cherokee and executive director of the National Congress of American Indians, and others concerned with Indian welfare assert that there is considerable restlessness in the Indian areas and an increasing desire to take the initiative in solving their own problems.

Tribal lawyers and Indian welfare workers are behind a movement to give the tribes control of their funds and to take over some functions that the bureau's field workers perform on the reservations. Mr. Myer is opposed to this "piecemeal" approach, asserting that only Congress can relieve him

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Lawyers evince considerable resentment at the power to terminate a contract. Some believe that Mr. Myer, with his considerable authority, could exert his influence to turn Indians against a particular lawyer and drive him out of the Indian law business if he is too aggressive in attacking Indian Bureau policies. Some lawyers and others already are accusing him of this.

Some of the most telling arguments against the proposed regulations are from lawyers who have no quarrels with the bureau. In this category is the firm of Wilkinson, Boyden & Cragun, which has filed a memorandum in opposition. It has stated that solicitation, of course, should be cause to bar a lawyer from Indian contracts, but it argued that an accused lawyer should be entitled to a hearing instead of being subjected to Mr. Myer's summary action on the basis of "reasonable cause for belief." ....

prive us of our rights will be defeated, largely as a result of what you have done.

Of course you will understand that our purpose in retaining the services of Mr. Curry and Senator Carville was to obtain redress of the underlying grievances. Once we have obtained the right of legal counsel, we hope we and they will also have your support in obtaining restoration to us of the lands and water rights that have been taken from us.

EVERY WINNEMUCCA,  
Chairman of Tribal Council, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe.

ALBERT ALECK,  
Secretary of Tribal Council.

WARREN TOBEY,  
Member of Tribal Council.  
Washington, Oct. 30, 1951.

of specific responsibilities to manage and supervise the trust funds and trust lands of the Indians, and for medical, hospital, welfare, educational and other services normally performed by town, county, city or state agencies.

His opponents contend that the tribes should be allowed to take over any functions that they can afford or are able to do if they are to attain maturity in self-rule. ....

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### Challenged by Another

Mr. Curry has been disputing with the Indian Bureau on various matters for his clients and has expressed the belief that much of the bureau's opposition and delay of his contracts can be attributed to these activities. He regards the delays as tantamount to disapproval and denial of counsel to the tribes affected.

Another lawyer who has challenged the bureau vigorously for his clients and has had one contract held up is Felix S. Cohen, also of Washington, who served in the Interior Department from 1933 to 1947 and was its associate solicitor. He is regarded as an expert on Indian law, which he has codified in the voluminous work, "Handbook of Federal Indian Laws," published by the Interior

CHAPMAN ON THE SPOT:

## Indians Charge Interior Department With Bias

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN

## The Paiutes Have Case

We must be in sympathy with the cause of these Indians because in many instances their struggles parallel our own.

The Indians say that the Government is denying them the right to hire their own lawyers because some official gets the opinion that Federal attorneys are fully capable of representing them.

We do not doubt the capabili-

ties of the Federal attorneys and neither do the Indians, but they know just as we know that usually officials who advocate the use of their own henchmen have in mind but one thing—subjugation of the people whose interests they are supposed to have at heart and control their movements in most instances for their own personal gains.

The Paiutes' cause and our own narrows down to the simple fact that we just want to be first-class citizens and enjoy all the rights of first-class citizenship.