

among them is Senator Burton K. Wheeler who so vigorously kept to a minimum the compromises which had to be made, and who so magnificently defended the bill on the Senate floor, preventing its mutilation by the snap-judgment amendments of his colleagues. To him, and to the venerable Representative from Nebraska, Edgar Howard, this Act is the keystone of their life-long labors for the Indians. Conspicuous, too, was the work of Congressman Hubert Peavey of Wisconsin whose strong sense of justice and good-humored tact more than once protected the measure from the onslaughts of the malcontents on the House Committee.

Other important bills were enacted; chief among them the Johnson-O'Malley bill for which the AIDA has fought for years. Under this law (P. L. 167), individual states can now help their Indians in health, education and social welfare, under contracts with the Secretary of the Interior.

Of great import to the Navajos is the measure fixing finally the boundaries of their reservation in Arizona. (P. L. 352.)

Two measures point to action on the new boarding school policy: P. L.s 95 and 240 transferring abandoned boarding school plants at Mount Pleasant, Michigan, and Genoa, Nebraska to those states.

The old espionage laws were repealed—acts which were passed in the days of Indian warfare and which in modern times have been used not infrequently to suppress the Indians' freedom of association and protest. (P. L. 242.)

## **THE WHEELER-HOWARD ACT**

In 1887, bent on "civilizing" the Indian, Congress passed the General Allotment law. Forty-seven years later, in enacting the Wheeler-Howard bill, Congress completely reversed that law. It declared that Indian tribes desiring to take advantage of the Act's many benefits must agree against further division of lands in severalty. Rarely in legislative history has there been so complete a reversal of policy. In effect, Congress said to the Indians: If you want the United States to help you climb out of the poverty and hopelessness in which the allotment system has mired you, you must eschew that system in the future. Millions of dollars will be available for your economic and cultural salvation, but not another cent will be wasted upon the old land-robbing system.

In its simplest terms, the Wheeler-Howard Act aims to give to the Indians economic units of land for their continuing use and development, together with the education, credit and self-government necessary to full utilization of their land.