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**Letter from Representative Burdick to Oscar L. Chapman
Enclosing a Letter to Members of the Three Affiliated Tribes
Which Burdick Hopes Will Help Resolve Current Tribal Conflict,
January 14, 1952**

Usher Burdick

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January 14, 1952.

Honorable Oscar L. Chapman,
Secretary of Interior,
Interior Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Chapman:

I outlined to the discontented Indians of Fort Berthold Reservation, whom I think number a majority of the Indians, a letter, a copy of which I enclose.

I know of no other way to settle this continual turmoil among the Indians than to have a hearing before you on the subject. As you know, I have full confidence in you and have passed that word along to the Indians.

I think an airing of these grievences would finally bring about some unity. There may be nothing to their complaint and yet there may be, and that is what a hearing will determine.

Sincerely yours,

Enc.

Usher L. Burdick, M. C.

*File
Chapman
Interior*

Oscar Berg, Percy Rush, Rufus Stevenson, and Jim Blackdog.

If you feel that the Tribal Council of Fort Berthold Indian Reservation is violation of the Constitution and by-laws under which the council was created, or if you feel that they are not handling the business of the Indians in and proper manner and are creating too much expenses against the funds of the Indians, or if you feel that this council is assuming authority not vested in them, you could set this all out in a petition to the Secretary of the Interior and ask for a hearing on the whole matter.

If your regular tribal council attorney feels he cannot act in your behalf, since he is attorney for the council, you have a right to your own council to assist you at this hearing, and I believe the Secretary of the Interior will not see you unprotected in this hearing and will allow reasonable compensation to such attorney as you, yourselves choose.

All particulars should be set out in your petition so that the other side will know what to answer for.

Yours very truly,

Usher L Burdick.

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Commissioner of the General Land Office

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D. C.
20540