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Letter from Thomas Reid to J. K. Murray Regarding Enrollment of Children in the Three Affiliated Tribes, September 26, 1956

Thomas M. Reid

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Tribal Government
13149-56

Mr. J. K. Murray
Attorney at Law
Knowles Building
Bismarck, North Dakota

SEP 26 1956

My dear Mr. Murray:

We have your letter of September 11 in which you take exception to the alleged action of the Fort Berthold Agency in rejecting the applications for enrollment of children. You state that the reason given for such action is, "that they were not enrolling any more Indians after July 1, 1956."

First, we should like to correct your impression that the Indian Agency has taken such action. Under a membership ordinance adopted by the tribal authorities and approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs the tribal council is required to vote on the acceptance or rejection of each application filed. The Bureau's representative does not make such determination as implied by you.

The act of June 4, 1956 (P. L. 553, 84th Congress), authorizes and directs the Secretary of the Interior to segregate certain funds in the Treasury of the United States belonging to the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation on the basis of a membership roll prepared for that purpose and approved by the Secretary. Naturally, in order to determine those who are to share and the amount due each individual there must be a closing date. The tribes by resolution have designated July 4, 1956, as the closing date and by another resolution of July 25, 1956, have declared "that no further applications will be accepted or considered for enrollment of members of the Three Affiliated Tribes for the purpose of sharing in the family distribution as set up under P. L. 553 after August 8, 1956; that all applications shall be received by the Tribal Council of the Three Affiliated Tribes, Fort Berthold, New Town, North Dakota, on or before that date."

The case of your clients should be taken up with the tribal authorities.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Thomas M. Reid
Assistant
Commissioner

Copy to: Aberdeen Area Office
Ft. Berthold Agency