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Hopi

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Washington 25, D. C.

October 1, 1945

Mr. William H. Zeh,
Room 614, Goodrich Building,
Phoenix, Arizona.

Briefed 39926-45

Dear Mr. Zeh:

Please look into the Hopi situation at your earliest convenience and let me have a full report. As you know there has been trouble between the Hopis and the Navajos for centuries. The problem of Hopi-Navajo relations was not solved by the Executive Order of 1882, which established the reservation of 2,472,000 acres, for the Hopis and such other Indians as the Secretary saw fit to admit. The encroachment of the Navajos on Hopi range has been continuous. Associate Forester Rachford and M. L. Wilson of the Department of Agriculture were asked several years ago to try and delimit the area beyond which no further Navajo encroachments would be allowed. Later, your former associate, Mr. Centerwall, studied the situation on the ground and shifted the line of Land Management District 6, so as to make 30,000 additional acres available to Hopi stockmen. But these adjustments did not solve the problem. The reasons for the continuance of the problems are discussed in a letter to Mrs. Charles H. Dietrich, of Santa Fe, copy of which is attached.

The adjustment of the use of the range to its forage-producing capacity began on the Navajo reservation in 1933. No similar adjustments were made on the Hopi range until 1943. The introduction of conservation practices on the Hopi range met with the same resistance it encountered on the Navajo range. For that matter, regulated range use has been opposed initially by the users of the National Forest and the Public Domain range as well as by Indians. The most persistent opposition to stock reduction came from Third Mesa, the range of which was most heavily overstocked and depleted. But the adjustment was made.

In the spring of 1944, Agricultural Aide Eugene Lowery took the lead in suggesting to the Hopi stockmen that they protect their range by the construction of drift fences with earned AAA funds, most of which had previously been spent for additional stock water facilities. This fence-building project encountered opposition from Third Mesa through the governor, Roger Quochytewa. The development of this anti-fence campaign is shown in the attached correspondence.

In Roger Quochytewa's July letters, and in the letters of Mrs. Genevieve Walther, attached, certain specific and generalized allegations were made. I wish you would look into their validity, discuss the allegations with the Hopis who make them and with other interested parties, and report your conclusions to me.

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I especially desire to have you analyze the economic conditions on the Hopi Executive Order reservation and recommend what steps should be taken to improve the economy of the Hopis, taking into consideration the effect these Hopi relief measures will have on their Navajo neighbors.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ WILLIAM A. BROPHY

Commissioner.

Enclosure 603.

Incoming letters from Mrs. Walther
Copies incoming from Roger Quochytewa
Copies Indian Ofc reply to Mrs. Dietrich, Mrs. Walther, Roger Quochytewa

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cc Chicago Ofc.
Supt. Ladd