

DOCUMENTS

Document One

In the aftermath of the North West "Rebellion" of 1885, the Department of Indian Affairs instituted a series of measures designed to destroy all semblance of Indian independence in the Canadian west. The blueprint for the repression of Indian society was the brainchild of Hayter Reed, the Assistant Indian Commissioner and one-time Indian Agent at Battleford. In the summer of 1885, Reed penned a lengthy memorandum to the Indian Commissioner in which he outlined the policies he deemed appropriate to the post-rebellion era. That document, cited below, is divided into two parts: on the right is the text of the memorandum and on the left are initialled comments written in the margin by the Indian Commissioner, Edgar Dewdney.

Memorandum for the Hon^{ble} the Indian Commissioner
relative to the future management of Indians:

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| <p>Approved
E.D.</p> | <p>1) All Indians who have not during the late troubles been disloyal or troublesome should be treated as heretofore, as they have not disturbed our Treaty relations, and our treatment in the past has been productive of progress and good results.</p> |
| <p>The result of the trials will I trust show that these views were carried
E.D.</p> | <p>2) As the rebellious Indians expected to have been treated with severity as soon as overpowered, a reaction of feeling must be guarded against. They were led to believe they would be shot down & harshly treated. Though humanity of course forbids this, unless severe examples are made of the more prominent participators in the rebellion much difficulty will be met with in their future management, a future turbulence may be feared. It is therefore suggested that all leading Indian rebels whom it is found possible to convict of particular crimes, such as instigating & inciting to treason, felony, arson, larceny, murder etc., be dealt with in as severe a manner as the law will allow, & that no offences of their most prominent men be overlooked.</p> |
| <p>Yes
E.D.</p> | <p>3) That Half-breed offenders who it is found have been really guilty of such serious offences as the above mentioned should be punished for their crimes in order to deter them from rebellious movements in future.</p> |

I approve of
this

E.D.

4) That the tribal system should be abolished insofar as is compatible with the Treaty, ie, in all cases in which the Treaty has been broken by rebel tribes; by doing away with chiefs & councillors, depriving them of medals & other appurtenances of their offices. Our instructors & employees will not then be hampered by Indian consultations & interferences but will administer direct orders & instructions to individuals, besides, by this action & careful repression of those that become prominent among them by counselling, Medicine dances & so on, a further obstacle will be thrown in the way of future united rebellious movements.

I would like the views of the Dept. as to future payment of annuities. I have no doubts as to how we should act this year.

5) No annuity money should be now paid [to] any bands that rebelled, or to any individuals that left well disposed bands & joined the insurgents. As the Treaty expressly stipulated for peace & good-will as well as an observance of law & order, it has been entirely abrogated by the rebellion. Besides this fact such [a] suggestion is made because in the past the annuity money which should have been expended wholly in necessities has to a great extent been wasted upon articles more or less useless & in purchasing necessities at exorbitant prices, entailing upon the Department a greater expenditure in providing articles of clothing food & implements, not called for by the terms of the Treaty, than need have been entailed if the whole of the annuity money had been well & economically applied to the purchase of such necessities. All future grants should be regarded as concessions of favor, not of right, & the rebel Indians be made to understand that they have forfeited every claim as [a] "matter of right."

I think we should endeavor to disarm all Indians not by compulsion for that will be impracticable but by persuasion and by keeping ammunition from them. If it is known by the Indians that we want to get their arms they will be cached in convenient places & they will never give them up, but if they find we care little about it & that they cannot get fixed ammunition they will sell their rifles.

6) Disarm all rebels, but to those rebel Indians North of the North Saskatchewan who have heretofore mainly existed by hunting, return shotguns (retaining the rifles) branding them as I.D. property and keeping lists of those to whom arms are lent. Those to whom arms are thus supplied if left to their own resources--under careful supervision--would suffer great hardship & doubtlessly be benefited by experiencing the fact that they cannot live after their old methods. They would soon incline to settlement & be less likely to again risk losing the chance of settling down.

E.D.

This should be done & insisted upon as far as practicable. It might be thought well another year to legislate in that direction.

E.D.

I have reported on them; report will follow.

E.D.

Yes

E.D.

I have expressed my opinion on this before; I approve

E.D.

Yes

E.D.

This should be done

E.D.

- 7) No rebel Indians should be allowed off the Reserves without a pass signed by an I.D. official. The dangers of complications with white men will thus be lessened, & by preserving a knowledge of individual movements any inclination to petty depredations may be checked, by the facility of apprehending those who commit such offences.
- 8) The leaders of the Teton Sioux who fought against the troops should be hanged & the rest be sent out of the country, as there are certain of the settlers who are greatly inclined to shoot them on sight, & the settlements are more in fear of such marauders as these than of anything else.
- 9) Big Bears[sic] band should either be broken up & scattered among other band or be given a Reserve adjacent to that of Onion Lake. The action in this regard could be decided better when it is known, after their surrender, the number that will have to be dealt with. If the band is kept intact & settled as suggested the Instructor stationed at Onion Lake would be sufficient for the two bands.
- 10) One Arrow's band should be joined with that of Beardy & Okemasis & their present Reserve surrendered & dealt with by the Department for their benefit. Chakastapaysin's band should be broken up & their Reserve surrendered, the band being treated as suggested with One Arrow's. Neither of these bands are [sic] large enough to render it desirable to maintain instructors permanently with them & as they are constituted of bad & lazy Indians nothing can be done without constant supervision for them. The action suggested therefore would have been wise in any case, their rebellion justifies its pursuit.
- 11) All Half-breeds, members of rebel bands, although not shown to have taken any active part in the rebellion, should have their names erased from the paysheets, & if this suggestion is not approved of, by directing that all [Half-breeds] belonging to any bands should reside on the Reserves, most of these half-breeds would desire to be released from the terms of the Treaty. It is desirable however that the connection between such people & the Indians be entirely severed as it is never productive of aught but bad results.
- 12) There are one or two Canadians, not possessed of Indian blood, on the paysheets, these should be struck off.

I am sending a report on deserving Indians throughout the Territories

E.D.

I do not see how this can be done

E.D.

I think this very desirable.

E.D.

13) James Sienum's band especially should receive substantial recognition of its loyalty, & all Indians like Mistawasis & Ahtahkakoop & other bands that have held aloof from [the] rebellion should receive some mark of the government's appreciation of their conduct. If such a mark is conferred carefully it will at once confirm their loyalty & assist in ensuring it in future, whilst increasing the contrast between their treatment & that of those who have acted differently, & this without leading them to believe that it is for the purchase of good behavior, an effect to be guarded against.

14) Agents should be particularly strict in seeing that each & every Indian now works for every pound of provisions given to him, & I would urge that as soon as possible directions be given to treat Indians that receive assistance in provisions & clothing in excess of Treaty stipulations, as coming under the Masters & Servants Act until such time as they become self-dependent. Unwilling ones can then be made to give value for what they receive, a policy heretofore most difficult to carry out.

15) Horses of rebel Indians should be confiscated, sold, & cattle or other necessaries be purchased with the proceeds of such sale. This action would cripple them for future rebellious movements, & they do not require ponies if made to stay on Reserves & adhere to agricultural pursuits. They would be retained on Reserves too with greater ease if the means of travelling expeditiously were taken from them. In view of the desirability of keeping the Indians from wandering, where confiscation is impossible endeavors might be made to induce a voluntary exchange of ponies for Cattle etc.

Hayter Reed
Ass^t Comm^r

Regina, Sk
July 20th/85