



*with Dr. Albert L Burke*

**The Monster  
Slayer  
Part IV**

Revolt! (*film: Indian fight and still picture of Indians on location*) No one expected it. There had been no sign of trouble among those Indians for weeks before this happened. What you see happening here is a kind of American history ... the kind in which these war-whooping, screaming, blood-thirsty savages tricked that Federal garrison by capturing a wagon train, hiding in the wagons until they got inside the fort after which they slaughtered the entire command.

This sort of thing had happened before, but no incident like this ever ended the way this one did because that ending wasn't in the script of this latest filming of the great American fairy tale called the "Western." just when the script called for the most action, the screaming suddenly died down and the war-whoops faded as the Indians in that film brought off the first revolt of its kind in American history when they rode as a group up to the director of that film and announced they were through — they quit. For years, they told him, their people had put up with Hollywood's version of American history out west — had played the blood-thirsty barbarian in the manner approved by the film makers because they needed the money. But their reservation was now producing oil and uranium, and they had enough income not to have to be part of faked

history any more. "We Indians," their spokesman said, "played a more important role in the shaping of this nation than we've ever been given credit for. It's about time this nation grew up to face the facts of history instead of rewriting them." Then they rode off leaving that film maker temporarily stranded until more extras could be hired to play Indian in the approved, war-whooping manner.

Behind that manner is a story — to be probed now in Part IV of *The Monster Slayer*.

The time is early 1942 (*film: British troops*) ... the place a British port of embarkation where a ship is loading special cargo for the United States — a cargo of cadets who will spend several months at American air bases learning to fly the planes American factories will turn out for them. These young Britons will fly many of them over the fronts of World War II. It's an important occasion for the British, which is why every one of those cadets was given an especially prepared little booklet before boarding ship and told to read it carefully before they arrived in America. (*picture: British Air Cadets*)

It was this little pamphlet which I got from one of those cadets in 1942, soon after they arrived. It was prepared for them by a team of British scholars from several top universities in that country: every member of that-team was an expert in American affairs. The British Government wanted no unnecessary or unpleasant incidents to grow out of ignorance among those cadets about Americans or their way of life. Those British scholars put this together to help them get along better with their American hosts. It's a very interesting bit of writing titled "Know Your Hosts, the Americans of the United States."

It's particularly interesting because of that part of it that covers American history. It doesn't quite deal with our history as we got it from our history books. There is this difference, for example, in these words: "American political, social and economic institutions are in several respects unique — without parallel or basis in European experience. To understand Americans it is necessary to consider the place of the Indian in American history." It then goes on to point out that very few things in our lives today do not show the influence or the ideas of the Indian, from the foods we eat to our form of government. It mentions the foods we got from the Indian — like the Irish potato, chocolate, tomatoes, pineapple and corn. It mentions the Indian "pow-wow" as the basis for the way we make group decisions, then carry them out in government and business. The American story, seen here, is a unique story ... not quite the story told in this batch

of American history books, some old, some very new. Because there is no mention in these books of this place (*film: forest*) or what happened here about 50 years before the Pilgrims stepped off the Mayflower to set up the Plymouth Colony.

This place is Kanawake, 250 miles west of the Mayflower landing where, in the 1570's, a pow-wow was called and attended by 49 chiefs from the tribes of five of the most powerful Indian nations in the North-eastern part of North America: the Mohawks, the Senecas, Oneidas, Cayugas and Onandagas. They called that meeting to set up a confederac<sup>y</sup> — a union of those nations to outlaw war amongst themselves . . . to keep the peace. Those 49 chiefs were to be the new confederacy's ruling council and they'd been selected to serve on that council in a very interesting way — interesting for the time. They were on that council by a popular vote in which all adult Indian men and women took part. (*picture: Indian pow-wow*)

As that confederacy of the five united Indian nations was set up, almost 400 years ago, authority, power, passed from the voting tribe members to their elected representative in the ruling council. In other words, from the bottom to the top. That meant those people had set up a government in which power was delegated and limited. What they had set up was a democracy; a democracy that was home-grown — native — in the new world. Nothing like it existed back in the old world where, then, kings were prattling about their divine God-given right to rule their people as they pleased, in governments that gave the people no voice in their affairs. As this World War II pamphlet put it about twenty years ago, there was no parallel for that Indian system of government in Europe — no basis for it.

Occasionally, in these American history books, there may be a word or two about that confederacy of Indian nations but never in a way to suggest — (*picture: Benjamin Franklin and Founding Fathers*) as men like Benjamin Franklin and Sam Adams among the founders did suggest in their day — that the Indian confederacy may have had something to do with the confederacy of thirteen English colonies they set up years later ... which they tied together by a representative central government much more like that Indian union than any political system then in existence anywhere on earth.

The American story has its roots in what happened at Kanawake, a unique American event . . . but not in these books used in our classrooms today. Here's one that's been a part of the education of hundreds, thousands of Americans for years. It's called the "Basic History of The United States"

and written by two of the most respected names among American historians, Charles and Mary Beard. This book has five hundred pages. The part played by the American Indian is mentioned seven times on parts of three pages. Here is another, but a brand new history printed last year, with one thousand pages. The American Indian rates nineteen references on twelve pages. As our historians see our history, it's more or less a direct line from our way of life today to the basic ideas about politics, social and economic matters that were worked out in Europe. There was the political idea called "the social compact" — about government by agreement, by individuals. You will find pages in these books filled with the way the idea of parliament began, how it was developed in England. All this was talked about and thought about during the days of Oliver Cromwell and his Commonwealth back in the 1640's when Englishmen cut off the head of their king to get some of the very rights and freedoms that were a part of American Indian life in the new world years earlier.

Beyond Cromwell, every schoolboy knows about what happened to a king named John who was forced to sign a paper called the Magna Carta. Now there's the root of the American story. It goes thataway . . . right back to the old world, what we call the "Western World" today. Our way of life was simply moved from Europe, here . . . and here (as one of the most powerfully influential of all American historians put it, back around the turn of this century) here, where land was free for the taking, and the settlers pushed into and across empty frontiers, the American story was written with its roots back in parliaments and social compacts and Magna Cartas. Because history is pretty much what historians say it is, this is the American story — except, of course, for the fact that from the Mohawks and Senecas in the east, through the Sioux on the plains and the Apache and Navajo in the west, this land was not free for the taking and the American frontier was never empty. Not one square mile of this land was unused or unoccupied. The Indian was there — all the way, in fact, if not in the way we've written history.

And the fact that he was there is more important than he's been given credit for, just as that spokesman for those Indians who pulled out of that "Western" being filmed in Arizona a few years back stated it . . . and as this World War II British pamphlet backs him up. And these men, too, who met late last summer to do something about that problem. The chiefs of eleven of this nations remaining Indian nations met near Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, at a place called Oo-Loo-Teka to draft a letter to the President of the United States; to let the people know the facts of American history. They weren't as concerned about history books that misrepresented their part in history in the American classroom as they were about what the

motion picture industry has always done — and the television industry now does too — to, and I quote from their letter, "miseducate millions of Americans about Indian and frontier history by ignoring the true historical facts." Something should be done. They hope the President will do it for other reasons we'll get to in a moment.

One of the men in on this event (*film: Suribachi*) found it easier to be respected by Americans for his willingness to die for this country than to live for it. He didn't die when this happened in February 1945. He and the others were decorated for what went on here, on Iwo Jima, a small island just south of Japan. He lived through that battle and that war, to die ten years later after losing another kind of battle in another kind of war. That final battle wasn't the one the public was told about when the story of Ira Hayes, Pima Indian, was headlined and televised several years ago soon after he was found dead on the Pima reservation in Arizona. Many things were aired then to explain why he died as he did — drunk. But the most important part of that story was not told. It was that part of the story — the hopeless, helpless part of it not even a highly-decorated American hero could change — though, shortly before he died Ira Hayes tried, hard. He tried by going to Washington to plead for "freedom for the Pima Indians. They want to manage their own affairs. They do not want to be wards of the Federal government," he told senators and representatives and anyone who would listen. He asked that his people simply be given what they had been promised in writing by two Acts of Congress to make it possible for them to change this. (*film: dry desert to pictures of irrigated fields*)

This is a part of the Pima reservation on which Ira Hayes lived. It's a dry, dusty, scrub-covered patch of Arizona desert. For years, people passing this place have pointed to its appearance as evidence of how lazy the Indian is. His land produces little or nothing, while the land of the non-Indians around him is rich and fruitful. The Pima reservation doesn't compare with the irrigated fields of alfalfa, cotton and fruit trees that surround it on all sides. It can't, thanks to the policies of the Department of the Interior which have kept the Pima Indians from getting water to irrigate their lands. The Pima reservation could look like this if the Pimas were given back the water rights the Department of the Interior took away from them soon after Congress authorized the building of this dam across the Gila River. (*picture: dam*) This was done, according to the wording in that Act of Congress in order to provide water for the irrigation of the land belonging to the Indians. When that was done, any water left over could be used by non-Indian land owners around the reservation.

It didn't take long for the non-Indians around the Pima reservation to put an end to that setup. Very soon after the dam was finished they got

the Department of the Interior to go to court to prove that Indians didn't need all that water. The Department proved its case with no trouble at all — because they wouldn't allow the Pimas to defend themselves in court! Then, with no Indian allowed to fight it, the court put through the Gila River decree which reversed, completely, the water rights given the Pimas by Congress. Water then went to the non-Indian owners first, and whatever was left over could be used by the Pimas. There's been very little left over lately. That's why the great difference (*picture: irrigation*) in the appearance of the rich and productive non-Indian farms and the dry, dusty, unused reservations lands. It takes water to do this on that Arizona desert ... the water that once belonged to the Pimas. The so-called laziness of the Indian doesn't explain that difference — but injustice does; the kind of injustice that can kill (not just a bitterly disappointed and frustrated Indian named Hayes, but hope for a decent life (*film: poverty on the reservation*) among people who have no more desire to live this way, as wards of the Government unable to manage their own affairs, and not free) these people have no more desire to live this way than you do.

Ira Hayes had been away from this ... had seen the good life up close as a serviceman off the reservation. And he came back hoping to do something to let his people in on the benefits and opportunities open to other Americans. He tried, but failed in this battle. And without hope, with no future possible on a reservation unable to pay its own way, Ira Hayes drank his way out of his problems in 1955. It's the height of irony that what Ira Hayes wanted for himself and his people the Government has been saying it wanted too, since 1953 when Congress put through the first of what have become known as the Termination Bills. As these Bills were reported at the time, they were the Government's big effort to get out of the Indian business by doing pretty much what Ira Hayes had asked for — putting an end to Federal protection over the tribes and Indian nations; getting rid of the reservations, after relocating the Indians in other places; pretty much what Ira Hayes and other Indians have asked for . . . but not quite. Because most American Indians on many reservations were not ready in 1953, and are not ready now to be moved some place else. Great numbers of them speak little or no English and cannot read or write. Even greater numbers have no training, no skills to earn a living for themselves or their families. Most are simply too poor to move, even with the help the Government offers in the form of one-way tickets anywhere off the reservation.

When the Termination Bills were passed in 1955 part of the plan was to train those Indians and educate them to fit into the world off reservation — in training programs that would make them engineers, court reporters, linotypers, barbers, mechanics and so on. But the 31/2 million dollars

a year that was to pay for that training has never been set aside by Congress, with the result that Indians who have been relocated end up either as tax burdens on relief rolls or live in poverty worse than they knew on the reservation. Those Bills did accomplish two things. They selected the reservation of the Menominee Indians in Wisconsin and the Klamath Indians in Oregon to be eliminated. just by chance, those two reservations happen to be two of the richest timber stands left in the nation — which could then be opened to lumbermen. The Indians see an old, raw deal in those Bills, and have been fighting them hard.

As Ira Hayes saw the problem, the Indian had to be educated, given an opportunity to make a decent living, helped to overcome the illness and disease that goes hand in glove with poverty. These problems can't be solved by Termination Bills. (*film: U. S. aid*) They can be solved by using some of the same effort, ideas and money this country has thrown into all kinds of foreign aid programs, to help our underdeveloped places and people here at home. These men are working all over the world to relieve poverty, improve health, set up better educational systems and develop local economies on the lands of other people. That is exactly what the Indian has asked to be allowed to do on their own lands, the reservation lands. There, they want the same privilege those people enjoy to develop their own way of life.

It's worth the try. And not just because our own people deserve at least as much help as we've been ready to give others, but because just as the British in that World War II pamphlet explaining us to their servicemen saw something about the place of the Indian in American history which we did not see, in exactly the same way other people see in what we say about justice and freedom and equality of opportunity the gap we do not see between what we practice with minorities like the Indian and what we preach. As in this copy of "Evergreen" — a Chinese Communist publication for young people which devotes an entire issue to explaining the problems of the American Indian, for people sensitive to the point of explosion about such things in the world around us. So what? In a moment ...

The story of the American Indian can't be described as anything but the story of greed for Indian lands — for what was in it and on it throughout our history — and of contempt for the Indian as an inferior person. There's nothing new in this story. It's the oldest story in human history ... the story of inhumanity as only men can practice it against men. And it was that theme that came up in a conversation I had returning home by plane the other day, with my seat partner who had watched this series of programs about The Monster Slayer. He said "you're wasting your time

pounding away at this subject. Men, like all of the other animals, has the right to dislike his own kind."

To which there's really one answer — the difference is that animals do not call themselves civilized!