

John Collier: Indian Commissioner, 1933-45

Reading Guide Answer Key

1.
 - Emphasis on community not individualism
 - “Ameliorate the disruptive forces of poverty, isolation and class antagonisms” of industrialization
 - Community centers, “progressive education”
 - General Federation of Women’s Clubs, Settlement house workers, school community center movement: Progressive institutions
 - Government as the solution
2.
 - Used sociology to study relationships and shared obligations of community life in immigrant urban environment
 - Prevent social disorientation by preserving culture, value of Old World cultures and communal institutions
3.
 - “He knew what was in their best interest”
 - “Condescending assumption”
 - Difficult to apply his romantic ideas
 - Steadfastly believed in sociology to promote “great society”
4.
 - World War I had stifled Progressive efforts in NYC
 - The Red Scare! “He discussed the cooperative movement and the significance of the Bolshevik Revolution”, “his activities irritated members of the state legislature
5.
 - Community life flourished, “had survived repeated and immense historical shocks”, the Indians the only people possessing “the fundamental secret of human life- the secret of building great personality through the instrumentality of social institutions” fits his communal Progressive techniques
6.
 - Opposed the Dawes Act, preservation of Indian civilization
 - Criticized Indian Comm. Assimilation policies, Comm. Burke a scapegoat, worked as lobbyist in Washington
 - Charges led to Meriam Report
7.
 - Passage of Pueblo Relief Bill- compensate Rio Gr. Indians for loss of land
 - Johnson O’Malley Act- \$ for states to improve Indian health, ed., soc. services
 - Indian Reorganization Act- ended land allotment, tribal self-gov’t.
8.
 - Closed the boarding schools
 - PWA \$ construct day schools/community centers
 - “Progressive ed.”
 - Professional standards of teachers raised
 - Cross-cultural ed.
 - First bilingual program> improve literacy
9.
 - Obtain legislation
 - Expose conditions at insane asylum in So. Dak.
 - Defended right to practice Indian religion
 - Increased # of Indians employed in Indian service
 - Establish tribal herds of buffalo
 - Abolished Board of Indian Commissioners
 - Reformed court system
 - Codification of federal Indian law
 - \$100 million of CCC, PWA and other relief to benefit Indians

10.
 - Reversal of Dawes Act
 - Autonomous Indian political communities
 - Promote study of Indian civilization
 - Collective ownership of reservation land
 - Creation of special federal court of Indian affairs
 - Establish cooperative commonwealths

11.
 - Little interest in his romantic ideal
 - Indian factions of mixed- bloods and full-bloods (liberals vs. conservatives)
 - No provision to tribal claims, no enforcement of treaty rights

12.
 - No mandatory transfer of allotted lands to tribal ownership
 - No special Indian courts
 - Inheritance fractionalized land allotments
 - Curtailed provisions of self-government
 - OK excluded!!!!

13.
 - Tribe could draw up a constitution defining their limited powers
 - Establish charters of incorporation to borrow \$ (financial benefits)

14.
 - Imposition of rigid non-Indian political and economic concepts
 - Inflexible
 - Not based in tribal custom, confusing legal jargon

15.
 - OK Indians remain skeptical
 - Wanted to keep individual allotments
 - Favored assimilation
 - Collier imposed communistic ideas and created tribal dissension

16.
 - Appropriations slashed- financial difficulties
 - Collier relations with Congress badly deteriorated- political stalemate
 - Ineffectiveness
 - Insistence on communal lands and cultural pluralism (“He knew what was best for them!”) despite tribal resistance

17.
 - Human and creative man
 - Respected tribal culture
 - Secured more lands
 - Started conservation projects
 - Potential of Pan-Indianism

18.
 - Much remains same: individual ownership of land, no real self-government, individualism
 - But respect for tribal cultures, religion becomes law