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
   • Insistance on communal lands and cultural pluralism (“He knew what was best for them!”) despite tribal resistance

17. Human and creative man
   • Respected tribl 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