

# TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I was approached the other day by a representative of the Children's Aid Society office in Ohsweken about the untold value to my purchasing a \$1 membership. It seemed that the benefits received would be far in excess of the mere one dollar. While it would have been easy to find myself this person by handing over the money, not that she was offensive in any way, but quite ordinary—the pitch was so low-keyed it was difficult to ascertain if the request was based on a real desire to sign me up or whether it was assumed I was to automatically know that it was something I shouldn't even question. As it turned out the person was sincerely just a real nice person, and didn't deserve the hard time I gave her.

After an initial "leg pulling" discussion, the seller and I both became more serious. Probably because I did recognize her sincerity and partly because of her determination to convince me of the merits of the membership.

In asking my pursuer to provide me with a little historical perspective of the

Children's Aid Society. I learned that its presence on the Reserves dates back to 1958 although the rationale for what precipitated this was not clear except it was by invitation by the Band Council. What is even less clear was what did the reserves do before the Children's Aid Society was here. The service was more formalized through the passage of the Provincial Child Welfare Act in 1965, which among other things entitled the Children's Aid to receive Indian Affairs money for each status Indian child in care on a per day basis.

## TIME FOR D.I.A. TO LET "INDIAN NEWS" GO

Editorial from Indian News, Vol. 22 No. 2, May 1981, by Gilbert Oskaboose.

We believe the time is near for the Department of Indian Affairs to let this paper go.

And we don't mean for it to go out of the Department and into the arms of an Indian political organization or any other group with

That could hardly be called progress if the Indian News is simply to evolve into

Further refinements came about in the early 1970's mainly due to the persistent and far sightedness of Wilma General who saw that a social service oriented and planned by the Native people themselves could not only improve the overall quality of life on the Reserves, but would also address the problem of so many Native children having to come into the care of the Children's Aid. By 1977, Mrs. General, at that time the only Native person on the Board of Directors of the Agency centered in Brantford, was able to see the rea-

lization of her goal of seeing a Native staffed office operating on the Reserve. Apparently, despite a sometimes less than enthusiastic sensitivity by the Board of Directors, some rather dramatic results have been achieved. Over the past five years for example, the number of Native children in the care of the Society has dropped from 50 to less than 20 with the target number for the end of this year being 15. In addition a variety of other programs aimed at preventing family crises and breakdown are an on-going feature of the Branch.

The expressed and avowed purpose of the membership drive as explained to me was to increase the number of Native people on the C.A.S. Board of Directors. It seems that seven or eight seats will be up for election at the end of this year and the \$1 membership entitles the holder to vote, nominate or to be elected to this Board and thus increase the degree of input of the Native people in policy planning and implementation with regard to services that will directly affect them. There are presently two other Native people on the Board in addition to Mrs. General (one elected last year and one from the New Credit Council) and if the goal of 250 memberships from the Reserves can be reached, no doubt an additional number of seats can be filled by Natives.

For this, the \$1 seemed a sound investment and a good bargain so I ended up purchasing one for my wife and one for me. My apology to the seller for giving her such a hard time.

Kaw-ah-h-Guhe Dya-

We believe what is required in Indian Country now is a national Indian newspaper, as free as humanly possible from the partisan politics, pressures and machinations of any Indian or non Indian group seeking to bring about total social, cultural and economic independence for Indian people.

The kind of Indian independence also demands a national Indian press as sweetable only to Indian