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“We Were Very Afraid”: The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Politics, Identity, and the Perception of Termination, 1971–2003

JAAKKO PUISTO

The federal policy of termination against Native Americans was on a high roll from 1946 to 1954. The policy received explicit expression in House Concurrent Resolution 108, passed in 1953, which stated that “Indians should be made subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States” and that “at the earliest possible time, all the Indian tribes should be freed from federal supervision and control and from all disabilities and limitations specially applicable to Indians.”¹ The policy culminated in 1954, when the Senate and House Indian Affairs Subcommittees organized joint sessions on the termination of twelve reservations, including the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (see fig. 1).

Historians have generally argued that the termination policy ended either in the 1960s with the civil rights movement or at the latest when President Richard Nixon publicly declared the end to the policy in his address to the US Congress on 8 July 1970. By that time federal Indian affairs had moved toward self-determination policy, whereby American Indians could and should obtain more responsibility for running their own reservations with reduced federal input.² This article proposes to present a reevaluation of termination by using the Salish and Kootenai as a case study and specifically focuses on the internal dynamics of the tribal politics from the early 1970s to the 2003 referendum on the linear descent proposal, which to many tribal members meant diluting tribal “blood” so significantly that it would parallel termination of the Salish

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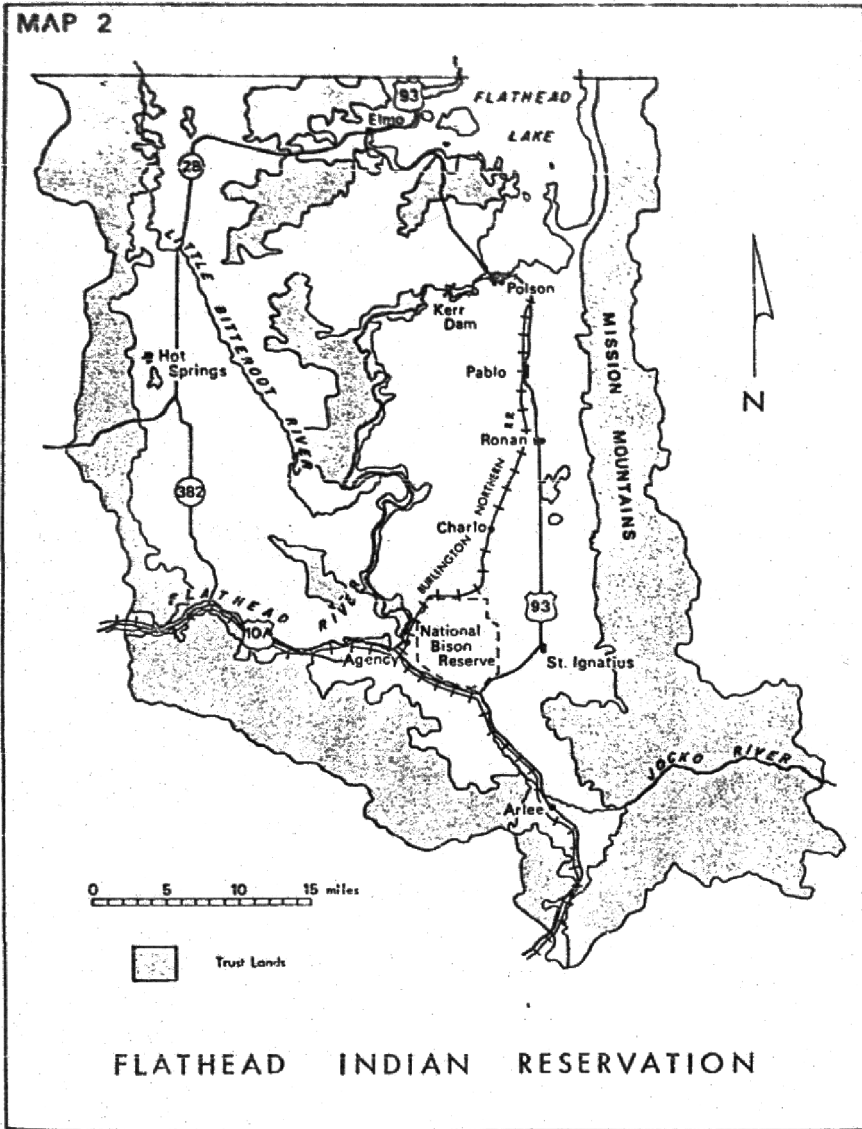


FIGURE 1. Map of the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

and Kootenai tribes. This time termination would not mean legal abolition of the tribes or their reservation, as in the proposed federal policy of the 1950s, but would mean opening tribal enrollment to lineal descendants, many of them practically "white," which to a majority of tribal members would mean de facto termination of tribal identity.

This, therefore, signifies a shift in the termination paradigm. In essence, termination, as proposed in 1954, meant that tribal members would get

monetary compensation for the liquidation of tribal assets and termination of tribal status, that is, for leaving the tribal status. The “optional withdrawal” proposals of 1971 and 1984 meant the same thing through voluntary withdrawal while the tribes would continue to exist as a federally recognized entity. In the 2003 lineal descent proposal more people would enter the tribes through extended enrollment, in essence to be beneficiaries of tribal services free for tribal members. Although the 1950s proposal would have resulted in legislated termination, the 2003 lineal descent proposal, had it passed, would have meant termination through dilution of Indianness and the eventual destruction of the tribes, or so most tribal members concluded in defeating the proposal in a referendum. This dilution of tribal identity, they believed, would open wide the possibility that the federal government, prompted by local non-Indians, would resume the policy to terminate the Flathead Indian Reservation.

We must recognize that the legacy of the 1950s termination policy and the threat of resumed termination were alive and well among the Salish and Kootenai, one of the peoples targeted by it, in 2003, even if the paradigm had shifted. Bringing the Salish and Kootenai story to 2003 proposes to reevaluate, through one case study, the multiple meanings of termination as they are understood at the tribal level. Historians need to extend their understanding of termination policy beyond the 1950s. The Flathead Indian Reservation provides an example of how rhetorics of termination can be used externally and internally to prevent political reform and to hinder efforts to improve social relations between the tribes and non-Indians.³

TERMINATION IN THE 1950S: CONGRESSIONAL BILLS

In October 1953, as part of the federal efforts to terminate the existence of Indian reservations, and therefore to conclude federal treaty responsibilities regarding specific American Indian nations, the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ (BIA) Billings, Montana, Area Director Paul Fickinger sought Salish and Kootenai input on S. 2750 and H.R. 7319, bills calling for a final membership roll, division of tribal assets into individual portions, closure of tribal accounts in the US Treasury, shutdown of federal services in the Flathead Indian Reservation, and repeal of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which allowed tribes limited self-governance, reaffirmed limited sovereignty, and stopped further land losses through allotment of reservation lands.⁴ Sensing that the tribes could not prevent the congressional introduction of the bills, the tribal council members tried to show cautious optimism that the tribes could manage their own affairs independent of federal aid. However, they protested against provisions that would allow the secretary of the interior the right to handle sales of tribal property and would make the tribes pay for their own liquidation. They also noted that the 1855 Hellgate Treaty, which had established the reservation, was not even mentioned in the bills, although its provisions clearly would be abolished.⁵

The councilmen toned down their optimism after listening to the tribal elders in a special council meeting in November 1953. Tribal elder Dolly

Linsebigler today recalls that “old people said no, and full-bloods didn’t want it because they felt they should be left alone. . . . Some of the old people wondered what was going on.”⁶ Salish tribal member Ross Dupuis believed that the tribes, if determined enough, would not have to liquidate their property: “I think we can ask and delay this to the extent that [in] a new [federal] administration, the whole thing will be changed, [and] they won’t want to liquidate. I think they would have forced it on us many years ago if they could have forced it on us.” Pend d’Oreille elder Nicolai Lassaw was sure that “if they pass this bill, somebody is going to be sorry. It says right there that all acts since 1909 will be repealed. That includes the Wheeler-Howard Act [Indian Reorganization Act], and if you repeal that, what is there left for us.”⁷ Kootenai Ida Finley Sorrell spoke from her heart: “The Indians that want to be liquidated, they own their homes, they are well prepared to keep their homes. But for us poor ones we don’t. We’re not ready to be turned loose. If we are turned loose, that’s all we look for is our tribal payment. When we get that, it goes for all our debts, and then we are out of money again.”⁸ Kootenai Baptiste Mathias also opposed the bill: “This treaty was granted to Indians, and I don’t like to do away with it. I want to exist, [and] that’s [an] Indian way.”⁹

With these directions from elders, the tribes sent Council Chairman Walter McDonald, Vice-Chairman Walter Morigeau, Councilman Steve DeMers, and a tribal official, land clerk Russell Gardipe, to the congressional hearings on S. 2750 and H.R. 7319 in February 1954. In the hearings, the delegates raised the same objections toward the bill as tribal members had in the October meeting and questioned the entire need of this legislation at that time. They stated that the BIA’s estimate of \$70 million (based on over-estimated timber values) as the net worth of tribal assets, including timber resources and a hydroelectric Kerr dam site leased to the Montana Power Company, had caused numerous petitions for enrollment in the tribes from outsiders interested in cashing in on potential tribal payments for members. They did not argue against a reasonable bill toward ultimate withdrawal, conceding such a course of action as inevitable. However, they contended that the effects on tribal welfare, assets, and rights would be tragic if the tribes were to be terminated in the proposed two years. Chairman McDonald and his associates would accept federal withdrawal if tribal land remained in tax-exempt status, arguing that this was the one provision on which they would not compromise. Gardipe pointed out that individual tribal members could not operate ranches for a profit without tribal help: “The fact is that our Indian farmers and stockmen that are on the reservation do not have what you could call economical units,” which is a legacy of allotment. Tribal delegates realized that corporation taxes of up to 50 percent would be too high to enable the tribes to pay their administrative and other expenses. Morigeau worried about timber resources: “If we were to be liquidated, and the land was taxable—I don’t think it should be broken up. We probably would be forced to sell that land in strips, timber and land. That is a national resource.”¹⁰

Gardipe feared that termination would lead to loss of land. He pointed out that the government’s policy of issuing fee patents to the individual Indian

allottees after the allotment of the Flathead Reservation in 1910 had led to land losses and feared that a similar fate awaited the tribes should the federal trust status on Indian lands be lost. Trust status, while restricting individual Indian or tribal use, such as leasing or selling of tribal land, guaranteed that land remained in individual Indian hands or in tribal ownership and not be subject to property taxes, which neither the tribes nor individual Indians could afford to pay. Chairman McDonald noted that tribal members could not compete with non-Indian farmers because of lack of credit and due to non-Indians' larger landholdings. Although the tribal loan fund was established through the Indian Reorganization Act's revolving credit provision in 1935 (when the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes were incorporated) in order to provide inexpensive federal loans to tribal enterprises, it had been cut off by the early 1950s as too expensive for the federal Indian affairs budget. Yet McDonald pointed out an ultimate contradiction within the termination policy: "They [Congress and the BIA] say we are progressive and advanced, and then they cut off our loan funds, because we were poor managers." In reality, Indians had been paying back their revolving credit fund loans diligently.¹¹

McDonald and other tribal leaders realized that for a vast majority of the tribal members who lived on the reservation, termination, for all practical purposes, meant the end of the tribes. The most important issue to the tribes remained the treaty of 1855 and tribal rights based on it. Termination threatened the right of the tribes to their own territory. The delegates asked: "Should Congress exercise such power [to violate any treaty] against the expressed peaceful opposition of the other party to the treaty?" They reminded US Senator James Murray that the reservation "was the home of their [tribal members'] ancestors from time immemorial. The wishes of those who wish to keep it as their home 'for their exclusive use and benefit as an Indian reservation' are entitled to the consideration and respect of the Congress of the nation with whom their ancestors contracted one hundred years ago."¹²

Because of determined tribal opposition, Montana Senators James Murray and Mike Mansfield, along with state representatives, also opposed termination at Flathead. Murray cited adverse effects on tribal welfare should the reservation be terminated: "The Indians ought to be able to determine for themselves whether or not they want this legislation, whether it would be in their interests to have it, and therefore they have a right to vote and determine that."¹³ The unified opposition from the tribal council to termination was crucial to the defeat of termination of the Flathead Indian Reservation. The Flathead termination bills never emerged from the subcommittees to the full committee vote.¹⁴

"OPTIONAL WITHDRAWAL" PROPOSALS OF 1971 AND 1984

Persistent problems with income distribution, poverty, and expected Indian Claims Commission and Court of Claims award payments led to calls to terminate the reservation and liquidate the tribal assets in 1971, this time from within the tribes. Again, financial benefits prompted talk of termination, which this time did not mean abolishment of tribal status for all but only for

those voluntarily leaving the tribes. However, in reality, the cost of paying off those wanting to cash in their share of tribal assets would lead to serious repercussions among the tribes, with the possibility of opening the door to renewed federal termination of services, which most tribal members perceived as a real threat. On- and off-reservation tribal members were among those wanting to liquidate tribal assets, especially the timber resources. E. W. "Bill" Morigeau, a tribal council member since 1961 and its chairman from 1961 to 1963, was the leading liquidation proponent. A \$6 million out-of-court settlement in the tribes' general accounting claim against the federal government initially prompted Morigeau's action. In Resolution 3083 the tribes approved the settlement in December 1970. The big question was how to spend the money. The tribes' Washington, DC, attorney Richard Baenen suggested that several avenues of action were open, but "the law states that no money to satisfy a judgment against the U.S. by an Indian Tribe can be spent without legislation by Congress. If legislation is to go through promptly a presentation must be planned in advance, also approval from the BIA must be obtained for the judgment distribution planning. Such a plan could include anything from total per capita distribution to no pay out at all."¹⁵

The tribal council, chaired by Salish Fred Whitworth since 1969, proposed investing at least some of the money for the future. Morigeau insisted that all of the claims money should be distributed to the membership. Therefore he insisted that all adults be "paid in full," and all underage minors would get their funds "placed in a special interest-bearing account" in the US Treasury.¹⁶ A successful businessman, Morigeau did not speak Salish, was comfortable in the non-Indian world, and saw the tribal council's role exclusively as a moneymaking operation. Interestingly, his rhetoric about the ineffectiveness of the council and the need to distribute all tribal income to the membership appealed to the general membership, especially those desperately poor or marginally Indian. After all, tribal leadership traditionally held its position because of its ability to distribute goods to tribal membership. This dynamic between "progressive businessmen" and "traditionals" would label the next three decades of debate over the multiple meanings of liquidation and termination in tribal politics. Both sides would use the terms *termination* or *liquidation*, in opposite ways, in order to rally their supporters against the opposite faction.

In 1970 the BIA estimated the value of tribal assets at close to \$200 million, or up to \$45,000 per tribal member.¹⁷ Morigeau established the Termination of Poverty Committee, which utilized these figures and the award payments to advocate liquidation of tribal holdings and an equal cash payment to each tribal member. Despite their initial optimism, Morigeau and his supporters would fail to gain signatures from 30 percent of the tribal members eligible to vote in order to get the issue to a referendum. Baenen concluded that liquidation would "make the rich richer and the poor poorer." He based this opinion on the Klamath and Menominee experiences, two Indian tribes that congressional acts had terminated.¹⁸ The tribal council took a 9 to 1 stand against liquidation, with Morigeau providing the dissenting vote.

On 10 January 1971, Morigeau and Ray Courville organized a meeting in the reservation community of Polson to discuss a proposal to "liquidate

resources.” A somewhat misleading report in the *Missoulian* indicated that “the effort is intended as a move to terminate the Flathead Reservation.” The newspaper further reported that “a tentative petition drawn up by Morigeau calls for the formation of a committee representing the tribal membership to draft legislation for liquidation which would be presented to Congress.” The Termination of Poverty Committee consisted of eighteen members, chaired temporarily by DeMers. Committee members emphasized that the termination of poverty did not mean the termination of the reservation.¹⁹

Immediately, Salish Joe McDonald protested the liquidation as a “tremendous blow. . . . It would be tragic sight to see our own Indian people five years after the \$35,000 [*sic*] was given to them. Their identity gone, their land . . . unavailable to them.” McDonald thought that the Termination of Poverty Committee might be more aptly titled the Operation Hopelessness, Despair, and Genocide Committee.²⁰

On January 21, the tribal council voted 9 to 1 to distribute 90 percent of the \$6 million December 1970 award money in per capita payments, which came to about \$4,000 per member. In the meeting, Morigeau’s motives for calling for liquidation “were questioned by other members of the council who concluded investigation of the motives should be made.” Morigeau wanted to distribute 100 percent of the award, but the council moved to impeach him for “acting against tribal constitution” with his committee.²¹

Morigeau and DeMers agreed that the Termination of Poverty “movement [was] being supported by tribal members who [were] not satisfied with the way council [had] managed tribal government.” They claimed that the tribes had “agreed through a resolution that the tribal council would provide a ‘buy-out program’ for older members who wanted to take their share” of the award money, but the council “did not act on this.” Liquidation was to be accomplished through a referendum and congressional legislation. Morigeau and DeMers assured that they “would ask for hunting and fishing rights to be continued.” They noted that “the method of liquidation could be patterned after the Klamath tribe,” which seemed quite alarming considering the problems linked to Klamath termination, such as short-term purchases without long-term benefits, problems that DeMers must have been aware of.²² The liquidation committee on January 20 approved a petition calling for a referendum on the issue, estimating “total tribal resources at \$193 million,” referring to the BIA calculations.²³

After meeting stiff opposition, Morigeau then modified his proposal to an optional withdrawal plan, which would allow retention of mineral rights on tribal lands and hunting and fishing privileges for those opting to take their share of tribal assets in cash. The optional withdrawal plan did not meet with general approval either, and the tribal council resisted it, citing the probable breakup of the tribes. DeMers argued that the change from liquidation or termination to seeking a “referendum to authorize optional withdrawal” was a unanimous decision for the committee. He claimed that voluntary withdrawal was a “more reasonable approach in view of opposition” toward termination.²⁴

On 26 January 1971, the Committee for Optional Withdrawal sent a petition letter to nearly one thousand tribal members asking for a referendum

vote on liquidation. According to Morigeau, his committee had several organizing meetings in which people expressed their opinion regarding optional withdrawal, and the new, rewritten petition was drafted “the way people wanted it.” The petition requested “that the secretary of the interior or his authorized representatives call for a vote on the question of distributing tribal assets on a pro-rata basis, and asks for an election to amend the tribal constitution to conform to the voting laws of the State of Montana, which would allow 19 year olds to vote.” The petition further asked for distribution of “the pro-rata share of the appraised value of tribal assets, including monetary settlements and judgment funds accruing, for any enrolled member desiring to withdraw their share of the tribal corporation in cash.” Finally, “members would retain their interest in any mineral rights reserved on tribal lands and also retain their tribal identity to the extent of hunting and fishing privileges.” Ray Dupuis of Polson resigned from the committee at this point because he could not see “buying out the Indians who want to sell and still let them have the same rights as those of us who want to remain as a member of a unified tribe.”²⁵ This proposal clearly would have meant termination of the tribes, as it is hard to see how the tribes could have survived after buying out a large number of tribal members, and it isn’t realistic to expect that Congress would have accepted tribal members’ retaining certain privileges after selling out.

The tribal council organized another community meeting in Dixon on January 30 to discuss liquidation. The meeting was contentious. More than four hundred tribal members, two hundred off-reservation and two hundred on-reservation Indians, attended the meeting held in a gym; most opposed the proposal. According to newspaper reports, many argued that the members would be “selling out their heritage,” while others noted that “without a land base, the Indians would lose their identity.” There was “persistent speculation that ‘big money and big business’ are behind the movement.” Councilman Al Sloan from St. Ignatius spoke “against liquidation and for a reorganization of the council by revising the method of selecting leadership.” He wanted to see a “qualified businessman” run tribal assets. Kootenai Mary Antiste declared that “I’m getting out. I tell you—I’m tired of living like this—I tan, that’s my living. All those people that got good jobs—they don’t have to worry about their next meal, but I do. I know how to use a dollar and a penny and I’d make a good use of that money.” Chuck Hunter of St. Ignatius thanked Morigeau for “waking people up,” but said “God have mercy on those who don’t use [the money] right.” Lucille Otter of Ronan pointed out the key issue: “Without a land-base we lose our identity.” Gene Maillett of Dayton, a member of the Committee for Optional Withdrawal, argued that nobody was being forced to leave and claimed that “the Klamath Indians, who did not liquidate . . . are now getting better returns than ever.” Salish Thomas “Bearhead” Swaney noted why elders like Antiste might want to sell out: “The tribal council system is no longer valid. It is not helping the older Indians.” However, he drew applause when he said: “Chief Joseph couldn’t sell his land and I can’t sell my land—not today—tomorrow—or any time.”²⁶

On February 5, the tribal council with a 7 to 0 vote approved Resolution 4005, “Removing E. W. Morigeau as tribal council delegate to the Montana

Inter-Tribal Policy Board and the governing board of the Indian Community Action Program for calendar year 1971." The council cited Morigeau's "affiliation with the Committee for Optional Withdrawal [being] inconsistent with Tribal Council's Resolution 4002 opposing liquidation and termination" as one of the reasons for the removal. Morigeau, Robert McCrea, and Sloan did not vote, in essence disapproving the resolution. Sloan and McCrea stated that the removal was "too personal."²⁷

Morigeau did not let up, however. In late February he was in Spokane, Washington, speaking to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai enrollees living there. Morigeau claimed that 99 percent of the three hundred members present favored his plan. In Seattle, out of the five hundred tribal members present, "100 percent . . . were behind the plan" to "withdraw from the Flathead reservation and receive their pro-rata share of tribal assets." Out of three thousand petitions mailed to off-reservation tribal members, one thousand had been returned.²⁸ Be that as it may, the Salish and Kootenai constitution states that 30 percent of eligible voters can put an issue to a referendum, which did not take place at Flathead in 1971.

The March 6 tribal council meeting drew a record crowd of four hundred tribal members. On the agenda was the issue that got the Salish and Kootenai most excited—the upcoming payment of judgment money. Tribal council proposed 90 percent payout and 10 percent investment, while Morigeau and off-reservation members wanted 100 percent payment. The Committee for Optional Withdrawal read its resolution; in Article I it emphasized that "this is not a bill to terminate the Flathead Reservation." Article III stated that once a member chooses to withdraw and is paid his (or her) share, he "automatically terminates himself from tribal entity and also removes his status as ward of the Government." Finally, after the final roll, "no child born thereafter shall be eligible for enrollment." This, despite the committee's rhetoric, is termination. Otter pointed to the crowd and said that "It is the people less than ¼ that want to terminate. All you have to do to get out of the Tribes is send an application into the Council and they will withdraw your name from the rolls." (This is, of course, without monetary compensation.) In the end, Morigeau's motion for 100 percent payout lost in the council 4 to 6, while the council's proposal for 90 percent payment carried 5 to 4 as Resolution 4027.²⁹

In an April 2 council meeting, Chairman Whitworth stated his support of H.R. 3333 and H.R. 3830 in order to provide "for disposition of judgments" for the congressional release of the payments from the US Court of Claims case, which had concluded in a \$22 million compensation, a very belated payment for lands lost due to the opening of the reservation to white settlement in 1910. This case, opened in 1951, also included a settlement from an erroneous survey of the southwest reservation boundary, minus attorneys' fees and 10 percent going into tribal credit and other programs as ruled by law.³⁰ Morigeau wanted an option to "take one's share of payment entirely," but no longer proposed withdrawal. Off-reservation Indians present demanded "the right to use our per capita share of this judgment money for our own purposes." The chairman's proposal for a \$4,000 per capita distribution, with the rest of the money going to investments, carried the day.³¹

Morigeau reintroduced his optional withdrawal proposal in 1984. According to the proposal, anyone wanting to leave tribal membership could do so and cash in his or her share of tribal assets. The renewed proposal rose from Morigeau's and many tribal members' frustrations regarding the tribes' business ventures, which had yet to turn into an all-out success. He and his associates wanted to "modernize the tribal government" by reducing the council from ten to five members and hiring a "badly needed manager." According to Morigeau, this would have saved the tribes \$300,000 a year, trimmed down the "jealousy-ridden and secretive" council, and decreased the tribal government's incompetency.³²

This time the organization proposing withdrawal was called a "\$50,000 Club," after the amount of money the withdrawing members were to receive. The club, headed by Salish Fred Glover, did not propose to "liquidate or terminate the Reservation, but [would] allow tribal members to withdraw their names from the per-capita rolls and receive a \$50,000 cash settlement." Morigeau claimed this was a "move to preserve the Reservation for the young and the remaining members." The settlements were to be paid with money earned from timber sales. Morigeau believed that these tribal members were worth more than \$50,000, but the "withdrawing members" would sacrifice for the remaining members. The payout would have been made reality through a congressional bill that left treaty status intact, along with "aboriginal hunting and fishing." Morigeau believed that no tribal income other than timber sales needed to be touched, and that the tribes would have saved money in the long run, as only 269 members wished to withdraw (a figure that, compared to Morigeau's decade-old claims, seems very low). He claimed that because each tribal member's share of assets was worth \$100,000, the tribes would save \$13,450,000. In what time period the savings would take place, and on what evidence Morigeau based his figures, is unclear. As expected, the tribal council and its new chairman, Michael E. "Mickey" Pablo, did not respond kindly to Morigeau's proposal. Morigeau especially had an issue with an unnamed councilman, possibly Chairman Pablo, whom he accused of "openly criticizing tribal members" and being responsible for "shut[ting] down two or three tribal enterprises at a cost of many jobs."³³

Recently interviewed tribal elders did not remember Morigeau kindly. Salish Thurman Trosper argued that Morigeau lost his councilman position due to fraudulent double-dipping on expenses. Trosper believed that Morigeau pushed the issue for greed, wanting to get his share of tribal assets.³⁴ Kootenai Al Hewankorn thought that Morigeau "pushed the issue because of the money." He believed Morigeau was about "lining his own pockets" and was supported by local ranchers who hoped to "get cheap leases." DeMers, who supported Morigeau's plans, was a merchant who "allowed charges, and got land from debtors." According to Hewankorn, DeMers was "white," although a tribal member. Kootenai Sadie Saloway believed 1971 was the "closest we ever came to termination." She thought many people signed Morigeau's petitions "because of money and greed." However, they did not have "facts on what could be done after termination," so many "took their signatures back once they knew the reality." Kootenai Francis Auld argued that Morigeau

used “assimilated Indians” to push his petition. Kootenai Adeline Mathias believed Morigeau “got money through some scheme,” wanted “more money,” and “didn’t care about people.”³⁵ As Saloway pointed out, a referendum never materialized because Morigeau and associates failed to find 30 percent of tribal members to sign and retain their signatures. This critique of Morigeau does not, however, mean that the interviewed elders thought the tribal council acted appropriately in shutting down Morigeau. Trosper later proposed amending the tribal constitution to decrease the council’s power because, according to him, the council “does not act [with] people’s best interests in mind.”³⁶

TRIBAL PERCEPTION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF TERMINATION

In the late 1990s, the termination idea did not seem to be dead as it on occasion came up from within and outside the tribes, mostly from state and congressional politicians, even if sporadic proposals always died out. One contentious issue was a conflict between the state of Montana and the tribes regarding Highway 93, which passes through the reservation. This heavily travelled road has two lanes, but local interests wanted it to be expanded to four lanes. The tribes opposed this change. Tribal elders saw this conflict as an example of why local politicians would like to get the tribes terminated: “We are opposing non-Indian initiatives, so they want to do away with reservation.”³⁷ In December 2000 the tribes signed an agreement regarding the reconstruction on Highway 93, which is now underway.

By 1999, it seemed clear to tribal elders that even some Salish and Kootenai still wanted to see termination happen. The issue continued to play a dynamic role in tribal politics. Many off-reservation tribal members advocated termination thinking they would “get a lot of money.” However, few on-reservation tribal members seemed to want termination, even if they expected it in the near future. The majority feared for the potential loss of federal services, benefits, programs, and treaty rights. The threat clearly did exist and tribal elder Dolly Linsebigler believed that the tribes had to be careful not to become terminated. Trosper was more pessimistic: he thought that the reservation would be dissolved because “Congress will bring it out,” as it has the ultimate authority, the plenary power.³⁸

Another issue causing tension in the reservation between Indians and non-Indians was the tribes’ 1995 proposal to take over the management of the 18,500-acre National Bison Reserve, carved from reservation lands in 1908. Since 2002 the tribes had been conducting ongoing negotiations with the US Department of Interior’s Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to take over the management of not just the Bison Reserve but also the Ninepipe and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges (bird sanctuaries) in the central part of the reservation. In an 11 March 2003 meeting in Charlo, the tribes proposed to take over the management of these areas based on the 1994 Self-Governance Amendment to the 1975 Self-Determination Act. Local non-Indians took issue with the tribes’ Indian-preference hiring policy, which, they feared, would affect jobs at the refuges once the tribes took over. The Charlo meeting was

organized by the Citizens Equal Rights Alliance, whose representatives argued that Indians did not pay taxes and received “free” health care and education, while emphasizing that this was not “a matter of white and Indian, but of equal rights.”³⁹ To get management over the Bison Reserve, the tribes were required to prove that they have “historical, geographical and cultural ties” to the areas under federal management. Tribal Vice-Chairman Jami Hamel of Arlee noted that “the whole issue comes down to the sovereignty of our Tribes. . . . They just don’t want Indians to do it.”⁴⁰

Two more major meetings between the tribes and the locals regarding the issue took place, one in Ronan on 15 May 2003 and another in Missoula on 3 June. Opinions, pro and con, pertaining to tribal management were presented in the meetings. One opponent claimed that “the American Indian does not have a history of caring management of any of their lands.” Those who supported the proposal noted the tribes’ “strong ties to the land and to the buffalo” and their other management successes.⁴¹

In 2004, USFWS signed a two-year agreement with the tribes to co-manage the Bison Reserve. Tensions did not ease: by October 2006, the USFWS ordered an outside investigation because non-Indian employees complained about deterioration in work conditions and tribal laxity in work performance since the agreement was signed.⁴² Once the agreement expired, the tribes sought full management of the Bison Reserve, but the USFWS resisted until “‘significant’ personnel issues [were] resolved.”⁴³ Thereafter tension between the sides escalated, so much so that both sides brought in security to ensure the safety of their workers. The USFWS stated that the decision not to continue temporary co-management was based on “poor performance, failure to correct it, and egregious personnel issues”; in other words, incompetence in tribal management. Tribal Chairman James Steele Jr. assured that the issue would not “stop here.” Many non-Indian opponents of tribal management plans were thrilled with the USFWS decision.⁴⁴ Finally the two sides came to a management agreement but kept mum on the details.⁴⁵ In this atmosphere of often-heated debate, it cannot be surprising that many tribal members are fearful of the return of termination; they perceive it as the ultimate goal of the anti-Indian rhetoric. Tensions with non-Indians increased internal debate about termination.

TERMINATION BY DILUTION: LINEAL DESCENT PROPOSAL

The latest reoccurrence of the termination paradigm arose from an effort to amend the tribal constitution to reform tribal government at the end of the 1990s and, after its failure, the subsequent proposal to expand tribal enrollment. Ever since the adoption of the new constitution in 1935, tribal members have generally been unhappy with the council’s nearly unchecked power and the tribal enrollment rules.⁴⁶ These issues came into conflict in the period between 1999 and 2003 in a way that reminded many tribal members of the federal attempts at termination during the 1950s. They believed that diluting tribal blood through expanded enrollment might open the door for renewed local and state calls for termination leading to federal efforts at abolishing

tribal status and services. After all, the tribes had amended their constitution twice in the 1950s to make enrollment more strict and, thereby, to defeat termination by appearing more “Indian.”

Enrollment eligibility has been a divisive issue for the Salish and Kootenai. Intermarriages are common and the matter of Indian descent has become increasingly complicated, with many split families, within which some are, while others are not, eligible for tribal membership. Tribal Resolution 1072 of 2 February 1960 was approved in a referendum. It officially amended Article II of the constitution and established current enrollment requirements. A person must be “a natural child” of an enrolled member, must be “1/4 or more Salish or Kootenai blood,” and must not be “enrolled in another reservation.” These requirements were not retroactive and therefore did not take away membership from now ineligible Indians who are already enrolled. Nevertheless, the tribal council can adopt members of minimum one-eighth Indian blood with the secretary of the interior’s approval. Tribal membership may be lost due to resignation, due to “enrollment with another tribe,” due to “establishing a legal residence in a foreign country,” or “upon proof of lack of eligibility for enrollment.”⁴⁷

In the late 1990s, two arguments divided the tribes: whether to broaden the membership base to include Indians with less than one-quarter Salish or Kootenai blood or to keep membership standards strict in order to preserve tribal identity. Salish Doug Allard was one of those who favored loosening the membership criteria. “We are running out of Indians,” he observed. The tribal membership was predicted to drop from the near seven thousand to five thousand by 2026.⁴⁸

A thirty-two-member constitutional review committee, established in January 1996 and chaired by Allard, became a sounding board for the enrollment debate. The final push for establishing the committee came when the tribal council, especially Chairman Pablo, reversed the tribal judge’s ruling by giving clemency to a tribal member convicted of an offense. Many tribal members questioned whether a true separation of powers therefore existed in the tribal government. The council’s action, after all, was legitimate: the tribal constitution leaves the “ultimate authority” to the council. The committee was expected to suggest cutting the tribal council’s supreme power and to make it more accountable to the tribal membership by amending the tribal constitution in a way that would guarantee real separation of powers. The council was to be reduced to a solely legislative body, and an executive director was to be elected to be in charge of the tribal budget.⁴⁹ Trosper, a committee member, noted that the council lacked management skills and had squandered opportunities; nepotism was rampant. Trosper acknowledged that the council would not give up its powers without a fight, but the “council’s politicking has to be overcome.” He charged that the tribal constitution is inadequate because the legal structure to force the tribal council to delegate power is missing, thereby confirming the deficiencies in the BIA-written constitution.⁵⁰

Trosper’s fears of difficulties in trying to change the tribal constitution came true: the constitutional review committee failed to force a change, and by 2000 Trosper and others had decided to try another method to deal with the

rampant problems. This was an effort to expand tribal membership to all lineal descendants. This proposal stirred a major hornets' nest among tribal members.

Split families, the fact that some family members were enrolled while others were not, obviously was, and still remains, a major problem. Noel Pichette, a Salish who was a councilman from 1975 to 1983 and a member of the constitutional review committee, acknowledged this in 1999. He opposed the lineal descent idea but noted how "many elders want their non-members in [the] family enrolled." Linsebigler was concerned about intermarriages and worried that if the tribes didn't do anything "there'll be no more Indians." She proposed changing the enrollment rules to allow those with a minimum of one-quarter of "any Indian blood [to] qualify as long as [they were] not enrolled in another Tribe." Trosper pointed out the other significant issue in the matter: new members would cut into the \$1,200 annual per capita payments.⁵¹

Others advocated keeping tribal membership criteria in its present form or wanted even further restrictions. Once again, the argument revolved around blood quantum and perceived Indian identity or lack of it. The rhetoric could get quite contentious at times, as exemplified by Augustine Mathias, an elderly Kootenai from Elmo: "People wake up before they pull another fast one on us. I'm talking about letting a bunch more white people on the rolls. They have pushed us to the edge of cultural extinction as it is." He continued, "It's just another attempt by greedy whites to gain more control over our resources. . . . They will take what little we have for their own economic gain." He continued with what this debate ultimately hinges on: "Who has 95 percent of the good paying jobs in the tribal system? In my opinion, diluting the blood even more with white blood will not benefit the Indians who are already struggling to survive."⁵² One splinter group in the reservation—the "4/4th for Reform Movement"—wanted to limit tribal membership to a minimum of one-quarter Salish or Kootenai without any possibilities for the council to accept exceptions.⁵³

In the fall of 2000 the Kootenai Tribe presented an enrollment ordinance to the tribal council, proposing that the Kootenai would thereafter "assume the exclusive responsibilities for tribal enrollment of Kootenai Indians." The tribes' legal department shot down this idea of a separate Kootenai enrollment board because the tribal constitution did not recognize any Kootenai Tribe, only the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and because the constitution gave all authority on decisions regarding enrollment to the tribal council.⁵⁴ New council chairman Fred Matt sent a letter to the Kootenai that same day, applauding their efforts "to stem the loss of culture and to secure the protection of Tribal identity for the future survival of the Tribes." He, however, could not approve the proposed changes in the enrollment procedures, as he deemed them "illegal" and believed that they would invite inequality in membership procedures if approved. He suggested that all efforts to propose ways to improve cultural survival be presented to the council "for review and possible implementation," a method that the Kootenai argue leads nowhere.⁵⁵

Some Kootenai then created a Flathead Indian Reservation Defense Organization (FIRDO). This group became deeply involved in the lineal

descent referendum; they opposed it and saw it as a way to open the door for termination. The proposal's proponents, however, gained enough signatures to get it to a referendum vote, which took place on 18 January 2003.

The tribes hired a consultant, Deward Walker, to investigate possible enrollment scenarios. In his December 2002 report Walker concluded that if no changes in enrollment were made, the tribal enrollment would drop from 6,953 in 2001 to 6,900 by 2010 and to 6,400 by 2020. If the tribes changed their enrollment criteria to include "blood of other tribes for currently enrolled tribal members thereby affecting their descendants' blood quantum," enrollment would increase to 7,690 by 2015, but would then drop to 7,290 by 2020. Finally, if the lineal descent proposal were adopted, the tribes would have 17,159 members by 2010 and 24,107 by 2025, argued Walker, who based his figures on an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent.⁵⁶

By using these potentially tendentious figures, FIRDO asked for a halt or delay on the referendum fearing that their members would "become a small minority on the reservation and [would] lose their voice in government affairs." They were also concerned about benefits being "watered down" should the amendment pass. US District Court Judge Donald Molloy refused to interfere "in the political process of the sovereign tribal government." Enrolled members who turned eighteen by election day and had resided on the reservation for at least a year prior could vote; eligible voters totaled 3,173.⁵⁷

Tribal members started an intense debate regarding the proposal during the days leading to the election. One wrote that tribal enrollment criteria were a result of federal threats to take away "medical, educational and welfare assistance," that is, termination. He considered lineal descent as a way to "restore membership" to what the chiefs had intended when they accepted the treaty. Regina Parot blamed the tribal council for presenting just the negatives about increased membership. She questioned the need to "perpetuate Indian blood identification through a mathematical fraction imposed by the United States" and believed added tribal members would increase the pool for tribal jobs, not add any workload to law and order, and make membership criteria more equal.⁵⁸

Jacqueline Britton, a tribal member from Sacramento, California, supported the amendment, because "by insisting on blood quantum, you will eventually lose many, many people who are Salish in their lives as well as in their hearts." Her children could not be enrolled, but "none of them want[ed] tribal money." They simply wanted acknowledgment of being Salish, she claimed. Lillian Hartung argued that the council was threatening people with losing their benefits, just like the US government had done earlier through "some extortion method," if they approved added members.⁵⁹ Vera Rosengren claimed that the council's stand against the amendment was "scare tactics and propaganda." She thought that no matter where one lived, they were "still Flathead," so the entire membership should be entitled to vote. Her children knew of "their heritage and cannot claim it because of the current 'tribal constitution.'" Nancy Brown Vaughn advocated the amendment noting how a "majority" of the tribes' ninety-five councilmen since 1935 "have been

less than full blood and several even less than $\frac{1}{4}$ degree." She reminded her readers that "most of us share the idea that our children are our most important resource for the future."⁶⁰

In contrast with these letters promoting the amendment, many tribal members adamantly opposed it; the tribes therefore were seriously divided. Susan Dowdall said she was "proud" to be a full blood and stated that the council waited too long to take a stand against the amendment. Referring to the national deficit, she argued that no additional money could be expected from the federal government, and therefore the burden of thousands of additional members would be too much for the tribes to bear. Cainan Monroe noted that, first of all, "the enrollment system was designed to destroy the native population." He was afraid that if the lineal descent proposal were adopted, "then you can expect termination of the reservation and the stripping of our identity to follow soon after." The amendment proposal reminded him strongly of termination in the 1950s: "When people start being enrolled on the basis of nothing more than a story . . . eventually it will lead the U.S. Government . . . to ask the question of 'who is really an Indian?' . . . Then the government has no reason to classify natives as a separate entity, or sovereign nations. . . . We are a target for the U.S. Government, mainly for our resources, and minerals." He thought the lineal descent issue was a "setup" to abolish the tribes and proposed enrolling people with "other native blood," a proposal that has quite a bit of support on the reservation today. Finally, he concluded how "creating disputes amongst ourselves such as the enrollment issue leaves us vulnerable to outside political attack."⁶¹ Here he pointed out an important dichotomy: tribes perceive that their internal divisions have made it easier for the federal, state, and local governments to divide and conquer, and thereby subjugate and colonize indigenous peoples. Tribal traditions have never promoted complete unity, which has made it hard for the tribal governments to show decisiveness.

On the eve of the January 16 election, Chairman Matt warned the tribal membership that "the lineal descendancy amendment would have serious and detrimental impacts on our tribe. . . . The Salish-Kootenai would become the new Cherokees of the West, where even a tiny fraction of Indian blood would qualify one for enrollment."⁶² However, the Split Family Support Group (SFSG) that pushed for the referendum believed that federal funding for many services would increase, and "many other programs, entitlements and privileges of tribal membership could continue without significant changes if the Tribal Council managed resources wisely and governed effectively."⁶³

During the election, 2,549 Salish and Kootenai out of the eligible 3,173 voted in eight polling places in the Indian community centers of Arlee, Dixon, Elmo-Dayton, Hot Springs, Pablo, Polson, Ronan, and St. Ignatius. Exactly 2,032 rejected the proposal while 450 approved it with the remaining 67 votes not counting. Therefore, 80 percent of the eligible voted, an unusually high turnout; a very divisive issue drew people to polling places. Elmo, the Kootenai community and a "stronghold" of FIRDO and "cultural traditionals," voted in the 80 percent range, "the most votes we've ever had."⁶⁴

The SFSG admitted defeat and stated that the election "closed the door for tribal identification of our unenrolled descendants." Trosper supported

the amendment from a frustration to get the constitutional review committee to succeed and because “tribal members fail to understand and appreciate that with the current one-quarter degree requirement for membership, it ultimately spells the death knell of the tribes.” He also criticized the tribal council for not helping SFSG’s earlier effort, in 2000, to amend the tribal constitution to allow enrollment of siblings of members, which the BIA rejected on technical grounds.⁶⁵ Allard thinks that the defeat of the amendment was “the stupidest damn thing that ever happened” and claims that people were afraid of their \$1,200 per capita payments.⁶⁶

Because of the issue’s divisive nature, Chairman Matt called for tribal unity after the election, admitting that “this election definitely strained the fabric of our tribal community.”⁶⁷ To this observer, unfortunately, it appears that this unity may be hard to achieve. It is clear that something needs to be done to tribal enrollment practices.

Opposition to lineal descent was much more pronounced at a more traditional Kootenai district in the northern part of the reservation than in a more business-astute Salish community, where even many elders, such as Trospen and Allard, advocated the change. Most certainly they did not advocate termination, although some saw the proposal as a move to that direction. Kootenai Ignace Couture saw the issue in terms of some “people trying to get back in because living [is] getting more expensive.” He believed that passing the referendum “would have put an economic squeeze on all.” While the split family advocates were saying “that you would get more money from [federal] government, government could bring up the issue of termination as a result.” He credited the tribal council for handling the issue well, although three council members promoted lineal descent. He put the whole matter into historical perspective by noting how the “split family deal” started in the 1950s when the tribes changed their enrollment criteria for fear of termination.⁶⁸

Hewankorn agreed with Couture. He noted how the termination issue disappeared with E. W. Morigeau, who died in 1990, but reappeared with the lineal descent proposal. He believed that the “federal government would have jumped in to argue for termination.” Saloway noted that while only 450 people voted for lineal descent, a thousand signatures were needed to bring the issue to a referendum. She concluded that many who supported the idea did so because they have family members unenrolled but voted against it “because [they] realized what it would do.” She stated that “we were very afraid” that the amendment might pass, but when it did not, “faith comes back to your people.” In contrast with Couture, Saloway did not think the council handled the matter well, because there are “many non-Indians on the council.”⁶⁹

Auld notes how the lineal descent issue “brought up the extremists from both sides.” He saw the tribal constitution as the issue that divides the tribes and credits people’s “sense” for defeating the proposal. Mathias believed that lineal descent would bring “faster termination” than anything, because it would quickly dilute the Indianness of tribal members.⁷⁰ Mathias’s granddaughter, Lois Friedlander, a FIRDO activist, pointed out how the council became involved in the matter only when FIRDO hired an attorney “to let people know what would happen.” She agreed with Saloway in that many of

those who signed a referendum petition voted against the proposal because they “found out what it means.” She noted how termination was a valid threat nationally by referring to Senate Bill 1721, introduced by resigning senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO) in 2004, which would have reduced the official federal blood quantum three points below one-quarter in order to “allow keeping trust status on lands for lineal descendants.”⁷¹

The last issue regarding lineal descent concerned the three tribal council members who supported the amendment. During the 28 January 2003 council meeting, Wilbert Michel, president of FIRDO, asked Maggie Goode (Hot Springs), Joel Clairmont (Polson), and Denny Orr (Arlee) if “they believe[d] they [we]re working in the best interest of the Indian people.” They believed they were. Michel asked them “to step down from the council.” Goode stated that she “was elected to represent all the people” who had a “constitutional right for a fair secretarial election [referendum].” Clairmont and Orr agreed, and all hoped to move on. Tribal member Pat Pierre requested that the “council move forward with the proposal for the inclusion of other Indian bloods for enrollment criteria.” Tribal member Junior Caye requested a motion to remove Goode, Orr, and Clairmont from the council, but Vice-Chairman Hamel insisted a proper procedure be followed. Finally the council agreed to “obtain a legal review on the process to remove a tribal council member from office” with a 9 to 0 vote, with Goode abstaining.⁷²

FIRDO later clarified that their request to remove the three councilmen was based on their violation of “tribal constitution and code of conduct.” Chairman Matt noted that councilmen could be removed only “if they are proven guilty of improper conduct or gross neglect of duty.” Neither of the charges applied here, and the councilmen kept their seats.⁷³ However, Goode and Orr lost their seats in the November 2003 council elections, and Clairmont lost his seat in 2004.

CONCLUSION

This case study on the Salish and Kootenai has demonstrated how termination, despite its initial demise in 1954, has persisted in the perceptions of the tribal members. Unlike in the cold war atmosphere calling for assimilation and conformity of all citizens, today it seems doubtful that the federal government or any US congressman would repropose abolishing Indian reservations or tribes. However, two centuries of dishonorable dealings have created an atmosphere in which any proposition to change current tribal laws, practices, or enrollment requirements, even if it does not come from federal agencies or officials, will automatically be suspect. Although many tribal members are dissatisfied with the tribal government, efforts to make changes have fallen short. E. W. Morigeau attempted to allow disillusioned tribal members to leave their membership and gain their share of tribal assets, often representing the lone dissenting voice in the tribal government. Others picked up the campaign to reform the tribal government but met with little success. Often the dissenting voices have been accused of promoting termination, even if their motivations have been different. The 2003 referendum over

lineal descent brought forth the idea that if the tribes “dilute” Indian identity by accepting new members with low Indian blood quanta, the federal government will somehow come up with new proposals to “terminate” the Salish and Kootenai. In 2003, tribal members did not talk about termination as it directly threatened them in 1954, but the basic fear of losing the remaining lands and sovereign authority over them remained the same.

Historians should not limit their discussion of termination to the cold war era. In the reservations such as the Flathead Indian Reservation, the issue is very much alive and as feared as ever. The internal dynamics of tribes regarding decisions affecting politics, economics, and enrollment remain understudied topics, particularly regarding contemporary times. Whether detribalization is a real threat or a perception deserves further study.

NOTES

1. House Concurrent Resolution 108, 83rd Cong., 1st sess., adopted 1 August 1953, printed in *House Report No. 2680: With Respect to the House Resolution Authorizing the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs to Conduct an Investigation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs*, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1954, vii.

2. On the traditional argument on termination, see, e.g., Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945–1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); Kenneth Philp, *Termination Revisited: American Indians on the Trail to Self-Determination, 1933–1953* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999); and Larry Burt, *Tribalism in Crisis: Federal Indian Policy, 1953–1961* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).

3. The author would like to thank an unidentified reader for helping him to flesh out this argument.

4. *Termination of Federal Supervision over Certain Tribes of Indians*, Joint Hearing before the Subcommittees on Interior and Insular Affairs, 12 Parts, 83rd Cong., 2d sess., 1954, pt. 7, Flathead, 774–76. For a more detailed explanation on how the Salish and Kootenai managed to avoid being terminated in 1954, see Jaakko Puisto, “We Didn’t Care for It’: Salish and Kootenai Battle against Termination Policy, 1946–1954,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 52, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 48–63.

5. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Dixon, MT, 7 October 1953, 2–6. Box 7, 1944–60, the files of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, MT.

6. Dolly Linsebigler, John Peter Paul, and Mike Durglo Sr., interviews with author, Salish Longhouse, St. Ignatius, 11 June 1999.

7. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 14 November 1953, 3–4.

8. *Ibid.*, 15.

9. *Ibid.*, 4.

10. *Termination of Federal Supervision*, pt. 7, Flathead, 941–54, 958–62, 975; Morigeau quotation, 945; Gardipe quotation, 948.

11. *Ibid.*, 947–50. The 1887 Dawes Act, on which the Flathead Allotment Act of 1910 was based, restricted heads of Indian households to one 160-acre allotment although no such restrictions were included in the 1862 Homestead Act for non-Indians.

12. Walter McDonald, Chairman, Walter Morigeau, Vice-Chairman, Jerome Hewankorn, Councilman, and George Tunison, Attorney, "Re: H.R. 7319, Memo for Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana," 19 February 1954, 1, 8, folder 2, box 276, James E. Murray Papers, K. Ross Toole Archives, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, Missoula.
13. *Termination of Federal Supervision*, pt. 7, Flathead, 829.
14. For further discussion, see Jaakko Puisto, "'This Is My Reservation, I Belong Here': Salish and Kootenai Battle Termination with Self-Determination," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 28, no. 2 (2004): 1-23.
15. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 18 December 1970, 3.
16. E. W. Morigeau, *Valley Creek: The Autobiography of E. W. Morigeau. A True Story of a Flathead Reservation Indian*, Polson, MT, privately published by Walter Douglas Morigeau, 2002, 93-96.
17. Marge Anderson, "Tribal Liquidation Includes 'Intangibles,'" *Missoulian*, 16 January 1971, 5.
18. Marge Anderson, "Tribal Attorney Admits Termination No Answer," *Missoulian*, 1 February 1971, 7.
19. Marge Anderson, "Tribe May Liquidate Holdings in Flathead," *Missoulian*, 15 January 1971, 1-2.
20. Joe McDonald, "Don't Terminate," letter to the editor, *Missoulian*, 20 January 1971, 4. Joe McDonald is today the president of the Salish Kootenai College.
21. Marge Anderson, "Indians Oppose Liquidation," *Missoulian*, 23 January 1971, 1.
22. Marge Anderson, "Tribal Liquidation Advocates Speak Up," *Missoulian*, 20 January 1971, 7.
23. "Liquidation Petition Format Approved at Ronan Wednesday," *Missoulian*, 22 January 1971, 11.
24. "New Indian Petition Asks Vote on Voluntary Withdrawal from Tribe," *Ronan Pioneer*, 25 February 1971.
25. Marge Anderson, "Tribal Assets Petitions Mailed to 1,000 Indians," *Missoulian*, 27 January 1971, 7; "Dupuis Quitting Liquidation Group," *Missoulian*, 28 January 1971.
26. Marge Anderson, "Issues and Indians Stand," *Missoulian*, 31 January 1971, 12; "Controversy Continues on Tribal Withdrawal Proposal," *The Flathead Courier*, 4 February 1971, 12.
27. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 5 February 1971, 7; Marge Anderson, "Morigeau Voted Off Indian Committees," *Missoulian*, 6 February 1971, 7.
28. "Off-Reservation Indians Are for Optional Withdrawal," *Ronan Pioneer*, 25 February 1971.
29. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 6 March 1971, 1-4.
30. Gary Langley, "Problems Seen in Payment of \$22 Million," *Missoulian*, 10 May 1971.
31. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 12 April 1971, 2-11.
32. Morigeau, *Valley Creek*, 109-13, 127.
33. *Ibid.*, 127-31. Mickey Pablo (1951-2000) served as a council chairman for the better part of the period from 1984 to 2000.
34. Thurman Trosper interview with the author, Ronan, MT, 13 June 1999.
35. Al Hewankorn, Sadie Saloway, and Francis Auld interviews with author,

Kootenai Community Center, Elmo, MT, 23 June 2004; Adeline Mathias interview, Dayton, MT, 25 June 2004.

36. Trosper interview.

37. Noel Pichette interview; Paul and Durglo Sr. interviews.

38. Paul interview; Pichette, Linsebigler, and Trosper interviews.

39. "Locals Oppose Tribal Takeover of Bison Range," *Char-Koosta*, 20 March 2003. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have published *Char-Koosta* since 1958.

40. Jennifer Greene, ed., "Tribes Prepare for Meeting to Decide Who Should Manage the Bison Range," *Char-Koosta*, 8 May 2003, 1.

41. Jennifer Greene, "Bison Range Forum Draws Large Crowd," *Char-Koosta*, 12 June 2003, 1.

42. "Outside Agency to Investigate Bison Range," *Great Falls Tribune*, 19 October 2006, M3.

43. Matt Gouras, "Tribe Seeks Full Management of Bison Range," *Great Falls Tribune*, 22 November 2006, M2.

44. Gwen Florio, "Tribes, Feds Bring in More Security as Tension Escalates at Bison Range: Agency Trades Barbs with Salish, Kootenai," *Great Falls Tribune*, 13 December 2006, 1A, 7A.

45. Mary Clare Jalonick, "Government, Tribes Forge Agreement on Bison Range," *Great Falls Tribune*, 18 June 2008, M8.

46. Trosper interview.

47. File 1411-053, box 3, 1956, Solicitor Edmund J. Fritz to Commissioner, 3 March 1958, both in Central Classified Files, National Archives, Washington, DC; Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 3 April 1960, 2.

48. Pichette, Trosper, Doug Allard, and Linsebigler interviews; James L. Lopach, Margery Hunter Brown, and Richmond L. Clow, *Tribal Government Today: Politics on Montana Indian Reservations* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1998), 259; John Stromnes, "Tribal Enrollment Rules Draw Fire," *Missoulian*, 26 March 1997, B1, B3.

49. Ron Selden, "Court Ruling Leads to Power Struggle among Tribal Officials," *Missoulian*, 11 June 1995, B4; Trosper interview.

50. Pichette and Trosper interviews.

51. Pichette, Linsebigler, and Trosper interviews.

52. Augustine Mathias, "Wake Up—They're Out to Get Our Resources," letters to the editor, *Char-Koosta*, 8 October 1999, 4.

53. John Stromnes, "Issue: Tribal Membership," *Missoulian*, 8 January 1997, B3.

54. John Carter, Tribal Legal Department, to Chairman Fred Matt and members of the tribal council, 17 October 2000, 1–6, in author's possession. Matt followed Mickey Pablo as chairman after Pablo's sudden death in February 2000 and was the chairman representing the Arlee district until he lost the reelection bid in 2005.

55. Fred Matt, Chairman, to the concerned tribal members, 17 October 2000, 1–2, in author's possession.

56. Minutes of the Tribal Council Meeting, 19 December 2002, 3–4.

57. John Stromnes, "Court Won't Halt Tribal Election: Ruling a Blow for Flathead Indian Group Seeking to Limit Membership," *Missoulian*, 1 January 2003, B1.

58. Arthur G. Barber, "Give Children Their Inheritance" and Regina Parot, "Your Vote Is Secret," letters to the editor, *Char-Koosta*, 6 January 2003, 6.

59. Jacqueline Britton, "Tribal Member's Children Have Limited Access to Health Care and Education Because They Are Not Enrolled" and Lillian Hartung, "You Won't Lose Benefits," letters to the editor, *Char-Koosta*, 9 January 2003, 5.

60. Vera Rosengren, "Enroll Descendants" and Nancy Brown Vaughan, "People of Mixed Heritage Have Been Here All Along," letters to the editor, *Char-Koosta*, 16 January 2003, 5.

61. Susan Dowdall, "Vote NO to Subjugation!" and Cainan Monroe, "Don't Destroy the Tribes," letters to the editor, *Char-Koosta*, 16 January 2003, 5.

62. "Vote in Secretarial Election This Saturday," *Char-Koosta*, 16 January 2003, 1.

63. John Stromnes, "Historic Election Saturday Could Alter Tribal Enrollment," *Missoulian*, 17 January 2003, B5.

64. John Stromnes, "Proposed Tribal Rules Fail at Polls: Salish, Kootenai Referendum Decides Issue of Desdendancy," *Missoulian*, 19 January 2003, B1, B5.

65. John Stromnes, "Effort to Change Tribal Enrollment Abandoned: Spokesman Says Membership Rules Will Lead to Tribe's Extinction," *Missoulian*, 21 January 2003, B1-2, Trosper interview.

66. Allard interview with author, 24 June 2004, at Allard's Trading Post in St. Ignatius.

67. John Stromnes, "Chairman Makes Call for Unity," *Missoulian*, 22 January 2003, B1.

68. Ignace Couture interview, Kootenai Community Center, Elmo, MT, 23 June 2004.

69. Hewankorn and Saloway interviews.

70. Auld and Mathias interviews.

71. Lois Friedlander interview with author, Dayton, MT, 25 June 2004.

72. Minutes of Tribal Council Meeting, 28 January 2003, 1-2.

73. "Council Says Insufficient Grounds to Remove Polson District Council Member," *Char-Koosta*, 20 February 2003, 1.