

Poll Was Misleading, Mrs. Covington Says

NESPELEM — There is no assurance that assets of the Colville Confederated tribes could be sold at a "fair value," a group of Colvilles opposing liquidation declared this week.

Chairman Lucy Covington said that if the Colvilles understood this, and also understood they would be giving away many assets for nothing, they would have voted overwhelmingly against termination in a recent opinion poll conducted by the tribal business council.

The Colville Group Against Liquidation is led by Mrs. Covington, Harvey Moses, Shirley Palmer and Frank George, minority members of the business council.

Mrs. Covington charged that the wording of the opinion poll "held out a false lure of large cash awards" should federal supervision be ended and the tribal assets liquidated.

"**THE OPINION** poll," she said, "stated that the assets would be sold at a 'fair value' with the proceeds distributed equally to the members.

"Many have been led to believe that individual shares of this 'fair value' — which is really a 'dream value' — might amount to more than \$40,000, so a vote for termination would be a vote for \$40,000."

Mrs. Covington said a "fair value" of tribal assets could only mean their long-range value, and that neither of these terms is equivalent to what the assets actually could be sold for.

"The only hope of the liquidationists," she said, "is their

plan to sell the tribal timberlands to the federal government at an excessive price based on paying tomorrow's values today.

"The government would buy a sustained-yield forest at its present cash value.

"This is unrealistic. There is real opposition in Congress to buying any more timberlands in the Colville area at such prices.

"If the government does not buy the timberland, it could only be dumped on the market to go to the highest bidders. We know what would happen then. Timber and land speculators would get together and acquire our wonderful forestlands at a

fraction of their 'fair value.'"

MRS. COVINGTON said grazing, mineral and other assets would merely be sold to the highest bidders.

"It would be like any forced sale," she said, "with buyers, not the Indians, reaping the benefits."

She said no one could ever evaluate the mineral potential of the reservation and that consequently, mineral lands would bring very little "real money."

Other tribal assets would be given away for nothing, Mrs. Covington said.

"We would receive no compensation for hunting and fishing rights and our various tax immunities," the spokesman declared.

"Many priceless rights would simply disappear. For example, trust lands would go on the tax rolls. Members would lose their rights to hunt as Indians on their own lands. Our general right to the use of a portion of the surface of Lake Roosevelt would simply go up in smoke."

MRS. COVINGTON said that if tribal members understood reservation assets could never be sold for their "fair value," and if they understood other assets and rights would bring no return at all, the opinion poll would have resulted in an overwhelming vote against liquidation.

The Colville tribes have an enrolled membership of 4949, Mrs. Covington said. Ballots were mailed to the 2526 adult members. She said a total of 1814 ballots were returned with 1272 voting in favor of liquidation and 491 opposed.

Mrs. Covington said the 763 members who did not return their ballots, or who returned them without expressing an opinion, "could easily have changed the situation in favor of the minority group."

Christmas Seal Letters Mailed to Most People

OKANOGAN — Christmas seal letters have been mailed to 4000 Okanogan county families.

"Generous donations will be appreciated," said Mrs. Orla Drake, president of the Okanogan County TB association.

Mrs. Drake said tuberculosis is by no means a dormant disease. During the past several weeks, she said, three cases have been detected in Okanogan county.

"Your contributions help support a continuing program of x-rays to detect TB in its infancy," Mrs. Drake said.

Other funds are used for medical or pre-medical scholarships.

College Center

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and custodial services for the college-credit courses. Wenatchee Valley college will provide instructors and pay their expenses.

Starting next year, Baugh