

Existing Conditions on the Reservation.

I will begin from where the Indian was first done wrong and I will begin where it came from up to the present time and how they live today. A long time ago, twenty years ago my people were well to do. They had cattle and stock and they had plenty that would make them rich. Then came an Indian Agent by the name of George Steel. During Major Steel's administration on this reservation we lived in plenty. We had provisions, we had fine horses, we had cattle and plenty of everything and we had good times and we had good wagons. <sup>After</sup> Major Steel was here sometime he figured out a graft and said we should take our cattle and have them dipped and he finally figured out this scheme telling them this and in this way they took our ~~XXXXXXXX~~ cattle and gave them to other stockman. After this had happened they rounded up all the cattle and dropped them off the Indian Reservation pretending to dip the cattle but it was just a stall and we didn't get all of our cattle back again. He also did likewise with the horses and I was told he was taking part in this and if he had taken all our horses and cattle and then he writes to Washington telling them the Indians had lots of cattle and horses and plenty of food and that they didn't need support from the Government and to cut down on the rations. After this letter reached the Administrator of Indian Affairs at Washington he wrote back in May and said to abandon the rations of all the Indians on the reservation and this they did.. If they had cut off the rations gradually and left our stock it wouldn't have been so bad. Every Agent has done the same thing. Major Steel is the one who started the whole trouble and all the rest have followed his way. I made up my mind to expose this to the U.S. Government who is the guardian of the American Indian and who has done unjust to their nation and I will fight to expose the Blackfoot Indian so they may receive justice from the good father at Washington. The Agent knows that we are now starving but he doesn't come to us, he doesn't help us and he

knows we are starving. Here is Appikuni and he has lived a good many years among us and has been taken into the tribe. I never have heard or knew of him in my life since he left us of saying that he made a success in this country of farming. There is another thing under the Lease of 1855 with the U. S. Government and it took away a large area of land covering western Montana. The U.S. Government promised they would lease the land and compensate the Indians but they have never done it. Now we want the privilege to sue the Government. We are very poor. Last year I could sell my hay for only seven and eight dollars a ton. We are forced to sell our land to buy provisions for our families. When we sell our land it must be handled through the Agent and it takes three or four years and if it is sold for three or four thousand dollars and we never see only a small part of the money. Last winter my son was very sick and the Agent and the Doctor knew it and knew he didn't have anything to eat but they didn't come out to see him. My son died and I have never gone inside the door of the Agency. Fine-Bull was a very old Indian, had no property and was very old and had a large family. The Agency cut off his rations and he was forced to seek work. He was sick also and he kept getting worse and worse and finally he died. There was another case. Eagle-Head and his wife and both of them were blind and they were drawing rations and the Agent took the rations away. They went to a family in Hart Butte and they sympathized and gave them some rations. Eagle-Head had a daughter in Kalispell and she heard about it and sent some money in care of the Agent but they never received it.