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Legislation is being drafted in the Bureau of Indian Affairs which will authorize transfer to the State of Texas complete trust responsibility over the affairs of the 410 Alabama-Coushatta Indians living on an approximately 4,000-acre reservation in Polk County, Texas, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced today.

Those are the only Indians in Texas for which the Bureau has any responsibility. Their tribal assets consist solely of lands upon which there is an excellent stand of timber. Their economy is based entirely on wage-earnings, principally in the logging industry.

Secretary McKay's action in asking that Federal legislation be drafted for introduction as soon as possible in the Congress was in response to a recently passed concurrent resolution by the Texas legislature accepting the trust responsibility, as well as a resolution adopted by the Indians on February 13, 1953, The Indian resolution stated, in part:

"**WHEREAS**, the Alabama and Coushatta Indian Reservation is located in Polk County, Texas, and consists of 4,281 acres of timberland (and) the State of Texas, through its Forest Service, is willing and able to extend to our reservation the conservation and management practices which are being applied to State forests, therefore, be it resolved that the Secretary of the Interior be, and is hereby, urged to authorize the great State of Texas to assume full responsibility for the management, protection and conservation of our forest resources....."

On May 21, Gov. A11an Shivers notified Assistant Secretary of the Interior Orme Lewis that the State Legislature had accepted the trust responsibility by concurrent resolution. That resolution stated:

"**WHEREAS**, the Congress of the United States may pass legislation relinquishing the trust responsibilities of the United States with respect to the lands and other assets of the Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes, and,

"**WHEREAS**, This Legislature finds it necessary to hereby indicate its desire and set forth a policy necessary in order to achieve a stronger unity for the protection of the interest and welfare of such Indian tribes; now therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, By the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring, that in the event the Congress of the United States shall provide such legislation, and the Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes shall indicate their consent by appropriate resolution, the Governor is hereby authorized to accept on behalf of the State a transfer of the trust responsibilities of the United States respecting the lands and other assets of the .Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes; and, be it further

"RESOLVED, That the Governor is authorized to designate the state agency in which such trust responsibilities shall rest, and the agency so designated shall have authority to promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the trust and the protection of the beneficial interest of the Indians in such lands and other assets."

Subsequently Assistant Secretary Lewis directed the Bureau to prepare legislation to provide for the termination of Federal responsibility for administering the affairs of Indians in the State of Texas. The only actual services which. this Bureau has been performing in connection with these tribes in recent years is a payment of monies- $18,000 in the current fiscal year--under the Johnson O'Malley Act to the State of Texas for the use of the local school district.

The State of Texas has given a number of services to these tribes and maintains a superintendent on the reservation. Texas is spending approximately $41,000 during the current year. This interest of the State in the welfare of these tribes has a long historical background, evidently going back to the days of Sam Houston, their friend. In 1854-1855, the State purchased 1,110 acres, the deeds running to the Alabama Tribe direct. The United States purchased in 1928 approximately 3,181 acres, to be held in trust for the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes. The two areas are contiguous and have been treated as one reservation.