

But the Indians never got what was owed them.

At one of the endless meetings she attended to try to rectify matters, Cobell actually heard a Treasury Department official admit that millions and millions of Indian dollars were being forwarded by the Department of the Interior with no instructions. "So we just put it in the general fund," said the official.

Cobell said she eventually discovered that the money apparently had been used, among other notable examples, to help bail out New York City during its 1975 fiscal crisis, to save the Chrysler Corporation from going under and even to reduce the national debt.

On assignment for PARADE, I recently visited Cobell. Along with her husband, she has a 320-acre allotment ranch with about 100 head of cattle in Glacier County, which encompasses much of the Blackfeet reservation and ranks as the 35th poorest county in the U.S. This is where she grew up in a house with no phone, electricity or running water and where she began her education in 1950 in a one-room grade school.

As it happened, Cobell's teacher subscribed to the Sunday New York Times, which she shared with her students. "It would arrive a month late, but it exposed me to a world I never knew existed," Cobell told me. "It gave me a chance to dream a little."

She went on to high school, which required a daily 50-mile round-trip by bus. Then Cobell made a daring move to the nearest city, Great Falls, to enroll in a two-year business college, where she specialized in accounting. "I wanted to learn more and to help out at home," she recalled. "My dream was to buy my mother a new dress."

Cobell cut short further studies at Montana State University in 1968 to return home and care for her mother, who had terminal cancer. Then her father died.

Because of her accounting background, the Blackfeet Tribal Council appointed Cobell the tribe's treasurer in 1976. "I remembered, as a little girl," she said, "the elders would come to my father's house and wonder where the money was. You lived with it all the time. But they didn't know what to ask. They had no information, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs was something to be feared. You felt so powerless."

She already had seen the local office of the BIA in action in a college work-study program. "I was people treated very badly," she recalled. "People sitting all day on hard benches, with no rest rooms. Some were begging for money, for food, for clothes for their children. I would tell my mother, and she'd say, 'Don't make waves.'"

Under the BIA's management of the so-called Individual Indian Money trust fund, Native Americans never were informed who had leased their land or for what purpose, how much the lease was for or how long the lease was to run. On occasion, the Treasury Department would mail checks to individuals for a pittance, with no accounting or explanation of any kind. (In addition to the Individual Indian Money trust, the government manages a separate trust fund covering more than 300 tribes.)

"As the tribe's treasurer," Cobell said, "I tried to get a handle on everything. I found that the BIA's investment of Blackfeet tribal trust funds was accruing negative interest. How could this be? Under the law, this money was only supposed to be invested in the safest government securities. But when I asked about this at a meeting with the BIA supervisor, he just stared at me and said, 'Why don't you learn how to read a statement?' It was so humiliating.

"Later—a lot later—I discovered what had happened. The BIA had taken a big chunk of money from the Blackfeet, loaned it to another tribe for whatever reason and forgot to replace it. After all, it was not their money, and we were just dumb Indians."

After getting nowhere at local and regional BIA offices, Cobell tried the Interior Department in Washington, D.C. And still got nowhere. "I did spreadsheets," she said, "and saw huge gaps where oil and gas companies that had leased out land weren't paying anything. There was no accounting system in place, so the Interior Department had no idea who was paying and who wasn't. They didn't care."

Then, in 1989, Rep. Mike Synar—an Oklahoma Democrat with a large Native American constituency—helped to arrange a meeting at the White House under the first Bush Administration with officials of the Office of Management and Budget. Cobell was invited, as well as some outside experts, including a prominent banking attorney named Dennis Gingold. Very little came out of it, except that Cobell remembered Gingold acidly saying at one point to the government men, "I'm amazed you guys haven't been sued."

In 1994, Synar got Congress to authorize the Presidential appointment of a special trustee to provide a full

And, despite repeated attempts to see Babbitt herself, Cobell never did. "He wouldn't meet with me," she said. "I was told he didn't have the time. All I got were empty assurances that mismanagement of our trust funds was a top priority."

Cobell already had reached the breaking point after meeting Attorney General Janet Reno at a conference where Reno was the main speaker. Cobell sketched out what she was going through, and Reno invited her to Washington. But when Cobell arrived in February 1996 with high hopes, Reno also declined to see her and relegated her to underlings. She was treated with such rudeness and condescension, Cobell told me, that "a lawsuit was the only option I had left."

She went back to Dennis Gingold and asked the attorney if he would accept the case. He agreed, telling her, "We cannot allow this to happen. Our government can't operate like this." But Gingold warned her that it would be extremely costly. Cobell said she'd get the money somehow. And she did, pleading her cause to private foundation after foundation, eventually raising nearly \$8 million. During this period, to her astonishment, she received a John D. MacArthur "genius award" and immediately threw the \$300,000 grant into the pot.

The class-action suit representing 500,000 Native Americans was filed in the District of Columbia on June 10, 1996. The Justice Department, representing the Interior and Treasury Departments, declined to enter into settlement talks. The presiding federal district judge, Royce Lamberth, twice ordered Interior and Treasury to produce documents involving the Individual Indian Money trust fund. Despite promises to do so, a special investigator appointed by Judge Lamberth discovered that, during the course of the proceedings, Interior had in fact been destroying documents. What's more, Treasury officials had shredded 162 cartons of ledgers listing transactions and disbursements plus records of uncashed checks—some 100 years old—that never reached their intended Indian recipients.

On Aug. 10, 1999, after holding Interior Secretary Babbitt and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin in contempt of court, Judge Lamberth fined them a total of \$625,000, which the U.S. paid with our tax dollars.

On Dec. 21, 1999, Judge Lamberth ruled that the government had breached its sacred trust duties across the board. He ordered the Interior and Treasury Departments to file quarterly reports detailing efforts to reform the trust system and decreed court supervision of these efforts. The Justice Department appealed on the grounds that the judge had overstepped his authority. But a federal appeals panel of judges unanimously upheld Lamberth's ruling.

This May, the Bush Administration abandoned an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. What remains now, in the second phase of Cobell's lawsuit, is to determine how much the Native American plaintiffs will receive. Some estimates range from \$20 billion to as much as \$40 billion.

Whether the government will continue the battle or begin serious settlement talks remains up in the air. In June, the House Appropriations Committee said it had no interest in funding more litigation, which so far has cost the U.S. more than \$31 million.

Meanwhile, Elouise Cobell has dedicated herself to helping Native Americans achieve economic self-sufficiency. She is the founder and current chairperson of the Blackfeet National Bank—the first bank in the nation owned by Indians.

In Montana, when Cobell drives from her ranch to her bank office in the woebegone town of Browning, with an unemployment rate as high as 70 percent, she passes a sign. It marks the site of the government's first Indian office on the Blackfeet reservation, under agent John Young. It says that this is where, in the terrible winter of 1884, 500 Blackfeet Indians died of starvation.

"The truth is," Cobell told me, "that agent Young kept the rations he had on hand for white people." She pointed to a ridge opposite the sign, where a trench was dug to bury the Blackfeet bodies. "We call it Ghost Ridge," she said. "I think of those souls every day. I'm fighting for them too."

HONORING THE GATEWAY/
UNAWEEP VOLUNTEER FIRE DE-
PARTMENT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, fire fighters place their lives on the line every time they battle a blaze. This challenge requires serious training, dedication and compassion for other human beings. The Gateway/Unawep Volunteer Fire Department in Colorado was experiencing difficulties until a team of individuals collaborated to rekindle the spirit of the department and enable it to become a reliable emergency response unit once again. Due to this unwavering persistence, the Gateway/Unawep Volunteer Fire Department has been able to once again become a viable community resource and I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the efforts of the members of the department for all that they have done.

Fire fighting in this area of Colorado did not always have the benefit of modern tools. This basic level of equipment did not deter Dean Rickman, a web site designer from Chicago, from relocating and joining the department. After being inspired by Oprah's Angel network, Angela Morgan decided she would help others

through involvement in the fire department. Shane Burton has tackled the position of being the assistant fire chief in charge of all the other duties. Through numerous hours of coordination and examination, these and other members patched the fire department back together and have created a sustainable plan to ensure its vitality. Currently they are seeking ways to make it more financially stable and have recently launched a new program called Project Human Touch to make certain that victims have access to supportive resources.

The Gateway/Unawep Volunteer Fire Department persists diligently for the benefit of their community. Through their hard work, the members have been able to increase the department's fleet size and upgrade the coverage area and equipment.

Mr. Speaker, the services these volunteers provide are priceless in any community. Although such a role always requires a sacrifice, the fire fighters at the Gateway/Unawep Volunteer Fire Department have gone above and beyond the call of duty to resurrect this fire department and sustain operations once again. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the sincere sacrifices the members of the department have made and extend my best wishes to them in many years to come.

HONORING TERRY LYNCH

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, the devastation our country has suffered became profoundly personal when my staff and I learned that a former member of our delegation staff was among those who were murdered by terrorists when a hijacked plane hit the Pentagon Tuesday morning.

Terry Lynch was from Youngstown, Ohio, and got his master's degree from Youngstown State University, where he met his wife, Jackie. He became an adopted Alabamian when he went to work for Senator RICHARD SHELBY of Alabama from 1983 to 1995. During those years, Terry worked closely with many of us on military projects for all of Alabama and in particular, the Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, Alabama, and Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Montgomery, Alabama, both of which are in my 2nd District.

Terry was a kind and knowledgeable person who was dependable and dedicated to doing his job and doing it well. He was well liked by his colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both the House and in the Senate. Terry worked tirelessly on behalf of his adopted state.

At home in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County, he was known as a kind and considerate neighbor, coach for his daughters, Tiffany and Ashley's T-ball and softball teams; and all around good friend.

Terry Lynch is indelibly etched in the hearts and minds of all Alabamians. Our hearts go out to Jackie, Tiffany, and Ashley during this great time of sadness for all of us.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING TERRORIST ATTACKS LAUNCHED AGAINST UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 11, 2001

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday, September 11, 2001 now marks a day that no American will forget. America was faced with unfathomable tragedy at the hands of cowardly terrorists. The very freedom that we hold so dear was assaulted and our country must search for, find, and hold accountable those who are in any way responsible for these violent acts.

As a nation, we must focus our attention toward proving our resolve and joining our fellow neighbors in healing our country. We are strong, proud and free country and our government will fight to protect all those ideals that make us such a strong nation.

We must now give of ourselves to our community. I urge you to remember that there are many heroes who have given selflessly to our neighbors at this time of tragedy. Fire, rescue, police personnel and countless others have put their lives in danger to save those victims of this terrible crime. For that courage, we must thank them and remember that these people give their lives daily to protect our freedom.

The leaders of our country will now focus on ensuring that justice is served. We should be rational about our strategy, we will focus on protecting our future and promise to uphold your freedom and your every liberty.

Pray for those who are grieving. Stand proud of our great country. Know that your government will vigorously pursue those guilty with all available resources.

HONORING DAVE SANGER UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, Dave Sanger helped to shape and open the minds of students at Salida High School in Colorado and after 30 years of teaching, has announced his retirement. It is with great pleasure that I recognize the tremendous contributions Dave has made to the future of our country and to the lives of those students he has taught.

Dave began teaching at Salida High School in 1973, after attending graduate school at the University of Colorado in Boulder where he was pursuing a master's degree in history. While at Salida High School, he taught history for twenty-eight years. While Dave had no intention of teaching at Salida for this length of time, he has received much joy out of seeing his students blossom intellectually and challenge their future. Mr. Sanger has been recognized for his energetic and insightful lectures, even to the extent that students who have graduated have returned to experience another Sanger lecture.

While teaching requires enormous dedication, Dave found time to serve his community in other ways as well. He helped to establish the soccer program in Salida and continues to track its success. Furthermore, he served on the Democratic Central Committee and was a judge for a mock congressional hearing for high school students. His wife Nancy and he opened a bookstore called Sanger's Books that thrived during a rough economic time between 1985 and 1991. Dave and Nancy have both also served as lay ministers at St. Joseph Church.

Throughout all of his efforts, Dave Sanger has opened doors for many students. His teaching will live in the hearts and minds of all those who have been in his classroom. He has truly been an integral and respected member of his community. Upon his retirement as a history teacher, I would like to honor his dedication and years of service and extend my warmest regard to Dave and his family.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS LAUNCHED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES ON SEPT. 11, 2001

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the world was different.

Today and tomorrow and forever our America is changed.

Today, there are no Republicans, no Democrats.

Today, we all are Americans.

May God hold in his arms the victims and their families who suffered these terrorist attacks.

Buildings and bodies may be destroyed. But freedom will survive. Because freedom burns in the heart of every American. And freedom burns in the hearts of freedom loving people throughout the world.

May God bless those who fight for freedom. and may God bless our United States of America.

INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS ON SIKHS MUST STOP; SIKHISM IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM ISLAM

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, a despicable terrorist attack was carried out on the United States of America. I am pleased to see how all of us, Republican and Democrat, liberal and conservative, are pulling together in support of our nation. That is inspiring and it shows the greatness of America.

At the same time, it is very unfortunate that some Americans have been made targets of violence simply because of the way they look and the way they dress. That is unacceptable. Despite the anger that we all share against