

“Depending on the outcome [of the Feb. 8, 1995 meeting], we will outline, for your approval, an action plan involving the Congress and White House.”¹³⁹

c. The Opponents Secure a Feb. 8 Meeting with Secretary Babbitt’s Counselor, John Duffy

The meeting set for Feb. 8, 1995, was the result of the opponent tribes’ persistence in pushing the Minnesota congressional delegation to obtain a meeting with Secretary Babbitt or John Duffy.¹⁴⁰ On Jan. 6, 1995, Rep. Minge wrote his Minnesota colleagues asking them to join him and Rep. Oberstar in sending a letter to Babbitt “urging” Babbitt or Duffy to meet with representatives of MIGA, due to “concern” that BIA had recommended approval of the project. Within a week, eight members of the Minnesota delegation – including Sen. Wellstone – took Minge up on his request. On Jan. 11, they sent a joint letter to Secretary Babbitt requesting that he or Duffy meet with their tribal constituents. The letter explained, “Because this decision impacts seriously Minnesota Indian Tribes’ economic viability and our entire state economy, we urge you to meet with and hear the concerns of Minnesota’s Tribal leaders.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁸(...continued)

O’Connor on Feb. 6, as well as a call from O’Connor to Collier’s office.

¹³⁹Kitto proposed this "action plan" in a Feb. 20, 1995, memo to Taylor. (*See infra* at 115-16.)

¹⁴⁰At least some of the opponents viewed Duffy as an adequate substitute for the Secretary, because these fee-to-trust applications "were always very political" and "it was always felt that if you wanted to influence a decision, you would at some point have to talk to Duffy." Ducheneaux G.J. Test. at 37-38.

¹⁴¹This letter was signed by Sen. Wellstone and Reps. Oberstar, Sabo, Vento, Ramstad, Peterson, Minge and William Luther (D-Minn.) – all of whom, save Ramstad, are Democrats. Ramstad apparently agreed to sign the letter only because he is anti-gaming, and because Minge’s and Oberstar’s staffs repeatedly called seeking his signature. Although the letter

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