

1212 N.32nd Ave.
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June 22, 1954

State Director of Welfare,
Olympia, Washington.

Dear Sir:

I am writing at the behest of a small remnant group of Wanapum Indians of Priest Rapids.

Until this year they have been permitted their ancestral rights of fishing for salmon for subsistence and time-honored religious purposes at The Horn or Wanawish on the Yakima River.

This spring, shortly after the start of the salmon run, they were cited by the State Department of Fisheries enforcement division for code violation, two appeared in court and their case was processed.

House Bill No. 327 was passed in 1939 as an assurance that these few people would not be prohibited from taking fish. It was killed by bill Number a couple of years ago without the Wanapums, their friends or legislators from this section of the state being aware that it was being killed.

A documented appeal for relief was sent to the State Director of Fisheries nearly three weeks ago in which it was pointed out that the salmon run would soon be ended, and it was believed that it was in his power to permit the Wanapums--less than 12 in number--to take salmon for subsistence and religious purposes before it was too later. This has not been acknowledged.

It was also noted at that time that this action of the Fisheries Department would prohibit the Wanapums from gaining subsistence as usual and that it would undoubtedly be necessary for them to seek relief, earlier. The fish of course were caught only for food. They dry and freeze them and with potatoes, fill out the long winter period when there is no work available.

Approximately 15 people, men, women and children will now be vitally affected, having only potatoes to subsist upon when fall comes. And if necessary, because of farm labor conditions this year,

some of these people will undoubtedly be compelled to seek relief.

I have always found, when necessary, every cooperation on the part of the Yakima office, but am not familiar with the Benton County office, to which some of these people will probably go to qualify.

I am writing you at this time to acquaint you with the facts, briefly, and point out that it is no fault of these people, who have always worked when possible to obtain a livelihood. One man had a record of 54 years work for one hop grower, before he was so old and crippled I aided him in securing an old age pension.

I am hopeful that this salmon matter can be adjusted, either by a directive of the State Department of Fisheries, reenactment of the protective security legislative bill that was killed without our knowledge, or the more costly and time consuming matter of ~~tax~~ court action, which these people, because of their nature, have never wished to resort to. But it is now impossible to adjust it and profit from this year's salmon catch. Their normal catch runs from 80 to 150 or more salmon. The religious use of the fish is of equal or greater importance to them than the food.

Sincerely

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