

1212 N. 32nd Ave.
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Attorney General Don Eastvold,
Attorney General's Office,
Olympia, Washington.

June 22, 1954

Dear Sir:

I am writing at the request of the non-treaty band of Wanapum Indians of Priest Rapids.

The occasion is the citation of two of these men--there are less than a dozen all together--for fishing for salmon at their ancestral fishery on the Yakima River, commonly known as the Horn or Wanawish.

The two appeared in court and their case was taken care of.

However this action has confronted them with the problem of subsistence, it being their customary fishery where they obtained salmon not only for food but for their religious ceremonies, a custom carried out before the coming of the white men.

These people were granted the privilege of continuing their fishing at this site in House Bill No. 327, introduced at the 26th session of the State Legislature by L. Dow McQuesten of Yakima. [Introduced Feb. 9, 1939]

They continued to fish, unmolested until this year when the citations were brought by the State Department of Fisheries. A documented request for a directive permitting these people to exercise their pre-historic rights and religion, was forwarded to the Director of the Department of Fisheries. But it has not been acknowledged.

The House Bill No. 327, referred to, it is my understanding, was killed by number a few years ago without knowledge on the part of the Wanapums or their friends, and perhaps without knowledge of legislators from this area that it was being done.

I am writing to request at this time if the records of the action are available, to show why the bill was killed, who killed it, dates, etc. This should not be a lengthy document and I will authorize a microfilm to be made of it, since I have my own microfilm scanner.

For personal reference to someone you may know, please consult Mr. Edward M. Morrissey, formerly of Yakima.

For your information, I have testified, under questioning of the Department of Justice before a federal commissioner regarding these people, that I profit in no way from my association with them, other than as a friend and brother.

And for your information, these people have lived, since time immemorial, on the Columbia River at the commonly known site of the proposed Priest Rapids Dam, yet interpose no objections against contemplated construction of the dam, other than to secure an in lieu home site on land now owned by the government or state, whosoever constructs the dam.

The information concerning the House Bill 327, previously referred to, is needed in the event it is necessary to seek the reinstatement of that security legislation for this small band of historic people, whose ancestors did not sign a Treaty with the Government of the United States, recognized no chief who signed a Treaty and who were protected in their rights by government legislation which in their case was never carried out.

Your assistance in this matter will be appreciated.

Sincerely

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