

YAKIMA NATION  
BIOGRAPHY - ALECK

1-9-2007

LOCAL HISTORY

## Suspended tribal leader faces ethics challenge

By PAT MUIR  
YAKIMA HERALD-REPUBLIC

TOPPENISH — A veteran Yakama Tribal Council member suspended from office on Dec. 20 could face removal when the tribe's General Council reconvenes.

The tribe's Code of Ethics Board, in a report written last week, recommended the General Council remove Leo Aleck from office when it reconvenes on an as-yet-undetermined date. It takes only a simply majority at the General Council meeting to remove a council member from office.

"The events of this past weekend confirms (sic) you are in need of some sort of help and guidance," states the report, written last Wednesday in the form of

a letter to Aleck. "We pray you have the courage and wisdom to seek help before you hurt yourself or someone innocent."

The Washington State Patrol arrested Aleck, 79, for DUI on Dec. 14 and again on Dec. 29.

Yakama Nation Tribal Police arrested him for the same reason Jan. 2, his third arrest in less than three weeks.

The ethics board report further states, "We are also



Aleck

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## ALECK

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investigating another alleged DUI incident in Oregon." No details were given on that incident.

Aleck did not return phone calls seeking comment.

The ethics board's recommendation for removal is standard procedure according to the tribe's code of ethics and is the third disciplinary step after probation and suspension.

Aleck was placed on 90 days probation in November for a drunken-driving offense in December 2005 that ended with a reckless driving conviction. His DUI arrest last month on Dec. 14 violated that probation, resulting in a 30-day suspension, effective Dec. 20.

The subsequent DUI ar-

rests came before that suspension was lifted, or Aleck's discipline for those also would have included suspension.

One of 14 members of the Tribal Council, which handles the tribe's day-to-day operations, Aleck is a renowned advocate for tribal causes. He has fought for compensation for salmon lost when The Dalles Dam was constructed, and he has sued the Bonneville Power Administration over an expired lease for transmission lines running through his family's property.

Along with Tribal Council Chairwoman Lavina Washines, Aleck has sought to re-examine the methods by which fuel and cigarettes are taxed.

He has served on the Tribal Council for seven years. Prior to that, he was a longtime secretary of the General Council.

YAKIMA HERALD REPUBLIC

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LOCAL HISTORY

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## Meeting postponed

TOPPENISH — Due to a funeral, Yakama tribal leaders have again postponed their annual General Council meeting until further notice.

The annual meetings normally begin on the third Thursday of each November. All major decisions are made at the gatherings, and elections held for the 14-member Yakama Tribal Council, which oversees the tribe's daily operations.

Funerals and bad weather postponed the meeting in November. After a new date is picked, a quorum of 250 voting tribal members will be needed to start the meeting.

— Yakima Herald-Republic