

1812 H. 32nd Ave
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Oct. 9, 1953

United States Department of Justice,
Room 8129 Department of Justice Building,
Washington, 25, D.C.

In reference to: REM-LIX

90-2-80-373

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 7, 1953, in reference to the case of Yakima Tribe v. United States, No. 161 before the Indian Claims Commission; and authorization of my employment for an estimated twenty additional days to prepare and testify as an ethno-historical expert.

I shall be most willing to accommodate the Department to the best and fullest of my facilities. But in this acceptance, I cannot definitely commit myself to testify at a full-fledged trial that to my knowledge has not yet been docketed by date. There are times in my profession that I cannot absent myself. However, I do not see that this should preclude my acceptance, because there are so many other ways the Department can benefit, although I think it should be understood.

I do believe that I possess material and have access to sources that will be helpful; and that I am capable of preparing this for other experts who may be working on the case so that it will enable them to expand and readily develop their material. And I would suspect that I should pursue my work in a rather "silent" manner. It is possible that my appearance to testify would terminate my position of being able to secure additional material in months or years to come. In other words, it has taken me years to develop my position with sources where I am able to obtain interviews and information. Were my sources to "clam" up on me--like the Yakimas for instance might do--I would see an opportunity for a long, needed work, destroyed.

Of course, perhaps I do not fully understand the requirements and needs of the Department. That can best be determined when there are assignments. And in that connection may I suggest that adequate time be given, not because of myself but because of the sources which are widely scattered and sometimes difficult to contact. Moreover with the approach of winter, my most profitable sources in the pertinent case, will be isolated from all contact for several months because of their remote habitation and deep snow.

The voluntary preparation of ethnohistorical and source material, I feel will provide bases for your experts to really take hold of the case which I can fill in with assignments. It will speak for itself itself, and I believe will clarify itself as it goes along without any entanglement with the authorization.

The natural sequence of such material, providing a complete familiarization and possible defense, would be supplementary citations and notes dealing with the commonly referred to "Yakima War," bolstered with copies of letters from the Yakima Agency. Some of these letters no doubt will be the source which the claimants are utilizing for grounds for action. Necessarily they are not providing letters that would be good defense. More fill-in material I hope to acquire from Pile Microcopy records I am obtaining personally. I feel confident that it would be of additional aid in completing the picture to a point where it can be made most effective for the Department's use.

In the final analysis, depending upon the actual date of trial and other factors, I may conclude that it would be proper for me to testify. I may feel by that time that I have gathered all the notes I will ever be able to prepare for historical preservation. But in any respect I intend that I will have provided much more than the Department's "close-at-hand experts can use, whether by assignment, or in the course of my voluntary prepared material.

In reference to final paragraph of letter Rom: LIX 90-2-20-373 concerning voucher covering services at Yakima, Washington and conferences, the voucher has previously been attended to and I have received Treasury draft No. 81,934,010, representing payment. My friends, the Indians, have received personally from me benefits in this matter in the form of housing for the approaching winter, some food and medical assistance.

If I have not satisfactorily explained my situation, and you wish clarification of any point, I shall be most happy to do so.

Sincere thanks for your authorization and assuring you again that I shall cooperate to the best of my ability.

Sincerely Yours

Cliff Rolander