

Nov. 19, 1955

Congressman Thor Tollefson,
Tacoma, Washington.

Dear Sir:

I mentioned on occasion of meeting you at the Donnelly Hotel that I would send you some clippings "for your files," and that these would deal with Indians.

I mentioned too that I had an especial interest in the non-treaty wanapum Band of Indians who have always made their home at Priest Rapids.

The Grant County PUD, as the clippings will show, will take precautions to preserve the burial grounds and sacred relics of these few people. This was required under terms of a protective clause in the Federal Power Commission exploratory permit.

A similar protective clause has been inserted in the construction permit. This is Article 42 of License for Project No. 2114. This states:

"The licensee shall, through and with the assistance of the Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, formulate an agreement with the Wanapum Band of Indians for the protection of the Indian graves in the project area, the removal of the pictographs from P'na Island, and the setting up of these pictographs as monuments."

The reference to formulation of an agreement through the Bureau of Indian Affairs was made on the recommendation of the Department of the Interior. I do not yet know why this was done, since I am on very good terms with the Bureau, but the few remaining "wanapums"--actually five unenrolled Indians--like their ancestors, do not wish to be brought under control of the government, and especially when the government's own policy is for termination. The PUD has taken every precaution and matters have been progressing very nicely. They have shown a very strong humane interest in these few people, who are extremely poor.

The present problem presented itself: Would there be objection to possible congressional relief legislation for these five people, who wish to maintain their home near the Priest Rapids, because of the fact that the dam is to be constructed by a PUD. Would it be felt that the PUD has the responsibility for small compensation, one single home and a small sum of \$3,754.91 per Indian (the formula of the Corps of Army Engineers) for loss of fishing, small game and food roots these people have depended upon both for subsistence and religious purposes.

As you can see from the clippings concerning the "wanapums," our relations have always been of the best with the PUD. We approached them with the statement we did not have an attorney, did not wish one and did not wish to deal with one.

I have acquainted, in writing, the PUD with the problem and asked their sincere and honest appraisal, offering to adhere to their recommendations, but no answer has been received.

The license is not to become final for 30 days.

Congressman Holmes is familiar with the Wanapums and their situation, and is entirely friendly to them, and their humane needs. I feel that he would sponsor legislation, and I also believe that the Senatorial delegation would be friendly to it.

For your information you should know I have no financial interest in this matter, that I have testified in fact for the Department of Justice to that effect. I have not yet acquainted the Department with the terms of the license but intend to do so this area is included in the Ceded Lands of the Yakimas. The Department attempted to exclude a wide area. That I could not agree to, but I did testify for them concerning the Priest Rapids area, which was Wanapum land. The Yakimas of course contend that the Wanapums may register or enroll any time they wish, and in that I stay neutral, but five of the Wanapums just don't want to, no more than their ancestors did who did not sign a treaty.

Furthermore the Yakimas, the very ones who heard me testify against them, have requested me to be an observer at the very important approaching election. As you can see from the clippings, a change in the council would no doubt result in a decided change in policy as it relates to state affairs with the Yakimas in the future. Several years ago I made it plain to the older Yakimas that I was determined they should learn to register and vote. They didn't agree with me then. Now they do and they are themselves carrying on such an educational program. I feel that later they will call on me to participate in a series of long house forums to that effect.

I expect to be in Tacoma on Dec. 10, the date of a State Historical Society board meeting, and expect to be in Seattle (bonus day vacation) Dec. 8 and 9. In event you wish to discuss any Indian situation I will be most happy to give you any background information I may possess based on my prolonged and extensive studies. And if you care for me to send you occasional "background" clippings to add to your files, I will be most happy to do so.

Meanwhile I trust that the Wanapum clippings will assist in gaining your favorable reception, in event legislation comes to pass for their relief.

The clippings are being sent by special mail, together with one of the Yakima Treaty Centennial booklets. This was one the Yakimas asked me to edit and write several sections--treaty history and reservation history. I thought this unusual in view of the fact they know I resist their walking over the few little bedraggled Wanapums.

Sincerely Yours

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