

Oroville, Washington
November 12, 1962

Open letter to

Hon. Walt Horan
House Office Bldg.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Horan:

This letter was delayed until after the election so that it could not be construed as political. The problems to be discussed deserve the help of the best minds available, regardless of political affiliations.

For nearly a year you have been receiving communications from the Oroville Chamber of Commerce in regard to the Colville Indian Reservation. Shortly before you returned to the 5th District you received a specific invitation to meet with our Chamber's committee on Indian Affairs. You replied that you would be glad to meet with any group that had constructive ideas on the Indian problems.

We have what we believe to be constructive suggestions so we assumed you had accepted our invitation. But, in spite of our correspondence, you came to Oroville and by-passed the Chamber of Commerce president, its secretary and both members of the Indian Affairs committee.

What is even worse, you gave a complete brush-off to the Colville Indian Association. This is an incorporated organization representing several hundred adult Indians who bitterly resent the way their property, money and lives are being treated by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. These people have been in constant contact with you, protesting glaring injustices, yet you came to Okanogan County and by-passed all their officers and their nine chapter leaders, both on and off the reservation.

When these Colville Indian Association people, whom you are supposed to represent in Congress, tried to make an appointment to talk with you, the best they could get was an appointment to talk with your secretary over in Spokane.

Mr. Horan, are you sure you really want constructive suggestions?

These Indians, whom you ignore, have good reason to protest. According to the report of the Stanford Research Institute they have a per capita investment in the reservation of about \$30,000. From this investment, under the management of the Federal Bureau, they usually receive an annual per capita return of \$150. Can you think of any trust fund or savings account where they could do worse?

According to this same Stanford report the Federal Bureau collects, annually, from this Indian-owned reservation property, about \$1,900,000. Most of this comes from the sale of timber. Now, let's look at what the Federal Bureau does with this money that belongs to the Indians.

As an example we'll take the fiscal year ending June 30, 1961. The Bureau returned to them a per capita payment of \$150, which, for 4600 Colvilles, came to less than \$700,000. The Bureau returned to the Tribal Business Council at Nespelem less than \$200,000 or a total of under \$900,000.

And the rest of their money? It was confiscated by the Bureau to be used for the development of a reservation on which there are more white people living than Indians.

Seventy-five percent of the Indian owners of this money don't even live on the reservation which the Federal Bureau is determined to develop and keep under Bureau control.

Mr. Horan, are you sure you are representing these people in congress?

When the greatly admired Judge Joseph Wicks recently wrote a fine letter to the Oroville Chamber of Commerce, giving us the benefit of his thinking on these Indian problems, the Colville Indian Association had his letter entered in the Congressional Record on September 18th, by Thor Tollefson from the 6th District. Nine days later, for some reason, you had it placed in the Congressional Record for the second time.

When our committee protested that it is unfortunate for the Indian citizens of Okanogan County to have to work through a Congressman from another district because you won't talk with the, you answered, "It was I and not Thor Tollefson who placed Joe Wicks' letter in the Congressional Record."

Mr. Horan, are you sure you couldn't learn a little more about what is happening to our Indian citizens, both here and in Washington, D. C.?

The Colville Confederated Tribes have won judgements of over a million dollars in the U. S. Court of Claims, plus 13% of \$4,000,000 awarded by the same court to the Nez Perce, 13% of whom belong to this Confederation. This money is drawing 4% interest in our U. S. Treasury because the Federal Indian Bureau refuses to let the Indians have it. The Bureau is determined to use that money to develop this reservation which Congress has ordered terminated!

Mr. Horan are you sure this is our American brand of justice?

In 1956 Congress passed legislation instructing that, within five years, a bill be presented to terminate this reservation. You presented a bill (HR 8469) which even the Bureau admits does not provide for termination. What it does provide for is unlimited stalling on the part of a power-hungry Bureau.

Mr. Horan, are you sure you really want this reservation terminated during this generation?

These are some of the issues we had planned to discuss with you privately, instead of in an open letter. We have suggestions which we believe to be constructive but it looks as if we will have to do as the Indians do and work through some other members of Congress unless you can muster a little genuine enthusiasm for the actual termination of this reservation.

In your last letter to us you wrote, in regard to termination, "Such a program is now under way - that it is moving awfully slow I must admit - but I have seen no other suggestion that offers more possibilities and less chaos."

Mr. Horan, are you sure you are looking for such suggestions?

Sincerely,

W. G. Scofield, Chairman
Warren Carey
Committee on Indian Affairs
Oroville Chamber of Commerce