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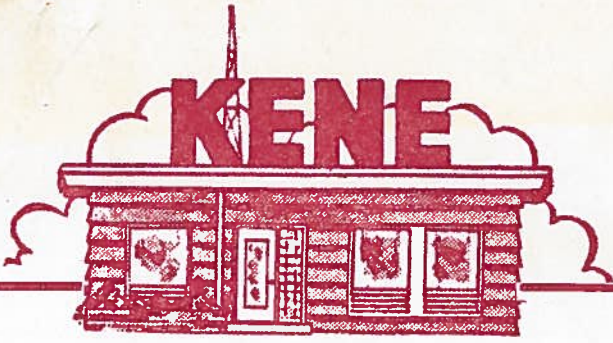
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Radio Station KENE

P.O. Box 350

Toppenish, Washington

*This is an editorial
we ran. Thought you
might be interested
Bob Swales*



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A REPORT IN DEPTH

By Robert A. Sumbardo

A lengthy, well-thought out, and complete talk on the Indian's side of jurisdiction and other pertinent problems was heard in Yakima by the Yakima County Democratic Club. Alex Saluskin, tribal leader, speaking on behalf of the Indian Nation gave a rundown of past histories, the tribes ideas about certain problems and misconceptions, and gave comment on the recent series of Indian articles in the Dailies by Gene Maudlin.

Saluskin said "The judgement of tribal courts should be made enforceable through the state jurisdictional system." He called for ammendment of Public law 280 adopted in 1953 and suggested these three ammendments:

- (1) To provide that consent of a tribe should be obtained before a state assumes responsibility for the civil and criminal causes specified in the act.
- (2) To provide in specific terms with tribal consent that a state may take over jurisdiction piece-meal as to subject matter and area.

- (3) And to require that any such state meet minimum standards in rendering services to Indians which standards should not fall below the highest maintained within that state.

Saluskin pointed out that tribal governments exercise the right of home rule in local Indian affairs. He added that the tribe is currently re-examining the present civil and criminal rules to help handle the growing problems of juvenile delinquency.

He pointed out fallacies in information and reasoning in many of the articles in the Dailies by Maudlin. Here's an example: the articles stated that regarding fire protection, there would be no indication that the three thousand dollar contribution to fire district five would continue. On April 20th of this year the tribal council adopted their 1962 budget including the \$3,000.00 to fire district five. Which, by the way, has no strings attached.

We checked with Elmer Schultz, fire chief of fire district five. He said that he has received the \$3,000.00 and there is every indication that this would be an annual thing. We asked Elmer what this covered. He said that this is paid by the tribal council for tribal lands. To clarify this further and to explain it, Fire District Five is made up of about 50% private lands that have no part of the reservation. Fire protection revenue comes from taxes. Of the remaining 50% on the reservation the smallest portion, or about 5% of the total district is tribal lands. Revenue from the tribe, the

\$3,000.00 covers this. Slightly over a third of the reservation or 15% of the total fire district is deeded land that has been transferred to white man or other type ownership. For this the fire district receives its revenue through normal tax channels. This covers all the district except for the remaining 30% which is the largest part of the Indian reservation. This is Indian trust land. This is the land that was entrusted to the Indians by the Federal Government. There are no taxes from this land. It does not belong to the tribe. It was given to individual Indians by the Federal Government and since then has been passed down by inheritances. Who is responsible to pay the taxes or pay the fire protection on this land? The reservation is covered by the law and order department of the Indian Agency which is supported in part by direct federal funds. Indian children that go to school from trust lands do not pay school taxes through any tax structure yet the schools get a per capita sum. From where? Once again from the federal government. Now back to fire protection. The tribe has neither the budget nor the necessity to pay this. We certainly should not have our taxes increased for this because we live in the central valley, or near, or on the reservation. If the federal government assumes a responsibility to help pay for law and order and assumes a responsibility to furnish schooling, should they not also assume a portion of the budget to pay for fire protection? This is just one of the very intricate problems that is misunderstood by all parties concerned and why this reporter believes that open

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publicity, information and understanding will furnish an answer to our problems.

Saluskin indicated that the tribe has been placed on the defensive. These reasons are because of prejudice on the part of many white men. Actually, the word "Damn Yankee" is diminishing from our vocabulary and it is being replaced by the term "Damn Indian". This is not fair. The Indian race is a minority race and it is being discriminated upon. Saluskin pointed out to this reporter in a recent interview that in the first place, public opinion is swayed by "screaming bands of Indians" that appear each night in television stories and they are always conquered by the white man. There is nothing wrong with this. It is part of our history; part of our heritage. But it places a mental picture of the American Indian today as a half-clothed, screaming, primitive and backward native. How many times have we noted in various news media, and we've even been guilty ourselves of specifying the "Indian" when we give a round-up news, such as, "six drunks were picked up, two were Indian". Why didn't they say, "six drunks were picked up, two were Indian, one was Norwegian, one was Jewish, one was Irish and the other was a 'Heinz-57-Variety' American"? We see articles specifying "Indians" being picked up for minor hunting charges or traffic violations or other large and in the small acts of crime and the phrase is always there, "he was an Indian". Does this not promote prejudice?

Alex Saluskin is right, the Indian is on the defensive. In his words: "The Yakima Tribal Council has promised all

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businessmen that if given an opportunity, everything can be worked out. The proponents of the jurisdictional bill, the citizens of the towns of Toppenish, Wapato and Harrah have and still are trying in every way to discredit the Yakima Indians in order to accomplish their scheme. The Yakima Tribe is on the defensive and it is almost impossible to swing a biased public."

We are not ballyhooing any side of the fence. We acknowledge serious errors on both parties, white man and red man. We do ask a few things. Help live together in brotherhood. Our bones our blood and our brains are the same be our color White, Yellow, Black or Red. Help our neighbors get off the defensive. If you accept him, he will accept you. And finally and as we stated before, the answer to our problems lie in fair publicity, correct information and most important - understanding.