

1212 N. 32nd Ave
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Miss Ella Clark,
312 Columbia St.,
Pullman, Wash.

Feb. 4, 1954

Dear Miss Clark:

Thanks for your informative letters and the copy of the telegram regarding dates for hearings on legislation terminating federal relations with Oregon Indians. I hasten to return it to you.

Personally I am not familiar with the sentiment of the body of people involved. I understand some wish it terminated, others do not. It has its arguments on both sides, but it seems to me that there should be little difficulty in obtaining the "true sentiment." And I think you are wise to just stand by and observe things, inasmuch as you, I and many others are fundamentally for the primary thing, fairness and justice for those involved.

I believe that the Yakimas are opposed to any withdrawal or termination as pertains to them, feeling that they are not ready for it yet, or rather that there would be many who would be injured by such legislation.

And, I am not too familiar with the operations of the Association on American Indian Affairs. I am a believer that the people should speak for themselves, and that the actions of their governing bodies should be that which is taken into consideration. But therein lies one of the difficulties. The people do speak for themselves and the legislators in many instances ignore their wishes. I believe one of the duties of such as you and I is to, as time goes on, make the general run of people familiar with the situation so that the legislators do abide by the wishes of those concerned, and do not subject themselves to the wishes of pressure or lobby groups. The Indians consider themselves a minority group. They are, as far as most legislators--senators and congressmen are concerned--but they are not so far as the many like you and I are concerned who believe in justice for them, fair treatment, etc. But this larger body, being unorganized, is in reality a minority group and hence is overridden by the aforementioned pressure groups, too numerous to mention. In fact, I do not know who they are, it is all so mixed up.

There are some people in Oregon who may be close to the situation, and who are, I know, true friends. One is Mrs. Martha Ferguson McKeown, like yourself, an author. Her address is Route two, box 352, Hood River. She is the very good friend of Chief Tommy Thompson at Celilo, and knows many of the Oregon people, both on and off the reservations.

Another is Mr. Jimmie James, 3331 NE 61st Ave., Portland, 13, Oregon. He is a painter, opposed The Dalles Dam strongly and I believe has written himself ragged, writing to various congressmen, senators, etc.

Still another is Mr. Allen E. Chisholm, 8532 SE 17th Ave., Portland.

I am writing at such length because it has long been my hope that in time there could be developed a group, not as a lobby or pressure group but those who are trusted by the Indians, and who know about the situation so in their various writings and comments can put in a good word at the proper time for fairness and justice. So many "organizations" have gone off on tangents, got allied with "red" thinking etc. that I shudder to attempt any organization. And heaven help anyone who ever thinks I have ideas along the "red" line because there's no "blacker" Republican in the state of Washington than myself. So I just go ahead by myself, putting myself in the category of serving rather than trying to run anything, trying to educate people to know the Indians, which you are doing through such writings as your "Legends." Although the time may come when I might have to stick up for one group against another, among the Indians themselves, because they as I said, are divided in their thinking etc.

It is nice to hear that the book is going so well. Why shouldn't it? That's how I reasoned when you were here and I made my prediction or forecast on a sellout by March, wasn't it?

You have had a terrible strain and are much to be admired for continuing along a difficult road. But until this legislative matter clarifies, I again think you are very wise in staying clear from that phase. I'm doing all the research I can on the situation, and it seems unending, but perhaps as time goes on I can gain a good, stable viewpoint.

I am keeping a clip file on the various happenings and shall send you some later for your own information, about various negotiations, actions, decisions of tribal councils etc. concerning this region.

I'll mail you soon too, a picture of the sculpture I referred to.

Thanks again for your time in writing when you are so terribly busy. It certainly shows your sincerity. More anon.

kind regards

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