

Cooperation The Key To Protecting Rights

The Text Of The Statement Delivered By The Warm Springs Confederated Tribes
At The ATNI Winter Conference, Spokane, December 8

The leadership of the NCAI, NTCA, Affiliated Tribes and their member tribes have recognized that the present crisis facing Indian tribal governments and their rights is not merely the introduction of several bills by disgruntled Congressmen from the State of Washington as a response to their non-Indian constituents. Rather, these bills are an indi-

cation of a much greater and more far-reaching problem that threatens the land, water, hunting and fishing and other property rights of Indian people as well as the very existence of Tribal governments and the continuation of Indian tribes as they exist today.

As a result of court recognition of Indian rights and claims and the development of

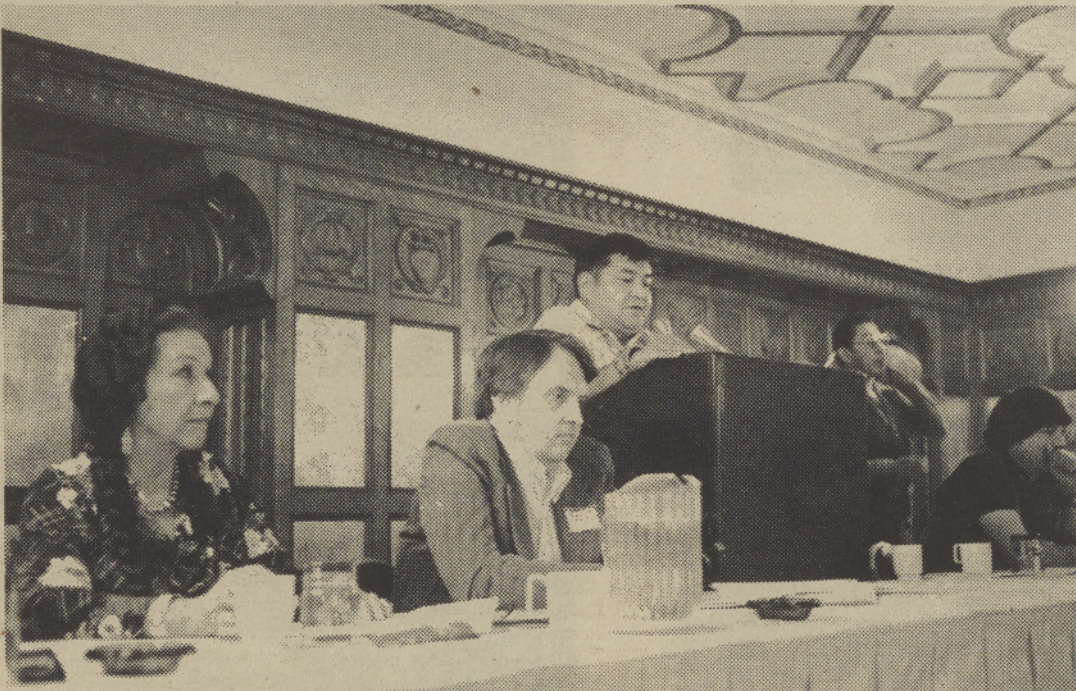
strong, active tribal governments, a growing sentiment is developing in this country to solve, once and for all, the "Indian problems". It must be remembered that these Indian claims are not "new" rights but only for recognition of rights that have existed all along but which have not been exercised, often because of suppression by the non-Indian society. And, as

surely as the disastrous termination policy of the 1950's failed to solve the "Indian problems" from the standpoint of either Indians or non-Indians, this revival of that philosophy will, if carried to conclusion, also surely fail.

We, as Indian leaders, must recognize that only through communication, cooperation and accommodation with our non-Indian citizens and governments can we expect to survive as strong tribal entities with the opportunity for our people to enjoy the precious rights secured by our Treaties with the United States. While our efforts must be channeled toward defeating legislation such as HR 9950, HR 9951 and HR 7736 in the 95th Congress, we also must do our utmost to bring about a change in the attitude that fosters such bills. We must show the non-Indian society that they have nothing to fear from Indian tribal governments and our Treaty guaranteed rights. We must achieve solutions to conflicts with non-Indians that can be accepted by all parties, such as the recent comprehensive plan for fisheries on the Columbia River. Many non-Indians do not believe that it is possible to mutually solve such problems. Unless we show them that it is, we can expect continued efforts for such solutions as HR 9950 and 9951 to be imposed upon us by Congress.

This will take a major coordinated effort by all Indian tribes and their friends. It will require the finest and most experienced legal, lobbying, educational and public relations talent available. Some of this talent exists within the present Indian leadership and our advisors but additional help may be needed. To insure our continued existence, we must be able to co-exist with the non-Indians. But, more importantly, we must show them how they can continue to co-exist with our tribal governments and our Treaty rights.

The Warm Springs Tribes take great pride in the relationship we have with our non-Indian neighbors and agencies of local, state and federal governments. We are working to preserve our Reservation and our Treaty rights for future generations as our old people did for us. We will do whatever is necessary to protect those rights through the participation of our tribal leaders, our attorneys, our public relations firm and our Washington, D.C. lobbyist. As Indian tribes and people, if one of us loses, we all lose. We cannot afford to lose our precious heritage and our Treaty rights.



Tribal Council Chairman Eugene Greene addressed the assembly of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians during their winter conference in Spokane December 7-9. Listening to Greene pledge his support of efforts to oppose anti-Indian legislation were Lucy Covington (Colville), Ralph Rieser (Legislative Office, BIA), and Joe Delacruz (Quinault). ATNI President Roger Jim stood in rear. CDS Photo

Siletz Win Restoration But Face Struggle For Land, Rights

Amidst the distressing business of sorting out and opposing the many anti-Indian bills before Congress, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians at their winter conference last week clung to the ray of hope offered by the Siletz Indians. On November 21, President Carter signed a bill restoring the Siletz to their tribal status after twenty-three years of hardship as an unrecognized tribe.

The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz were honored at the ATNI banquet with warm congratulations and a standing ovation by fellow northwest tribes. Wasco Chief Nelson Wallulatum returned a song that his tribe had taken from the Siletz long ago and everyone acknowledged that the Siletz victory was really a victory for all Indian people.

But even good news in Indian country seems to have a sobering side these days. As Pauline Ricks, a Siletz representative at the conference pointed out, passage of the restoration act marks the beginning of a struggle to obtain land and rights lost when the tribe was terminated in 1954.

The Siletz Indian Tribe Restoration Act makes the Siletz eligible to receive services and assistance designated for federally recognized Indians from the Department of Interior and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. But the bill does not return any of the 9,000 acres of land sold in their behalf by the federal government. And

it does not restore treaty hunting and fishing rights, although according to tribal attorney Charles Wilkinson, there is some debate about whether these rights were ever taken away when the tribe was terminated.

There are many issues to be settled and Ricks said that tribal officials are receiving dozens of calls daily from members who are unsure of their status. Can I throw away my Blue Cross card? Is there money available to send my child to college? Can we enroll former members who were taken into other tribes? The questions are endless, and often there are no simple answers.

The House added a clause to the bill that provides a procedure for the Siletz to regain some of their land. Within two years of enactment of the bill, the Siletz in collaboration with the Secretary of Interior may submit proposed legislation to Congress outlining a plan for acquiring land.

Currently the Siletz Tribe is negotiating with the town of Siletz for the 37 acres which had been used by BIA offices and facilities before termination. This is only a fraction of the 9,000 acres once held in trust by the federal government and a far cry from the 1.1 million acres set aside for the Siletz in the 19th century.

One of about 100 Indian tribes terminated in Oregon and California during the reign of

the disastrous termination policy in the 1950's, the Siletz Tribe then consisted of 929 members. The population is now somewhere between 1500 and 2000, but many of the members scattered, some losing their identity, shortly after termination.

Those who stayed began to reorganize in the sixties and formed a non-profit corporation in 1973. Restoration, however, has been the long range goal of the tribe for years.

That goal has now been met thanks to the efforts of attorneys, legislators and tribal members. When the cheering subsides, Indians all over the country will be keeping one eye on the Siletz as they gather up the pieces, and another eye on proposed bills that could replay the Siletz story nationwide.

Auction At Simnasho Sunday

The Simnasho Longhouse will have its first auction this season on Sunday December 18. Set to begin at 4:00, the auction will be preceded by Washat services and lunch.

Many locally hand-crafted items will be on the auction block. Proceeds will help finance the Lincoln's Birthday Powwow as well as other activities at the Simnasho Longhouse.

School Calendar

December

- 20 - Warm Springs Grade School Christmas program, Community Center.
- 22 - School Christmas Concert, Madras High School, 8:00 p.m.
- 23 - Christmas Vacation begins, school will be released 2½ hours early on this day.

January

- 3 - School resumes.

COCC Offering Winter Classes

There should be something for everyone this winter as Central Oregon Community College offers ten classes ranging from beadwork to beef cattle management. Classes begin the week of January 9 and will be administered by the Adult Learning Center. Students may register in advance to assure themselves of a place in the class of their choice, or may wait till the first class meeting.

The Adult Learning Center is located in the Community Center and is open Monday through Friday 10-4 and Monday and Thursday 7-10 p.m. Their phone number is 553-1428. Call or drop by anytime for more information and tuition fees.

The following is a list of classes being offered, meeting days and instructors. All classes meet in the evening at 7:00 or 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

MONDAY -

Beginning Beadwork, Caroline Tohet

TUESDAY -

Basic Photography, Nathan Jim

Beef Cattle Management, Jay Binder, Dr. Jay Betteworth, Ron Mobley, and Clint Jacks.

WEDNESDAY -

Basic Crochet, Rose Mary Smith

THURSDAY -

Beginning Shorthand (1:00 p.m.), Reba Powell

Welding, Leon Maxwell

Beginning Indian Language, Ada Sooksoit.

FRIDAY -

Refresher Shorthand (A.M.), Reba Powell

SATURDAY -

I Can't Draw (10 a.m.), Nancy Chin

I Can Sorta Draw (10 a.m.), Nancy Chinn