

Ebona resigns under pressure

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While executive committee members seemed to agree that the action was in the best interest of the organization, it was not clear from the tapes of the sessions just what NCAI was being saved from.

In a later interview Murdock was more specific. She said that Ebona had failed to "give credence" to warnings issued by the executive committee about NCAI's impending financial crisis. The director continued to obligate moneys that were not yet in hand and the debts piled up, she said. Finally on March 30 Ebona was forced to fire his entire staff because there were "absolutely no dollars," but he failed to give proper written notice.

"That was just one of the straws on the camel's back," said northwest area vice president Calvin Peters in a phone conversation this week. At the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians conference in early April, Peters and first vice president Mel Tonasket presented a position paper recommending that Ebona's check-writing authority be removed and that an investigation into his conduct be launched.

Peters, a former supporter of Ebona, said that his hand was forced by the number of phone calls that were coming in registering complaints. While the other executive committee members were inclined to give Ebona "another chance, another chance," Peters felt it was time to put their concern into action.

An emergency meeting of the executive committee in Denver April 11 resulted in an eight-point memorandum to Ebona removing his authority to expend funds and reinstating terminated staff. An oversight committee was also established to investigate allegations against Ebona for "mismanagement and unresponsiveness."

Based on the conditions she found in the central office when she visited a short time later, Murdock wrote a letter to Ebona asking for his resignation by May 30. At their May 3 meeting in Albuquerque, the executive committee endorsed the letter and Ebona was placed on administrative leave pending action at the mid-year convention.

While the final events took place fairly quickly, the problems had been building for some time, indicated Murdock. Less than two months after Ebona assumed the directorship November 8, 1978, the executive committee advised him of projected cash flow problems within 90 days if spending and hiring were not curtailed. In February the committee suggested that travel be curtailed and that only those staff covered by grants and contracts and money in the bank be kept on. "But the problems persisted," said Murdock.

Ebona reviews directorship

In his response to allegations at Reno, Ebona referred to NCAI's continual plea for unity and cooperation and an end to "finger-pointing." "But it appears to me that there is finger-pointing and it's all being directed at me as executive director and I'm being asked not to comment and to be Mr. Nice Guy."

Ebona defended his actions during the eight months he was director, while admitting that "the administrative changeover was not smooth by any means." He described the central office situation as being chaotic. In a May 18 mail-out the director pointed to problems with the telephone, filing systems, furnishings, security, and "an established office procedure which would astound just about anyone."

These problems, coupled with the daily pressure of meeting the public, "did not allow for adequate staff evaluations to begin or adequate checks with the accounting department," admitted Ebona, referring to requests made by the committee last November.

Some staff were released and Ebona brought on new staff "only when existing dollars and programs were in place, maybe with one or two exceptions," he noted. He defended his right to hire new staff, reminding the committee that they had entrusted him with this responsibility.

Ebona listed fifteen accomplishments that he and his staff had made "before things fell apart." They included such internal improvements as shaping up files, forms and policies, and such external activities as establishing working relationships with other Indian organizations and providing testimony on pending court cases and legislations.

While Ebona mentioned public relations and keeping a "high profile" as one of his accomplishments, detractors claimed to have documentation of the director having used tribes' donated backlashes for "wining and dining."

"I believe that it is mentioned also that my coming on board as the new executive director created a crunch in the financial situation of the organization which I think is far from the truth and I think the audit will point that out."

The blame for NCAI's financial crisis cannot be pinned on Ebona exclusively, maintained the director. "I admit that I've made mistakes in the administration of the office in the past six months or so.... but I would also like to point out that these problems were longstanding and could not possibly have happened in six months to any organization."

The director added that he felt the February meeting in Albuquerque had ended in "agreement on staffing patterns; salaries and continuing administrative problems." He was asked to give notice to certain staff, which he did verbally but with assurances that funding would be sought for the threatened positions. This was taken as an affront by the executive committee, as a failure to heed their mandates, he said.

The mass firing on March 30 was done "out of frustration because of my inability to come to grips with all the problems that were surrounding the central office," said Ebona.

Ebona concluded by alluding to the secrecy of the executive committee's final few meetings, "I think the question needs to be asked, 'Who constituted the oversight committee?' The executive

director's speech, unlike the many other presentations on the subject, was greeted with applause.

As the executive council (membership) prepared to vote on the issue, Ebona turned in his resignation. Warm Springs Tribal Council Chairman and NCAI delegate Gene Greene said upon his return, "If I had had a chance to vote I would have abstained because I didn't see any documentation. Warm Springs doesn't act irrationally."

NCAI future uncertain

While consultants complete their audit, NCAI struggles to keep its head above water. According to Murdock, only one contract—with Bureau of Indian Affairs—remains. The LEAA and Lutheran Board contracts have just ended and a CSA contract pending. Two staffers—an acting administrator and a fiscal officer—are working with CETA employees, volunteer and executive officers to stay afloat. Despite the pinch, plans are being made for the annual conference in September, said Murdock.

NCAI treasurer Rachel Nabahe made a very tentative prediction to the Reno assembly. She said, "We project that if we tighten our belts, proceed with the audit and bring the books up to date, and with the contracts and grants that we currently have with the BIA...and other pending grants and contracts... that if we closely watch the budget that there may be the possibility that NCAI will be in the black for the first time in years by October 1 of this year."

Procedural change proposed

Meanwhile, the executive committee is mailing out to members a proposed amendment to the constitution changing the procedure by which the executive director is selected. Instead of election by the executive council to a two-year term, it is being suggested that the executive director be hired by the committee.

The membership will vote on the amendment at the September meeting in Albuquerque. Northwest representative Peters said it was time that the executive director was selected on the basis of talent rather than popularity.

509-J Vacancy

POSITION:

Bus Driver/Custodian

PLACE:

Sinnasho

STARTING DATE:

August 27, 1979

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Certificate of good health signed by a licensed physician.
2. Ability to read, write, and follow written and oral instructions.
3. Demonstrated aptitude for successful completion of the tasks assigned.
4. Valid Oregon license to drive a school bus (or willingness to participate in summer training.)
5. Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the Board may find appropriate and acceptable.

SALARY RANGE:

Bus Driver \$4.76 per hr., custodian \$5.07 per hr. Plus housing

CLOSING DATE:

July 31, 1979

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Interested Candidate Should Contact: Dr. Ernest S. Weber, Assistant Superintendent Jefferson County School District 509-J 1355 Buff Street Madras, Oregon 97741

(503) 475-6192



MISS OREGON NAIWA — Lucinda Heath, center, the daughter of Delvis and Shirley Heath, was recently named Miss Oregon NAIWA. Pat Darcy, left, and Marie Calica, right, are Vice President and President respectively, of the Oregon State chapter of NAIWA. Cinda, as she is called, was selected on her poise personality and ticket sales.

Spilyay Tymoo Photo by Behrend

NAIWA Conference

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total national membership. Presently the Warm Springs chapter has only five members, but an active membership drive will begin soon.

Eighteen resolutions were presented to the executive board of NAIWA. All were approved except resolution number 7, which recommened to provide equal treatment under Indian Health Service care for non-Indian spouses of female tribal members if such care is also to be provided non-Indian spouses of male tribal members.

All the resolutions dealt with

national issues such as supporting legislative action to develop cultural awareness of public school teachers; opposition of the transfer of the Education from B.I.A. to a special Department of Education; and support of the Child Welfare Act, Equal Rights Amendment and B.I.A.

Newly-elected officers included CeCe Smith, Warm Springs local NAIWA president, as the national treasurer.

From the outside looking in, NAIWA appears to "have their act together" for they are aware of national concerns which affect all people nationwide.

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fighting over the last salmon anger him. "The fishermen are shown as equal in size." Belloni said that he thinks a comparison of elephant to mouse might be more accurate.

Tribal attorney Dennis Karnopp, who was in Portland when the announcement was made, said it came as a "helluva surprise" to him. "Belloni has, over some 12 years, spent a great deal of time studying and

concentrating on this complex issue," Karnopp said. He added that it is unfortunate to lose his background and experience.

Karnopp said that Chief Judge Otto Skopil has scheduled a hearing for 8 a.m. today (Friday) to consider what the next step in the proceeding will be. "A prompt hearing on the matter will be essential from the standpoint of the plaintiffs," he remarked.

Church Services

ST. WILLIAMS
WARM SPRINGS

MATTHEW CROTTY, FATHER

Confession Prior to Mass - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Mass - 9:00 a.m.

WARM SPRINGS
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ROBERT GRIFFEN, INTERIM PASTOR

Tel. 553-1237

Family Church School 9:00 a.m.

Worship - 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m.

REORGANIZED CHURCH OF

JESUS CHRIST OF LATTERDAY SAINTS

ELDER, CLINT JACKS

Tel. 553-1670

Worship - 10:00 a.m.

WARM SPRINGS
FULL GOSPEL CHURCH

ORIN JOHNSON, PASTOR

Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.

Sunday Evening Service - 7:30 p.m.

Bible Study, Wednesday - 7:30 p.m.

Young People's Service,

Friday - 7:30 p.m.

WARM SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH

ALLEN ELSTON, PASTOR

Tel. 553-1267

Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.

Bible Study - Sunday &

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.