

Chavers critical of Smith

by Dean Chavers

President Reagan's Indian reorganization plan and budget cuts are meeting heavy resistance in Indian country. Because of this resistance, Reagan officials are reportedly using tactics of questionable legality to ramrod their changes through.

Ron Andrade, Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians, says all tribes sending comments to his organization about the reorganization are against it.

The proposals, put forth by Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ken Smith, would eliminate Indians not living on reservations from eligibility for services. One Indian official thinks Smith is deliberately pitting reservation Indians against those living off reservations.

By pitting Indians against each other, he says, the administration hopes to have Indians fighting each other and not the cutbacks.

The reorganization proposal would consolidate 12 field offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) into six regional offices. The budget cuts amount to about 11 percent—from \$943 million this year to \$849 million for 1983.

Smith is basing his justification for limiting eligibility on the lack of validity of Indian treaties. A draft document leaked from the BIA states "education is not a trust responsibility." It goes on to say the trust responsibility to Indians of the federal government is restricted to "land, water, minerals, and other physical resources."

Smith is tossing the legal theory the federal government has maintained for the past two

hundred years—that Indians are wards of the government—out the window. In its place, he is counting on the states to provide services the federal government has provided in the past.

According to Carl Shaw, chief press spokesman for Smith, Indians living off reservation will no longer be eligible for some BIA services after 1982.

This type of action was not expected of Reagan's chief Indian spokesman. The former business manager of the Warm Springs reservation in Oregon and a native of that reservation, Smith presided over the past two decades of development of the timber industry at Warm Springs.

He has come to have a deep and abiding faith in the spirit of capitalism and development. He thinks Indians should pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

The director of another national Indian organization thinks Smith is out of touch with reality. "There are only 36 out of 400 tribes—the members of CERT (the Council of Energy Resource Tribes)—which have enough natural resources left to support themselves," he says.

Smith's thinking, in the face of the poverty and powerless in Indian country, is tantamount to disaster, this executive says. Tribal leaders have to take the initiative to keep their people from being reduced to further levels of poverty, he asserts.

Another Indian executive says every effort in the past to place Indians under state jurisdiction has resulted in disaster. He cites the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin as an example.

The Menominees had their treaty relationship with the

federal government "terminated," and their reservation was renamed Menominee County. In a few years, the tribe was impoverished, their timber industry was a disaster, and most of them were on welfare.

It was only after Congress intervened and restored the treaty rights of the tribe, and removed their vulnerability to local politicians and businessmen, that their economic and health conditions improved, he says.

An Indian lobbyist thinks Smith is causing some of his own problems. By making decisions in a vacuum, Smith is out of touch with Indian leaders, he says. Smith could smooth over some of his problems by meeting with the leadership of the tribes to explain his changes in advance, he adds.

Another official thinks Smith, is "too much the epitome of a business manager." Smith is a good accountant, he says, but a poor politician.

Smith's proposals will have an impact on off-reservation Indians by the end of this year, according to Indian leaders. So far, CETA programs, child welfare programs, housing, community health clinics, and education programs have been eliminated from the 1983 budget requests. Other programs may follow.

Smith's cutbacks are already eliminating some of the sources of Indian resistance. Among the Indian organizations said to be on the ropes are the National Indian Education Association, the National Indian Health Board, the American Indian Nurses Association, the United Indian Planners Association, and the National Tribal Chairmen's



CITIZENSHIP AWARDS—Seven Warm Springs Elementary students received citizenship awards for the month of March. The awards were presented to the students by Bob Finch, Tribal Credit manager. The awards are given each month to students who have been selected by the Elementary staff for excelling in citizenship.

Association.

By eliminating urban Indians arbitrarily, one Indian leader says, Smith is challenging the right of tribes to determine their own membership according to the Martinez decision of the Supreme Court. This person thinks Smith leaves himself vulnerable to lawsuits for his actions.

A highly placed Indian policy analyst calls Smith's reorganization plan "the most screwed up mess I have ever seen." According to this official, severance pay for early retirees, long term leases, concentration of specialists in one office, and other features of the plan, mean it won't save any money.

Shaw, Smith's spokesman, insists the plan will not only save the \$16 million mandated by OMB to be cut from the

Indian budget, but will save another \$8 million, for a total of \$24 million.

Smith and his top management team are pressing hard for both the cuts in Indian programs and the reorganization of the BIA. And they are confident both will be approved.

In the meantime, the suddenness of the moves, and the secrecy with which they were made, have left Indian leaders hanging on the ropes, waiting for the next punch.

And the changes have left many Indian leaders wondering about the motivation and the thinking of the most controversial head of the Indian service since John Collier in the 1930's. The only thing many of them are sure of is that Smith is not on the side of Indians as Collier was.

Toe Ness

There was this tourist out boating off the coast of Florida when he capsized his boat. He could have made it to shore if he would swim but for fear of alligators he clung to the boat. After awhile he saw this beach comber on shore and shouted to him, "Are there any alligators here?" The beach comber, "Naw, there haven't been any around for some time." So he starts swimming to shore and about half way he shouted to the beach comber, "How'd you get rid of the gators?" "We didn't do anything," the beach comber said. "The sharks got 'em." YIKES!!!

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There was this couple dressing to go out for the evening when the guy said to his wife, "That sure is a pretty necklace you're wearing." "Yes, isn't it, darling?" said his wife. "I found it in the back seat of your car." YIKES!!!

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CONFUCIUS SAY: "Man who pay too much attention to girls' figure do not notice she have two faces!" YIKES!!!

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There was this guy who was lecturing his son, stressing that we are here in this world to help others. His son considered this for a while, then asked, "What are the others here for?" YIKES!!!

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One day the Pastor of the church was showing his little son around the church yard when they came upon the grave yard. The Pastor said, "This here is for church members who wish to be buried here in the church yard." Off to one side there was group of identical grave markers of military personnel who were returned to be buried there. The little boy asked, "What are these graves here?" The Pastor said, "These are the men who died in service." The little boy thought for a while and then asked, "What service did they die in, the early or late service?" YIKES

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From the Vehicle Pool

The vehicle pool wishes to announce that there is a car wash rack available to the public located in the Industrial site car pool through the hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A cost of \$1.50 per vehicle which will be used to cover the cost of the soap, scrub brushes and other necessary supplies.

Tribal Garage

The Tribal Garage has reorganized and has increased the mechanic staff by one to bring the total of three mechanics. To do things right the first time will better serve you. All work is fully guaranteed.

PHS no longer paying for abortions

Recent publications of regulations governing federal funding for abortions limits Indian Health Service involvement to only those cases where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term. IHS funds may not be used to provide nonconforming abortion services through the direct care system or through the Contract Health Service

program.

The reregulation became effective February 26, 1982.

Written certification from a physician will be necessary to verify that the situation meets the life endangerment of mother requirement and should be reviewed before Contract Health monies are committed.

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