

Community News

Chairman's Report (Cont.)

Court's "Duro Decision". This Supreme Court decision means that Indian Tribal Courts can no longer prosecute non-enrolled Indians visiting a reservation. What this decision boils down to, is that if an enrolled Grand Ronde Tribal member were to commit a major crime on another reservation anywhere else in the nation, he would only be subject to prosecution by the federal government.

Another concern voiced by Tribal leaders were budget cuts currently proposed by the Indian Health Service. Housing budget cuts concerns were also voiced. The Alaskan Natives voiced concerns about problems they are now having maintaining their salmon fishing rights. Concerns about the current reorganization of the BIA were but a small sampling heard by Senator Inouye and Congressman Miller.

As the forum was winding down about 5:00 pm, Senator Inouye gave his thoughts about problems facing Indians. He urged Indians nation wide, to get politically involved in all branches of governments, (school boards, city, county, state governments also). The Senator noted in the Dakota States, Oklahoma, and Arizona, substantial numbers of Indian reside there. However, he noted the number of registered Indian voters was dismally low. If every Indian person in these states were registered, Indians would hold a great deal of political clout.

Mr. Inouye further noted that until Tribes nationwide begin active participation in the political system, the overwhelming number of problems facing Indians will prevail. He further noted that regardless of the number of these forums held, just talking about these problems will solve nothing. It is up to the elected Tribal leadership to actively provide guidance and data to Congress to assist Tribes in obtaining a solution for our problems. We can't wait for the federal government to step in, and solve them for us.

I wish to share my thoughts with you regarding Senator Inouye. Currently, he is one of the most senior members of Congress, serving in the Senate since 1963. Besides serving on the Committee on Indian Affairs, he serves on the Committee on Appropriations. This Appropriations Committee controls the purse strings for the federal government to operate on.

He serves as Chair of the Appropriations Sub Commit-



Tribal Council member Larry Brandon

tee on Defense. This Sub Committee alone, is responsible for the allocation to the defense Department, a total \$280 billion. He also noted that his message to defense contracting companies, their key to his door that they are willing to work with Indian Tribes.

Not many other members of Congress are as committed to helping Indians as he is. Fortunately, we have a supportive Senator from the State of Oregon, however, we will have him for just 6 more years. Since the existence of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, no other Committee Chair has travelled extensively to Indian country to actually meet with Tribes, to get a feel for problems facing Indians. (Not an insignificant achievement, for someone who said he hates travelling.)

Most of us are aware of the violent demonstrations that have taken place in Wisconsin, where Anti-Indian groups gather annually, to protest Tribal Treaty fishing rights there. Members of Congress from the State of Wisconsin consistently introduce legislation to deal with this problem. Unfortunately, most bills introduced by these Congressional folks don't favor Indians. We must remember that not all Tribes have Congressional support like our Tribe enjoys. In early April, Mr. Inouye will travel to Wisconsin, to meet with Tribes, State officials and members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation, to see if a solution to this volatile situation may be reached.

The Senator's message to Tribes - "Speak with one voice, you will be heard".

Tribal Timber (Cont.)

become law on September 9th, 1988 there were eight Bureau of Land Management sales pending on the reservation. "When the reservation became law those sales went to the Tribal organization," explained Adams. "One of those sales was actually being logged at the time so the Tribe only received part of the money from that sale."

The process set up by the Tribal Council prior to the establishment of the reservation called for timber revenues to be used in a way that would lead the Tribe in the direction of self-sufficiency. Ten percent of every dollar generated from the timber base is used for administrative fees like forest management deductions. It is required by the federal government that this money is put back into the forest for regeneration purposes. The Tribe has stipulated that 30% of timber dollars be placed into an economic development fund. This fund was created to pump badly needed dollars into development of the local community. This uncommon commitment to the local economy was established as a viable economic resource for 20 years from the date of enactment of the legislation.

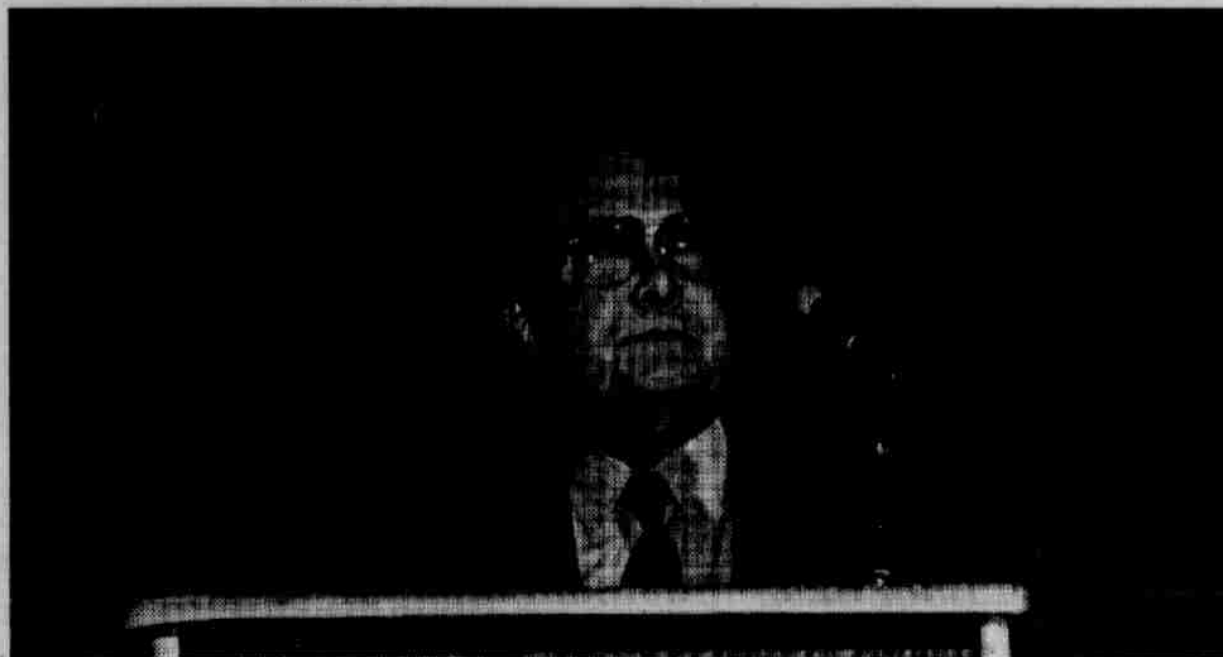


Cliff Adams

In addition to current governmental and operational program costs the Tribal Council has established four Tribal trust funds according to Willis. The funds include a Health Trust, a Housing Trust, and Education Trust and a Tribal Government Operations Trust fund. The Tribal Government Trust Fund includes all essential government services. This fund is aimed at enabling the Tribal government in Grand Ronde to implement their plan for self-sufficiency. This plan would allow the Tribal government to continue providing essential services to Tribal members even in the event of federal budget cuts and reductions. "With this fund in place, the Tribe will not have to depend solely on the government for services," explained Willis. Currently, the Tribes' plan is to have the governmental operations trust prepared to handle funding of services within five years. The health, housing and education trusts are targeted to be self-supporting within ten years. These trusts are permanent funds in that once they reach their limit no more will have to be put in.

Since the Tribe has taken over the management of the timber on the reservation there have been three sales. The volume of the "Western Skies" sale was 4.8 million board feet. The "No Boots" sale was 2.8 MBF and the "East of Eden" sale was 3.8 MBF for a total of 11.5 MBF. The Tribes annual allowable cut is 6.2 MBF.

NEXT MONTH: What are the Current issues facing the Tribe and what activities is the program currently involved in.



Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii recently met with Grand Ronde Tribal chairman Mark Mercier and Tribal Council member Larry Brandon as well as other Tribal leaders at a conference in Seattle, Washington.