

At the request of the administration I submitted a conditional resignation as Commissioner of Indian Affairs without an effective date. On May 1, I revoked that resignation and submitted another resignation to be effective May 31.

I have not heard from the administration before or since with respect to the matter of my resignation. As soon as definite word is received from the administration, I will meet with you at length to discuss their decision.

RESOLUTION
OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF
THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION
An Indian Chartered Corporation

No. 2759



RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THURMAN HOWARD TROSPER FOR COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 2670 adopted on December 27, 1968, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes supported the retention of Robert L. Bennett as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council has been informed of the Commissioner's resignation, and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council reaffirms its support of Commissioner Bennett, again requests his retention and urges him to reconsider his resignation, and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Bennett's resignation may be accepted or he may decline to withdraw the resignation, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, in the event of the above, THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION, MONTANA supports and recommends Thurman Howard Trospen to be the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

C E R T I F I C A T E

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted on May 2, 1969 at a regular meeting of the Tribal Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana by a vote of 9 for, 0 opposed, and 0 not voting, pursuant to authority vested in it by Article VI, Section 1, (a), (c), and (u) of the Tribes' Constitution and Bylaws adopted on September 25, 1935 and approved by the Secretary of Interior on October 28, 1935 and as amended by the Tribes December 10, 1948 and approved by the Secretary of Interior on December 22, 1948 and further amended by the Tribes April 1, 1960 and approved by the Secretary of Interior on May 5, 1960.

Harold W. Mitchell Jr.
Chairman, Tribal Council.

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Secretary, Tribal Council.

NOTED:

[Signature]
SUPERINTENDENT
MAY 8 1969

bcc 9584

May 7, 1969

The Honorable Richard M. Nixon
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Yesterday I had the privilege of receiving a telegram from my old friend, Wendell Chino, President of the National Congress of American Indians Executive Council. I am enclosing a copy of his telegram, and a copy of my reply.

May I say on behalf of Commissioner Bennett and Mr. Chino, these are two great Americans who are far above partisan interests. Their dedication is to the cause of bettering the Indian community in the United States and as a result they make contributions to America itself, not to any particular partisan forum.

I am an ardent Democrat, and you are an ardent Republican, but there are moments when you and I serve that great common denominator of us all, our Country. It is in this spirit that I send you the copy of Mr. Chino's telegram.

Yours most sincerely,

Julia Butler Hansen, M. C.

JBH:mvt

Enclosure

bcc: Commissioner Bennett
Mr. Wendell Chino

BIA

June 7, 1969

Mr. Wendell Chino
President
National Congress of American Indians
P. O. Box 153
Mescalero, New Mexico 88340

Dear President Chino:

Thank you so much for your telegram of May 5, which I
am delighted to have.

May I assure you that Bob Bennett has the support of a
great many Americans, and I am pleased you are supporting
him, but I do not make appointments. You should address this
communication to Secretary of Interior Hickel and to President
Richard M. Nixon.

With my warmest personal regards, I am,

Yours most sincerely,

Julia Butler Hansen, M. C.

JBH:myt

Enclosure

bcc: President Nixon
Commissioner Bennett

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REP. JULIA B HANSEN

1969 MAY 5 PM 10 CA

WASHDC

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MET
HERE TODAY AND REAFFIRMED N.C.A.I. SUPPORT FOR REAPPOINTMENT
OF ROBERT L. BENNETT AS COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

INDIANS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE UNITED BEHIND BOB
BENNETT BECAUSE HE HAS THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT OF THE INDIANS
AND NON-INDIANS OF THIS COUNTRY TO AN EXTENT NO OTHER COMMISSIONER
HAS EVER HAD. BOB BANNETT HAS HELPED INDIANS MAKE PROGRESS
TOWARDS GOALS OF INDIAN SELF DETERMINATION PROPOSED IN YOUR
SPEECH TO N.C.A.I. OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1968. WE URGE YOU TO REAPPOINT
COMMISSIONER BENNETT

WENDELL CHINO, PRESIDENT, N.;:A.I.

(547).

SF1201(R2-65)

4

1. ~~RTB~~ ~~PMB~~
2. ~~for~~ file

May 8, 1969



Mr. Harold E. Rainville
U.S. Courthouse
Chicago, Ill

Dear Mr. Rainville:

Thank you very much for your letter to myself, and also to Miss LaFrinierre, the Indian Council Fire president.

We very much appreciate this frankness on your part, and I hope you will forgive my comments. Please consider them in the light of someone who has been closely identified with Indian people since her high school days - "lo, these many moons ago." Because of a close personal involvement, and a dedication to Indian interests, I am very much interested in what takes place with regard to the new Commissioner, if there is to be one.

Since the first intimation by Mr. Hickel that he was not retaining Mr. Bennett, I have had letters, wires, phone calls - even midnight ones - from Indians who were very distressed about it.

It is very difficult to understand why Mr. Bennett should be replaced counter to the wishes of so many Indian groups, especially when they were assured by President Nixon's representative at the National Congress of American Indians, that their wishes would be considered.

The wishes were expressed by the number of tribes making up the NCAI with the resolution adopted urging that Mr. Bennett be retained. This is only one such endorsement, but it represents a large number of tribal bodies.

Today, in the mail, I have a copy of the Rosebud Herald stating that the United Tribes of South Dakota have re-affirmed their support for Bennett. The Navajo Times has stated editorially that they believe Mr. Bennett should be re-appointed.

I have known Indian Commissioners going back to Mr. Rhoades. I do not know of any other that has had this tremendous expression of "want" such as Mr. Bennett has had. It is most unusual for Indians to unite behind one of their own in the way they have for Mr. Bennett. To quote a once-famous Indian: "When the Indians get together, they separate."

Personally, I know Mr. Bennett as a man of great integrity, and one who has fought the good fight for Indians, and accomplished much for them in spite of the handicaps under which any one in his office labors.

It would seem that one who has tried hard, and who has accomplished, and who has wide government experience administratively from "growing up" in Indian work would deserve the honor of re-appointment, and the opportunity of serving in an even more enlarged way through the upgrading of the position such as is planned.

This is quite wonderful news and we shall hope for its fruition.

Congressman Reifel, if Mr. Bennett is eliminated, would be an equally fine choice. Peter McDonald, I do not know personally, and I doubt that he is known to Indians outside of his region. I doubt, too, that he is as experienced as either Mr. Bennett or Congressman Reifel. I do not know him as the head of the Navajo tribe unless he has succeeded Raymond Nakai, the tribal council chairman. I don't think the Navajos have an individual head.

Both Mr. Bennett and Congressman Reifel can tell you that I have very wide contacts among Indians across the country, and that what I indicate as to Indian opinion would have some validity. Those who have contacted me are shocked, hurt and angry. They do not see any reason to express themselves when they are not given promised consideration - as they believe - and they are saying some "strong things" about Republicans.

Because I am a Republican and a great admirer of Mr. Nixon, it is too bad to see this attitude developing.

We most sincerely appreciate your efforts, and those of Senator Dirksen (another favorite) and we shall hope for the best.

Sincerely,

Editor

G:em

* The Association on American Indian Affairs says, in its bulletin, that "a period of mutual trust between Indian leadership and the BIA exists as it has few times since 100 years ago. This environment of trust and mutual respect..has been created which the Nixon administration is indeed fortunate to inherit." This climate has come about largely because of Mr. Bennett and his depth of understanding of Indian situations. It would be a tragedy if it were to be broken down again because of a lack of deference to Indian wishes.

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ROBERT L BENNETT, (DELIVER), *del by msg*

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS WASHDC

(COPY TO THE HON WALTER HICKLE, SECRETARY DEPT OF INTERIOR WASHINGTON, DC)

WE THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED SOUTHEASTERN TRIBES, COMPRISED OF THE CHEROKEES OF NORTH CAROLINA, THE CHOCTAWS OF MISSISSIPPI, AND THE SEMINOLE AND MICCOSUKEE TRIBES OF FLORIDA, DO HEREBY STRONGLY URGE THAT MR. ROBERT L. BENNETT BE RETAINED IN HIS PRESENT POST AS COMMISSIONER, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS, IN ORDER THAT THE PROGRESS MADE UNDER HIS ADMINISTRATION CONTINUE. WE FEEL THAT COMMISSIONER BENNETT, BEING AN INDIAN HIMSELF, HAS GIVEN MORE VOICE AND PARTICIPATION TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE OPERATION OF THE BUREAU PROGRAMS, AND HAS ADVOCATED TRIBAL SELF-DETERMINATION AND MANAGEMENT. IN SHORT, WE FEEL

1969 MAY 7 PM 6 14

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BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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1969 MAY 7 PM 6 14

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THAT MR. BENNETT HAS SERVED CONSISTENTLY IN THE BEST INTERESTS
OF ALL INDIANS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION
OF THIS IMPORTANT MATTER.

WALTER JACKSON CHIEF, EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS..

EMMETT YORK CHAIRMAN, MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS.

BETTY MAE JUMPER CHAIRMAN, SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA.

BUFFALO TIGER CHAIRMAN, MICCOSUKEE TRIBE OF FLORIDA.

CLINTON P. ANDERSON, N. MEX., CHAIRMAN
RICHARD B. RUSSELL, GA.
WARREN G. MAGNISON, WASH.
STUART SYMINGTON, MO.
JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.
STEPHEN M. YOUNG, OHIO
THOMAS J. DODD, CONN.
HOWARD W. CANNON, NEV.
SPESSARD L. HOLLAND, FLA.
MARGARET CHASE SMITH, MAINE
CARL T. CURTIS, NEBR.
MARK O. HATFIELD, OREG.
BARRY GOLDWATER, ARIZ.
CHARLES MC C. MATHIAS, JR. MD.
WILLIAM B. SAXBE, OHIO

JAMES J. GEHRIG, STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
AERONAUTICAL AND SPACE SCIENCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

May 8, 1969

5/9
1. RLB
2. Spec. file

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.


Dear Bob:

It was good to talk to you today, but I regret very much to learn that you are going to be retiring as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

I just want to say that it has been good to know you and to work with you. I think you have done a very fine job, and we appreciate all the help and courtesies that you have extended us during your tenure.

When you are on the Hill, please stop by some time.

Sincerely yours,


Claude E. Wood
Administrative Assistant to
Senator Clinton P. Anderson

CEW/mg

PERSONAL

May 9, 1969

Mrs. Natachee Momaday
Stonehenge
P. O. Box 94
Jemez Springs, New Mexico 87025

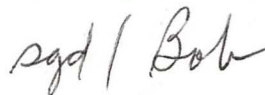
Dear Natachee:

I know that you must be very proud of Scott for the honor of receiving the Pulitzer Prize in fictional literature. This must make you feel that all of your efforts and contributions to his development as a person and as a scholar and writer have been worthwhile.

I appreciate your interest in my behalf. At the request of the administration, I submitted my resignation on May 1, to be effective May 31. You may be assured, however, that my interest, concern, and work with Indians will continue.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "sgd / Bob".

Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs

~~RLBennett~~:emh 5/9/69
file, chrono, mailroom

Stonehenge
P.O. Box 94
Jemez Springs, N.M. 87025
April 30, 1969

Dear Bob,

Evidently, the "powers that be" at U.P.A. are needling me but I was told yesterday that May 1st was your final day in office. Thus the phone call this morning.

I have asked that letters from DAR, UDC, COLONIAL DAMES and DELTA KAPPA GAMMA be sent both to President Nixon and Walter Hickel requesting that "in the name of the Indian peoples all over America you be kept in office of Commissioner of Indian Affairs." These letters will be sent immediately. It helped me tremendously when Olsen, Barker and Pierce were crucifying me two years ago - to have letters from these organizations sent in on my behalf. It stood them off - believe me. I only hope that the letters I am having sent on your behalf will have the same effect.

In the interim, if there is anything I can do to be of further help, please advise.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natachee".

Natachee



AMERICAN INDIAN SOCIETY of WASHINGTON, D.C.

519 5th Street, S. E.
Washington, D. C. 20003
May 11, 1969

Hon. Walter J. Hickel
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are an organization of American Indians located in the Nation's Capital. We would be remiss in our responsibility to our people were we to remain silent in the matter of the selection of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. We are, therefore, taking this opportunity to express our unanimous support for the reappointment of our present Commissioner, Robert L. Bennett.

We maintain strong ties to the reservations or communities from which we come. For this reason, we are keenly aware of the fact that the majority of Indian people support Mr. Bennett.

Mr. Bennett's whole life has been devoted to the advancement of the Indian cause. His personal philosophy has steadfastly been "Given opportunity, Indians will improve their situations and assume more responsibility for the management of their affairs." He has actively encouraged Indian participation in all phases of American life and has emphasized that Indians need not sacrifice their heritage to enjoy the benefits of contemporary society.

Many of the goals and accomplishments of the American Indian Society have been made possible because of the vital interest and encouragement of Mr. Bennett. In addition to providing a functional social organization for American Indians residing in this area, we have undertaken projects to benefit American Indians in general and to create a better understanding of our culture.

The American Indian had grown distrustful of the motives of the non-Indian in matters of mutual concern. Mr. Bennett has done much towards overcoming this attitude. While we believe in the concept of majority rule, we think that consideration should be given to the voices of the persons who are affected. We strongly urge, therefore, that you listen to the voices of the Indian people in your selection of a Commissioner of Indian Affairs. We know that the Indian voices call for the reappointment of Mr. Bennett and hope that our voices will not be lost in the wind.

The members of the American Indian Society requested that the officers of the organization take the above action at a meeting held on May 7, 1969. A list of those persons concurring in the views presented in this letter is attached.

Sincerely yours,

Mitchell L. Bush, Jr.
President

John W. Parker
1st Vice President

Vernon V. Halley
2nd Vice President

Betty L. Beaver
Secretary

Edna B. Starr
Treasurer

Attachment



RMB

GOVERNOR
ROBERT E. LEWIS

LT. GOVERNOR
KASSA APPA

HEAD COUNCILMAN
NATHANIEL NASHEBOO

May 12, 1969

RECEIVED
BUR. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 15 2 11 PM '69

The Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

We have only recently been brought to notice about your resignation, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. We take this time to state our feeling of regret, that this has to be so.

We are positive in our statement. You have done an excellent job while you have been our Commissioner. We therefore express our Congratulations unto you for a job well done.

You served during the first critical years of transition for the Indian. You gave us, who are elected officials of our tribes, pride in using our offices honorably, progressively, and with determination first, because you know, and stated openly that you were confident we were capable of assuming our own responsibilities more and more, and with the right approach in using our BIA resources people, to gain our objectives with a manner of confidence, co-operation, faith and optimism.

Thank you, Mr. Bennett, for this trust in your fellow-Indian. Wonderful results are taking place now and more to come.

Surely, you have been criticized. But who of us holding office isn't, and who is perfect enough to go through a term or terms and please everybody? Your answer is ours also.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is every bit of all right as far as we are concerned. Criticized and abused up and down by everyone from the top level on down at one time or another, no one has ever yet come up with an answer as to how they would have done, to do the job better. Observing, we are finding out that every other branch of our government is guilty about playing the same role of Daddy for what the BIA has been blamed for--paternalism.

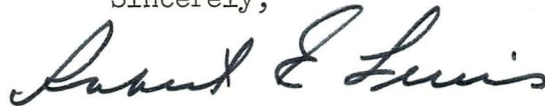
The Honorable Robert L. Bennett - 2

Only an-Indian can understand and know the Indian, to think on his level. Especially at this time yet, and for some time to come, and get results. You have done just that.

Thank you again, Mr. Bennett, for the lift. If heartfelt things well up in us to over-look protocol in stating plain words, then it just has to be so.

So accept our well-wishes, our respect, and our love, because we are proud of you, and very

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert E. Lewis".

Robert E. Lewis
Governor of Zuni Pueblo
and
Council

cc: The Honorable Walter Hickel
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Mr. Walter O. Olson, Area Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108

Mr. James D. Cornett
Superintendent
Zuni Agency
Zuni, New Mexico 87327

May 12, 1969

Mr. Don Baird
National Broadcasting Company
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Baird:

I have been informed by my very good friends, Reginald and Gladys Laubin, that you might be interested in an Indian speaker to dedicate the new Indian exhibit of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

I would like to cooperate with you in this effort and if you would write me about your interest in having a speaker, the time, terms and conditions, it would be appreciated. Every effort will be made to supply you with a well qualified speaker.

Sincerely yours,



Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs

cc:

Reginald and Gladys Laubin: Thank you for all of your efforts in my behalf. At the request of the administration, I did submit my resignation on May 1 to be effective May 31. Since my resignation was requested, it is logical to assume that it will be accepted. I have been contacted by several groups who wish to employ me as a consultant on Indian affairs and this may well be my future career. Robert L. Bennett

RLBennett:emh 5/9/69
file, chrono, mailroom

3/25
1. ~~RLB~~ BJB
2. Special file
100

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1969

RECEIVED
MAR 25 1969
DEPT. OF INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D.C.

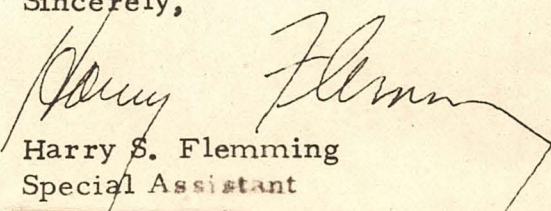
Dear Mr. and Mrs. Laubin:

The President has asked me to thank you for your recent letter on behalf of Mr. Robert L. Bennett whom you recommend for reappointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Your interest is appreciated and I can assure you that this endorsement will be carefully considered.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,


Harry S. Flemming
Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Laubin
Post Office Box 4 - Moose
Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83012

83012
March 19, 1969

Mr. Harry S. Flemming
Special Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Flemming:

We appreciate your encouraging letter of March 11 assuring us that recommendations for the re-appointment of Robert Bennett as Commissioner of Indian Affairs will be carefully considered.

Recently we received a letter from the Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians thanking us for our concern in the continuance of Mr. Bennett as Commissioner, "who, at this time, seems to have unprecedented support from practically all sectors of Indian country. We are hopeful that the new Republican Administration, especially the new Interior Secretary, Walter L. Hickel, will take cognizance of this support and so act according to the wishes of the American Indian People."

On our travels across the country, following a lecture or concert, someone invariably mentions the terrible mistreatment our Indians have received throughout history. The Indians have suffered such injustice and ill treatment that nothing can ever make full amends to them, so it would seem that the least the Government can do is give them the Commissioner they so urgently request.

Such recognition would be not only encouraging to our Indian citizens but to other citizens as well.

Sincerely yours,

Reginald and Gladys Laubin

RJD

FEB 10 2 27 PM '69

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

February 5, 1969

Mr. & Mrs. Laubin
P. O. Box 4
Moose,
Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83012

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Laubin:

Many thanks for informing us of your interest in the continuing Commissionership of Honorable Robert L. Bennett -- who, at this time, seems to have unprecedented support from practically all sectors of Indian country.

100
We are hopeful that the new Republican Administration, especially the new Interior Secretary, Walter L. Hickel, will take cognizance of this support and so act according to the wishes of the American Indian People.

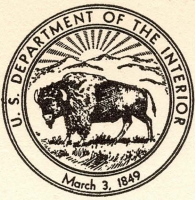
Sincerely,

JB /jw

John Belindo
Executive Director, NCAI

JB:jw

cc: Robert L. Bennett



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Area Director

PORTLAND AREA OFFICE
POST OFFICE BOX 3785
PORTLAND 8, OREGON

97208

May 13, 1969

AIRMAIL

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

These three past years in Indian Country have been a vital, exciting, progressive time.

Your philosophy, your leadership, your contribution have been wonderful.

We know your philosophy will have a continuing impact, your leadership will find its new role, and your contribution will mount.

We in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian people of the Pacific Northwest, and a host of other persons appreciate you.

I know, with the delightful capacity which you and Mrs. Bennett have for a happy life, that your retirement from Government service will also be a time for the start of something great.

Sincerely,

Dale M. Baldwin
Area Director

**Qualla Indian Boundary Projects
Community Action Program**

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

P. O. BOX 427, CHEROKEE, N. C. 28719

PHONE (704) 497-2071



RMP
SAVANNAH BIGWITCH
PROJECT DIRECTOR

TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
WALTER S. JACKSON, CHIEF
NOAH POWELL, VICE-CHIEF
JOHN A. CROWE, EXECUTIVE ADVISOR

[Handwritten mark]
May 13, 1969

Commissioner Robert L. Bennett
Bureau of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

On behalf of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Chief Walter Jackson, Councilman Roy French and myself, I would like to thank you for your time on our recent visit to your office.

We concur in your long range development plan for Indian self-determination and hope that regardless of whatever personnel changes might be contemplated that this program will become a basic principal of the Government's relationship with Indian tribes.

Please know that you are welcome at Cherokee any time you care to visit.

Sincerely,

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

[Signature of Johnson Lee Owle]
Johnson Lee Owle
Director

JL0:cs

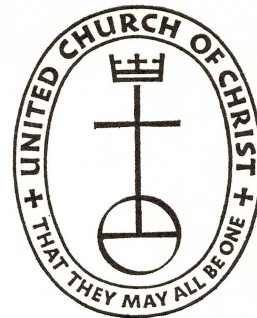
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WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 19 12 51 PM '69

THE NORTH DAKOTA CONFERENCE
of the
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

202½ NORTH THIRD STREET, BISMARCK, N. D. 58501

Room 12

701-255-1104



May 13, 1969

MAY 19 12 26 PM '69

RECEIVED
BUR. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

2 file
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

This is a note to express our thanks to you for taking time out from your busy schedule to appear at our Conference Annual Meeting.

The hope of our program committee was that we might help develop a bit greater understanding of the Indian's situation in the minds of the non-Indians. Through your help and that of others, I think that we succeeded to a degree. Of course, much more needs to be done.

I heard recently that you have resigned your post. If true, I am sorry. The Indian people hereabouts, and others involved, spoke highly of you. Politics, I suppose.

Thank you again for visiting us. I wish you well in your future endeavors.

Cordially yours,


Lester L. Soberg



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PIERRE AGENCY
BOX 640
PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA 57501

May 13, 1969

Mr. Robert Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett,

It is with considerable regret that I learn that you will no longer be serving as our Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with you for a long number of years and have formed my opinion of you as being an exemplary public servant who has scored an enviable record of accomplishment, such accomplishment will long remain in the minds of so very many of your co-workers and fellow employees and certainly will never become erased from my mind.

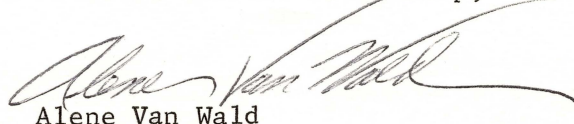
You have given outstanding service to thousands of Indian People for more than a third of a century, during this phase of your life you have garnered a host of friends. I am sure that all of us who have had the privilege and pleasure of knowing you and working with you have mixed feelings at this time knowing full well how much you will be missed.

Your tasks have been difficult, however, with your very pleasing personality, your noted ambition and abilities you have created a coordination which has helped all of us who have worked with you to reach a higher rung on the ladder of success.

I personally wish, in all sincerity, to thank you for the very fine consideration and work enlightenment which you have afforded me throughout the years of our employment relationship. You will always have a special place in my memories of fellowship.

As you embark upon a new phase of life, it is my wish that your health remains good and that you and Mrs. Bennett may have many, many happy years together; you so richly deserve the very best!

Yours in Sincere Friendship,


Alene Van Wald

Pine Ridge, S. Dakota
May 13, 1969

Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Commissioner:

We would like to take this means to express to you the sense of personal loss which we, along with many others, feel in knowing that you will be leaving the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

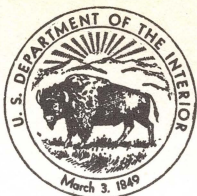
To many of us, you were much more than "the boss" -- you always based your decisions on a vast store of knowledge and information, and you always tempered your decisions with kindness and understanding.

Your leaving is a great loss to the many Indian people who have benefitted from your guidance.

Best Wishes.

Sincerely,

Mr & Mrs Brice Lay
Mr. and Mrs. Brice Lay



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PHOENIX INDIAN SCHOOL

P.O. BOX 7188

PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85011

May 13, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20240

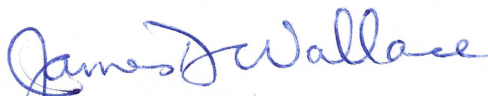
Dear Mr. Bennett:

Over many years, thirty-two to be exact, I have been concerned about the development of human resources of Indian People. During these years, I have been assigned positions in Education of various degrees of responsibility and in four different states.

I can rightfully say that I know of no Indian Bureau Commissioner that has provided more opportunity for Indians to develop their human resources than you have provided.

The students of Phoenix Indian High School join me in wishing you well at your retirement.

Sincerely yours,


James D. Wallace
Superintendent



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
- BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
MINNEAPOLIS AREA OFFICE
831 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55402

Area Director

May 13, 1969

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob:

During the past few months I have had an opportunity to think back on my acquaintance with you as Commissioner of Indian Affairs as well as relationships with you while in other administrative positions throughout the Bureau.

I am sure that your leaving the Bureau will not remove from the reservations many important signs of progress which have been a part of your making. The Indian folks, whether they be in urban areas or on reservations, will miss your leadership, your thoughtfulness, and suggested solutions to their problems. You should feel proud to have been a part in the development of Indian leadership throughout the entire Indian country. It was because of your foresight and concern for Indian youth as well as the elderly, more traditional leadership, that we can see today the emerging of new policies and new tribal aggressiveness which is so apparent when we visit reservations.

My personal association with you has been a most pleasant one and I will miss your guidance and counseling very much. I only hope that I will be able to carry forward some of the human aspects of your strong administration.

May you and Cleota have a bright future and I will be looking forward to visiting with you when our paths cross. The best to you.

Sincerely,

Owen D. Morken
Area Director

PH

3113 Tristian Avenue
San Jose, California 95127

May 14, 1969

Comm~~is~~sioner

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I read, with regret, your resignation as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in the local paper.

I want to thank you for all the good work you have done for the American Indians. I felt that since you were Indian you knew the Indians desires and needs and could really help us.

Incidentally I met you on your trip to San Jose. I am Blackfeet.

Good luck on your plans for the future.

Sincerely yours,



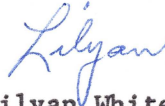
Margaret M. Kittson

7329 Penn Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55423
May 14, 1969

Dear Robert:

Seems hard to believe we are now of retirement age. I am very proud to have been one of your schoolmates at Haskell and immensely proud of your record of service to our Indian people. May you have all happiness and success in your future plans.

Sincerely,



Lilyan White Barse



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABERDEEN AREA OFFICE
820 SOUTH MAIN
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA
57401

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Area Director

May 14, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

There are the words, "Say it isn't so!" These are now uppermost in the minds of so many people. They just hope your leaving the Bureau of Indian Affairs isn't true.

During your more than 35 years in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and particularly during the last three years as Commissioner, you have left a lasting impact. Through your vision, your leadership, and your personal dedication, it can truly be said, "Indians will never be the same again!" There has been a 180° turn and the process has been established--the process whereby Indian communities and Indian individuals assume responsibility and determine what happens in their communities and lives and know that the answers to their problems lay with them.

We now look forward to your new role with Indian people as we just know there must be one. We know there are greater things to come from you and that this step is a change from one to another.

Personally, I consider it to have been a rare privilege to have had the opportunity of working with you. My life has been enriched as a result of it. I have always appreciated the consideration you have extended me. The very best to you and your family in your new endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

Area Director



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS
CERRILLOS ROAD
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501

May 14, 1969

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 19 2 42 PM '69

Hon. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I have just finished reading your statement to the Senate Subcommittee. Please let me express my admiration for the cool, rational way you stated the situation concerning the plight of the Indian as relates to the historical programs he has borne up under. Your clear statement of the progressive activities now taking place where possible, recent gains, and the warning that the major supporting agencies have a tremendous job to do in the future and that it will cost money--all cannot be denied.

Congratulations, and deep appreciation for your stand.

Sincerely yours,

Lloyd H. New
Director

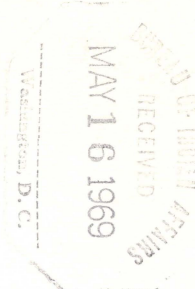


IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
HOPI INDIAN AGENCY
KEAMS CANYON, ARIZONA 86034

RMB

May 14, 1969



[Handwritten signature]

Commissioner

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

The Hopi Agency wants to thank you for the many things you have done for both the agency employees and the Hopi people. You shall always hold a very special place in the hearts of the people in Hopiland. We sincerely hate to lose you as our Commissioner but we hope for you the best of everything in retirement.

We believe more good things have happened to the Indian people during your administration than any time in the history of the Bureau. We are sure you will look back with a great deal of pride and satisfaction to the development of the Natural and Human resources that took place while you were Commissioner.

Mr. Bennett, I want to thank you personally for the help you have given me since I started as Superintendent at Fort Berthold in North Dakota and during my years as Superintendent at Colorado River and Hopi. I sincerely appreciate your guidance and cooperation.

We hope your retirement years will be long and active.

Sincerely yours,

Homer M. Gilliland
Homer M. Gilliland
Superintendent



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Fairbanks Agency
P.O. Box 530
Fairbanks, Alaska

May 14, 1969

Commissioner Robert L. Bennett
Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

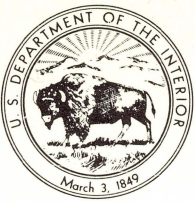
Dear Commissioner Bennett:

The Fairbanks Agency personnel join me in expressing our appreciation for the dedicated leadership and guidance you have provided us, both as Area Director and Commissioner. Your contribution in establishing the philosophies of joint participation, consultation and self-determination have been particularly outstanding, and, to those of us in the field adhering to these policies, particularly rewarding when we see the possible and actual results accruing from adaptation to those policies. The opportunities for self-development of our Native people have been significantly enhanced by your expressions of concern in reviewing the aims and goals of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Your leadership, guidance and devotion to the cause of the Native people has been exemplary and we value the memories you leave with us. On behalf of the Fairbanks Agency staff and myself, we wish you the best of everything during your retirement and hope that the experience and knowledge that you have acquired during your Bureau service will be utilized in future consultations with leaders in the Bureau of Indian Affairs who follow you.

Sincerely,

Wallace O. Craig
Wallace O. Craig
Superintendent



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Colville Indian Agency
Post Office Box 97
Coulee Dam, Washington 99116

May 14, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

We have been advised that you are retiring from your position as Commissioner at the end of this month. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have enjoyed working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs while you held this important post. I feel that the Indian people have made progressive strides during the time you have directed the Bureau.

Speaking from a more personal standpoint, I wish to thank you for the support you have given me while at Colville Agency. You came out on the ground and learned firsthand the special problems that exist here. You were able to observe why it has not always been possible to implement some of the fine programs you initiated for the benefit of our Indian people, and your help and assistance have been most appreciated.

I wish you and Mrs. Bennett many fruitful years of happy retirement.

Sincerely yours,

Elmo Miller
Superintendent



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF CHEMAWA

CHEMAWA INDIAN SCHOOL

Chemawa, Oregon 97306

Superintendent - Hallie O. Walters

Principal - William J. Tucker

Advisor

Clement E. Azure

Officers

Pres. - Eugene Bourdukofsky

V. Pres. - Eva Wilson

Sec. - Madelyn Reft

Treas. - Donald Jackson

May 15, 1969

Robert L. Bennett
Commisioner of Indian Affairs
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

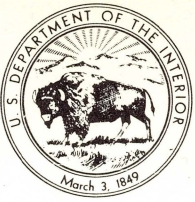
The students of Chemawa would like to take this time to congradulate you on your retirement. Thank you for all the help you gave to this school and for what you did for all the Native and Indian people of this great country.

In memory we present our school yearbooks for 1967-68 and 1969-70.

Again congradulations and we all are grateful for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Eugene Bourdukofsky
Eugene Bourdukofsky
(President)



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Chemawa Indian School
Chemawa, Oregon 97306

May 15, 1969

Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue Northwest
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

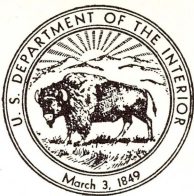
I heard with regret that you had submitted your resignation as Commissioner of Indian Affairs to be effective May 31, 1969.

Having worked for you during your stay in Alaska as Area Director and later, after your appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, I feel that I can speak with some knowledge of the working spirit and dedication which I feel you brought to the Indian Bureau. In my own view, I think the most important thing that you helped people in the Bureau to remember was the basic reason why they were working and for whom they were working. This has made a difference in the past several years.

Personally I will always feel proud to be able to say that I worked in the Bureau of Indian Affairs during your tenure as Commissioner. Mrs. O'Brien and I send our very best wishes to you, to Mrs. Bennett and to your children, and we hope and believe that your voice and influence will continue in Indian Affairs after your retirement.

Sincerely,

Charles A. O'Brien
Acting Superintendent



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PORTLAND AREA OFFICE

POST OFFICE BOX 3785

PORTLAND, OREGON 97208

May 15, 1969

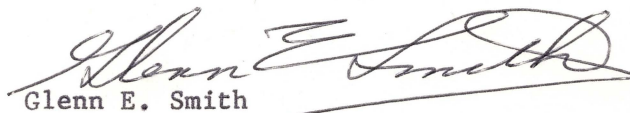
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

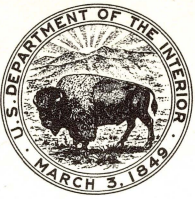
Dear Mr. Bennett:

It has been a pleasure to have known and worked with you when you were Assistant Area Director in Aberdeen and during the period you were Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I sincerely believe that you have done a very fine job and have contributed a great deal to the development of the American Indians.

My family and myself wish you a very happy and enjoyable retirement.

Sincerely yours,


Glenn E. Smith



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 15, 1969

Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs

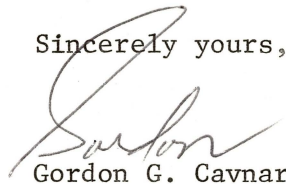
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

Even with the official notice of your retirement party, it is not easy for Gayle and I to accept the fact of your retirement. Unquestionably, you have left a deep and meaningful mark on the history of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Yours is a record of service that all could emulate. Officially and personally you will be missed.

It is with complete sincerity that Gayle and I wish for you the deserved rewards of a distinguished career and for you and Cleota happiness in a future that is sure to be as productive as your past.

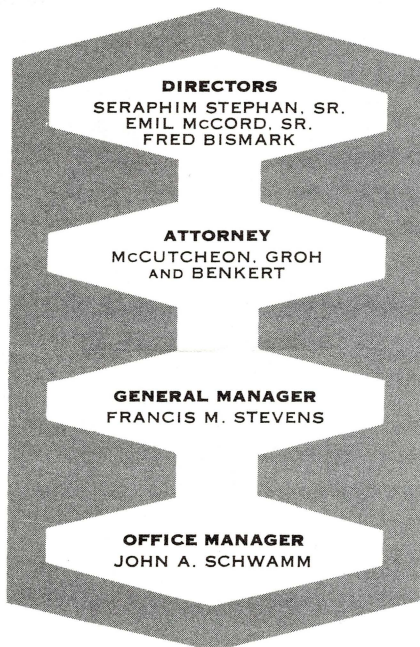
Sincerely yours,



Gordon G. Cavnar

Tyonek Management Corporation

TELEPHONE 272-4461
KALOA BUILDING
1675 C STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501



May 15, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D. C. - 20242

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 20 1 08 PM '69

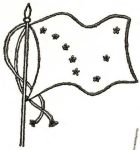
Dear Mr. Bennett:

We have been advised that you will be leaving the position of Commissioner and would like to add our comments to the many, many we know you will be receiving with your leaving the agency with which you have served for so many years. My personal feelings concerning the programming you worked with in respect to the Native Village of Tyonek probably can best be expressed by saying 'we know we will miss you and it will be difficult to pick up with your successor no matter who he may be'.

The fact that you were present with the beginnings of a new community, a new outlook at life and a total new program for a group of people who had for years lived in poverty and degradation with little hope for their future must give you a great sense of satisfaction. From my point of view it has been a pleasure to be associated with you in this effort. We hope there will be the opportunity to have some contact with you after you leave your position as Commissioner and that we will not lose touch. We appreciate your many efforts over the past years and wish you the best of health and success in your future endeavors.

Very truly yours,

F. M. Stevens
General Manager



NATIVE VILLAGE OF TYONEK, ALASKA

INCORPORATED
TYONEK, ALASKA 99682



COUNCIL

EDWARD KROTO
ADAM KROTO
ROBERT STANDIFER
LECON CHUITT
BILL STANDIFER, SR.

May 15, 1969

PRESIDENT

FRED BISMARCK

VICE PRESIDENT

DANIEL STANDIFER

SECRETARY

EMIL MCCORD, SR.

TREASURER

HARRY TRENTON

ATTORNEYS

MCCUTCHEON, GROH &
BENKERT

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D. C. - 20242

Dear Mr. Commissioner:

During the past five years the council of the Native Village of Tyonek has been privileged to present you with pictorial reports of our progress. We understand your moving from the position of Commissioner and we wish you the best of everything as you leave.

We look back to a time five years ago where you were faced with difficult decisions in respect to our program, we look back to the time where your position was not understandable and not acceptable to us. We recognize that at that point you demonstrated an ability to move with the situation and to come up with new ideas, new programming and opportunities that were understandable and acceptable to us. We appreciate the fact that you were able to do this and we want you to know that while our relationships with the Bureau of Indian Affairs have not always been comfortable and acceptable our relationship with you as a person meets the test of friendship.

We hope that you will feel that you are welcome to visit in our homes should the opportunity present itself. Our best wishes go with you to whatever the future may hold.

Very truly yours,

Fred Bismark SR.

Fred Bismark, Sr.
President
Tyonek Village Council
Native Village of Tyonek

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 23 10 48 AM '69

888 Kentwood Drive
Brigham City, Utah 84302
May 15, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

Congratulations to you on your retirement! After thirty some odd years of service with the Bureau of Indian Affairs it has been my personal pleasure and satisfaction to work with you on many different occasions, and especially in Alaska and in Washington, D.C. You always seemed to have the knack of knowing what to do before "congressionals" and thus turn them into letters of commendation rather than letters of complaint.

Another great satisfaction to me is that you, as Area Director and as Commissioner, delegated responsibilities in a manner which built confidence in employees who worked with you.

Finally, I have always regretted the fact that when we played horseshoe I was "hot" and you were "cold." Had this been the reverse, I may have become Assistant Commissioner by now!

Incidentally, now that you are going to have a new position description and a different time schedule, please drop by the Instructional Service Center at Brigham City and I'll let you get even with me in horseshoes. You are welcome any time, of course.

With kindest regards to you and yours.

Sincerely yours,



Edgar L. Wight



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABERDEEN AREA OFFICE
820 SOUTH MAIN
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA
57401

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Community
Services

May 15, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

People say nobody is indispensable, but a mighty big gap is created in our organization when some people leave. Such a gap will occur when you leave the Bureau. Many of us will miss you very much.

As Commissioner you have done a commendable job in giving the Bureau direction and guidance toward developing a greater sensitivity to the needs, wishes, and aspirations of Indian people. The Bureau will ever be more conscious of the need to involve Indian people in shaping their own destinies because of your efforts and leadership.

You have been like the Rock of Gibraltar, standing firm during sunshine and storm. This has given much stability to the Bureau. It has also been a great comfort to know that those of us in the field could turn to you for good and sound advice drawn from many years of tried and proven experience. Words cannot express how much this has meant to field personnel to have a person of your caliber on the team.

It is my sincere hope that the future has much good health and happiness in store for you and yours.

May God continue to bestow His blessings upon you.

Sincerely yours,

Leslie M. Keller



Hoop Valley Business Council

HOOPA VALLEY TRIBE

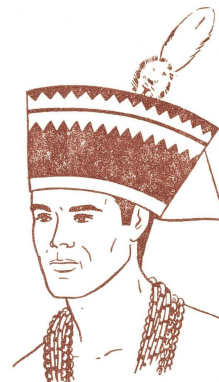
Regular Meetings on the First Friday of Each Month

P. O. Box 817

HOOPA, CALIFORNIA 95546

Phone 625-4691

May 15, 1969



Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Commissioner Bennett

We were very sorry to hear of your resignation.
The Hoopa Tribal delegates who met with you recently in
Washington D.C. were happy for having had to opportunity
to meet and talk with you.

On behalf of myself, the Tribal delegation and the
Tribal Council we express our regrets at your departure as
our Commissioner and wish you luck in your future endeavors.

Sincerely

Charles J. Moon

Charles J. Moon, Chairman
Hoop Valley Business Council

DRY



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
BRANCH OF PUBLIC SCHOOL RELATIONS
5301 CENTRAL AVENUE, N. E., ROOM 201
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87108

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Education

May 15, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Congratulations on your well-earned retirement! I can well remember the first time you spoke before a group of teachers attending a workshop at Tempe. That speech provided teachers and administrators with a background of information that they were able to understand and put into practice. I have had occasion to hear and read many other excellent speeches you have made, but none more stimulating than the one at Tempe.

I am sure you will retire with a feeling of deep satisfaction in a job well done. Your kind of leadership was needed and deeply appreciated by Indian people, as well as Bureau employees and the general public. The fruits of your labor may be slow in coming but they will, even in our time.

Our very best wishes go to you and your family. If you come to the Southwest, I hope you will come by and see us.

Sincerely yours,

Glenn C. Lundeen, Chief
Division of Public School Relations



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

MINNESOTA AGENCY
THIRD FLOOR, FEDERAL BUILDING
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA 56601

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Administration
003

May 15, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

It has been an honor and a privilege to have served under you in your capacity as Commissioner the past three years. Wherever I have worked in the Southwest and here, over the past 28 years in the Bureau, your name and your tracks left a deep and lasting impression.

At the time of this writing we do not know who your successor will be. Actually I had hoped that the occasion for a letter such as this would not have occurred for some years.

The staff and I wish you the best of health and success in your future endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

Paul A. Krause
Superintendent

ANSEL CARPENTER JR.

BOX 411 • DULCE, NEW MEXICO 87528

May 16, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
United States Department of Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

It is with sadness that I write this letter. Upon hearing of your retirement from government service, those of us who felt a closeness with the Bureau because of our personal friendship with you now feel that we have lost a great champion of the cause of the American Indian. But we know that your talents will be utilized in other capacities.

Although we feel a great loss because of your retirement, we also feel that you have done your share for our cause. May God go with you.

Your friend,

Ansel Carpenter, Jr.
Ansel Carpenter, Jr.
Crow Creek Sioux

May 16, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob:

In 1948, at the time when you were working for the Veterans Administration, you called a meeting of the Southwest Indians. Practically all of the Arizona tribes were represented to discuss the many problems which existed on all reservations.

From this meeting we got to know each other better. We realized we had the same common problems on all reservations. This meeting motivated the Indian people toward a united front and a strong desire to appeal to our government to correct or improve the general welfare of the Indians throughout Arizona.

Three years later the Arizona Inter-Tribal Council was organized at a time when Indians of Arizona faced strong discrimination. Through the work of the Inter-Tribal Council in their public relations program they were able to bring about better feelings and better relations with their non-Indian neighbors. Today the Indian people of Arizona are accepted everywhere. All these changes in Arizona, I believe, is due largely to our first meeting in 1948, initiated by you.

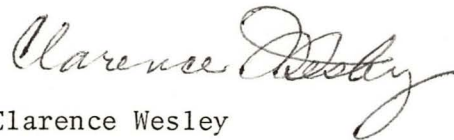
Those of us in tribal leadership at that time will remember. I, for one, appreciate your work in getting us together. Your leadership all over the Indian country and the American Indians themselves know that you have proved yourself as a great Indian chief and a great Indian leader.

At a time when we still need your leadership, at a time when most government officials, politicians and the general public have a strong sentiment toward Indian involvement and Indian participation in the atmosphere of Washington, then suddenly a change is to take place. This incident is a big setback to the American Indians.

Although I know that you have a great satisfaction to know that your work and efforts were well accepted by Indians everywhere, you will go down in history as a man who spoke for the American Indians. Personally, I will always remember you as my friend.

Thank you, Bob, for a job well done.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Clarence Wesley". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Clarence Wesley

DISTRICT OFFICES:
220 CITIZENS BUILDING
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA 57401

300 NORTHWEST BANK BUILDING
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA 57102

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

SHIRLEY M. LUIKENS
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

JOHN C. VICKERMAN
PRESS SECRETARY

May 16, 1969

Hon. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

Your retirement as Commissioner of Indian Affairs is regretted more deeply than I can ever express. In that office you have done one of the most outstanding jobs that any Commissioner has ever accomplished.

Since last January, my office has continually received week after week letters and telegrams not only from Indian Tribal leaders and Tribal Councils, but from friends of Indians urging me to continue to impress upon this Administration the importance of your being retained as Commissioner. They have all commented on your superb performance as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

I regret that I have not been able to prevail upon those who would make the decision that you should remain. I believe that this will result in a distinct loss to the country and to the Indian people. However, I know that you will leave the active service of the Bureau with a warm spot in your heart and an abiding faith in the ability of the Indian people to eventually find themselves in this wonderful society of ours and that we may continue to look to you for guidance, encouragement and help.

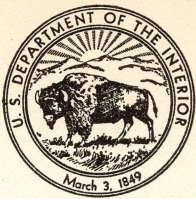
I hope that in the years ahead we will be able to continue our close and happy association.

Alice joins me in extending our very best wishes for many pleasant and rewarding years for you and Cleota.

Sincerely yours,


Ben Reifel, M. C.

BR:s1



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PORTLAND AREA OFFICE
POST OFFICE BOX 3785
PORTLAND 8, OREGON
97208

May 16, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

I had hoped that I would be congratulating you on your reappointment as our Commissioner. However, fate must have decided otherwise or the "cards must have been stacked".

It has been wonderful knowing and working with you for approximately 35 years; our first acquaintance being at Haskell then Fort Duchesne.

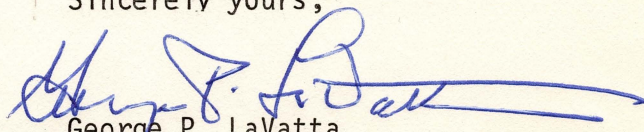
You have spent your life--first, preparing yourself educationally; by work experience, and then encouraging and assisting the Indians in the various positions you have held both in and out of the service.

Knowing you as I do, you won't quit now but will continue to devote your life to the Indians and their progress.

Although others did what they could, Angela and I worked almost night and day for you as we knew what your retention would do for the Indians' general welfare. We must "keep in touch".

With sincere best wishes.

Sincerely yours,


George P. LaVatta
Special Assistant



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Branch of Employment Assistance
Greyhound Bus Depot, Room 4
Spokane, Washington 99204

May 16, 1969

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 21 12 07 PM '69

2. Sp. file
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

It is with regret that we learned you had resigned your position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs and that you were retiring from the service.

Your record will stand out as being a faithful and devoted employee to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and an individual who has the interest of the Indian people at heart.

Your loyalty and dedicated service to the Bureau and the Indian people will be greatly missed, and we are sure another individual of your capabilities and interest will be hard to find.

We wish you and Mrs. Bennett many happy and fruitful years of retirement.

Sincerely yours,

Robert T. Crawford

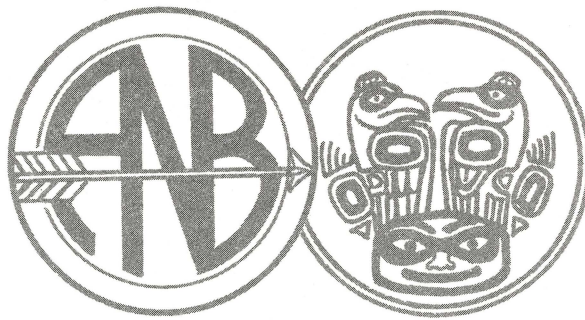
Robert T. Crawford
Employment Assistance Officer

Robert R. McMartin

Robert R. McMartin
Employment Assistance Specialist

Doris M. Kevis

Doris M. Kevis
Clerk-Stenographer



Alaska Native Brotherhood

Camp Number 2

Box 566

Juneau, Alaska 99801

JAMES AUSTIN, JR.
President

WILLIE ALLEN
Vice President

JOE WILSON
Corresponding Secretary

ROBERT MARTIN
Recording Secretary

AMOS WALLACE
Financial Secretary

CARL NELSON
Treasurer

JOHN WILSON, SR.
Camp Council

THOMAS BENNETT
THOMAS PADDOCK
Camp Council

JOHN WILSON, JR.
RAYMOND PECK
Sergeant-at-Arms

May 16, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of Interior
Washington, D. C.

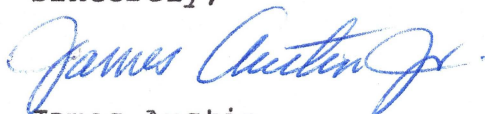
Dear Commissioner Bennett:

We were indeed sorry to hear of your resignation. So many years of your life have been dedicated to helping the American Indian adjust and become truly accepted in today's society.

Our Alaskan Native will certainly feel the loss. Our best wishes go with you in whatever you plan to do in future years.

Regards to your wife Cleota and family.

Sincerely,



James Austin
President

JA/cc

● Connecticut Mutual Life INSURANCE COMPANY

140 Garden Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06115 Tel. (203) 249-0631

Charles J. Zimmerman, CLU, Chairman of the Board

May 19, 1969

RECEIVED
BUR. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 21 8 29 AM '69

*1. [Signature]
2. file*
Dear Commissioner Bennett:

It was wonderful of you to take the time to be at the Dartmouth celebration at Columbia, Connecticut, on Saturday.

Furthermore, your talk was a most down-to-earth, timely and stimulating one.

All of us are indebted to you for a lifetime of dedication to the welfare of your people and of the entire nation. It is my hope that you will have the opportunity of visiting Dartmouth once you transfer the arduous duties of being Commissioner of Indian Affairs, a step which you plan to take very shortly.

Thanks ever so much again for your presence and for your remarks which made this entire occasion an even more enjoyable and meaningful one.

Cordially,

Charles J. Zimmerman

The Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs
United States Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

CJZ/arm

Aberdeen, South Dakota
May 19, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

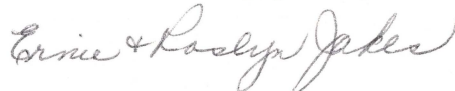
Dear Mr. Bennett:

It was with much regret that we learned you will no longer be our Commissioner of Indian Affairs. We have known you since the Aberdeen Area Office first came into existence almost 20 years ago. The Bureau will not seem the same without you.

We thoroughly enjoyed working with you during your tours of duty in this office, and it has been a pleasure to see you progress to the highest position in the Bureau.

We know you and your family will find much happiness wherever your travels may take you. Our best wishes go with you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ernie & Roslyn Jakes".

Ernie and Roslyn Jakes



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABERDEEN AREA OFFICE
820 SOUTH MAIN
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA
57401

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Economic
Development

May 19, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

Now that you have decided to leave our fold, some of us question where we shall look for knowledgeable and sincere direction. I know you must enjoy a great deal of satisfaction in having been in various positions of the Bureau and to feel the closeness and warmth of having served so many people so well.

Over the years your advice has served as my check and balance in dealing with problems in which you already had much experience. You always offer most freely and amicably alternatives for meeting the many complex problems which arise daily in our dealings with the Indian people. You offer this because you have a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw from. Those of us who have drawn from this well will sorely miss your guidance.

May your future continue to offer the best things in life.

Sincerely yours,

Don F. Jensen
Assistant Area Director



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

May 19, 1969

Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

The notice I have before me indicates that on May 31, after more than 37 years of Government service, you plan to retire. Your direction toward the development of programs to benefit Indian people will most assuredly be missed by all.

I have not had an opportunity to often be directly involved in discussions you have held or in aiding in the development of policy for BIA, but it is evident to me that in the few years you have been our Commissioner, more has been accomplished in truly involving Indian people in making decisions which affect their economic well being, than has ever been the case before. Indian people have become used to this kind of involvement and with the increasingly capable Indian leadership showing up almost everywhere, I don't think such Indian leaders will ever again permit themselves to be pushed into the background where matters affecting their well being are being considered. This is a landmark, among many, that you will be leaving behind, one of which you can most certainly be proud.

I wish you and Mrs. Bennett many years of healthful and happy retirement. However, I'm sure we haven't heard the last of "Bob Bennett" insofar as matters concerning Indian people are concerned.

My sincere congratulations go to you for a long and most successful career in Government service and in service to Indian people. I am pleased to have been able to be a part of your administration.

Sincerely yours,

Bill Pitner
Bill Pitner



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

GENERAL COUNCIL

CONFEDERATED TRIBES
Of The
Umatilla Indian Reservation

P O Box 520

PENDLETON, OREGON 97801

Area Code 503 Phone 276-5961

May 19, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of
Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

The Board of Trustees and members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation of Oregon, wish to express their appreciation for the many benefits and productive developments you have secured for the Indian people.

Indians are now being recognized and acknowledged as individuals. We feel credit for this is due largely to your efforts and hard work for this cause. Your retirement will leave a tremendous gap in Indian betterment and will be felt deeply by all who wish to be known in their own rights.

We sincerely regret that you are retiring, but wish you many happy years of full and happy living, and are sure the work for yours and our ideals, will not retire, but will continue to fulfillment. The door is always open anytime that you are in our vicinity and hope you can visit often.

Respectfully,

Viola P. Wocatsie
VIOLA P. WOCATSIE, Secretary
Board of Trustees

Toppenish, Washington
May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

This is a sad occasion for Bureau and Indian people. I hope it can be a more pleasant time for you and Mrs. Bennett, for you surely have earned an opportunity for some rest and relaxation.

I feel your departure very strongly for I was fortunate to have been exposed to your philosophy at first hand over several years in Washington. Your confidence in the ability of Indian people and your emphasis on the need to involve them in decisions affecting their lives are exactly what we have needed. It is a philosophy which I can whole-heartedly support and with which I can be very comfortable in dealing with Indian people. Your impact will be with all of us for a long time.

I hope you managed to convey your "80% - 20% analogy to many Bureau people. It is serving me well.

Mary joins me in our very best wishes to you and Mrs. Bennett for a well-earned but premature retirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bud".

William T. Schlick
Superintendent
Yakima Indian Agency



IN REPLY REFER TO:
Administration

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Fort Hall Agency
Fort Hall, Idaho 83203

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

In the words of the Indian people, "it is hard" to say farewell to a truly great Indian Commissioner who has led us out of darkness into a brilliant world of light; now we see bright rays of hope for all Indian people, those living today and the others to come in future years.

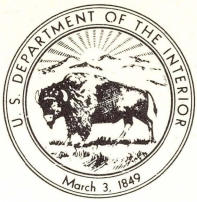
Your warm and dramatic philosophy toward Indian people has quickened our heartbeats, and captured the initiative and imagination of all peoples who are dedicated to honestly working for the best interests of that great race of people--the American Indians. What you have handed the people, - direct involvement in matters relating to their destiny, decision-making responsibility, and the will to be humble, and yet rightly proud of their Indian heritage, - is a gift that man alone will never be able to subdue or erase from the face of the earth.

The lives of all who have been privileged and honored to have known you, and worked with you, are indeed enriched by your qualities of inspirational leadership as the most outstanding Commissioner of Indian Affairs that has ever arisen on the horizon of Indian Affairs.

I consider it a great moment of my life, and that of my family, and also in behalf of the employees of the Fort Hall Agency jurisdiction, to wish you and yours many glorious and happy years in your new life.

Sincerely yours,

W. A. Mehojah, Sr.
W. A. Mehojah, Sr.
Superintendent



IN REPLY REFER TO:
Social Services

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Fort Hall Agency
Fort Hall, Idaho 83203

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

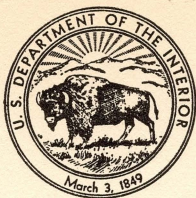
The announcement of your retirement was received with many regrets. From the time of your first report to Congress to the latest communique from your office, the philosophy you so expressed in the interest of the Indian people instilled in us a sense of accomplishment and hopes for the future. They were most inspiring and refreshing to us in the field.

While it is with deep regret that you soon will be leaving us as Commissioner, we are pleased in the realization that in still other capacities your positive leadership shall undoubtedly be an inspiration to your people.

Sincerely yours,

Branch of Social Services

Harold W. Hinrichsen
Agency Social Worker



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PORTLAND AREA OFFICE
POST OFFICE BOX 3785
PORTLAND 8, OREGON

97203

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

It has been a real comfort to many of us to know that you had walked the many trails of the Bureau and knew from experience the problems, frustrations, and real pleasures of day-to-day activities.

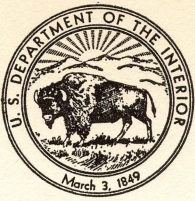
You will be missed and the Bureau will not be the same without you; but your policies and philosophy are too deeply imbedded in the Indian people and the Bureau to be quickly forgotten. You led us all to the right track.

I expect that you will soon leave the Office of Commissioner, but your past leadership will continue to influence many. I also believe and hope that you will find a way to use your wisdom and leadership for the betterment of the Indian people.

Good luck and many happy years of retirement--or whatever--

Sincerely yours,

A. W. Galbraith
Assistant Area Director
(Economic Development)



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PORTLAND AREA OFFICE
POST OFFICE BOX 3785
PORTLAND 8, OREGON

97208

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

In my thirty-two years of service, the last four years have been the closest the Bureau has come to communicating with Indians in the matter of understanding each other's problems and trying to work together to solve them.

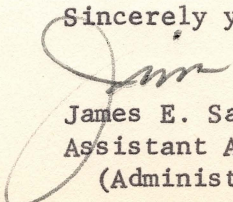
Certainly the changes have been dramatic, particularly in the Portland Area. It's good to have Indians defending the Bureau against all comers for a change. This I'm sure is due in large part to your personal attitudes, experience and influence as the leader. Your philosophies have struck a chord with Indian needs. It's too bad the American system of political party machinations deprives the American Indian of continuity of your type of direction and policies. I hope the Administration recognizes and acknowledges the dramatic changes for the good of Indians which you achieved during your term as Commissioner, and proceeds to act accordingly.

I believe you were known by more people, Indians and employees as well, than any other Commissioner we have had. You took the time to see and meet people, to talk to them, and this, I'm sure, helped all of us in making the progress that was made during the immediate past few years.

If you're around Portland in the future, you'll always be welcome. We'll have the good sense, however, not to take you to the "Top of the Cosmo" again. I've never been a collection agent for any occasion since!

As a Chippewa Indian employee, I say thanks for paving the way for better things to come for all Indians. And good luck on your retirement!

Sincerely yours,


James E. Sayers
Assistant Area Director
(Administration)



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

Program Coordination

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
1951 Constitution Avenue, N. W.,
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

If I said that in addition to great ability, you had a fine sense of humor that would merely be my opinion. However, if I declared that you had the greatest rapport of any Commissioner with both the Indian people and your staff, I would really be stating a simple fact.

Your insistence that Indians participate in decisions concerning themselves was a wise policy and one greatly appreciated by them, and it was a pleasure for me to be associated with you.

The Bureau will sustain a great loss in your departure but we know that your talents will ever be at the service of the Indians, and we wish you well.

Sincerely yours,

Albert E. Kane
Program Advisor

8624 McHenry Street
Vienna, Virginia

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.


Dear Bob:

Sir, you are leaving with my bank account! You will recall that at the time I declined consideration (mutually agreed) for a "choice" Superintendency a few months ago I asked to have the "good will" returned to your "bank" for later withdrawal.

And, I'll have you know I heard about the gesture you thought of giving me if I were only along the street while you and Ray Jackson were riding in the back seat of the Secretary's limousine (courtesy of Chuck Luce) from BOB to House Hearings. Seriously, Bob, I have enjoyed working for you and your humorous exchanges and its terrific timing made tough situations easier. I consider your using me in that humor as complimentary.

Best wishes from the guy to which you awarded an "Oscar" for record length "I don't know" answer to Congressman Haley's query during heirship hearings.

Sincerely,


Charles P. Corke

RECEIVED
BUR. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 23 11 55 AM '69

913 Washburn Ave.
Louisville, Ky 40222
May 20, 1969

Commissioner Robert Bennett *RR*
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob,

Just a personal note to
commend you for the excellent
statement on Indian Education
which you made before the
Senate Subcommittee. Those
of us who were involved in
some of the programs you described
know there were results, despite
what recent detractors claim to
the contrary. We appreciate your
courage in telling them so.

I fully agree with the seven-
point program of action you set
forth.

Sincerely,
Hildegard Thompson

May 20, 1969

Mr. Bennett,

We do hereby present you with this beaded letter-opener as a gift from the employees of the Shoshone Bannock Tribes, and do hope you will enjoy your visit to our reservation.

L L Littlejohn
Charley Lantz
Eloise Little
Wilma Buckskin
Monte Faulkner
Charlene Nacke
Hudson Grant
Raymond George

Charlene Nacke

15700 AM
188 Eleanor Drive
Woodside, California

May 20, 1969

RECEIVED
BUR. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 22 10 19 AM '69

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs
United States Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

My dear Commissioner:

It was with very great interest that I read the quotations from your testimony before the Congressional committee. And I want to go on record and compliment you very much on the competent manner of your presentation and the importance of selecting the one thing of value to the B.I.A.: your objectives and accomplishments.

Very sincerely yours,

Charles L. Wheeler

Charles L. Wheeler

CLW:f

been otherwise established in accordance with Section 2 of these Rules.

(d) At the option of the utility, a deposit plus accrued interest may be refunded, in whole or in part, at any time earlier than the times hereinabove prescribed in this Section.

Section 6. *Record of deposit.*—Each utility holding a cash deposit shall keep a record showing: (a) the name and current address of each depositor; (b) the amount and date of the deposit; and (c) each transaction concerning the deposit.

Section 7. *Appeal by applicant or customer.*—Each utility shall direct its personnel engaged in initial contact with an applicant for service or customer, seeking to establish or re-establish credit under the provisions of these Rules, to inform him, if he expresses dissatisfaction with the decision of such personnel, of his right to have the problem considered and acted upon by supervisory personnel of the utility. Each utility shall further direct such supervisory personnel to inform such an applicant or customer, who expresses dissatisfaction with the decision of such supervisory personnel, of his right to have the problem reviewed by an official of the Commission and shall furnish him the name of the Commission official to be contacted and his address and telephone number.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT SPEAKS FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

HON. ED EDMONDSON

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 1969

Mr. EDMONDSON. Mr. Speaker, one of the great American Indian leaders of this generation is Commissioner Robert L. Bennett of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Commissioner Bennett has provided remarkable leadership in creating a partnership between the Indians and the Federal Government through the Bureau.

This leadership has been an expression of Commissioner Bennett's philosophy that the American Indian must move into society as a constructive and contributing force, while at the same time maintaining and cherishing his Indian heritage and the Indian tribal organizations.

The Bureau under Commissioner Bennett's leadership has placed special emphasis on the role of the young Indians. This emphasis reflects the Commissioner's understanding of the problems facing the Indian children and young adults, both on and off the reservations.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bennett summed up his philosophy quite well in a speech he made last fall to the National Congress of American Indians in Omaha, Nebr., and I would like to have this speech printed in the Record. I would especially like to call the attention of my colleagues to the final section of this speech, the section on "Indian Youth":

THE FUTURE AND THE FIRST AMERICANS

It is a pleasure for me as your Commissioner, friend, fellow Indian American, and member of NCAI to provide you with a report of my efforts during the past 29 months. By the way, 29 months is a new record for an Indian Commissioner, as the only other Indian Commissioner, Major Eli Parker, was allowed to serve only 26 months.

No Commissioner has received such wonderful support as you have given me. I want you to know that it is appreciated more than I can say. With this kind of support you have made my job easier, the burdens, cares and worries lighter, and the satisfaction from whatever progress has been made much greater.

Indeed, the past several months have been a time of several "firsts" for the First Americans.

For the first time in history—in this year 1968—a President of the United States sent to Congress a message dealing exclusively with American Indians and the social and economic problems confronting them.

For the first time in history, Indian tribal organizations have begun to take an active part in State and regional economic development planning, so that Indian lands will no longer be surrounded by that invisible barrier that separates reservation economies from growth opportunities with their neighboring communities.

For the first time, Indian people are being afforded a partnership with the Federal Government in Indian affairs.

For the first time, the President in his special message, and the Senate in the passage of S. Con. Res. 11 have taken affirmative action to bury the unilateral termination policies of the 1950's and instead offer new hope to the Indian people that they will be masters of their own fate.

For the first time, the education of Indian children has been given priority attention, not only in terms of dollars expended to quantify it but in terms of brainpower invested in giving it quality, from kindergarten to college. Hopefully there will never be another generation of Indians who suffer a kind of second-class citizenship because of their second-rate schooling.

Most important of all, for the first time in this century the Indian people have rediscovered themselves as a great people and have begun to reestablish cultural and historic identity. We are on the way once again to full command of our own future.

Now, I am providing you the first Commissioner's report to the Indian people. It is my fervent hope that this will set a precedent so that each and every Commissioner of Indian Affairs will come to you regularly and give an accounting of his administration. You are entitled to this.

Because you will have an opportunity to read this report at your leisure, I will not dwell upon it too much this afternoon. If you have any questions, comments, or criticisms, please feel free to write me. I want you to be fully informed and I hope satisfied that we are working together to achieve partnership in reality and in spirit. The spirit of true partnership is that spirit which makes us in the Bureau of Indian Affairs work in partnership with you because we want to and not because someone told us to.

Although we can develop the capability to meet your needs by providing opportunities for adequate food, clothing, and shelter, I feel that you will be satisfied only if you have a voice in the development of these opportunities. I promise you that as long as it is my honor to be your Commissioner, your voice will be heard.

I believe that our greatest progress has been in the changing role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to meet the changing times. No part of my position gives me more difficulty or more pleasure than that of being your advocate in Government.

I am not unmindful of my obligations to the Federal Government as an executive officer, but I do find a lot of running room to advocate your interests and I use it. I am grateful that Secretary Stewart Udall has supported the Bureau in this role of advocate.

We cannot rest upon our record because we can never be satisfied as long as some of the people are without adequate opportunities to obtain food, clothing and shelter. We

can never rest as long as we are confronted with new ideas of concern.

For this reason in particular it is important that we spend time during this convention to analyze certain new issues in Indian affairs that will have a growing and lasting impact upon the ultimate destiny of the Indian people.

These three issues are: The rights of individual Indians under the Constitution of the United States; problems of Indians who are increasingly congregating in off-reservation communities; and, last but hardly least, the young among us.

Each of these issues is a reflection of the fact that the lives of Indians are becoming more and more enmeshed with society as a whole. It is a trend we cannot reverse; and therefore we must help ease the transition so we do not lose.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The civil rights of American Indians under the Constitution of the United States have been won slowly but not easily. Citizenship has been guaranteed only since 1924. Until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, voting rights of Indians under various State laws were frequently questioned. Job discrimination against Indians existed in many areas of heavy Indian population until equalization of employment opportunities for minorities was further protected by recent Federal law. Most recently, the Civil Rights Act of 1968 gives further protections to the Indian citizenry of this country.

Under the 1968 Act are several titles—I through VII, to be specific—pertaining directly to Indians. Title II, for example, provides redress through Federal courts against arbitrary and capricious treatment by tribal authorities in violation of Constitutional rights. Title IV of the Civil Rights Act relates to the assumption by States of criminal and civil jurisdiction over Indian country. It makes a significant change in Public Law 280, 83rd Congress, by requiring consent of the Indian tribe before assumption of jurisdiction by any State not now having such jurisdiction; and it further provides authority for the United States to accept a retrocession of jurisdiction from States which have previously acquired it.

It would appear that the intent of Congress, under this new Act, is to assure uniformity of justice to all Indians while providing the means for a healthy strengthening of tribal law enforcement authority. It calls for a new model code for the few remaining courts under BIA jurisdiction and for the training of judges in such courts. Such a model code, and such professional training could well be applicable to tribal courts.

We hope that you will join us to render a service to member tribes—and, conceivably, to other tribes, as well—by providing leadership to see that in time existing tribal laws will relate to the requirements of the new Civil Rights Act. This concept has taken a long time to be supported by law and we must take the opportunity to make it meaningful.

This organization can also help member tribes obtain fullest benefit from other new legislation: The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act; and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. Both of these laws provide funds for help in improving law enforcement services and in administering justice effectively. These laws qualify Indian tribes for direct participation.

The BIA is ready and willing to help you in this matter.

OFF-RESERVATION INDIANS

Another issue—one is which this organization and all tribes must move to find solutions—is the question of off-reservation Indians. Thousands of Indian people are moving away from reservation communities, sometimes to nearby towns, sometimes to cities some miles distant. Not all of the numbers who are now settling in such diverse

places as Rapid City, South Dakota; the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul; Chicago, San Francisco; and Los Angeles are doing so through the BIA's Adult Vocational Training and Employment Assistance services.

The BIA's mission has not extended to Indians who leave the reservation, except to the extent that it provides short-term services for those on reservations who seek BIA help in relocating.

Neither does the BIA mission extend to Indians whose reservation lands are not under Federal trusteeship control. Large pockets of Indian population in northern New York and Maine, for example, are beyond BIA's purview. So are smaller groups scattered along the east coast from Massachusetts to Georgia, and groups in California that have been "terminated."

Indian organizations, therefore, are the hope of these groups. Through your structure and that of your tribes, you can help them to rally public attention to their cause and public aid to alleviate their pressing needs. Through State and local governments, the Federal Government disburses billions of dollars annually for such services as public schooling, health and welfare, development of community projects, and manpower training. The question is: Are the off-reservation Indians, and the Indians on reservations not under trusteeship, getting a fair share of their community's total Federal outlay?

You need also come to grips with the problems which develop in relationships between those of you who live in Indian communities, and those who live away. We are all of one blood, we all have the same basic goals, we are too few to have any political voice unless we are united.

Indians in far away communities are proud of their Indian heritage, have organized themselves because of their common interest, and seek a meaningful relationship with those of you who are in positions of tribal responsibility.

We need to sit down and start discussions that will open the way for understanding between resident and non-resident Indians. I am sure we will find that we have much in common and that most differences can be resolved. We cannot afford the luxury of disunity, so I suggest that the NCAI use its good offices to bring about useful meetings between those who live in Indian communities and those who are away.

INDIAN YOUTH

As the forces of change are at work all over the world—and since the reservation is no longer isolated from the rest of society because of T.V., radio, and all communication media, Indian youth is in turmoil over what they see and hear. This turmoil is good if it is founded in the realities of the issues of today. And, the reality of the young Indian people in Indian country is—that they must learn to live in two worlds so as not to become the victims of both. My concern is that Indian young people not become diverted in their quest for meaningful places in society by those elements who are attempting to tear apart the fiber of American lifeways and who see this period of change as a means to achieve leadership through anarchy. Indian young people should not use their youthful energies to burn themselves out in hate and destruction as some young people are doing, but rather they should use these energies in the agonizing search for social justice. They need to look forward with goals in mind—and not backward in anger. To look backward in anger would only perpetuate discontent, provide no basis for revival of Indian spirit, and use of energies which are needed to build a better future.

We need to appraise our relationship with Indian youth before we find ourselves in treacherous waters—before passion replaces reason—before slogans replace issues—before carrying of signs replaces carrying of pride and dignity. We owe them our best efforts

because we look to them for the fulfillment of our dreams. They are our prime resources of vitality and new ideas, and our greatest resource.

How do we establish communication between them and us? We need to create an environment for them to speak out with a sense of responsibility and not of futility. We need to provide a forum by which they can make their voices heard on public issues. We need to talk and listen to each other with mutual respect, and the desire for understanding—and we need to make them feel comfortable in this dialogue, but we do not need always to agree with them. We need to understand them. They want to talk to you—the Indian leaders—and not to others. The reason I know this is because many, many young people in the last few months have told me this.

We should seek to build and not to destroy—because in seeking to destroy we become our own victims. We need to think and communicate in realistic terms with sincerity as its basis. And, we need to face life in our times. We need to draw upon the past—but not to rest upon it. We need to keep Indian heritage a living thing—and keep it from becoming stagnant. And the only suggestion I could make on the theme for this conference is to have the word "Living" before Indian Heritage because a stagnant or a dead heritage is of no value. Indian youth are coming on us very strong. They are coming on us in large numbers—they are coming on us better educated—they are coming on us more sophisticated. Fifty percent of the general population of this country is approximately 28 years of age and under. These young people as they come on can be a positive force for good, or they can be a negative force for evil—this is our challenge. Indian culture does not provide a place for the young person because in the Indian culture you went from child to man or from child to woman. Wisdom was related to age, and silence among the young was a virtue. But because the minds of our young have been stimulated by education and new experiences, more than ever before they want to know "why?" and we need to answer. They possess everything to build healthy personalities. They have heredity in which they want to take pride—they come from an environment with which they know they must cope—but they know that they alone must accept responsibility for how they respond to the situations that they will be confronted with in daily life. They will have to accept their heredity, cope with their environment, and say to themselves, "Now what shall I do with myself?"

The rate of suicides among younger Indians is greater than the young people in society generally. The rate of suicides among older Indians is lesser than that of older people in society generally. Young Indian people need to find and know themselves. If they don't find themselves they will not be any good to themselves or to anyone else. It could be that we have not provided them with the sources of strength, we have not helped them to see life in proper perspective, and develop values around which to build their lives. We have not taken them into our confidence to give them the recognition they so desperately want. We have not provided them a means by which they can see that they will ever derive a sense of fulfillment. We must see to it that they get the opportunity to build our Indian heritage anew and help keep it *living and great*; so they can live wholesome lives in the image of man and God.

But, we must start now, because today is already too late for some, and tomorrow will be too late for others. You can do this. In my experience, living on the reservation, going to school, with Indian young people, and 35 years of work among you I've developed an unshakable faith and abiding confidence in Indian people. I know you can rise to this

challenge as you have risen to challenges in the past. I look to you for ideals, for goals and for inspiration. I am proud of the restraint and dignity that you have shown in this period of our history.

I am very optimistic for the Indian future because of the leadership that we have and is currently emerging among Indian people both young and adult. I am proud to be one of you.

ANTIBALLISTIC MISSILE SAFEGUARD SYSTEM

HON. STROM THURMOND

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Tuesday, May 20, 1969

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to congratulate the WAGL radio station in Lancaster, S.C., for the fine editorial on the antiballistic missile Safeguard system which was broadcast on May 7, 1969. The editorial is an excellent example of a great public service to keep the radio audience in the Lancaster area well informed on a vital issue affecting our national security.

It is reassuring for a responsible news medium to accept its obligation to the people to explain difficult and complex critical issues. It is especially important for a responsible medium to take a position on these issues. I commend Mr. B. L. Phillips, Jr., president of WAGL, for his outstanding editorial in support of the ABM Safeguard system. It reflects a wise understanding of what is involved and clearly presents the urgent need for this defensive protection of our Nation's nuclear deterrent.

I ask unanimous consent that the editorial be printed in the Extensions of Remarks.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WAGL EDITORIAL

Very soon in the Congress of the United States, our Representatives and Senators will be voting on whether or not this nation should build and deploy the Safeguard System, which is President Nixon's version of the much discussed ABM . . . Anti Ballistic Missile System.

WAGL would for the following reasons, cast a ye vote on this issue in favor of construction and deployment.

First, the Safeguard ABM System would give creditability to the United States' retaliatory position in that it would protect our minuteman missile sites which are designed to deal a devastating retaliatory blow to any country launching a first strike against us.

Secondly, the Safeguard ABM System would be an effective defense against an accidental launch of one or two missiles by any foreign country against the United States through either human or mechanical error.

And third, while the Safeguard ABM System is not designed to be, and therefore would not be, an effective defense of our cities against an all out attack by the Soviet Union, it would be an effective defense against any limited attack Red China may be capable of launching against the United States for the next few years.

WAGL feels that in the face of the knowledge that the Soviet Union has built their SS-9 missile which is capable of delivering a 25 megaton warhead on target, President Nixon's strategy of deploying the Safeguard



Council of the Alumni of Dartmouth College

HANOVER • NEW HAMPSHIRE

HOWLAND H. SARGEANT '32
President
Radio Liberty Committee
30 East 42nd Street
New York, N. Y. 10017

PAUL R. STALEY '51
Vice-Pres., Long Beach, Calif.

J. MICHAEL MCGEAN '49
Secretary
206 Crosby Hall
Hanover, N. H. 03755

May 20, 1969

Commissioner Robert L. Bennett
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I want to express my sincere personal thanks as well as those of the Dartmouth "family" in Connecticut for your participation Saturday in our commemorative program in Columbia. It was a privilege to meet you and visit, albeit briefly, and to hear your very timely remarks. They served as a vivid reminder that progress for American Indians since Eleazar Wheelock's day has been slow indeed.

Through your comments on ABC, we hope that the townspeople in Columbia received the further stimulation needed to set up such a program themselves. Whatever help the local Dartmouth alumni can provide will be given freely because we would like our tribute to Mr. Wheelock to be something more than mere rhetoric. There has been enough talking for 200 years.

We were disappointed to learn that you will be retiring from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but know the change will not reduce your activity on behalf of Indian people. For someone who has given over thirty-five years of devoted service, these last few months in Washington must have been particularly difficult. We wish you well in whatever you choose to do in the future.

Again our thanks and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Edwin T. Rice
Chairman

er/da

A. KELVIN SMITH '20
Cleveland, Ohio
WILLIAM M. ALLEY '21
Hanover, N. H.
CARROLL DWIGHT '22
Boston, Mass.
LOUIS S. KIMBALL '25
Jacksonville, Fla.
SAMUEL H. MARTIN '27
Portland, Ore.
A. MARVIN BRAVERMAN '29
Washington, D. C.
LESTER R. GODWIN '30
Boston, Mass.
JOHN F. RICH '30
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GAYLORD A. FREEMAN JR. '31
Chicago, Ill.
WILLIAM G. ALLYN '32
Syracuse, N. Y.
H. CALVIN FISHER '32
Denver, Colo.
NATHAN W. PEARSON '32
Pittsburgh, Pa.
ERNEST L. BARCELLA '34
Washington, D. C.
DAVID T. HEDGES '34
Houston, Texas
FREDERICK S. BEEBE '35
New York, N. Y.
SANBORN C. BROWN '35
Lexington, Mass.
EDWIN L. RAMSEY JR. '35
Los Angeles, Calif.
DERO A. SAUNDERS '35
New York, N. Y.
EDWIN J. DRECHSEL '36
San Francisco, Calif.
WARREN J. CRUMBINE '37
Cleveland, Ohio
WILLIAM H. TIMBERS '37
Darien, Conn.
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Sarasota, Fla.
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Worcester, Mass.
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Milwaukee, Wis.
PAUL B. URION '38
Rochester, N. H.
ROBERT W. GIBSON '39
Minneapolis, Minn.
RICHARD C. EVERETT '40
Atlanta, Ga.
ROBERT S. WEIL '40
Montgomery, Ala.
RICHARD D. HILL '41
Boston, Mass.
ROBERT E. KRIEGER '41
Minneapolis, Minn.
HAROLD L. BOND '42
Hanover, N. H.
RICHARD REMSEN JR. '42
New York, N. Y.
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CONRAD S. YOUNG '43
Omaha, Nebr.
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Baltimore, Md.
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Rochester, N. Y.
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Chicago, Ill.
JOHN H. HATHEWAY '48
New York, N. Y.
THOMAS J. SWARTZ JR. '49
Short Hills, N. J.
ROBERT H. ZEISER '49
Providence, R. I.
ROBERT N. KREIDLER '51
New York, N. Y.
JOHN W. BARTO '52
Concord, N. H.
EDWIN T. RICE '52
Hartford, Conn.
JULIAN K. ROBINSON '52
Jersey City, N. J.
RICHARD D. LOMBARD '53
New York, N. Y.
W. GENE GERARD '55
St. Louis, Mo.
EMERSON B. HOUCK '56
Indianapolis, Ind.

MAY 23 3 57 PM '69

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

189 Defense Highway
Annapolis, Maryland

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear "Boss":

The debit side of my experience ledger shows that I didn't get to know and work for you for any great length of time. However, quality of experience has a far greater value than mere quantity. Thus, whatever I have lost in time is much more than offset by the profitable and enjoyable experience gained during the year and a half in which it has been my pleasure to serve you.

I wish you and yours all the best that Life has to offer. May God speed all your future endeavors and guide you along a trail of many more years of success, health and happiness!

With sincerest best wishes and highest personal regards --

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George", with a stylized, flowing script.

George W. Hubley, Jr.

WILL ROGERS, JR.

May 20, 1969

The Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

To have worked under you in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, first as a part-time consultant and later as a full-time assistant, has been one of the memorable periods of my life.

Surely no one else in this country understands the American Indian in such depth and with such sympathy. You have combined this with an administrative skill, a gift of leadership, and a kindly humor. The result, in my opinion, is that the BIA has made more progress in the three years of your Commissionership than in any similar period in recent history.

From now on, all future Commissioners will be judged by the high standards you have set.

As you leave, it is nice to have statements from those in your official family who have served under you. But, Bob, you are leaving with something no other Commissioner of Indian Affairs has ever had.

You are leaving with the almost unanimous support of all of the American Indians all over this country. You were their Commissioner. They looked to you. They respected you. And, wonder of wonders, their respect and admiration increased every year you were in office. There can be no higher praise.

With best regards, always,


Will Rogers, Jr.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABERDEEN AREA OFFICE
820 SOUTH MAIN
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA
57401

MAY 20 1969

Mr. Robert Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

My first acquaintance with you probably was about 1949 or 1950 when you were known as the Aberdeen Area Placement Officer. After many more titles and twenty years, you reached the top--Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Many of us are proud of your accomplishments.

I sincerely hope you and your family will enjoy your retirement. My plan is to retire too--about August 1. Having worked with Indian folks for thirty-two years, I can see great advancements in many aspects of Indian livelihood. I'm sure you feel the same way.

Again, best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

Sincerely yours,

H. P. Mittelholtz
Area Program Officer



Shawnee Agency
Shawnee, Oklahoma
May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

As an individual and as an employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, I wish to extend to you my sincere wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

It has been a pleasure serving under an Indian Commissioner and I hope you won't be the last for another hundred years. I personally feel that you have lifted the morale of the Indians by serving in this capacity. You have proven that Indians are able and capable of serving in the higher offices of our Government. I appreciate your sincere interest in the Indian people since I am one.

I had the privilege of meeting you in Seminole during the Seminole Nation Day activities. I enjoyed talking with you and Mr. Tommaney about Haskell and other subjects of interest to all of us. I hope you can be present at the next Seminole Nation Day activities to be held sometime in September in Wewoka.

My Best Regards,

Jane C. Northcott

(Mrs.) Jane C. Northcott

560 Pleasant St., Apt. 6
Long Beach, Calif. 90805
May 20, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner Of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Dear Commissioner Bob:

It has come to my attention that you will be leaving the Bureau Of Indian Affairs, effective May 31, 1969, after more than thirty-five years service with the Federal Government.

Word of your excellent career with the Federal Government culminating in your appointment and service in the position of Commissioner Of Indian Affairs has traveled far and I am pleased to have followed it with much interest. You were doing an excellent job as Commissioner Of Indian Affairs and we regret that you are leaving the Service.

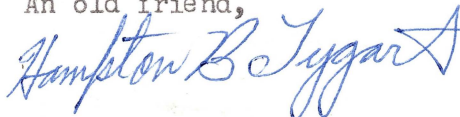
It has never been my privilege to have been associated with you in your work career with the Bureau Of Indian Affairs, but I wish it had been. It has, however, been my good privilege to have known you as a Senior class friend at Haskell Institute.

Although you are leaving the Bureau Of Indian Affairs, I feel that you are still a man in the prime of life and that you are not actually retiring from the affairs of Indians, but will still maintain a keen interest and be active in Indian affairs.

I know that you will derive much satisfaction through the passing years as you look back on your excellent career of years well spent in the service of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, particularly in the position of Commissioner.

I offer you my sincere congratulations on your Federal Service career and a job well done.

An old friend,



Hampton B. Tygart

STATE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

ROOM 425, FORUM BUILDING, 1107 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814



May 20, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

We wish to congratulate you upon your retirement and sincerely hope you can now do the many things your duties have prevented you from doing because of lack of time.

Your retirement is going to be a great loss to the Indians of California, felt by all of us interested in the general welfare of the Indian population.

The changes effected under your leadership and guidance before and after the federal "change in Indian policy for California" have been appreciated by the Commission and most beneficial.

It is our sincere hope that your replacement will be an Indian with your character and dedication. We can ask for no better.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Berenice Pate".

Berenice Pate
Executive Secretary



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ZUNI INDIAN AGENCY
ZUNI, NEW MEXICO 87327

MAY 20 1969

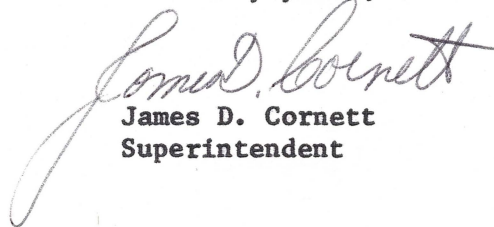
Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

The past three years have been exciting and rewarding years in Indian Affairs. Your leadership and direction has certainly been appreciated by me and, I believe, a great majority of the Indian people. Changes for the good have resulted which is reflected not only in better conditions for a lot of Indian people; better working relationship between the Bureau and Indian tribes; but also in the leadership and attitude of the Indian people themselves. You can rightfully accept the credit for this. It has been a real pleasure to have been appointed and to serve as a Superintendent at Ft. Totten and Zuni during your term of office.

Congratulations on a job well done and the very best to you and Mrs. Bennett.

Sincerely yours,



James D. Cornett
Superintendent

May 20, 1969

Commissioner Robert L. Bennett
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

On behalf of the employees of the Plant Management Engineering Center, we the members of the Board of Directors of the Plant Management Engineering Center Employees' Association, want to take this opportunity to send our best wishes to you on your retirement.

Since most of the employees here have had the opportunity to meet and work with you, your retirement will be a personal loss to us. Your accomplishments with the Bureau during your thirty-seven years of service truly left us with a standard we shall long be striving to uphold.

We extend our sincere wishes for continued success in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Donald A. Falvey
Donald A. Falvey, President

Patsy J. Thomas
Patsy J. Thomas, Secretary

Modina M. Waters
Modina M. Waters, Gift Buyer

Cliff Blackstun
Cliff Blackstun, Party Chairman

Lee Holmes
Lee Holmes, Treasurer



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Washington, D. C.

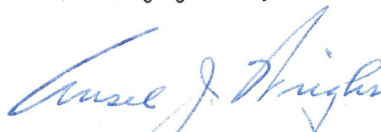
Dear Mr. Bennett:

Congratulations for a job well done.

You may recall some of our mutual contacts with Angoon representatives at Angoon, Juneau, Seattle and Washington, and, of course, Hydaburg representatives at Hydaburg, Seattle and Juneau - with mixed emotions. To say the least, the encounters were interesting. Another recollection is riding in the seat behind you on the plane from Seattle to Juneau on your first trip to Juneau as Area Director.

My best wishes for an enjoyable retirement. I hope to "hang on" for another two or three years.

Sincerely yours,



Ansel J. Wright



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

May I add my sincere good wishes to you and Cleota at this important time, your retirement from Federal Service. I know it won't be retirement from service to all the people you have worked so long for as we all will need your continuing interest and ideas.

It was good training and experience for me to have been able to work for you on occasion, Mr. Bennett. I appreciated your kindnesses and consideration during the time I filled in for Ruth Blake, and thank you for the opportunity.

Your impact on the programs of the Juneau Area while you were here will always be remembered with gratitude. Your leadership as our Area Director and Commissioner will long be remembered as the best!

May you have many blessings ahead, which you so richly deserve.

Sincerely,

June V. Clare

DOMINGO MONTOYA
SANDIA PUEBLO
Chairman
RAMOS SANCHEZ
SAN ILDEFONSO PUEBLO
Vice-Chairman

ALL INDIAN PUEBLO COUNCIL

Representing the Nineteen New Mexico Pueblos

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BERNALILLO, NEW MEXICO 87004

VICTOR SARRACINO
LAGUNA PUEBLO
Secretary
BENNY ALENCIO
SAN DOMINGO PUEBLO
Treasurer

(Office) 907 Indian School Rd., N.W.

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107

Telephone 505-242-1891

May 20, 1969

Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Reluctantly and with much regret I am writing this letter in behalf of the Pueblo Indian people of New Mexico. Reluctant because an effective Indian servant is retiring and regretting because our official relationship may be ending.

Nevertheless, as you leave employment with the Bureau of Indian Affairs we are placing you among our honored few. Many have worked for our Pueblo people but the few who did a good job for us we can count on one hand. This does not mean that others did not do a good job. What we do mean is that you did an outstanding job.

We shall also be grateful for creating the outstanding image of an American Indian being a good Indian Commissioner and sound administrator. We hope your fine example will continue to be a guideline hereafter for other American Indian, Indian Commissioners.

Upon your retirement you are welcome to return to the Pueblo country and hope you will find a home here.

Very sincerely,

Domingo Montoya
Domingo Montoya

DM/JSS/iv



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

INDUSTRIAL
DEVELOPMENT

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FIELD OFFICE
219 SOUTH DEARBORN STREET, ROOM 2404
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604

May 20, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I wish to take this opportunity to express my deep feelings of regret upon receiving the news today that you are retiring from your position as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I am sure that your leadership will long be remembered by your friends and associates and all who knew you. I am confident that though you are leaving the Bureau at this time, it is in no way an end to your service and contributions to the important work that has occupied so much of your life to date.

I also wish to express a word of appreciation for the interest and friendship you showed to the staff of this office during your visits to Chicago. We hope that you will have occasion to visit our office whenever you are in the city.

Best wishes to you and your family in whatever activities occupy your interest and abilities during the months and years to come.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert N. Huey
Officer-in-Charge

212 Willis Avenue
Ashland, Wisconsin 54806

May 21, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

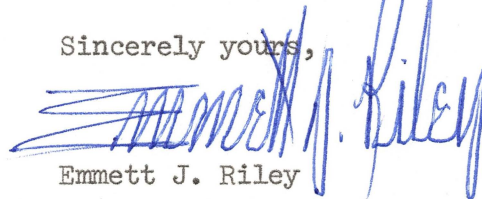
Dear Commissioner Bennett:

I am indeed sorry to have heard of the resignation of my most illustrious ward! As you are well aware, I have been a great admirer of the Wisconsin Oneida and have found these people to be the "best."

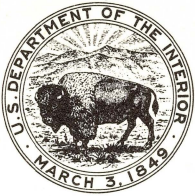
It was well that former President Lyndon Johnson had the foresight to choose you for the position of Commissioner, and there is no doubt that the Indian populace has advanced and progressed their greatest during your regime.

I do hate to think that even though you claimed to be my ward, at the same time you will no longer be able to state you are my "boss." Of course, I would prefer it the latter way.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Emmett J. Riley", is written over the typed name. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'E' and a long, trailing flourish.

Emmett J. Riley



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 21, 1969

Dear Mr. Bennett:

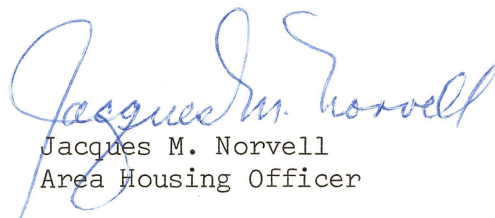
My wife, Norma, and I want to extend our sincere wishes to you and your wife for the best of everything in your retirement. We are sure that your many friends and acquaintances in Alaska join us in this wish.

Your leadership and accomplishments have been a source of pride to a great many people. In addition, it has been a personal pleasure working for you.

Now that you can possibly devote a little more time to their support, the Green Bay Packers will surely come back!

Hopefully, in your other pursuits and interests, we may see you in Alaska again.

Sincerely yours,


Jacques M. Norvell
Area Housing Officer



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
PIMA AGENCY
SACATON, ARIZONA 85247

May 21, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I have enjoyed my association with you for the past several years and particularly appreciated the opportunity to serve under your leadership as Commissioner.

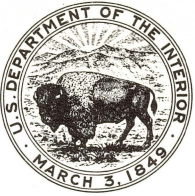
The job of Commissioner is an extremely difficult one and I think that the Superintendents at the agencies are perhaps in the best position to really understand the job that a Commissioner does.

I can truthfully say, without any traditional bouquets for departing officials, that I, and the other superintendents with whom I am acquainted, feel that you have done an outstanding job.

Good luck in your retirement and in any new endeavors you may undertake.

Sincerely yours,

Kendall Cumming
Superintendent



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 21, 1969

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I want to take this opportunity at your departure from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to express my appreciation for your loyal support and assistance in your capacity as the Commissioner of an important installation.

The leadership and initiative which you have displayed in meeting constantly changing situations, occasioned by the limitations and restrictions as a result of changing political situations, and the decisive and expeditious manner in which you have met these varying conditions, has materially assisted our Bureau in the accomplishment of our mission.

It has been a pleasure to have you as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and, in such category, as an important part of the team.

I trust that the future will bring continuation of your success and to this end, my best wishes go with you.

Sincerely yours,

George H. Atlas
Area Safety Officer



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

CHEYENNE RIVER AGENCY
EAGLE BUTTE, SOUTH DAKOTA 57625

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Administration

May 21, 1969

Hon. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

It is with mixed emotions that I join the many others in wishing you the best at this time of entering your retirement years. Mixed because I feel no one should regret the opportunity to be freed of the pressures experienced through a long career devoted to service of the Government and the Indian people; and yet, I can appreciate your desire to see the new and innovative ideas you have fostered bear fruit. I feel certain many of these ideas will be implemented.

I appreciate the opportunity to have served as a superintendent for the past three years under your leadership as Commissioner, and consider it a highlight in my career. I hope it has been an equally significant and beneficial period for the Indian people we have both served.

Sincerely,

John J. Weber
Superintendent

May 21, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob,

It is with mixed emotions that I view your coming retirement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I have been hoping against hope that you would be able to continue as Commissioner for at least another two years to complete the change that you have started in Bureau attitude. Regardless of who becomes Commissioner in the future, the impact of your administration will continue for a long time to come if the Indian people will give support to the philosophy that you have expressed these past three years. On the other hand, since all agencies of government are subject to outside influence I would hope that you will continue yourself in an influential position either privately or publicly so that your leadership may still be enjoyed by the Indian people in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

I am sure that you can use a well deserved rest for at least a short period of time.

Winnie and I both wish the best for you and your family and remember the latch string is always out to you at the Balsiger house.

Sincerely in friendship,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dick", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard M. Balsiger

Box 86
Concho, Oklahoma 73022
May 21, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

It is with regret that I learn of your retirement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Indians, as well as the employees of this agency, hate to see you leave. Several of the Indian leaders here, such as Sam Buffalo, know that both the Indians and the Bureau will miss you. Your contribution to the advancement of Indians has been felt by everyone and is appreciated. It has meant hope for many who were discouraged and had lost confidence in themselves.

I want to thank you personally for what you have done for me. You stood behind me when the going was rough and that is when it really counts. Mrs. Vance shares my high regard for you and sends her regrets for your leaving. We both wish for you many years of happy retirement. If you ever come near, please feel welcome to visit us at any time.

Sincerely yours,


Paul Vance

Winnebago, Nebraska
May 21, 1969

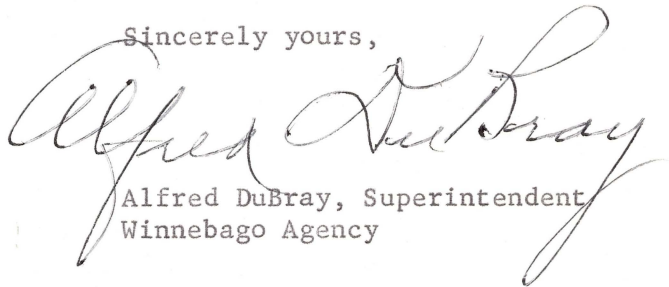
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

I have been informed of your plans to retire from the service at the end of this month. This comes as a great surprise and somewhat of a disappointment, I am sure, to all Bureau employees and especially the Indian people throughout the Indian Country. You are to be commended for devoting a lifetime to the service and advancement of the Indian people. As a fellow employee, I want to add my congratulations to you for taking advantage of retirement, which is one of the great benefits of the Civil Service System. The decision to retire was, I am sure, an extremely important one for you to make.

All Indian tribes can point with pride to the fact that a member of their race served with honor and distinction in the highest office of Indian Affairs. I personally want to wish you and your family the best of health, happiness and many years of successful retirement.

Sincerely yours,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alfred DuBray". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Alfred DuBray, Superintendent
Winnebago Agency



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 21, 1969

Dear Bob:

Of all the dozen and more jobs I have had in government, none gave me a greater thrill in being appointed than that of research assistant to Robert M. La Follette, Jr., and none has given me more lasting satisfaction than that in which I was inherited by Robert La Follette Bennett from his predecessor as Commissioner. Part of the evidence is that, by more than a year, this is the longest period I have served in any post.

Each year here has been worth a year of formal education and that is especially true of the three years you have been Commissioner. Your combination of "head in the non-Indian world and heart in that of the Indians" gives you a unique advantage in Indian affairs, one that is less fully appreciated today than it will be in the future. It has also given those who have been privileged to work with you a similar advantage in learning to understand the nature and subtleties of the requirements of Indian advancement.

Ellen and I are happy to have you and Cleota as friends and neighbors and to know that in leaving office you are not yet leaving Washington. You have our very best wishes for an active, effective, and happy retirement from formal public life.

Sincerely yours,

Roderick H. Riley



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 21, 1969

Dear Mr. B.:

Nobody -- least of all, I -- is anything but distressed that you will no longer be Our Leader.

However, it is a happy thought in retrospect that you had the opportunity to serve as Commissioner for a long enough period to accomplish some lasting good. There is no doubt in my mind, nor will there be in the history books, as to when the turning point came in Indian affairs. It came when you came. Indians have gone through the "removal period" and the "allotment period" and the "reorganization period." Now they are at a really meaningful point in their history -- the period of free and open participation in matters that affect their own lives and fortunes.

We wish you well, and we know you will still be a leader in Indian affairs "out there" in the world beyond bureaucracy.

Most Sincerely,

Virginia S. Hart
Assistant for Communications



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 21, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

When you changed the policy of the Bureau to one of hiring more Indian employees, I, as many other Bureau supervisors, had reservations concerning the impact of this policy upon program accomplishments. After several years I have observed no lessened mission accomplishment and in some instances, such as Barrow Utilities and the Branch of Personnel, I have seen better work output.

I believe your policy decision was wise and want you to know this.

Best wishes to you and Mrs. Bennett upon your retirement.

Sincerely yours,

David F Weaver

David F. Weaver
Area Personnel Officer

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The Fort Belknap Indian Community is a Federally chartered corporation as defined by the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, and conducts its business through the Fort Belknap Community Council, and

WHEREAS, This Council has numerous and frequent contacts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs at all levels in its efforts to promote and develop the social and economic conditions of this Reservation, and

WHEREAS, These contacts have been continuous over a great many years permitting the Council to be fairly knowledgeable of the Bureau's representatives and policies and their effect upon the Fort Belknap Reservation and its members, and

WHEREAS, During the past three years, the Council has had the opportunity to view and consider the policies of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Robert L. Bennett, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:


- : The Fort Belknap Indian Community Council feels that Commissioner Bennett has put forth dedicated and sincere policies to stimulate the growth of Indian councils and people,
- : During the past three years, the Council has undertaken several projects such as administration of Law and Order, supervision of a work experience program and numerous contracts, all of which have increased the Council's experience in program supervision. Our assumption of these responsibilities would not have been possible but for the policies of Commissioner Bennett.
- : These policies are based upon a personal knowledge of what we as Indian people think, want and look forward to as well as upon broad and extensive experience and responsibility at the highest levels of Indian program development both in and out of Government.
- : We deeply regret that Commissioner of Indian Affairs Bennett finds it necessary to resign at a time when his philosophy and experience are needed more than ever to bring about the changes in governmental and reservation attitudes and programs in order that all Indian tribes and individuals can more rapidly assume responsibility for their own destinies.
- : The Fort Belknap Indian Community Council congratulates Commissioner Bennett on a job well done, if he must leave the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but in the same breath we support strongly his continuation in this most important of all positions to the Indian people.

- : We sincerely hope that Commissioner Bennett will continue to be a strong force in the field of Indian Affairs for many years to come, whether he be in or out of government.
- : Should Commissioner Bennett ever be on the "Highline" of Montana we extend our heartiest invitation to stop by to visit the many friends he has made on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, the undersigned, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, hereby certify that the Fort Belknap Indian Community Council is composed of 12 members, of whom 7 were present at a meeting thereof, duly and regularly called, noticed, convened and held this 21st day of May 1969; and that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at such meeting by the affirmative vote of all of its members and that said resolution has not been rescinded or amended in any way.

Attest:


Clarence Adams, President


Wilbur Bigby, Secretary-Treasurer

THE FORT BELKNAP INDIAN COMMUNITY, Fort Belknap Agency, Harlem, Montana 59526



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

Time seems to have a way of speeding along. I didn't realize, until I saw the announcement of your retirement party, that you had logged over 37 years of Federal Service. You really got away to an early start.

It seems only a short time ago, although about 20 years would be more accurate, that we first served together in the Aberdeen Area in a number of different assignments. Relocation, as it was then called, Tribal Operations, Extension and Credit and Resources Development were our chief official responsibilities. As you will recall, the establishment of the Area Offices during this period also meant plenty of action for everyone.

I particularly recall the pheasant hunting that we enjoyed together in Aberdeen on some of those Friday afternoons and Saturdays during the season. Those hunting groups had a way of organizing themselves very efficiently about Friday noon. They were good days in many respects.

You have also had many good days since that time in furthering the interests of Indian people in other places and we are all proud of your outstanding individual accomplishments as well as those of your family.

Marie joins in congratulating you on your retirement and wishing you and Mrs. Bennett the very best.

Sincerely yours,

Glenn R. Landbloom



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 22, 1969

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Words are never adequate when they are most desired. This is true now as I search for those I need to express my appreciation to the best administrator it has been my privilege to serve.

Congratulations to you upon your retirement from Federal service. It has been a privilege to have worked under your guidance, first as Juneau Area Director, and now as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

I am confident your outstanding service to Indian Americans will continue. May our paths cross again.

Good luck to you and Mrs. Bennett.

Sincerely yours,

Prentiss Gazaway
H Prentiss Gazaway
Area Economist



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

Congratulations to you upon your retirement from Federal Service.

Words cannot express my appreciation to you for your able leadership and direction and the valuable contribution you have given the American Indian over three decades. As an administration in your long career ladder you have contributed greatly to the Branch of Employment Assistance. I am proud to have played a small part in the "big picture" under your leadership.

As I recall our paths crossed spanning back almost two decades ago, when I was stationed at Turtle Mountain, you were Assistant Area Director, Aberdeen.

It has indeed been my pleasure to have worked under your leadership over many years.

When you are in our vicinity, remember the "Coffee pot" is always on for you at our wigwam.

Good luck to you and Mrs. Bennett.

Sincerely yours,

Therman C(Pat) Ingram
Area Employment Assistance Officer



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 22, 1969

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Your impending retirement is viewed with mixed emotions by personnel in the Division of Education, Juneau Area. During the time you have occupied the Commissioner's chair we have worked with confidence; secure in the knowledge that the education of Indian youth would always receive your first consideration. For this reason, among others, your decision to retire is a cause for regret on our part. As friends, however, we are vicariously enjoying the leisure you will soon have an opportunity to enjoy. We say 'have an opportunity' because those of us who have observed you in action entertain a strong suspicion that you will lose no time in resuming your life long battle to advance the cause of the Indian people from some new vantage point.

We hope your separation from the service will not bring your association with present co-workers and employees to an end. Your continued success and happiness will always be of great interest to us who have been privileged to work with you.

Sincerely yours,

Eunice Logan

Eunice Logan
Acting Assistant Area Director (Educ.)

May 22, 1969

Dear Bob and Cleota:

Contrary to my usual habit, I will say it short and fast. Working with you, Bob, has been one of the most satisfying aspects of my Federal service. I am most sorry to see you go.

My mind goes back, most of all, to the Alaska days. Not only was the work challenging but it was there that Ruth and I got to know Cleota and that has been a privilege.

Much affection to both of you from both of us and a long and satisfying future.

Sincerely.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Madison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Madison Coombs



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

I consider my visit with you approximately three years ago as one of the most significant in my work career. That was the time we discussed the possibility of my joining you on the Bureau staff. I deeply appreciated your confidence in me at that time and even more deeply value the opportunity of working with one of the ablest Commissioner's of Indian Affairs in recent times. Your record has been phenomenal; the confidence of the Indians in your leadership is unanimous. Indian, Bureau, and Governmental policies have been directed toward involvement and participation, the only true ways of learning and developing.

Best wishes to you in your new career.

Sincerely yours,

T. W. Taylor
Deputy Commissioner

May 22, 1969

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

Congratulations upon the accomplishment of 37 years of the highest quality and greatest level (Commissioner, no less) of Federal service. It has been a privilege to be on your team, even when the crowd appeared to be applauding for the other side.

Seriously, I am convinced that the Bureau has made outstanding progress under your leadership. Your talent for patient insistence upon the resolution of problems, coupled with your ability to perceive the true nature of the problem, has made working with you a rewarding adventure.

As far as I know, you have had no dull moments. To the contrary, "hectic and tumultuous" appear to be appropriate to the occasion.

May I suggest that in your treasury of memories you place, through recall, your salmon fishing experiences at Point Retreat in the "K-T-K". You are reminded that the salmon were indifferent to our blandishments for what appeared to be indeterminate periods of time; until, suddenly, one of the reels excitedly announced a strike. The ill advised salmon was subsequently pulled along side in a fairly exhausted state. In an over-confident manner, I am slightly, but not very much, embarrassed to remind you, you beat him off the line with the net. This happened not one, but three times. Some people never learn!

Katherine and I wish you and yours God's speed in whatever endeavor you undertake.

Very sincerely,



Kenneth K. Crites



Salt River

PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ROUTE 1, BOX 120 SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85257 PHONE 261-4925

May 22, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

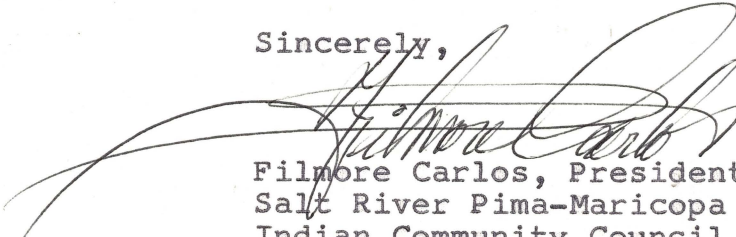
Dear Bob:

The Tribal Council wishes to express regret over your decision to retire from service, to be effective May 30, 1969.

Your efforts at relaxing B.I.A. Policy to give tribes more latitude in decision making, and the Salt River Tribal Council's natural desire to provide for its people, created an area of mutual concern, a concern which cannot be conveyed in so many words.

The Council is convinced this same concern for our Indian people, played a decisive role in your final decision to retire. While we cannot agree with you in this instance, we feel honored to have had you as our Commissioner.

Sincerely,



Filmore Carlos, President
Salt River Pima-Maricopa
Indian Community Council

FC/bl

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob,

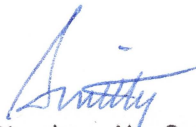
Jimmie and I enjoyed our visit with you during your recent trip to Anadarko for the Riverside commencement - particularly the lunch at the airport in Oklahoma City. We indeed regret your retirement. It has been nice being a special friend of the Commissioner.

I look back on the years with you in Alaska as being among the most formative of my career. My entire tour of duty in Alaska and particularly my association with you was very pleasant. I appreciate very much the boost and recognition you gave me in Alaska and your understanding of my particular problems.

We are going to miss you as Commissioner but not, we hope, as a friend. The welcome mat is out for you and Cleota if, in your post-retirement travels and activities, you come our way.

May the next phase of your life be as rewarding and productive for you as the past! Jimmie joins me in extending best wishes to you and Cleota on the occasion of your retirement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Smith", with a stylized flourish above the name.

Stephen W. Smith



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Sacramento Area Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

May 22, 1969

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

On the occasion of your leaving (formally - but not informally) Indian Affairs, I extend my heartfelt congratulations for an outstanding and inspiring career.

Beginning with your kind indulgence and guidance to a "trainee intern" at Aberdeen, you have inspired, influenced and reassured me as you continued to work with Indians and rose to the highest position in Federal Indian Affairs. This influence has persisted to the extent that I still do not carry a brief case or papers when I attend Indian meetings, which reflects your advice at Aberdeen when you were involved in the "planning for Indians" in connection with the Big Bend Dam in South Dakota.

As you leave the federal Indian Service I wish sincerely that you do so with much satisfaction and feeling of fulfillment as your career has been beneficial and rewarding for all American Indians, Eskimos and Alaska Natives. I personally feel indebted to you and I am confident that all Indians have benefitted from your long and dedicated service.

Your friendship and inspiration will be cherished memories with us, and Mrs. Old Coyote joins me in wishing you every success and good health in the coming years.

Sincerely,


Barney Old Coyote



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Sacramento Area Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

May 22, 1969

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

It is often difficult to put into a letter of this sort the full complexity of feelings which one has which results from an association extending back several years and involving a personal as well as a professional relationship. Your leave of the Bureau of Indian Affairs as Commissioner portends a hiatus in ideas and personal commitment which has impressed me and more importantly the Indians, and leaves to any successor a difficult task by comparison.

For my own part, I feel a giant step has been taken under your guidance in making a large and old institution become responsive to Indian need in a way never heretofore achieved and in a time of extreme pressure for massive social change, uncertainty, and difficulty. The initial steps you have taken will continue to influence us in carrying out our responsibilities and, therefore, your contributions will not end with your departure.

On a more personal note, my wife and I hope that we will be able to see you and your wife from time to time in order to continue the personal relationship that has developed.

Sincerely,

Bill Finale

William E. Finale

Chilocco Indian School
May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

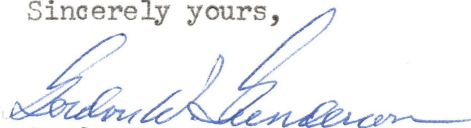
Dear Bob,

In the many years I have known you I have steadily gained more and more respect for you, your philosophy, your extreme dedication and enthusiasm. My career in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and my association with Indian people has become more meaningful and indeed richer because of your leadership and philosophy. One cannot help but be caught up in the forward thinking of your time. This has meant a great deal to me in working with Indian youth and adults.

Your recent trip to Chilocco stands out in my mind as one in which you exemplified the pure philosophy of Bob Bennett and his administration. Meeting with youth, gaining interactions with youth and carrying your message to the student body before the nations cameras and press demonstrate your dedication to the idea of involving the Indian People in the process of decisions.

May my wife and I wish you many happy days in your retirement.

Sincerely yours,


Gordon W. Gunderson



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

NORTHERN CHEYENNE AGENCY
LAME DEER, MONTANA 59043

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Administration

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Emeritus?)
Washington, D. C.

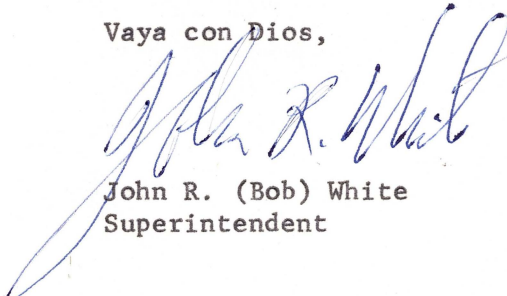
Dear Bob:

As this was written, your status for the immediate future still was in doubt at this precinct. But whatever the future may hold--for you, for BIA, or for any of us in the Indian business--I'm reasonably certain that your service to the Indian people is by no means ended. And I'm more than reasonably certain that the years ahead will see continued progress for all Indians on the trail you began to chart as Superintendent at Con-Ute 15 years ago.

Whatever the next few days may bring, I can't feel that we've reached a complete parting of the ways.

And whatever the next few days or few years may bring, all of us at Northern Cheyenne wish you the very best of all good things. (With the possible exception of poker hands, when next we sit down to play; you've already had your share of those.)

Vaya con Dios,


John R. (Bob) White
Superintendent

May 22, 1969

Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob,

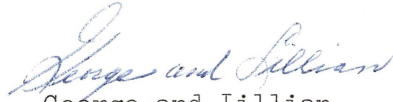
We understand you are retiring shortly after many years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

You may well be proud of your illustrious career with the Bureau. We know you contributed greatly to the Indian people and to the Indian Service. We know your actions were always taken, and your decisions were always made, with the Indian people, including the Alaskan natives, first and foremost.

Your achievements were and will remain to be inspirational to the Indian people, especially the Indian youth.

When in Montana, be sure to stop in and see us.

Your friends,


George and Lillian
LaVerdure



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

PHOENIX AREA OFFICE

P.O. Box 7007

Phoenix, Arizona 85011

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 22, 1969

Dear Bob:

Like many others I am sure, I had hoped that you would be reappointed. Since this is not to be, however, I congratulate you on your retirement.

I am proud to have been associated with you and to have played the role of interpreter of your philosophy and ideas to the Indian people, and, where the need is much greater, to Bureau staff.

The experiences that Indian people have had in making decisions affecting their affairs will make it impossible for the extreme paternalism of the past ever to return. This will, in my opinion be the most far-reaching accomplishment of your tenure as Commissioner.

I look forward to working with you in common effort for many years to come.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "LaFollette Butler", is written over the typed name.

LaFollette Butler



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Juneau Area Office
P. O. Box 3-8000
Juneau, Alaska 99801

May 22, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I view your coming retirement with mixed emotions. From a purely personal standpoint, I am truly happy for you and your family.

The Bureau has changed its course of direction in your three years as Commissioner. The new directions you charted gave the Bureau new and realistic incentives and goals to accomplish, particularly the direction to non-paternalism.

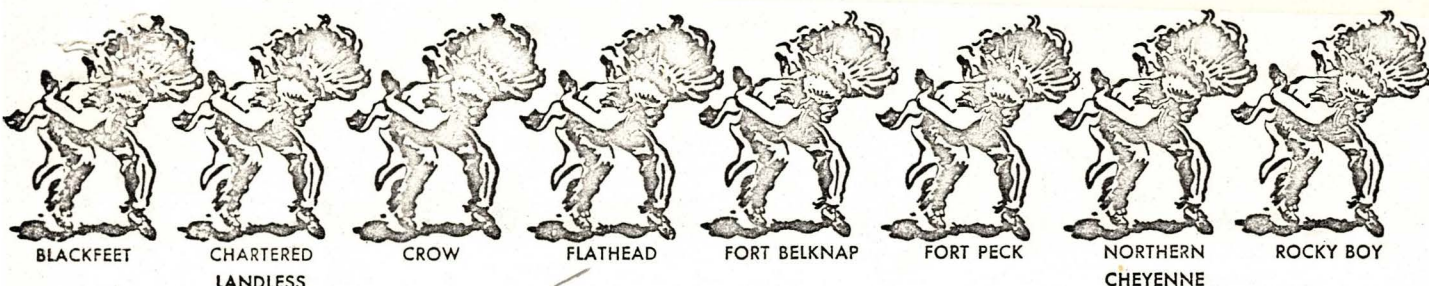
Under your direction the Bureau has accomplished much and you can be justly proud of your achievements. One can not measure the untold intangible benefits which have been, and will continue to be, created and benefited by the Indian people. I sincerely believe that history will distinguish you as the best, if not the only, Commissioner to accomplish with the Indian people their ideals, hopes and goals.

I feel it a personal privilege to have worked under your direction.

Lee and I wish for you and Cleota a truly wonderful life ahead. May God bless you more richly and abundantly than ever before. Should you or your family be traveling where Lee and I abide, the door is always open and always you are welcome.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. McLean
Assistant Area Director (Adm.)



Montana Inter-Tribal Policy Board



RESOLUTION

May 22 & 23, 1969

William Youpee

Chairman

Fort Peck

Poplar, Montana 59255

Leo Sias

1st Vice Chairman

Flathead

Ronan, Montana 59864

Joe Shaw

2nd Vice Chairman

Blackfeet

Browning, Montana 59417

Roland Kennerly

Secretary-Treasurer

Blackfeet

Browning, Montana 59417

Whereas: A duly called meeting of the Montana Inter-Tribal Policy Board in session in Billings, Montana, May 22 & 23, 1969, and

Whereas: The Inter-Tribal Policy Board learned that Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Robert L. Bennett has been asked to submit his resignation, and

Whereas: It is further understood that a decision will be made in the next few days as to accepting his resignation, and

Whereas: The Montana Inter-Tribal Policy Board as well as each individual tribe in Montana and Tribes from all over the United States and various inter-tribal groups have repeatedly and emphatically asked that Commissioner Robert L. Bennett be retained as Commissioner, and

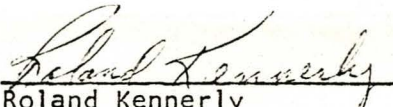
Whereas: We have been advised that the Administration plans to work closely with Indian people and consult them on all matters effecting their interest, and

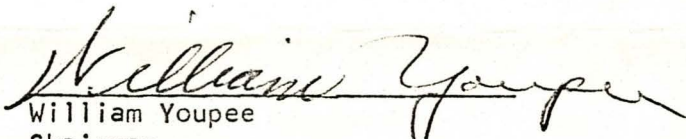
Whereas: It is the belief of the Inter-Tribal Policy Board that Robert L. Bennett has the trust and confidence of the Indian people and any action to remove him would result in a great loss of confidence and trust by Indian people in the promises of the Administration,

THEREFORE NOW BE IT RESOLVED: That the Inter-Tribal Policy Board reaffirms again as emphatically as possible their request that Robert L. Bennett be retained as Commissioner and that his resignation not be accepted, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Secretary of the Interior
be requested to consult with Indian groups throughout the country before any further proposals are made regarding Indian affairs, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That copies of this Resolution be sent to the Montana Delegation, the Secretary of the Interior and Commissioner Robert L. Bennett.


Roland Kennerly
Secretary


William Youpee
Chairman
Montana Inter-Tribal
Policy Board



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
OAKLAND-SAN FRANCISCO FIELD EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE OFFICE
FEDERAL CENTER, BLDG. 2A
620 CENTRAL AVENUE
ALAMEDA, CALIFORNIA 94501

May 23, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Word reaches us of your retirement. All of us here join your multitude of friends in congratulations and good wishes; however, it is with mixed emotions. We are very happy for you as you approach your well deserved rest, but we experience an inclination to protest your departure from our ranks because we dread the loss of your association and wise counsel.

For more than a third of a century, your devotion to the advancement and welfare of the American Indian has been an inspiration to your associates and a benediction to your people. As a teacher and administrator, through precept and example, you have gained the affection of youth, the respect of intelligent men, and the loyalty of many friends. Many will endeavor to emulate your "footsteps in the sands".

We gratefully acknowledge your friendly and constructive counsel in the programs of this office. We all wish you good fishing, and hope you will continue to visit us.

Sincerely yours,

Robert H. Isaacson

Donald H. Spangy
Staff of the Oakland/San Francisco
Field Employment Assistance Office

James W. Morse
John B. Rickette
John Riley
Kit Collins
Mary D. Peterson
Wm H. Warren
J. Dale Maurice
Lona Cooper
Jackie Graedrich
Joseph H. Trombore
M. L. Day
Conrad E. Bader
K. McCurtain
Donna Hoester
Kathie Furie
Ralph E. Parsons
James Strong
Gerald Thomson
Frank Looking
C. A. Doitras, Jr.
Grace Bullette
Philbert H. Swain
Donna Davis
Martina L. Menard

CHIP HOUSE

Carol G. Linder

Joanne Jones

Arnold Pankau

Solon M. Hill

Philip M. Belgarde

Delores Gournau

Erin Crawford

Ray Wicks

Franklin B. Zeisler

Agnes E. Beane

Lena M. Robertson

Dorothy Martin

Gerard Bury

Stella Ziegler

Jean Hill

Dorothy Schmitt

Edna M. Cloud

Janis L. LaBette

Russell Warren

Elmer Cloud

Richard Crawford

Linda Vignor

Donald H. Berg

Anita L. Boutwell

Hazel G. Stutrud

Johnnie Hagland

Wendee Grandalen

Viola Carlson

Duke Wellington

Cora M. Cox

Marquardt M. Landu

George T. F. Holt

Ralph L. Erdrich

Mitchell D. Hripentoy

Gladys V. Lee

Mrs. Emer Thundel

Lillian V. Sjoberg

Jim L. Davis

Connie T. Camm

Al Morris Jr.

Diane C. Kuebener

Patricia H. Egan

Phyllis Hripentoy

Arthur Giedt

Eleana Houle

W. A. Lieberman

Lillian M. Beane

Jeanette Twohig

Jean Fausse

Theresa Kovarik

Maryne Loepf

Dora T. Hill

Lloyd Crawford

Elyse Crawford

Lee A. Owens

Ed. Brown

James B. Martini

Dr. Boutwell

Frances A. Belgarde



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS DATA CENTER
500 GOLD AVENUE, S.W.
P. O. BOX 2026
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87103

MAY 23 1968

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Rumor has it that you may decide to settle in New Mexico after you have retired. From my point of view, that is all to the good. I hope that you will be able to stop in and see us once in a while. All of us have enjoyed working under you.

Just think; No more will you have to wonder whether or not the Data Center will louse up the pay check which is due. No more will you look at a deposit slip and think "Hey! I got my check again!" You will lose your membership in that exclusive club of Bureau employees who have been mispaid--or not paid--by the Data Center. (That group, we insist, is a small, select number!)

Thank you for being so patient with us. We wish you a wonderful retirement.

Sincerely,

Executive Officer



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Phoenix Area Office
P.O. Box 7007
Phoenix, Arizona 85011

May 23, 1969

Dear Bob:

I wish this were a letter of congratulations on your reappointment rather than on your retirement.

I believe history will regard your term as Commissioner as a major turning point in the Federal-Indian relationship. There are, I think, three basic reasons why this will be so.

Of primary importance is your enunciation and demonstration of confidence in Indian people which they have so sorely needed over the years. Many of us, for many years, have had this confidence in them but through your leadership our confidence in them has been imparted to and instilled in them.

Also, you have shown that we can, under present law, relax our traditional trustee role so that Indian decision-making is possible. Indian people, having had exposure to involvement and self-determination, will never again be content to allow decisions to be made for them. Having had this exposure they will more readily accept proposed changes in law that may be necessary to assure minimum Bureau participation in decisions affecting them.

A third accomplishment which history will note in assessing your tenure as Commissioner is, the change in emphasis from the Indians' natural resources to their human resources. This, I feel, in years to come will result in lasting and tangible benefits to Indians to a degree we cannot begin to imagine at this point.

Bob, we must all look forward and not to the past -- the work is far from finished and I am sure you will continue your efforts, in what has been your life's work, for a good many years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Wade
W. Wade Head



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Phoenix Area Office
P.O. Box 7007
Phoenix, Arizona 85011

May 23, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Although our relationships since you were appointed Commissioner were not always of the direct contact type, certainly the impact of your presence in this capacity was felt daily in a most beneficial and satisfying way. My assignment to the Area Office coincided almost to the day with your appointment as Commissioner.

Working for the Bureau and association with so many fine people, such as yourself, who comprise this Bureau and represent the goals thereof, has made it the most rewarding experience in my entire career.

Whatever your pursuits are in the future, I sincerely trust you will find them to be rich and rewarding and that you have many years for the continuation of a fruitful and enjoyable life.

Sincerely yours,

Albert Lassiter

Albert Lassiter

2611 Oxford Road
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
May 23, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Dear Bob:

The Anadarko Area Office has informed me of your retirement at the end of this month. This news was received with regret at the loss of your services but also received with the thought of one who deserves the rewards of retirement.

I think of you first as a Haskell Alumnus of whom all haskellites are very proud. Your commencement address at Haskell a few years ago was inspirational and scholarly. Oh yes, I really did enjoy those unusual stories of your escapades while a student.

Your leadership among the Indian people has been outstanding--in fact it has never been equalled. You have blended Bureau experience, Indian heritage, understanding and insight in a manner that has moved the Indian cause forward at a rapid rate.

We hope you plan to pay us a visit whenever you are in this part of the country. Our friends of Indian service days are expected to make frequent use of the guest room.

We are enjoying our Haskell friends and plan to attend many of the school activities.

Best wishes for many happy years ahead..

Most sincerely,



Floyd E. Stayton

Gila River Indian Community

Box 97

Sacaton, Arizona 85247

Tel. 562-3311

May 23, 1969

The Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

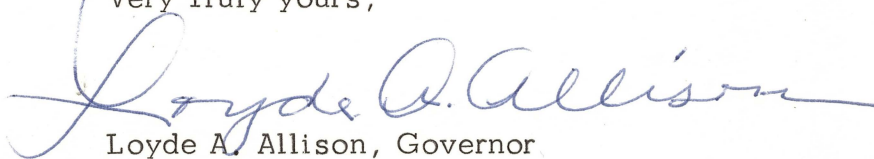
Dear Commissioner:

On Behalf of the Gila River Indian Community Tribal Council, we wish to take this opportunity of expressing our very sincere appreciation to you, for the excellent and appreciative duties which you have performed for the Pimas of the Gila River Indian Community, Sacaton, Arizona.

We, gratefully acknowledge your concern and interest for the problems of our people, as well as those of other tribes; said interests and concern being an invaluable asset to your leadership in Indian Affairs. We only wish that your great service as Commissioner of Indian Affairs could have been extended.

Though you are stepping down from the position which was a pedestal from which your great service for the various tribes was accomplished through concern, interest, identification, and motivation, this august body of the Gila River Indian Community, Sacaton, Arizona bequeaths to you an extended service of human interest, devotion, and dedication in whatever capacity you might serve in the future.

Very Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Loyde A. Allison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Loyde A. Allison, Governor
Gila River Indian Community

The Ute Indian Tribe

FEDERAL CHARTERED CORP.
UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCY

FORT DUCHESNE, UTAH 84026

May 23, 1969



GOVERNING BODY

UINTAH AND OURAY TRIBAL
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

FRANCIS WYASKET, CHAIRMAN
HOMEY J. SECAKUKU, VICE-CHAIRMAN
FRED A. CONETAH, MEMBER
GARY POOWEGUP, MEMBER
WILBUR CUCH, MEMBER
IRENE C. CUCH, MEMBER

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

R. O. CURRY
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
ELWYN L. DUSHANE
ACCOUNTANT-TREASURER
FRED A. CONETAH
EDUCATION
HOMEY J. SECAKUKU
EMPLOYMENT - PERSONNEL
HARVEY NACHEES
SUPERVISOR - DOMESTIC WATER
J. WESLEY JENSEN
SUPERVISOR - MAINTENANCE
ROSS L. IORG
SUPERVISOR - TRIBAL SERVICE
FRANK B. ARROWCHIS
OUTDOOR RECREATION
RUSSELL CUCH
LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISE

Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Commissioner:

The Ute Indian Tribe has learned of your pending retirement on May 30, 1969.

On behalf of all the members of the Ute Indian Tribe, the Uintah and Ouray Tribal Business Committee extends to you their heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the many services you have rendered the Utes.

It was here on our reservation that you started your service to Indians, it was here that you started your family, and we hope it is here that you can visit frequently as time permits.

We wish you every success and our very best wishes in your future life, and may we invite you to visit us often.

Sincerely,

Francis Wyasket
Francis Wyasket
Chairman

rc

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 26 3 36 PM '69

CONFEDERATED TRIBES AND BANDS

Yakima Indian Nation

POST OFFICE BOX 632
TOPPENISH, WASHINGTON - 98948

May 23, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

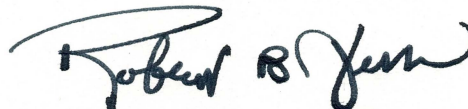
Dear Commissioner Bennett:

The Yakima Indian Nation would like to express their gratitude to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on his retirement.

To dwell on the fact of your distinction as one of the few Indians to become Commissioner of Indian Affairs and your tenure in office as being one of the longest would not pay you full tribute. Your policies, such as industrial development and hearings with the Indian people to develop interest and bring recommendations for the development of the Indian people during your term in office has caused the majority of Tribal leaders to try to retain you as our Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Need we say more?

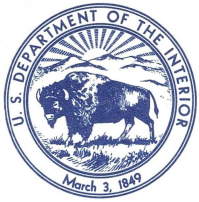
We would like to close by sending you our sincere "thanks" and

Best regards,



Robert B. Jim, Chairman,
Yakima Tribal Council

100
MAY 26 1969
RECEIVED
WASHINGTON, D. C.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

May 23, 1969

Dear Bob,

Sig-go-lee Gaz-za How-äh snig-gee-la

It has been a real pleasure for me to watch your accomplishments as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I sincerely believe that you have done more to get Indians involved in their own destiny and started in the right direction than any other Commissioner of Indian Affairs I have known.

If you were my own brother, I could not be more proud of you.

I wish you much success in your future endeavors, or if it be retirement, a long and happy one.

Sincerely,

A Fellow Oneida

8213 Old Court House Road
Vienna, Virginia 22180

May 23, 1969

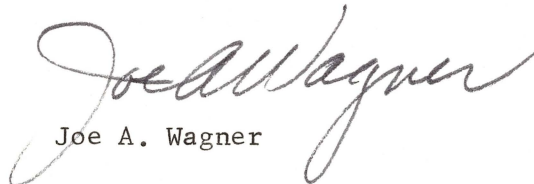
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Bob:

On my arrival at Ft. Duchesne in late 1939, many of the Ute's asked if I knew Bob Bennett. The Ute's are proud of your accomplishments. It was about a decade later before I did have the opportunity of meeting you.

It has been a pleasure to work with and for you. I hope that you and Mrs. Bennett in your next endeavor will have the satisfaction of accomplishment that has been milestones in your government career.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe A. Wagner". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent. The ink is dark and the background is slightly textured.

Joe A. Wagner



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 23, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, NW.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob and Cleota:

Just a short note wishing you much success and happiness as you approach retirement. We say approach, because we know that you will continue to be a driving force and inspiration to both Indian and non-Indian peoples for many years to come.

It has been our privilege to have been able to work under your leadership in Alaska, Oregon and the Washington Office.

During all of your busy times ahead, don't forget to take time out to have fun and relax just a bit.

It is with pride we can say we know you both professionally and personally.

Best wishes,

Ray + Mavis
THE SORENSENS

1018 Maple Avenue, East,
Vienna, Virginia 22180,
May 23, 1969.

Mr. Robert L. Bennett,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

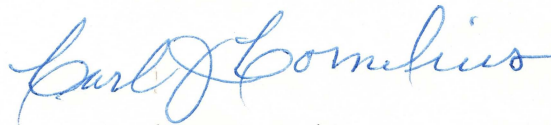
I am not one of those literary geniuses, so this will be one of the "grass roots" letters you will have among your collection of well-wishers.

You and Mrs. Bennett have the best wishes of Louise and myself for many pleasant years of retirement. I am sure the leadership and philosophies you have given the Indian people will continue to grow and will strongly influence their future.

I have always enjoyed our many years of association in the Bureau, including the ups and downs. Yes, I even clearly recall our haste one time, somewhat inadvertently, in Chicago on a return jaunt to Haskell.

Notwithstanding your retirement from the Bureau, we shall look forward to seeing you from time to time.

Sincerely,



Carl J. Cornelius

May 26, 1969

Dear Bob:

When one has "captained" the good ship "BIA" as you have, and has steered it through many troubled waters, it is hard for an "old salt" to express his appreciation of your good work. It is more difficult to put down on paper how you will be missed by the "crew."

You will be missed, Bob, that's for sure.

It is a compensating fact that the many wise policies you had an influential hand in promulgating will remain. The "rough water" temporarily encountered on the "recent voyage" will soon abate and the calm of the past will again prevail. We can then record the following in the ship's log.

"We enjoyed to the utmost our passage on the ship with you. We who remain to carry on as deckhands are better able to do so because of the fine steerage you so willingly gave." But the good ship "BIA", in the future as in the past, will -

"Heave . . .
Like a mighty ship in pain,
Facing the tempest with
struggle and strain."
(Browning)

Good luck, Bob!

Fert Allen



IN REPLY REFER TO:

Administration

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCY
FORT DUCHESNE, UTAH 84026

May 26, 1969



VIA AIR MAIL

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

I know that it must be with mixed emotions that you now leave your long career with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Really though, you are not leaving, for the impact you have made for the well-being of Indians throughout the United States will be with us for a long, long time. Thousands of Indians will, in generations yet to come, live better because of the things you have been able to accomplish. Truly, there can be no greater satisfaction to you than this.

June and I consider ourselves as two of your many, many friends throughout the Bureau. I will personally always be proud that it was you who selected me to work with the Bureau. Your expression of trust and faith in me that long time ago has always been one of the reasons why I have felt compelled to try to do an exceptionally good job for the Indian folks wherever I have worked.

I hope we will see each other again. I wish you and your family the very best of success as you pick up new interests in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Stanley D. Lyman
Superintendent

Haskell Institute
Lawrence, Kansas
May 26, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

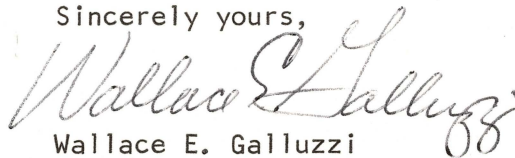
Dear Mr. Bennett:

We would like to take this means of expressing our personal appreciation, as well as Haskell Institute's appreciation, for your interest and services to our school. It is with deep regret that we see you leaving the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Our long association with you as a fellow employee in the Aberdeen Area and as one of your school administrators during your tour as Commissioner of Indian Affairs has caused us to have a deep respect for your ability as a professional person and your interest and concern for your fellow employees and the Indian people we are trying to serve.

Under separate cover, we are sending you a copy of this year's Indian Leader. We hope that you enjoy it and that when you embark on a new career, it will be productive and enjoyable. We know that your contributions to the Bureau of Indian Affairs will be felt for a long time and that Indian people will benefit and appreciate them.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wallace E. Galluzzi". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Wallace" being more prominent than the last name "Galluzzi".

Wallace E. Galluzzi
Superintendent

Distinguished Alumnus
Statement of Appreciation

Haskell Institute

In recognition of Robert L. Bennett for reflecting the potential of Indian leadership and success, for continued and devoted service to Indian people, for outstanding contributions to the Indian way of life, and for exemplifying the highest traditions of this institution, Haskell presents this statement of appreciation.

Wallace S. Selinger
SUPERINTENDENT

May 26, 1969
DATE

Karl H. Talawyma
PRESIDENT, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

HEALTH SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

7915 EASTERN AVENUE

SILVER SPRING, MD. 20910

May 26, 1969

REFER TO:

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

Dear Bob:

How does one find words that can adequately convey the sense of loss one feels upon learning that a fellow co-worker and a cherished personal friend, as well as program friend, is leaving the Federal service? This is exactly the dilemma I found myself in when word of your retirement reached our office.

I can sincerely say, Bob, that it has been a real pleasure to work with you both in the field and in headquarters. There has never been a time when we needed your advice and guidance in our Indian Health pursuits that you failed to share your expertise with us. I think you will agree that our common goal to improve the lot of the Indian people is beginning to prove fruitful. Much of this success can be contributed to your many years of outstanding leadership and dedication to the cause of your people. Their reluctance to see you leave is shared by many others, myself included, who recognize the contributions you have already made and who are hopeful that we may continue to call upon you in the future when we again need the wisdom of your counselling.

On behalf of the Indian Health Service, I should like to take this occasion to express our deep appreciation for your cooperation and assistance and to wish you the utmost success and happiness in your future endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

E. S. Rabeau, M.D.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director, Indian Health Service

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue, NW.
Washington, D. C. 20242

MRS. HELEN L. PETERSON

718 CORONA STREET — DENVER, COLORADO 80218

May 27, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

In the 1950's, when it was unpopular for BIA personnel to cooperate with Indian organization, there was a conscientious, able young Indian career man in the Bureau who persisted in doing all that he knew to be right and helpful for Indians --without demanding attention to himself, I might add. He performed his duties for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in a superior way and no one ever questioned his loyalty to his employer. In addition, at the meetings of the National Congress of American Indians, there always appeared among the registrants, the name of Robert L. Bennett, Oneida. But he didn't just merely register. During conventions (and between conventions!) he accepted and discharged duties that were essential to the organization even when they were not glamorous. Robert L. Bennett never asked that favors be returned; he never sought to promote himself; he never "demanded."

For your selfless devotion, unswerving loyalty to the Indian cause, for your unfailing good humor, for the symbol you are to--and of--the Indian people, I admire and respect you, Bob. This seems a good time to put this in writing.

Sincerely,

Helen L. Peterson

AMERICAN INDIAN DEVELOPMENT, INC.

500 Zook Building, 431 West Colfax Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80204

May 27, 1969



PRESIDENT

Royal B. Hassrick

VICE PRESIDENT

Charles E. Trimble

Oglala Sioux

SECRETARY-TREASURER

F. McLaughlin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Helen L. Peterson

Oglala Sioux

LEGAL COUNSEL

Jane W. McLaughlin

William T. McGlone

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

What a tribute to you that we feel we can call you "Bob" as we write you on the warm, personal occasion of the banquet marking your departure from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Each one of us on the board and staff of American Indian Development sends you congratulations on a career in the Bureau of Indian Affairs culminating in the Commissionership -- all handled superbly!

We have appreciated most, perhaps, the quality and extent of your availability to Indians. The respect, understanding, and patience you demonstrated as you listened to Indians --and heard them-- are known and commended.

No Indian Commissioner has served in times that were any more confused for Indians, or troubled for the nation. Lack of clear purpose and issues is surely more difficult to deal with than external threats. Yet, your steadiness in pursuing proven methods together with your open mindedness to consider new ideas were productive of good results.

When Indian confidence and cooperation are so utterly essential for Indian progress, and when widespread, enthusiastic support has been made so abundantly clear, it is incredible that any national political administration could even consider permitting you to leave! We are happy to hear, however, that you will continue to serve in the field of Indian affairs, and we are confident that it will be in a role which will give you greater freedom and opportunity to be of service to the Indian people.

Our heartiest good wishes!

Sincerely,

Royal B. Hassrick

Royal B. Hassrick
President

Contributions Deductible for Income Tax Purposes

MEMBERS

Clarence Acoya
Laguna Pueblo

Dr. L. Loring Brock

Hon. Joseph R. Garry
Coeur d'Alene

Henry Hough

Wanda Kanes
Sac and Fox

Elizabeth W. Morgan

John C. Rainer
Taos Pueblo

Richard Tallbull
Southern Cheyenne

Eugene Trimble
Oglala Sioux



UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE SEMINAR CENTER

2440 BANCROFT WAY, ROOM 301
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94704

May 27, 1969

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

JUN 2 1 25 PM '69

100
[
Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242
L

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

The class and I send our sincere appreciation for the meetings you held with us.

Our consensus is that they were educational, stimulating, and reflected much wisdom, knowledge and perception. We feel the discussions have much universal application for a great number of problems confronting the American society.

We thank you and send you our warm regards and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely yours,

Dick Bagshaw

Cradoc L. Bagshaw
Associate Director

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 28, 1969

9993

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Commissioner Bennett:

Your letter of May 26 has arrived and I cannot begin to tell you how sorry I am that you are leaving the Bureau of Indian Affairs. You have been reflective of some of the finest and the most constructive thinking possible for our Indian programs during your tenure. All of us on the Committee have enjoyed working with you. It is with keenest disappointment that I and other members of the committee see you leave.

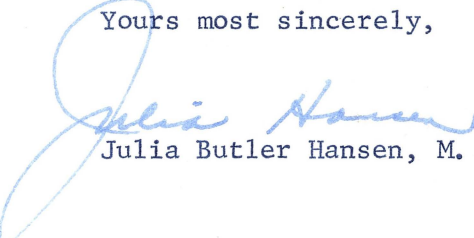
I am deeply sorry and a little incensed that our program of Indian Affairs has been automatically shoved into the category of partisan politics. It has no place there. I have withstood efforts in my own party to make it partisan and I expected that those who talked continuously of good government in the context of a bipartisan approach to one of America's great problems would do the same.

I am sure as you leave that this will not be the last time that I or other members of the Committee will see you, for your deep interest and your great knowledge of Indian Affairs make it important to Indian progress and growth that you continue to serve these wonderful people.

You have all my best wishes for the future and my deepest appreciation for the kind of cooperation you have given and program you have been responsible for in a very difficult period when funds were so curtailed for other priorities.

With my warmest personal regards, I am,

Yours most sincerely,



Julia Butler Hansen, M. C.

JBH:Ter1

cc: Under Secretary of Interior
Russell Train



STATE OF IDAHO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BOISE

DON SAMUELSON
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUN 3 10 04 AM '69

May 28, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Commissioner:

Your gracious letter was deeply appreciated, and will always be a reminder to me of the brilliant and effective job you did as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

I recall our personal associations and contacts with deep pleasure and respect, and feel a sense of regret that you will no longer be directing the affairs of the Bureau.

Please accept warmest best wishes for the future. There will always be a special welcome mat out for you if your travels bring you to Boise and Idaho.

Sincerely,

DON SAMUELSON
GOVERNOR

DS:be



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 28, 1969

Hon. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Mr. Commissioner:

Writing is my profession but the writing of this letter is one of the most difficult tasks I have ever undertaken.

I find it hard to select the words to attempt to convey in the coldness of black letters on white paper my appreciation of these two years of close association with you.

The Indian Americans are losing from official Federal life their most understanding, knowledgeable and outspoken advocate but I find some consolation in knowing of your intent to continue an active interest in and devotion to betterment of American Indians. Knowing you, nothing else could be expected.

I have learned more about American Indians through my relationship with you than I had gleaned in more than 40 years in newspaper work, and with this education has also come the realization of the inspiration you personally have given to so many Indian leaders. The virtual unanimous support of Indian leadership was a result of your wise conduct of BIA activities along new policy lines.

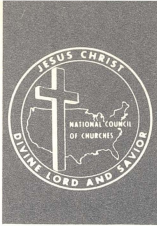
Thank you for your counsel and guidance.

Best wishes to you and Mrs. Bennett and the other members of your family, some of whom I have met and cooperated with in trying to inform the uninformed of facts concerning Federal activities to benefit Indians.

The Office of Public Information staff joins me in these good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

W. Joynes Macfarlan
Chief, Office of Public Information



department of social justice

national council of the churches of christ in the u.s.a.

475 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10027

telephone: 870-2297

ARTHUR S. FLEMMING, president

R. H. EDWIN ESPY, general secretary

REV. E. RUSSELL CARTER

DIRECTOR FOR SPECIAL MINISTRIES

May 28, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

Your letter of May 26 makes me very sad, as I am sure is true of the multitude of our friends who hold you in the highest possible regard, both as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and as a man of integrity and dedication.

While I know there must be the touch of personal disappointment in the termination of your relationship as Commissioner, you must carry with you the priceless conviction you have served exceedingly well and have so well earned the status of one of the best.

You have meant much to us in the Churches. We knew you could be counted on and your insights and good sense served well in keeping us on course.

I wish you all things good, Bob, and sincerely hope our paths will continue to cross.

Sincerely,

E. Russell Carter

ERC:hv





IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
INDIAN AFFAIRS DATA CENTER
500 GOLD AVENUE, S.W.
P. O. BOX 2026
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87103

MAY 28 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Bob:

As your many years of service to the Government of the United States and the Indians of America draws to a close, I should like to express my appreciation for having had the opportunity to work for and with you, in Alaska and here at Albuquerque.

I join your many friends and associates throughout the country in wishing you the best in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A. W. Bartlett

He delighted his Worcester flock and won their affection with his corn-cob pipe, his knowledge of the cartoon character Charlie Brown, his teas for unwed mothers, his love of music, his New England frugality and his Boston-brogued charm.

But he also became known as a perceptive businessman in his dealings to build a new hospital and to rebuild a tornadoed college. His debating background always kept him garnering the last word.

Since he came to Pittsburgh—on St. Patrick's Day—he has been a consistent newsmaker, more for himself than his office.

Almost immediately he established a list of firsts.

He was the first Catholic bishop to visit the County Workhouse in its 93-year history and confirmed 21 inmates who were serving sentences on everything from murder to morals charges.

He was the first Catholic prelate to speak before a Methodist general conference in the 226 years of Methodism. And later he became the first Catholic bishop to speak at a Lutheran church convention in America.

He made 41 round trips to the Rome sessions of the Second Vatican Council where he served on the principal theological commission.

When he got back he conducted a night course to explain the council's declarations.

He still thinks the ideas of the historic council have not yet filtered down to all the people. He shrugs that "you can't expect instantaneous results from something that far reaching."

But he also adds, "Former councils lacked the means to communicate. It used to be hard to get the news. Now it's hard to get the news straight."

He says he means the news media present reactions to the news so fast that "before the real issues are clear, the bonfires have started."

The black-haired, big-eyed cardinal has consistently impressed others with his many interests.

Historians marvel at his collection of St. Joan of Arc artifacts, valued at well over \$70,000 and the largest personal collection in the country.

He speaks fluent Italian and French and keeps informed on what's happening in the world—a throwback to his early newspaper days.

Asked to sum up Vatican II, an almost all-consuming interest for a long while, he said: "The 19th or 20th bishop of Pittsburgh, probably black, will say, I think, that we did a reasonably good job. It is a planting. It will take many years of weeding and cultivating before reaping a harvest."

He has been outspoken on social issues.

In 1966 he called for a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam. He refused to talk about race unless it was the "human race." He said Pope Paul VI gained a "heroic stature" for his stand against birth control. He told organized labor it had to fight for social justice.

In Pittsburgh too he crusaded against the name "morals court," saying it was being used to try other offenses and was ruining reputations. He was successful in getting it changed.

He has waged a consistent fight against alcoholism and has backed proposals helping alcoholics' rehabilitation.

As bishop he banned uniform apparel for children receiving their first communion and ordered a 10 per cent tithe on diocesan collections for "neighbors in need."

Cardinal Wright's soaring kite has a lengthy trailstring of honorary degrees and merit citations.

His hard-driving demands are sometimes hard on his staff and he can be inflexible in how he wants things done.

But John Joseph Cardinal Wright is also a kind man. The men and women who have known him the longest love him—perhaps the best testimonial of all.

The key to Cardinal Wright may be in one statement he made in a recent interview. "I love the Catholic Church as I love nothing else," he said earnestly. "I don't think of the Church as an organization—an institution. To me it's the personal presence of Christ in history."

"I see all truth and all faiths related to the Church and I think the Church has never been more powerful, more influential in the world. The pope is a symbol of permanence and stability in the midst of chaos."

This is a man who has stacked all the zeal and energy and devotion most men put into family or a career or making money into his religion without becoming a fanatic.

He is getting ready now to leave Pittsburgh. On the day he learned Pope Paul named him a cardinal, he said, "I'd spend the rest of my life in Pittsburgh." But he was quick to add, "But I'm ready to go wherever the pope wants me. We priests accept our assignments without knowing much about them."

But he's looking forward to the challenges and opportunities of Rome as he has always looked forward to every big step in his life.

In his words, "You have to keep saying yes or you're over the hill."

And John Joseph Cardinal Wright is a church man who isn't ready to start slipping down the other side.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT TO RETIRE

HON. JULIA BUTLER HANSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 27, 1969

Mrs. HANSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, a notable career in Federal Government service comes to a close this coming Saturday. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, will retire after 36 years, largely in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Commissioner Bennett is an Indian and a graduate of the respected Haskell Institute at Lawrence, Kans. He progressed through ranks of the BIA to become a skilled and visionary Commissioner.

The Commissioner recently delivered a speech at Dartmouth College where he told of the challenges and achievements of Indians.

I include the text of his address in the RECORD:

CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE EDUCATION OF AMERICAN INDIANS

It might be said that we are celebrating two events today—not only the 200th anniversary of Dartmouth College, but also the revival, during the 1960's, of public concern for the educational well-being of American Indian youth. Because Dartmouth was founded with a primary purpose of providing higher education for Indians, I am most gratified to have this distinguished forum to discuss publicly those aspects of Indian education which particularly require the attention groups such as this.

Since both Dartmouth and the American Indians pre-date the American Republic itself, it is plain that both possess a remarkable ability to adjust to the ever-changing shape and pace of America's cultural, social and political life. In our time, however, those changes seem to be coming so swiftly and so irrevocably that we are all put to test to maintain the socio-political equilibrium. Dartmouth, like other educational institutions, is not immune from the pressure. Nor

are the Indian citizenry of this Nation. I am convinced that the responses of the great colleges like Dartmouth to the needs of people such as Indians will be a significant factor in determining the form and substance of the new American society.

Although Indians are a very small minority in this country—the Indian population is well under a million—there is considerable new political action taking place among the Indian communities. For more than a hundred years Indians had remained the stolid and silent prototypes of what the white man alleged they were. But, today, Indian young people have moved in upon the fronts of community action. The Indian warrior today is fighting his great battle on the social level. He has abandoned the arrow and the musket for books and public platforms.

The transition from obscurity to a conspicuous role in contemporary political affairs has not been an easy one for the new generation of Indian youth. It has been accompanied by some confusion as to goals, some hostility to the dominant society, and a great deal of defensiveness in the way Indians see themselves. These are traits that characterize many of the social activists in this country today; but in the Indian they are often more acute because the culture gap between Indians and other Americans is wide and deep.

There are fundamental differences, however, between Indian social action and some of the current social movements by other groups. Indian youth are motivated by the desire to stabilize their communities, not disrupt them; to make them more economically viable rather than more dependent upon government largesse. They are turning to the government for increasing help but are rejecting the paternalism that was the core of the special federal-Indian relationship for so many decades.

"We are building, not burning," is the way one youthful Indian leader puts it. It is indeed true. From Florida to Alaska, there are evidences that building is going on in Indian communities. Not merely construction of facilities, like homes and schools and water and power lines and roads. Community spirit is building up, too. The voices of the Indian people are beginning to be heard on matters of resources development, environmental control, and education of their children.

Such constructive activities as these can be sustained only through an educated leadership. Indians understand the tremendous importance to themselves of quality education and equality of educational opportunity. The various tribes invest about \$20 million annually in college scholarships; and during the past three years that I have served as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs contributed another \$10 million for higher education aid.

The vast majority of young Indian men and women today are seeking not to close the gates of the colleges, but to force open gates to institutions that have hitherto had few if any Indians among the student ranks.

Even so, only about 20 percent of the Indian college age population continues schooling beyond high school, whereas the national rate exceeds 40 percent. There are serious blocks to their success in school and college—financial need being one, but the culture gap being an even greater obstacle. For this reason, the educational needs of American Indians must necessarily be viewed from the perspective of the American Indian culture, and the special education requirements it imposes upon our schools.

This is the area in which Dartmouth College could, with singular appropriateness, assume a leading role in broadening educational opportunities for Indians. What could be more in keeping with the spirit of this 200th anniversary celebration than to sponsor a nationwide effort to develop educational programs that accommodate to the needs of Indian students? The focus is needed

equally at the college preparatory and the college levels.

Dartmouth is already moving in such a direction. I commend to the attention of all communities the program called A.B.C.—“A Better Chance.” It is a program that works with maximum effectiveness when a high school and a college both participate. Dartmouth is participating in A.B.C. with the town of Hartford, Vermont, situated across the Connecticut River from Dartmouth's site in Hanover, New Hampshire. Hartford has opened its high school—and, more than that, its heart—to educationally and socially disadvantaged youngsters from many parts of the country. This year Hartford is providing schooling, board and room, for ten Indian boys, and Dartmouth is providing tutorial services needed by those boys to qualify them for entrance into the College.

Dr. McGean, Secretary of the College—and to whom I am indebted for the invitation to be the speaker at this bicentennial—informs me that the townspeople of Columbia are also eager to launch an A.B.C. program. I hope it will be possible. There would be no more fitting locale than here, where Dartmouth's founder, Dr. Wheelock, began his teaching services to Indians as head of Moor's Charity School more than two centuries ago.

The need for charity is hardly less today than it was in Dr. Wheelock's day. I do not mean charity in the narrow sense that implies an obligation of the more affluent to provide for the poor, but charity in the broad sense of kindness and understanding. These are the qualities that Indian students need most desperately to feel within the school environment; because when they are absent the relevance of education declines precipitously for them. This is a cultural response on their part which cannot be ignored in our desire to stimulate the intellectual response.

Indians are frustrated by the tendency of most other Americans either to romanticize and stylize them on the one hand, or, on the other, to minimize their place in our society. Even after 200 years, and in spite of the purposeful efforts of many Indian leaders today to be involved with the non-Indian world, most Indians are still a people apart, still strangers in their own land.

Even while adopting the outward aspects of modern American life, Indians today, as a whole, are probably less fully attuned to the non-Indian lifeway than many of them were in the early part of the last Century. Some of the Eastern tribes in those days assumed with ease and great success such European culture add-ons as systematic farming and formal schooling.

Back in the days when Oklahoma was Indian Territory, Indian groups operated schools and colleges that later formed the core of the State's public school system. This kind of leadership in education on the part of Indians has been absent for many, many years, except in individual instances. It is only now beginning to reappear, currently in the form of Indian demands for control of elementary and secondary schools serving their children. The new interest in education is prompted by a sense of frustration with the average school program that ignores the Indian cultural background.

Indians today feel threatened by the pressures now forcing total assimilation, because they fear the loss of their self-identity. Being Indian and being aware of it sustained them during years of oppression. They challenge the motives of those who would make them less Indian. They seek from education the ability to be both Americans and Indians. An either/or choice is intolerable to them. Because Indian history, and Indian contributions to the building of this Nation, are an integral part of our national history, Indians ask that these facts be fully

acknowledged within the framework of our educational programs. Only when other Americans recognize the full significance of the Indian role in the making of the nation will the Indian people of today be accorded their rightful place of dignity and social acceptance within the American ecumene.

The Indian's determination to retain his identity has contributed to a social phenomenon in modern America—the revival of tribalism. To be sure, today's tribalism has little in common with primitive tribalism, other than to retain remnants of the religious orientation of the Indian society. Today's tribal structures are usually modeled upon American governmental forms, and the objectives and services of tribal governments are, broadly speaking, comparable to those of county governments. The new tribalism is multi-ethnic in character, as is the Indian culture itself. Indian lifeways have been modified by the Spanish horse and Spanish weaving and by the industrious, acquisitive English mores. They have also been modified by the trade and agriculture schools of the 19th and early 20th Centuries, and by commercialized farming and motorized deep-sea fishing; by World War II and the enlistments of thousands of young Indian men; by air transportation and rocketry. Native Alaskans man the defense early warning system on the Arctic, Navajos and others assemble intricate electronic devices for space exploration, and the tribes are turning to computers to help keep account of their natural resources.

But the new Indian doesn't always feel comfortable in his new role. The tenor of Indian thinking is well expressed by a student who recently graduated from the federal Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. He composed a brief piece of poetry that is memorable to me not alone because it demonstrates literary artistry but also because of its revealing undertone of bravado. It goes like this:

“We shall learn all these devices the white man has.

“We shall handle his tools for ourselves.

“We shall master his machinery and his inventions, his skills, his medicine, his planning;

“But we'll retain our beauty.

“And still be Indian.”

Some Indians, like myself, walk always in two worlds, trying to maintain the perspectives of both and to draw unto ourselves the best of both. This is not always done with ease, yet it is the course that must be walked by all American Indian children growing up today. It will be harder for them than it was for me, because the gap between the traditional Indian lifeway and the new technological society is far greater than was the gap between rural and city life in the earlier part of this Century. Some of the traits and values that are the very core of contemporary American society are totally alien to their Indian upbringing. They must learn to live by the new code, yet their heritage cautions them against foolishly abandoning the basic values of the old.

To be sure, thousands upon thousands of Indians have already become a part of present-day city and suburban American life. But many thousands more remain in their traditional home environs, on or near their reserved lands. They live in a sub-culture which is too often made up of the worst aspects of American civilization mitigated only by remnants of a simpler and more orderly lifeway. Poverty is the common chord shared by nearly all rural Indians today. The economic depression of the more isolated communities is exceeded only by the atmosphere of social depression. These are the conditions that today's Indian leadership is trying to combat.

From such rural environments comes the booming Indian population. Seventy-five

percent of today's Indians is under the age of 25 years!

These are the young people for whom I have such great concern. These young people are the hope for rebuilding the Indian-owned lands and for the making of a new Indian culture that can live compatibly and coequally with the whole American community.

These Indian youth are usually very sensitive—sometimes hyper-sensitive—to the differences between themselves and others. They tend to deal with slights, real or imagined, by snubbing the offender forever. This is a form of censure that derives from the Indian culture; but outside the Indian culture it has the unfortunate effect of exhausting the patience and goodwill of many non-Indians. Such niceties of social behavior point up the culture difference between Indians and other Americans.

Although Indian students are attending colleges and universities today in unprecedented numbers, many find the experience an endurance test that exceeds their capacity. Very few institutions—either secondary or collegiate—have attempted seriously to help them through the adjustment period. They need academic help to enable them to progress in the classrooms, and they need social help in accommodating to the alien patterns of student life.

Most high schools, and colleges as well, tend to polarize rather than synthesize the cultural differences between Indian students and others. Perhaps this is a large part of the reason why so few Indians are to be found today in colleges like Dartmouth.

It may also be argued, of course, that Indians are not in the Ivy League because there are no longer many Indians in the East. It is true that most tribes, including those for whom Dartmouth was founded, were long ago moved westward. They generally tend today to think of themselves as westerners and to look only to western schools for their education. Even my own people, the Oneidas, to whom upstate New York was homeland, are now very much a part of the Wisconsin scene.

Indian students today are found predominantly in schools in the west—in the State universities and land grant colleges; and in such places as Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, or Bacone College in Oklahoma, both of which were, like Dartmouth, founded largely for purposes of providing higher education for Indians. A few institutions in the West, most notably thus far in Arizona and New Mexico, have established special centers for furtherance of Indian affairs studies. The University of New Mexico has established a special program in law studies for American Indians, to encourage the entrance of more Indians into the legal profession. Arizona State University and the University of Arizona both encourage Indians to enter the teaching profession and are developing new programs for teachers of Indian children which include the teaching of English as a second language and the teaching of Indian history.

Indians have not found a like degree of interest and concern in the institutions located in more easterly parts of the country. I wish a more intensive effort could be made to attract Indians to schools outside their own regions because the ultimate effect would be to give tremendous new breadth to Indian thinking and to Indian understanding of their own country.

It is not enough to offer scholarships, grants and loans to the Indian students who are the cream of graduating classes of the better high schools and academies. My concern is that the less well academically and socially prepared have an opportunity to broaden their backgrounds so that they, too, can compete successfully in such academic environments as Dartmouth offers.

They need such programs as A.B.C. They need, also, programs such as the transitional year that Yale has instituted. I have no doubts about the ultimate abilities of Indian children to perform as capably as any others in the classrooms. In fact, in the earlier elementary years they do somewhat better than average. The slump comes in the early 'teens, when chronic deficiencies in mastering the English language are compounded by chronic feelings of social frustration.

Within the school environment, whether it be a public high school or a private academy or a college, Indian students need to be re-assured that they truly belong within the American society. They need to know that their teachers and their peers hold them in regard for their own worth as individuals. It is not enough to pay them passing tribute because they are the First Americans; they ask to be recognized as a vital part of the fabric of America today.

What Indian youth hope to find in school is the experience of achievement that will sustain them and help obliterate the feeling of being born losers that engulfed their parents and their grandparents.

I believe my observations are sufficient to suggest ways in which the educational institutions of this country can help Indians toward the feeling and the reality of achievement.

As for the general public, typified by the townspeople of Columbia, Connecticut, there are other ways to help. The A.B.C. program is one. Your continuing public awareness and active interest in Indian education is another.

Your tax dollars are contributing to the education of about 100,000 or more Indian youngsters in public high schools throughout the country. Federal aid is available to those schools, often to a greater extent than it is employed, to provide the special language and counseling and related supplementary education services that many Indians require. You can help assure that funds are used more effectively for Indians in public schools.

Your tax dollars are also contributing to the education of about 50,000 Indian youngsters in the federal day and boarding schools that serve Indians who cannot attend public schools—either because none are available or because their needs are such that they require supplementary services not provided by their public schools. Federal boarding schools today operate on a per capita student budget of about \$1,650 annually—half the amount expended in the operation of a first-rate private preparatory school. We cannot do justice to Indian youth on such a pennypinching scale. The schools need expert counselors and corps of teacher specialists in all fields—the price for which comes high, and the competition for which is usually won by the affluent and progressive high school systems in more urban areas.

Where there is the will, a way can usually be devised. Indian youth today have the will to build a better world for themselves and their people. You, the public, can help pave the way, by being informed and concerned. I have confidence that the educational community of America—and the general public—will respond to the yearning and the need of Indian young people and pave the way for more of them to move out of the shadows of limited educational opportunity. When all of them have access to the best in education this country has to offer, and the most they can absorb, then the Indian people will no longer feel like strangers in their own land.

In any way that I can help, I shall always do so to the ultimate of my own ability and influence, for the problem of making quality education available to Indian children is always the matter of uppermost concern to me.

In a sense, this is my valedictory. At the end of this month, I plan to withdraw from my position as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. I shall not, however, withdraw from active participation in efforts to foster the betterment of the Indian citizenry of this country. For most of the 35 years I have given to public service, the service has been in the area of Indian affairs. It has been my life—and my life interest will go on. Perhaps, with release from the administrative responsibilities, will come the ability to be more active within the general community—and so I look forward to closer contact with interested people such as yourselves.

And, because old Indians never die, I look forward to the next 200 years of friendship with Dartmouth.

SEX EDUCATION—PARENTS TAKE ACTION

HON. JOHN R. RARICK

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 27, 1969

Mr. RARICK. Mr. Speaker, the battle by concerned parents to stop immorality and perversion from entering their schools is now nationwide.

The unfortunate situation is that in most States instead of the sex panderers seeking to legitimize their nefarious design on youth they have been able to sneak into the education field and force the outraged parents to come to the defense of their children by restricting and outlawing the pornographic education.

It is unfortunate that many of these concerned parents have not yet followed the example of those who brought suit in the name of religious freedom under the Constitution to protect their children from God in the schools. Further, in many States it is a criminal offense for anyone to contribute to the delinquency of a minor child, even in the guise of "education."

Clearly the extremists in the field of perverting the minds of our youth under the guise of sex education programs have disturbed a hornet's nest and it is probably only a matter of time until criminal actions and other litigation arises. And I feel confident that once this evil monster is brought out into the open with all of its unwholesome and unnatural objectives it will be completely removed from any program of compulsory education.

Mr. Speaker, I include, following my remarks, a resolution from the Missourians for National Security, a letter from Mrs. Frances H. Purcell, of Rock Island, Ill., and a news clipping from the local paper.

The courts were used to get God out of schools—surely the courts can be used to get compulsory pornography out.

The material referred to follows:

St. Louis, Mo.,

May 17, 1969.

HON. JOHN R. RARICK,
House of Representatives,
House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

MY DEAR MR. RARICK: For what assistance it may be worth to you in connection with

your House Resolution 329, there follows the text of a resolution adopted by Missourians for National Security:

"Whereas Missourians for National Security have become aware of a massive drive to establish compulsory and detailed sex education in the public schools of our Nation beginning with kindergarten pupils, such drive primarily being led by SIECUS, and

"Whereas we approve the teaching of physical hygiene and proper health habits as well as biological facts at suitable ages, we are unalterably opposed to the promotion of the "new morality" regarding intersexual relations, perversions, and/or other "situation ethics" as expounded by SIECUS in the kindergarten or elementary grades, and

"Whereas we are in accord with Psychiatrist William McGrath, M.D., of Phoenix, Arizona, who stated 'Premature interest in sex is unnatural and will arrest or distort the development of the personality. Sex education should not be foisted upon children; should not begin in the grade schools. Anyone who would deliberately arouse the child's curiosity or stimulate his unready mind to troubled sex preoccupations ought to have a millstone tied around his neck and be cast into the sea,' therefore, be it

"Resolved, That Missourians for National Security, by unanimous vote, go on record in full support of House Resolution 329, which would establish a ten-man committee to conduct a thorough and penetrating investigation into the operations and tax-exempt status of SIECUS."

Sincerely,

HOWARD ROBB,
Chairman, Missourians for National Security.

ROCK ISLAND, ILL.,

May 15, 1969.

Attorney General JOHN N. MITCHELL,
U.S. Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL MITCHELL: Sex education courses have been introduced into the curriculum of the State of Illinois School District #41, County of Rock Island, City of Rock Island, public schools.

These sex education courses and the instructional material used in said courses has been approved by the office of the Superintendent of Education and the Board of Education of said public school district.

Staff members of the Superintendent of Education Office and duly elected School Board of Education members have publicly stated that the sex education courses are permissive; that parents of minor children are informed of the content of the instructional material being used in sex education courses; that they are permitted to view all audio-visual, visual aid and textbook material used in the sex education course before any part of it is used in the instruction of their minor child.

These same persons have publicly stated that no Religious Morality Guidelines are taught, nor can they be, since by law, No Religion can be taught in public schools.

Having given careful consideration to the above statements, I, Frances H. Purcell, citizen of the United States of America, State of Illinois, County of Rock Island, City of Rock Island, do herewith petition the Attorney General of these United States for a redress of grievances in behalf of my minor child, Mildred E. Lawrence, for the following reasons:

(1) I was not afforded the opportunity to preview ALL sex education instructional material being used in the eleventh grade of the Rock Island Senior High School before said material was taught my minor child, a duly enrolled student of said grade in said school.

(2) I did not receive a notice from any member of the Rock Island Senior High

STATE OF MICHIGAN



~~GEORGE ROMNEY~~, Governor
William G. Milliken

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

R. BERNARD HOUSTON, Director

COMMISSION ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

~~246 S. Main St.~~
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783
Telephone: 906 635-5021

213 West Spruce St.
P.O. Box 566

May 29, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Your letter of May 26, 1969 is acknowledged.

Your kind comments have been noted and please be assured they are all appreciated.

The sociological issues that involve our people continue to haunt us. While great strides to ameliorate the existing socio-economic maladjustments have been accomplished, the fact remains intact that our Indians remain within the influential spheres of the detrimental impact of discrimination and prejudice. It has been my thought that an Indian occupying the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs represented the pinnacle insofar as a sympathetic realization of the depth and breadth of existing problems are concerned.

In a momentary departure from my official position and capacity, I wish to state that our Indians will again be subjected to the inevitable period of policy readjustments. This facet of our political ironies have plagued our Indian people for years untold.

While we face the realities that are associated with a political transition, may we wish you the best as you tread the pathways of a new future.

With kind personal regards,

Herman E. Cameron, Director
Commission on Indian Affairs



Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

29 May 1969

PRESIDENT:

EARL OLD PERSON
TRIBAL COUNCIL
BLACKFEET TRIBE
BROWNING, MONTANA

1ST VICE PRESIDENT:

JAMES ELY
TRIBAL COUNCIL
SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
RONAN, MONTANA

2ND VICE PRESIDENT:

ROBERT B. JIM
TRIBAL COUNCIL
YAKIMA TRIBE
TOPPENISH, WASHINGTON

3RD VICE PRESIDENT:

ALEX SHERWOOD
TRIBAL COUNCIL
SPOKANE TRIBE
WELLPINIT, WASHINGTON

SECRETARY:

FRANK GEORGE
TRIBAL COUNCIL
COLVILLE TRIBE
NESPELEM, WASHINGTON

ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

LUCY F. COVINGTON
TRIBAL COUNCIL
COLVILLE TRIBE
NESPELEM, WASHINGTON

TREASURER:

LYMAN TRAHAN
TRIBAL COUNCIL
SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
ST. IGNATIUS, MONTANA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

ANGELA BUTTERFIELD
TRIBAL COUNCIL
SHOSHONE BANNOCK TRIBES
FORT HALL, IDAHO

The Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Thank you for your letter of May 26th expressing your gratitude for our support. I have been told of the party planned in your honor on the occasion of your retirement from the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs. This retirement is not by your choosing but at the request of the new Administration and is certainly a time of great sorrow for all who know you and know what you stand for.

I have been asked by some leaders of the Northwest to write a letter on behalf of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians expressing our sentiments to you on this occasion.

I know I will be forgiven by the ATNI for choosing instead to continue the battle for your retention as our Commissioner as expressed in copy of enclosed letter written to Senator Everett M. Dirksen on this date. I believe that the Indians of the Northwest would rather be remembered by you as continuing to fight even though defeated by seemingly over-whelming odds. Let it never be said that we of the Northwest fell by the wayside or defected, in this effort.

This letter to Senator Dirksen with copies to Senators Jordan, Fannin, Allot, Hatfield, Hansen and Goldwater can be remembered by you as an indication of our feeling for you.

Respectfully, sincerely, and most affectionately,

Angela Butterfield

Angela Butterfield (Mrs.)

Executive Director

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

cc: Earl Old Person, President
Lucy Covington, Secretary
Dr. Paschal Sherman, Legal Adviser

JUN 3 12 37 PM '69

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

29 May 1969

The Honorable Everett McKinley Dirksen
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20042

Re: Robert L. Bennett
Retention as Commissioner
of Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Dirksen:

Thank you for your letter of April 9, 1969 which told me you were bringing my letter of March 6th to the attention of the White House. I am very grateful to you for your interest in this matter and it is only because of this indication of your interest that I am encouraged enough to approach you again.

We Indians have tried every way known to us to let the proper people in the United States Government know how highly we regard our present Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mr. Robert L. Bennett. Despite our best efforts, we are faced with the seemingly hopeless fact that we are to have a different Commissioner.

We have been told that Mr. Bennett was asked "by the Department" to resign; which he did. We have been told that Secretary of Interior Hickel has been quoted as saying he has "interviewed literally dozens" of persons, seeking an individual who can "carry out the department's Indian programs."

Without meaning to offend anyone, may I ask just what Mr. Hickel has in mind when he refers to "the Department's Indian Programs"? And why are we Indians not entitled to help in the implementation of these programs? What hope for success can there be for these programs without our whole-hearted involvement?

We have been told the names of some of the people who are now being considered for the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Our reaction to some of these candidates varies from tolerant amusement to outright alarm. It is unfair to expect anyone else to begin to measure up to Mr. Bennett, because in our eyes, he has no equal. The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians as well as the National Congress of American Indians have never wavered in our support of him.

Won't you, as a man of compassion continue to intercede for us?

Most sincerely,

Angela Butterfield
Angela Butterfield (Mrs.)
Executive Director ATNI

cc: Senator Jordan
Senator Fannin
Senator Allott
Senator Hatfield
Senator Hansen

Senator Godlwater

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington 25, D. C.

TRAVEL REPORTS
DIVISION OF PROGRAM

May 1952
Southern Ute Reservation

RECEIVED
PROGRAM DIVISION
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Noted by
ROUTING
1. Myers
2. [unclear]
3. [unclear]
4. [unclear]
5. [unclear]
6. [unclear]
Program Division

Noted by
Director
Prog. Div.
[unclear]

Comments and observations:

FROM

Robert L. Bennett
Program Officer.

So, I have temporarily retired from the arena, bloody but unbowed.

It is cold and rainy here which should make for a successful Bear Dance since they will have to dance so close together to keep warm - (I'll be there - representing the Division of Program).

I attended the Bear Dance and I have been advised that I ably represented the Division of Program, probably moreso at the Bear Dance than at the Council meeting.

Ute Mountain Reservation

I had razzed the Chairman the ladies at the Bear Dance at Ignacio. So, in discussing about his activities with Program he asked me to advise him where they could take their ladies in the event we filled all the arroyos. I told him that would be left up to native ingenuity.

1952

All the Ute girls expressed their regrets at my not being able to attend the Bear Dance at Ignacio this year which takes place beginning the 21st. The trip was made in blizzard, fog, rain, snow drifts, etc., but I kept remembering the slogan "Come wind, come rain, come snow - the Bureau of Indian Affairs has got to go." Somebody slipped up on ordering the car because there is no radio or TV. The car has been averaging about 17 miles to the gallon and I have been averaging about 500 miles to a fifth.

Well, it is almost time for the general council to start so I will enter into the "fray" with my scalp intact and hope that I leave the same way. I can't understand why everyone packs off into the mountains out here to hunt "dder" when there are so many walking the streets in Salt Lake City but maybe they hunt a different kind of deer.

I am now at the Nevada Agency, home of John Kel/iaa's Washoes. (Notice how I just knocked the "l" out of Kel/iaa.) Well, they say it takes all kinds of people to make a world and I am meeting some of them out here.

P.S. I checked into this six week's residence, in Nevada, alimony and the like, but I found out that with six kids I can't afford the alimony and it is cheaper to stay married.

1952 - left the reservation on good personal relations with the Council members and Tribal leaders so that the door is open to return.

Dear Folks: Consolidated Ute Agency - This is the first of a series of letters which I hope to write you each month to help you learn more about your tribal business and what is expected of you, your leaders and the Indian Service if all of us are to have a good life here. August 2, 1954 Superintendent

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Program Division

February 5, 1952

Commissioner Bennett
There were the years - when we were
all (?) so young - remember?
Chiz, Toda 5/20/69

Noted by
Director
Prog. Div.

To: H. Rex Lee, Associate Commissioner
From: Director, Program Division

We have been giving some thought to division of the workload within the Program Division

Our study of the workload within the Division reveals that there are several kinds of programs.

Mr. Keliaa and Mr. Bennett are giving Rehabilitation programs Currently

Some relocation programs involve the relocation of surplus population to off-reservation areas

may involve relocation of families from one part of a reservation to another.

(Mr. Bennett is well qualified to make a contribution in this field.

Mr. Bennett
Mrs. Claymore
Mr. Hand
Mr. Hendrix
Miss Hicks
Mr. Jenkins
Miss Kamiya
Mr. Keliaa
Mr. Langdon
Mr. Lindzey
Mrs. Madron

This appears to be good organization.

Mr. Mangan
Mrs. Matheson
Mrs. Moore
Mr. Perkins
Miss Sacks
Miss St. Arnold
Mr. Spaulding
Miss Tighe
Mrs. Toda
Mr. White
Miss Wungnema

John B. Keliaa

James S. Lindzey

Al Sacks

George E. Hendrix

Paul W. Hand

Emm O. Hicks

RLBennett:rw 6/16/52

Tribal Program - Bennett

Programming activities conducted at the present time with the Indians of the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, Fort Berthold and Jicarilla Apache Reservation.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

The present approved 3-year short-range program of the Ute Indians of Utah is to be used as a trial period in order to work out a long-range program based upon experience gained from the experimental phases of the short-range program. The short-range program has been in effect approximately 14 months, and no activity had yet been undertaken to develop a long-range program to follow immediately upon completion of the short-range program which would assure continuity of program and effort.

Introduction

RLB:

I will always remember you as the father who left this poor, not dependable, but tieless - (of the 50's, that is) more concerned about that! et 5/24/69

The Plan family

Short H Con Res 108

December 8, 1952



BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
in
recognition of faithful and
efficient performance of duty this

Scroll of Achievement

is awarded to

COMMISSIONER ROBERT L. BENNETT

for outstanding service to the Indian
people of this nation 1933 to _____



During an illustrious and extended career, Commissioner Bennett distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Through his unselfish and devoted performance of duty he made noteworthy contributions in the development of Indian people. He added a distinct measure of permanence to the cultural, social and intellectual life of Indian people. The dedication and professional competence displayed by Commissioner Bennett are worthy of emulation and reflect great credit upon himself, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian people of this nation.

Presented at
Washington, D.C.
This ²⁹ day of ^{May} _____
A.D. 1969

Edgar L. Wight

EDGAR L. WIGHT
Director, Instructional
Service Center

Charles N. Zellers

CHARLES N. ZELLERS
Assistant Commissioner
(Education)

Richard J. Keating

RICHARD J. KEATING
Chief Division of
Instructional Services

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Commissioner

FROM : Assistant Commissioner for Administration

SUBJECT: Your retirement

DATE: May 29, 1969

AW HELL!!!

Wood

Assistant Commissioner



*Me too!
Mary Chapline*





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 29, 1969

Honorable Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C.


Dear Mr. Bennett:

Several months ago when I booked you into the Newhouse Hotel (now an old folks' home) in Salt Lake City, little did I know that you would soon be eligible for residency there and that we would be writing you this letter.

Those of us who have been associated with you, however, know that because of your "youngness" in heart you have won a place in the hearts and minds of all young Indians. Your character and manner in dealing with Indian people by placing your confidence and faith in them in planning their own destiny can now be seen and will surely be reflected in the years to come.

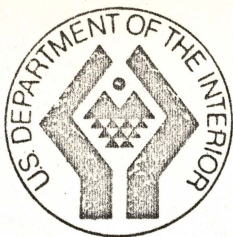
The overwhelming expressions of support you have received from the Indian people should be a source of satisfaction and will be helpful in your future partnership with them. We wish to join those thousands in wishing you the best of everything in the future and we consider it a privilege to have known and been associated with you during your term as Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Sincerely,



Perry and Ella Mae Horse

P. S. We appreciate your generosity in "sending" us as your personal emissaries to the Crow celebration in Montana last year. Perry's eloquent remarks in your behalf held the assembled crowd spellbound for almost a minute until he forgot what he was going to say and had to fake it.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
FORT APACHE INDIAN AGENCY
WHITERIVER, ARIZONA 85941

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob:

I was greatly surprised to see a notice of your retirement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs on May 30, 1969.

Although, our acquaintance has been relatively short throughout my service in the Bureau, I have been aware of your efforts towards betterment of both social and economic conditions for Indian people in the Aberdeen and Alaska Areas, prior to your appointment as Commissioner.

During your tenure as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Indian people and Bureau employees have developed a great respect for you and your objectives. Your efforts toward involving the Indian people more and more in decision making and acceptance of responsibility, will no doubt have a lasting effect on the future progress of the American Indian.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Superintendent

Arizona Indian Association

Representing The Indian Mailman Monthly Publication

3224 W. Larkspur Dr.
Phoenix, Arizona 85029
May 31, 1969

Mr. Robert L. Bennett,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

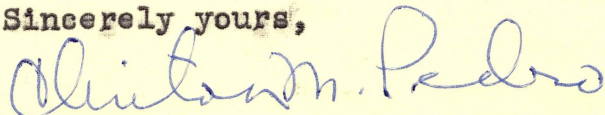
Your letter of May 26, addressed to Mr. Edward R. Davenport, immediate past president of the Arizona Indian Association, will be shared with members of our organization. It has been forwarded to Mr. Davenport.

As you know, the Arizona Indian Association strongly supported your retention in office, and the announcement of your resignation was received with sadness and a sense of personal loss on the part of our members and officers.

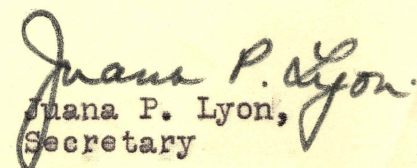
Although we are far removed from Washington, you were no stranger to us because you were interested enough to visit us personally and to take positive action to render to the off-reservation and urban Indians the assistance they have long been denied. We have no doubt that, had you remained in office, the many progressive steps taken in that direction would have culminated in serving the needs of the forgotten Indian in the cities. It is our fervent hope that your successor will continue along the trail you have opened up.

We take pleasure in knowing that you will continue to devote your efforts to the Indian people in other capacities. In behalf of the Arizona Indian Association we extend to you our sincere gratitude for a difficult job well done and our warmest wishes for the future.

Sincerely yours,



Clinton M. Pedro,
President



Juana P. Lyon,
Secretary

ISSUING
OFFICE

ORDER FOR SUPPLIES OR SERVICES

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Indian AffairsMARK ALL PACKAGES AND PAPERS WITH ORDER AND/OR
CONTRACT NUMBERS

DATE OF ORDER

CONTRACT NO. (If any)

ORDER NO.

May 31, 1969

OK510100001

ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA-BAN

OBJ
CLASS.

AMOUNT

ITEM NO.

REQUISITIONING OFFICE

OCS USE ONLY

A
B
C
D

14X7200

Indian Monies, Proceeds

of Labor.

Office of
Administration

REQUISITION NO./PURCHASE AUTHORITY

A
B
C
D

CONTRACTOR (Name and address, including ZIP code)

SHIP TO (Consignee and address, including ZIP code)

TO →

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20242Mrs. Robert L. (Cleota) Bennett
6015 Landon Lane
Bethesda, Maryland 20034

VIA

TYPE OF
ORDER

PURCHASE



REFERENCE YOUR 37 years of Service.

PLEASE FURNISH THE FOLLOWING ON THE TERMS

SPECIFIED ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS ORDER AND ON THE ATTACHED SHEETS, IF ANY, INCLUDING DELIVERY AS INDICATED. THIS PURCHASE
IS NEGOTIATED UNDER AUTHORITY OF * See below.

DELIVERY

EXCEPT FOR THE BILLING INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE, THIS DELIVERY ORDER IS SUBJECT TO INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED ON THIS SIDE
ONLY OF THIS FORM AND IS ISSUED SUBJECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE ABOVE-NUMBERED CONTRACT.

F.O.B. POINT

GOVERNMENT B./L. NO.

DELIVERY TO F.O.B. POINT
ON OR BEFORE

DISCOUNT TERMS

Bethesda, Maryland

None

SCHEDULE

ITEM NO.	SUPPLIES OR SERVICES	QUANTITY ORDERED	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT	QUANTITY ACCEPTED
1.	Furnish all labor and material for a completely enjoyable and long retirement. Payment to be made on the first of every month commencing July 1, 1969. * AUTHORITY: "BUY INDIAN ACT" The Act of June 25, 1910 (36 Stat. 861; 25 USC 47).	1	Job			

 SIZE CLASSIFICATION (Check one) ☒ SMALL BUSINESS ☐ OTHER THAN SMALL BUSINESS
TOTAL FROM
CONTINUATION PAGES(See
reverse
for
rejections)

SEE BILLING INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE

GRAND TOTAL →

SHIPPING POINT

GROSS SHIPPING WEIGHT

INVOICE NO.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MAIL INVOICES TO *

Civil Service Commission

BY

(Signature)

NAME (Typed)

Deputy Assistant Commissioner,
Administration

TITLE: CONTRACTING OFFICER

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Bennett:

There has been a lot of progress and inroads made for the benefit of the American Indians during your tenure as our Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Your presence at various Indian functions and festivities has been encouraging to us Indians and has lent prestige to the occasions.

Thank you for being present and sharing the honor bestowed upon me as the Outstanding American Indian of the Year during the All American Indian Days at Sheridan, Wyoming. I am grateful for the kind words you spoke to those in attendance on my behalf.

We wish you well and God's blessing in your future endeavors.

Sincerely yours,

Fern Thompson Fisher

Fern Thompson Fisher
Indian Home Living Counselor
Branch of Housing Development, BIA
P. O. Box 3785
Portland, Oregon 97208

He Walks Tall Among Men

(A Tribute To The Honorable Robert L. Bennett)

Now, there is a man we all know,
A Robert L. Bennett by name.
He's quiet, quick of wit, and so
Much a giant of a man by fame.

He urged Indians to act soon:
"Become a part of today's world,
Be the first to go to the moon,
Help get basic programs unfurled,

Try for education quality,
And strive for better homes, also,
Expand your economy,
Improve health. Now, get up and go!"

The guiding hand of fate cloaked him
With the robe of LEADER OF MEN,
The role he played so straight and trim,
That took him far from Wisconsin,

To the lands of the great Southwest,
Where the sun shines long and hard,
To the heart of the Northland's best,
Where winters are held in regard.

Then to D.C. he came, to share
With us his wisdom and friendliness,
His compassion, charm, and great care.
He earned our respect, we confess!

(Aside to Bob)

And now we shall remember you
Henceforth, until the end of time,
As the man who walks tall and true
Down Life's path, modest and sublime.

Best Wishes Always!


Otis J. Morgans

~~Cultured!~~
Uncultured
Who?!

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Of all the letters we gals in Congressional Relations either write or rewrite, we all agree this one is the most difficult.

It always seemed that when we were ready to push the "panic" button you just happened to stop by and had a bit of your own special humor to drop in the "hopper" which inevitably erased the pressure. We will all certainly miss those particular rays of sunshine which you added to our work-a-day life.

In all seriousness though, each one of us want to take this opportunity to extend to you and your family our best wishes for many hours of relaxation, happiness and success in any future endeavors you embark upon in the years ahead.

Don't forget us and do come see us often.

Sincerely yours, (gotta be formal)

Gladys E. Ragsdale
Hazel E. Elbert
Phyllis J. Walton

P. S. This was written with mixed emotions. We are sure you've heard the definition of "mixed emotions". But, just in case you haven't, it's a man watching his mother-in-law driving his new 1969 Cadillac over a cliff.



ADMIRALS OF THE FLAGSHIP FLEET

Dear Admiral:

Fine to have you aboard, as an Admiral of the Flagship Fleet. The membership will be better because you are with us.

Your membership card and a copy of the house rules booklet are enclosed. As soon as your framed certificate has been completed, it will be presented to you by a member of our staff. Please sign your card in the space provided.

You will find the Club rooms pleasant and convenient. And you will find some especially capable young women, the Skippers, willing and able to be of service to you. Use the Club as often as you can; you will enjoy it.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. R. Smith'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large 'C' and 'S'.

C. R. Smith
Fleet Admiral

Enclosures



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ABERDEEN AREA OFFICE
820 SOUTH MAIN
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA
57401

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, "The Great Oneida Chief and Leader":

How come you are quitting before me?? All these years, in my spare moments, I've been making a red velvet carpet, so we could roll it out for you to tread on when you come to retire me. I guess I'll just have to roll it back up, put it in the attic among my souvenirs and just retire from the Service calm, cool and collected as I entered back in the dark ages, November 21, 1921, at Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. I was a young, dark-eyed Pocahontas, full of pep and vinegar, eager to learn the "civilized" ways of my white brothers.

In 1950 when I first came to Aberdeen we were all together above Webb's Shoe Store. I remember there was a Legion Clubroom right across the hall from us and every so often we were missing one or two of our co-workers.

The Area Office Christmas parties were something to remember. We would draw names and have a nice party among ourselves. I remember one year you drew Mr. Spaulding's name and what did you give him? -- the biggest, rosiest, polished apple. (As years went by I found out that there were other ways of "polishing the apple" that I didn't quite have the hang of.

I used to dance in those days too, and how I loved to dance to your "Joan Castle" piano playing. I've hung up my dancing shoes since. Too hard on the old ticker.

I think I've said just about all the nonsense I can think of and if I had some cute little pictures I'd stick them on here. I think you can remember me better without them, however, because pictures never do me justice anyway.

Wherever you go to retire I hope it will be a healthy, long and happy one with you and yours. You lived through that big earthquake in Alaska -- you can take this nice and easy. As my dear fellow-tribesman, Ben Reifel, would say: "Cante tinsya mani, na towa nihakab u kin han insya hompa nitawa kin ki pi pte nacece."

Yours sincerely,

Majed B. Cunez

Say-go-le

Dear Bob:

Do not hesitate to call on some of the Oneida Indians should you come to this area at any time. The latch to our hogan will always be open to you.

How are the Little Johns ?.

Elijah

Honorable Robert L. Bennet
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Bob,

Cleme and I wish you a continuing fruitful life as you leave the Federal Service. You are turning over the important work of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and I am certain you feel that many of your plans and desires to assist the Indian people have not been completed. But you made great progress!

Looking back over the years to the Uintah and Ouray Reservation where we both started our Bureau service, I can think of so many pleasant days we spent together. You taught an Atlantic Ocean-oriented New Jerseyite how to fish the water of the Whiterocks and Uintah Rivers. We played golf on our self-constructed and maintained course, driving over the old bandstand on the Fort Duchesne parade ground. We went to dances together and, when you were playing piano in the band I danced with Lucille. We took the boys, Johnny and Willie P. to town on Saturdays, sometimes for haircuts. I remember hosting the Bennetts at the traveling circus in Roosevelt because I wanted the boys to see an elephant. I think we got as big a bang out of watching them as they did, getting their first look at the clowns and the few animals there were in that moth-eaten menagerie. I remember the time you beat out the strains of Blue Hawaii on the piano at a P.T.A. benefit while I danced the Hula in some kind of grass skirt over long underwear. Well, we had lots of fun and were close friends there at the old Fort Duchesne. I was honored when you named your third son, Leo Arnold.

You worked hard after you transferred to Washington, going to law school and you had predicted, I remember, that some day you would be the Indian Commissioner. And it did happen just after our meetings in Alaska where you were Area Director. Your appointment by President Lyndon Johnson was perhaps the best one he made. There may have been some who thought the job as too tough but I never doubted your ability to handle it for one second. You have done more than confirm my faith by being the best Commissioner of Indian Affairs this country has ever had. This is not only my own opinion, it is shared by all the Indian

people, the Eskimos and thousands of your loyal employees.

It is not difficult to understand your popularity nor your efficiency. During your career in the Bureau you touched on all administrative functions from that I.I.M. Clerk start through Superintendent, Area Director and then the top exalted post of Commissioner. You know the Bureau, its faults and its good qualities and you know the desires, longings and trials of the people whom the Bureau serves. You have always had and you have kept, a wonderfully friendly attitude, mixed with an almost impish good humor, toward all those with whom you came in contact. Your sincere efforts to help the people has not gone unrewarded. I am sure they will let you know how much they think of their Commissioner.

I hope that somehow I might be able to attend your party because I know it will be a truly memorable occasion. I surely would like to be able to shake your hand again and say, "Well done, Mr. Commissioner!"


Arnold Lehlbach



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Ute Mountain Ute Agency
Towaoc, Colorado
81334

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20242

Dear Sir:

Needless to say, we were most saddened to learn of your official retirement from the great Bureau of Indian team. However, I hasten to add, through the splendid and exemplary endeavors in your most colorful career with the Bureau you certainly have richly merited this well earned rest.

As I am sure you are aware, I have known and worked with you since the days of your Superintendency at the former Consolidated Ute Agency, and must say, our long acquaintance has always been and will be cherished by me.

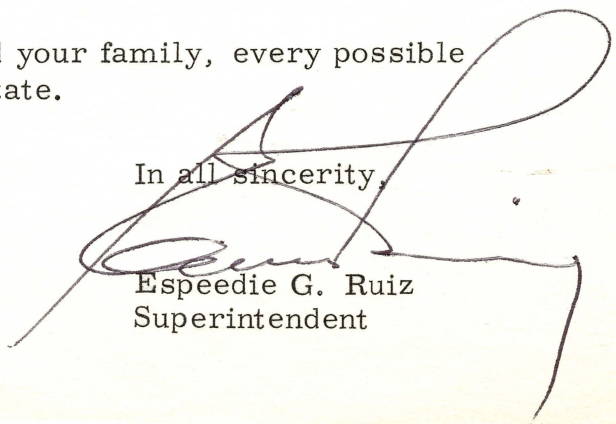
I shall always hold our friendship in the highest esteem Mr. Commissioner, and will continue to believe that you truly administered the helm of our Bureau with the following philosophy:

"I shall pass through this world but once;
Any good therefor that I can do for my fellowness;
Let me do it now, let me not deter,
Nor neglect from it;
For I shall not pass this way again."

Enclosed as a remembrance as one of your Superintendent appointees is my photograph which reciprocates for the one you sent to me.

In closing, I wish you, Mrs. Bennett and your family, every possible happiness and God-Speed in your new estate.

In all sincerity,


Espeedie G. Ruiz
Superintendent

Mr. Robert L. Bennett

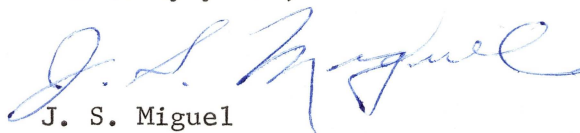
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bennett:

A people's program such as ours will surely miss the imaginative leadership you have provided. While we did not have the pleasure of working with you personally, the impact of your tenure as Commissioner was felt by everyone in the Bureau. Your policies have been forthright and for the benefit of the Indians whom we are privileged to serve. Of especial admiration is your stand on promoting the full flow of Indian participation in their own affairs.

The Minneapolis Branch of Employment Assistance wishes you well in your future undertakings and hope you will continue in the field of human relations where you have contributed so much.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "J. S. Miguel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

J. S. Miguel

Acting Area Employment Assistance Officer



IN REPLY REFER TO:

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

5135 Federal Office Building
Seattle, Washington 98104

Mr. Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20242

Dear Mr. Bennett:

All of us here at the Seattle Liaison Office, the NORTH STAR III, the BIA Terminal, and the Seattle Orientation Center, feel privileged for having had the opportunity of working so closely with you both when you were the Area Director and later as Commissioner. It was always comforting to know that there was someone in Washington who knew and understood our particular problems.

Each of us in our own way feel that you have done a remarkable job in bringing about the policy of Indian partnership; a policy of self determination. You have done much to erase the distrust of the BIA from the minds of Native leaders and you leave the Bureau with a better image than it has ever enjoyed.

We hate to see you retire, but we wish you the very best and the most that life has to offer in your retirement.

Sincerely yours,

Dale R. Laydon
Wesley E. Gellerman
Stanley F. Haldane
Alan E. Mather
Ed Moses
Elwood Penney
John J. Brown
Robert A. Remmert
Leif M. Updegraff
Henry Johnson
Ronny Williams
Jack Hudson Jr.
Albert Nelson

V. R. Farrell.
Harlan E. Gray
Phyllis Palmer
Madelaine Summerhays
Kathleen M. Ardena
Ernie Mather
William D. Wanser
Betty Barb
David W. Marley
Florence Campbell
Alice G. Solomon
Barbara J. Rose
William W. Thompson
Harold A. Beach
George Williams



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

P.O. Box 500 Salamanca, New York 14779

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 1969

Sir:

This is one of those letters I wish there was no occasion to write and one I find most difficult.

When I heard of your decision I was shocked and surprised. Yet a change at the Commissioner level should be expected when an administration changes. Perhaps the long period without an announcement was mistakenly taken as an indication that this might be an exception. I tell myself that no doubt this is largely your choice and that you have good reasons for so choosing.

Many employees have expressed the thought that working with people of Indian heritage seems to grow on a person. I trust that you and your good wife will find this to be true and will continue in this field of endeavor. And speaking of growth, after each visit with you I came away knowing that I had grown a little.

May your health remain good, your hobbies often used, and may you always retain that satisfying feeling that your friends, both Indian and non-Indian, are more numerous than can be easily counted.

Bobbie joins me in wishing that you may enjoy many years of productive "retirement".

Sincerely yours,

Howard F. Johnson
Special Liaison Representative

Mr. Robert L. Bennett, Commissioner
Bureau of Indian Affairs
1951 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mr. Wendell Chino
President
National Congress of American Indians
Mescalero, New Mexico 88340

Dear Wendell:

I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the support and encouragement which you have given me during the uncertain days following the change of Administration in January.

The almost unanimous and spontaneous efforts made by you and the Indian leadership to have me retained as Commissioner of Indian Affairs was a most gratifying development. I will always treasure the many expressions that have been made in my behalf. It makes the disappointment at not being able to continue as Commissioner less severe and it assures me that I was doing the things and providing the kind of leadership that the Indian people wanted.

My three years as Commissioner of Indian Affairs have been the most wonderful experience of my life, for they put me in contact with so many fine people. The courteous and welcome manner in which I was received in Indian country was an inspiration to me. You made me feel at home, and in turn I brought back to Washington renewed desire to be of service to the Indian people.

So I leave the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs not by my choice, but at the request of the new Administration. In so doing, I extend to my successor every good wish for the difficult job ahead. If he merits the same kind of support from you that you gave to me, then his job will be made less difficult.

I intend to keep up my long association with the Indian people and to serve them in other capacities. I look to the future, therefore, with hope and enthusiasm and to the opportunity of seeing many of my Indian friends again.

Sincerely yours,

Robert L. Bennett
Commissioner of Indian Affairs

WESTERN UNION

10025
L AY405 ED PDB FAX ALBUQUERQUE NMEX 5 526P MDT
HONORABLE ROBERT L BENNETT

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPT OF THE INTERIOR WASHDC
NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MET
HERE TODAY AND REAFFIRMED N.C.A.I. SUPPORT FOR REAPPOINTMENT
OF ROBERT L BENNETT AS COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

INDIANS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE UNITED BEHIND BOB
BENNETT BECAUSE HE HAS THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT OF THE INDIANS
AND NON-INDIANS OF THIS COUNTRY TO AN EXTENT NO OTHER COMMISSIONER
HAS EVER HAD.

BOB BENNETT HAS HELPED INDIANS MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS
GOALS OF INDIAN SELF DETERMINATION PROPOSED IN YOUR SPEECH
TO N.C.A.I. OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1968. WE URGE YOU TO REAPPOINT
COMMISSIONER BENNETT

07 WENDELL CHINO, PRESIDENT, N.C.A.I.

1201 (R2-65)

Telefax

MAY 6 8 06 AM '69

RECEIVED

DEPT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

69

1969 MAY 6

RESOLUTION NO. 7

NCAI POLICY - COMMISSIONER BENNETT

WHEREAS, never before have so many people and so many government agencies and private organizations been interested in Indians; and

WHEREAS, the employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Central Office and Field, are now engaged consistently in really productive work for Indians and among Indians; and

WHEREAS, never before has such a start been made as now for the substantial and sustained progress of Indians in individual enterprise, in bringing industries to reservations, and in concerted efforts for improvement of health, education, and employment among Indians; and

WHEREAS, to this auspicious climate, Robert L. Bennett as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, is seen as a contributing and stimulating factor, bringing to bear a wealth of knowledge and experience in Indian Affairs to involve so many diverse interests and to awaken the potential capacity of Indians for self-improvement and for self-help.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the National Congress of American Indians in Convention assembled September 24-27, 1968, that we hereby express our gratitude and confidence in Robert L. Bennett as the standard bearer of Indian progress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of this organization, as well as friends of the Indian, be called upon to urge the retention of Robert L. Bennett as Commissioner of Indian Affairs upon the change of administration in January next, with copies of this Resolution furnished to the Commissioner and to the Presidential candidates and the National Committees of the Democratic and Republican Parties.

1968 Convention
25th Annual Convention
Omaha, Nebraska

Shane Chess	Luiseno/Wyglaki	California
Judy Thompson	Oneida	Wisconsin
Lloyd E. Gilbert	Creek	Oklahoma
Ella Mae Lane	Cherokee	Oklahoma
Perry G. Horpe	Kiowa	Oklahoma
Vida A. Jackson	Member	Ad S
Marjorie I. Boyd	Seneca	New York
Kay Sue Chess	Pawnee	Oklahoma
Bill Smith	Sioux	California
Archie H. Davis Jr	Navajo/Choctaw	New Mexico
Loretta Dia go	Sioux	So. Dak.
Donna Johnson	Cherokee	Maryland
Lucinda Smith	Member	Ad S
Rosemary Davis	Navajo	New Mexico
Audrey Hare	Sioux	South Dakota
Mary Nephew	Sioux	South Dakota
Anna B. Gonyea	Onondaga	New York
Ivan D. Hyde	Nev Perce	Idaho
Vern Halley	Tigua	Texas
Caroline Metcalf	Penobscot	Maine
Pauline Veladz	Pueblo	New Mexico
Mitchell L. Bush Jr	Onondaga	New York
Grace A. Sene	Ojoe	Oklahoma
Etha B. Starr	San Carlos Apache	Arizona

Cassandra J. Walker

Earl B. Chess

Gary Green

Ruth A. Chess

Lorena Butler

Sharon M. Chardon

Sophia J. Simentwa

Alice D. Kekahbat

Jack Albion

Douglas Black

Laura Mae Osceola

Sylvia Brown

Loraine Cook

Mercedes C. Lewis

Beverly Hicks

Edith B. Wapone

Alice E. Raiford

Marlene Han Shows

Toniella Pierce

Gabe Paxton

Stella E. Selwane

June Wolf

Homer A. Green

Pearl J. Meen

Catherine L. Menthorn

Crow

Luiseno/Wiglati

Seneca

Suissis

Caddo

Mambr

Colville

Cherokee

Cherokee

Seneca

Fla. Seminole

Navajo

Shinget

Sac & Fox

Kiowa/Cowache

Sioux

Creek

Sioux

Seneca

Choctaw

Pottowatomie

Cherokee

Iowa

Cherokee

Wamilla

Montana

California

New York

California

Oklahoma

f. S. S.

Washington

North Carolina

North Carolina

New York

Fla.

New Mexico

Alaska

Oklahoma

Oklahoma

S. Dak.

Oklahoma

S. Dak.

New York

Oklahoma

Oklahoma

North Carolina

Kansas

Oklahoma

Oregon

Janice A Bruce	Cherokee - Oklahoma
Tim M. Timmentwa	Celville - Washington
Patricia L. Craig	Comanche - Oklahoma
Germaine Packard	Siaux - S. D.
Edward J. Lovelette	Siaux - S. D.
Georgia Stopp	Crow - Montana
Pat J. Lilagody	Yakima/Paiute - Oregon-Washington
Joyce H. Ryan	Caddo/Delaware - Oklahoma
Julian Pruitt	Crow - Montana
David L. Jozzi	Nevajo - New Mexico
Nelson L. Rogers	Nevajo - Arizona
Alton Paul J.	Blackfeet - Montana
Lila E. Le Croix	Siaux/Chippewa - Minnesota
Robert F. Delaware	Sac & Fox - Oklahoma
Loretta M. Minardi	Seneca - New York
Geraldine Mushaga	Choctaw - Oklahoma
Walter Jackson	Quilente - Washington
Jonathan Lee	Nanajo - Arizona
Robert Kirsling Jr	Pawnee - Oklahoma
Mary Peters	Athabascian - Alaska
Cecilia Lome	Nanajo - Arizona
Colman J. Josh	Florida Seminole - Florida
Shulma C. Harris	Creek - Oklahoma
Wang McClammy	Chippewa/Kassinabine - Montana
Barbara C. Davis	Creek - Oklahoma

Naomi Lee Bear	Creek	Oklahoma
Linda Baker Bruce	Mandan	North Dakota
Betty Lee Beaman	Creek	Oklahoma
Benjamin Enago	Luisine Wailabi	California
Edith Williams	Soux Taux - Okla.	
Edyng. Sloan	Soux Taux	Oklahoma
Raonna L. Osborne	Pawnee	- Oklahoma
Paula B. Clifford	Navajo	- New Mexico
Abba Kiderathedon	Blackfeet	Montana
Marilyn Kiderathedon	Shoshone	Utah
Leroy V. Clifford	Sioux	South Dakota
Leguas Leguina Fox	PAWNEE	OKLA
Andrew M. Gachta	Sioux	N Dak.
Mozelle W. Henry	Choctaw	Oklahoma
Peggy Fenell	Seminole	Florida
Lillian L. Summers	Onondaga	Wisconsin
Lela C. Benallie	Navajo	New Mexico
John W. Parker	Choctaw-Chickasaw	Oklahoma
Charles L. Johnson	Eastern Cherokee	North Carolina
Al W. Weipah	Colville	Washington
Virgil L. Paappylitz	Kiowa	Oklahoma
Billie S. Royce	Navajo	New Mexico
Pete Thompson	Seneca	New York

Wymay N. Nabby

Rose Robinson

Raymond V. Butts

Helen M. Scherbeck

Josef. P. Pharr

Line Ridge (Oglala) Sioux
South Dakota

Hopi, Arizona

Blackfoot, Montana

Lumber, North Carolina

Cherokee, N.C.



Robert L. Bennett
Thanks for a job well done!
Wapeton Indian School

1. RLB
2. Sp. file

BILLINGS GAZETTE
Billings, Mont.

May 23, 1969

BIA Chief Popular

By HARVEY GRAY
Gazette Staff Writer

Montana's Indians want Robert L. Bennett to remain as commissioner of Indian affairs. And they are fearful of what might occur if he doesn't.

The Inter-Tribal Policy Board, representing about 35,000 Indians living on seven reservations as well as chartered landless Indians, made their wishes known Thursday.

Meeting in Billings, the board passed a resolution calling for Bennett's retention as commissioner.

IN THE RESOLUTION, sent to the Montana Congressional delegation and Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel, the board said, "each individual tribe in Montana and tribes

from all over the United States and various inter-tribal groups have repeatedly and emphatically asked that Commissioner Robert L. Bennett be retained."

And, the board notes, wryly, "We have been advised that the administration plans to work closely with Indian people and consult them on all matters affecting their interest."

The board noted that Bennett has the trust and confidence of the Indian people and warns, "any action to remove him would result in a great loss of confidence and trust by Indian people in the promises of the administration."

AND THEY requested that Bennett's resignation, due to take effect May 31, be refused and "that the Secretary of the Interior be requested to consult with the Indian groups throughout the country before any further proposals are made regarding Indian affairs."

Robert McCrea, a board member and Flathead councilman, said he wants Bennett retained because, "he is personally and vitally interested in our problems and works more closely with all the Indian people."

Joe Day, councilman from the Fort Peck Tribes, said he feels Bennett has "a better attitude than we have experienced in the past. I think he is a step in the right direction," Day said.

ROLAND KENNERLY, secretary-treasurer of the board and a Blackfeet Indian remarked, "He (Bennett) is Indian and he knows the problems we

have. And because he is an Indian, all Indians throughout the nation respect him."

William Youpee, board chairman and chairman of the Fort Peck Tribes, in commenting on Bennett's tenure in office said, "In the past four years, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has come a long way. They work with us now and are right in with us. We feel that here's a group of specialists to be used by the tribes to solve their problems."

"There should be continuity," Youpee said.

FINE FOOTSTEPS TO FOLLOW

It was no surprise to me to learn, when I returned from my trip, that Robert L. Bennett had resigned as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. This was taken for granted in Washington when I visited there a month ago.

I was fortunate enough to spend almost an hour with the Commissioner—an hour that strengthened my conviction that this post should not be political, and that a man like Bennett, an Indian himself, is often best qualified for the position.

Commissioner Bennett would like to see some of his policies continued—and so should I. Many of his ideas look good to Indian tribes, and some of them also appear hopeful to taxpayers. Though he came up through the ranks in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bennett has visions of depopulating that particular bureaucracy. His goal: a decrease of 1,000 in BIA personnel each year for the next six years.

Commissioner Bennett believes that the BIA is doing many municipal-type jobs that Indian people could and should be doing themselves. He wants Indians to have more to say about the way their communities operate and to take more responsibility, too. One way to do this, Bennett suggested, was for the Bureau to contract with the tribe for road and street maintenance on reservations.

Under another plan, the tribes could borrow money to buy present facilities used by BIA or to build new ones. Bennett said such loans could be repaid in 10 years out of rent. The tribes would then have income-producing properties. They would also have the responsibility of keeping them clean and in good repair, and this would make jobs for members of the tribes.

In much the same way, the tribes could own and operate their own utilities.

Public assistance, the welfare activity conducted by BIA, has already been in the hands of the tribes on 14 reservations. Funds allocated for this purpose are turned over to the Indian Tribal Councils, which dispense the money, but in the case of able-bodied men, require that they work for the Tribe. Wag-

es, paid out of the money formerly used for welfare, support families, and also give a feeling of self-respect.

"So far," Mr. Bennett told me, "this has been favorably received by the tribes." He hopes this policy will be extended to most of the other reservations.

The Commissioner also believes that the strict trusteeship exercised over Indian lands should be relaxed, and that the position of officials in the Department of the Interior should be more advisory and less mandatory.

Bennett envisions a Bureau whose members will serve only in advisory or professional capacities, who will rent their homes and offices from the Indian tribes they serve and pay their water and perhaps other utilities bills into tribal coffers.

The idea, however, is not to force this kind of enterprise on tribes until they are ready for it. The Indians themselves must come up with administrative plans. Some of the changes Bennett hopes for would require Congressional action.

Commissioner Bennett was never a politician. He was just trying to do a job for his people, and in my book he understood their needs very well. His idea was to encourage, rather than to force, Indian people to progress at their own rate and in their own way—and that's the only way they'll make progress. It is the only way any group of people gets ahead—either as a group or as individuals.

One of the greatest problems Indian people have faced in the past and most still face in the future is the changing winds in Washington, as administrations change.

Robert L. Bennett will leave the gold-carpeted Commissioner's office at 1951 Constitution Ave. the first of next month. I hope he will leave behind him his graphs and charts, and a full explanation of his plans.

I hope even more devoutly that his successor will study the work of Commissioner Bennett zealously, and will be a big enough man to carry on with the best of the good programs which Bennett began.

Montanan May Succeed

Indian Affairs Chief Quits

By DENN CURRAN

Missoulian Staff Writer

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert L. Bennett, featured speaker at an Indian conference in Missoula Thursday, submitted his resignation Friday, the Associated Press reported.

The Interior Department declined to reveal any further details but said Bennett's resignation — the second time in about two weeks — has not been considered yet by Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel, who is on a week-long visit to the Pacific Trust Territory.

Bennett checked out of his Missoula hotel Friday and could not be reached by The Missoulian for comment.

Alonzo Spang, formerly of Lame Deer, another participant in the Kyi-Yo Indian Days Youth Conference, and several others apparently are being considered for the commissioner's post.

Bennett's first resignation came shortly after Hickel said applicants were being interviewed for an unspecified job influencing the Indian Affairs program. An informed source confirmed this meant Bennett would be replaced, the Associat-

ed Press said.

Bennett said his first application was a belated action similar to that of other government officials who left a decision up to the Nixon administration, but the second application could mean that Bennett's departure could come in the near future.

Spang, a Montana native and currently vice president and provost of Navaho Community College in Many Farms, Ariz., told The Missoulian he is being considered for the job of commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Spang was in Washington earlier in the week for an interview, and although he is not a Republican, he thinks he has a chance because Hickel is on record as saying he would appoint Democrats as long as the Democrats are not highly partisan.

"I think working with Indians should span politics because the important objective is to promote the development of Indians," Spang said.

He said he would like to make some changes in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), — "it would be one of my prime undertakings" — without changing the basic structure of the agency.

Paternalism Varies

He sees a degree of paternalism in the bureau which differs from agency to agency, program to program and is evident more on some reservations than on others.

"It also depends on the superintendents, who have the authority to determine the degree of Indian involvement," he said, adding that tribes themselves differ in their levels of sophistication.

"The key thing," he said, "is genuine Indian involvement, not just token or pseudo involvement. The Indian needs to get in on the ground floor and be involved clear through the process."

This hasn't happened in the past, according to Spang, and he thinks the BIA should establish more programs to enrich Indian leadership.

"The Indian has a right to be wrong just like anybody else," he said, adding that Indians should be able to learn from their mistakes.

The Bureau needs to set some directions for Indian youths, which he described as "pretty frustrated and more alienated than non-Indian youth because they don't know which world they belong in."

But one of his chief concerns is education. As vice president of the Navaho Community College, he serves as the on-site president of the 330-student college with its 92 per cent Navaho enrollment.

One of the prime objectives of the college is to make higher education available to Indians, and Spang said there are more applicants than can be admitted. A new facility is planned.

Indian people need to have more than token representation on school boards so they can really affect education at the local level, he said.

He said more than half of the BIA budget goes for education "yet this is where the Indians have the least involvement." Indians serve on advisory boards but have little power or authority and cannot make any changes.

Sylvester Knows Gun Sr., a member of the education advisory group in Busby on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, agreed with Spang and told The Missoulian that more local control is needed and that Indians should have a say in the hiring of teachers.



Alonzo Spang



A Happy Birthday

*Birthday
Greeting.*

*May this Birthday be a splendid
Happy day.*

*And long after it has ended
May it stay*

*In your mind a precious treasure,
Giving measure after measure
Of the highest kind of pleasure
Every day*

*Your mother
Mrs. L D Bennett.*

A TRIBUTE
published in the pages of
GREEN BAY PRESS GAZETTE

GREEN BAY, WISC.

MAY 21 1960

Memorial Obituary

Mrs. Lydia Bennett

Mrs. Lydia D. Bennett, 77, died Friday night at the home of a daughter, Mrs. Roman Doxtator, Oneida. Born at Oneida April 15, 1883, she was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Paul Doxtator. She attended Wittenburg school and Carlyle Institute and for many years served as an interpreter of the Oneida language.

Mrs. Bennett also served as substitute mail carrier for many years on Oneida rural route 1, following the death of her husband, Fred, in 1927. She was a member of Holy Apostles Episcopal Church and the parish Guild Auxiliary.

Surviving besides the daughter is a son, Robert, Aberdeen, S. D. There are also nine grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and two brothers, Joseph and John Doxtator, Oneida. The body will be at the Roman Doxtator residence after 11 a.m. Sunday. Funeral services will be held at 9:30 a.m. Monday in Holy Apostles Church. The Rev. Harold Goetz will officiate and burial will be in the parish cemetery.

Rest In Peace



*The Lord is my shepherd:
I shall not want. He maketh
me to lie down in green pas-
tures: he leadeth me beside the
still waters. He restoreth my
soul: he leadeth me in the
paths of righteousness for his
name's sake. Yea, though I
walk through the valley of
the shadow of death, I will
fear no evil: for thou art
with me; thy rod and thy
staff they comfort me. Thou
preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine
enemies: Thou anointest my
head with oil; my cup runneth
over. Surely goodness and
mercy shall follow me all
the days of my life: and I
shall dwell in the house
of the Lord for ever.*

Twenty-Third Psalm



© 1958 ®

A Permanent Record of the
Obituary and Funeral Details

AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED

YOU HAVE SET

THE

ALL TIME



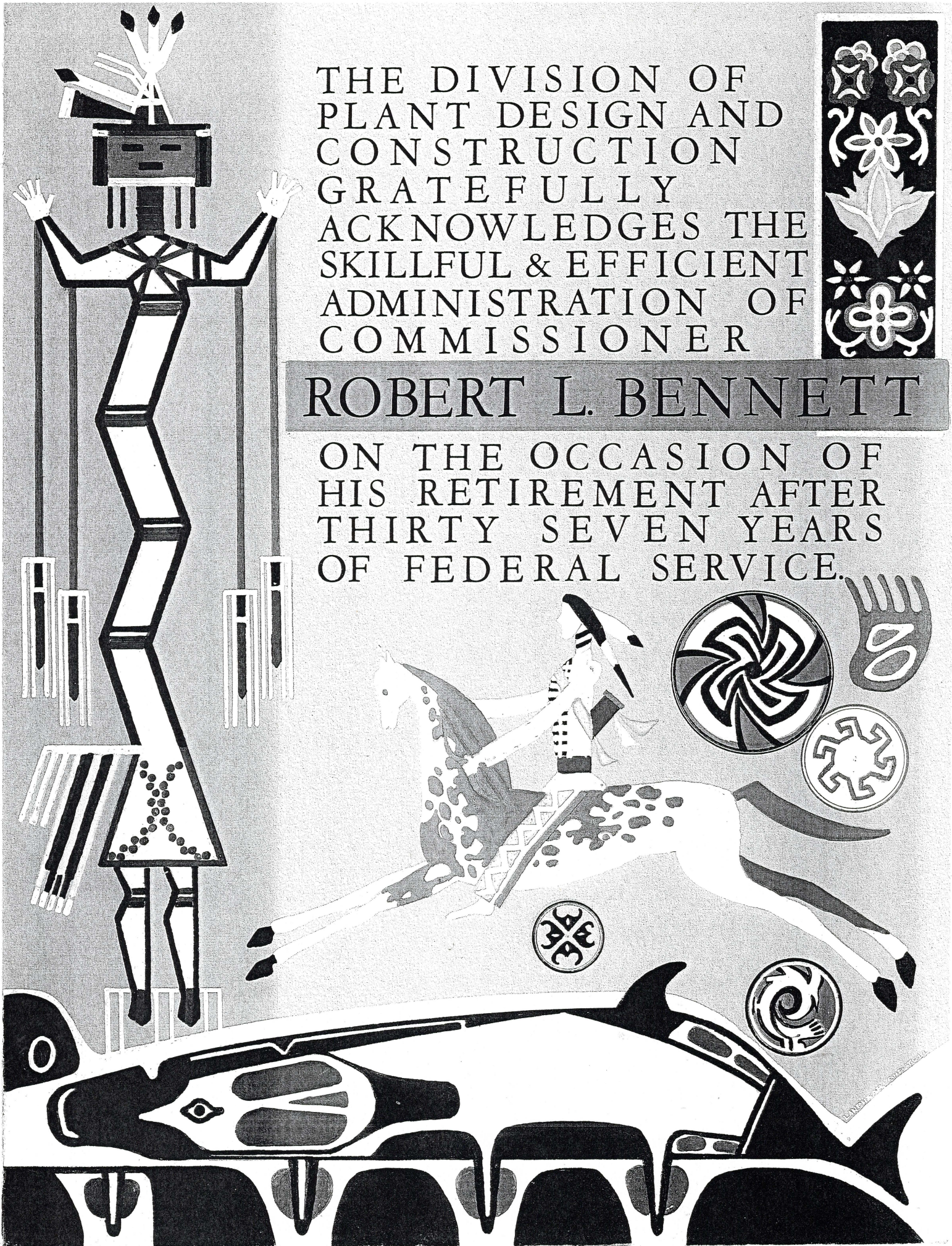
INDIAN RECORD

Tom Wilson

THE DIVISION OF
PLANT DESIGN AND
CONSTRUCTION
GRATEFULLY
ACKNOWLEDGES THE
SKILLFUL & EFFICIENT
ADMINISTRATION OF
COMMISSIONER

ROBERT L. BENNETT

ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS RETIREMENT AFTER
THIRTY SEVEN YEARS
OF FEDERAL SERVICE.



Robert A. Dudley
 John C. Ideelfrielt
 Ruth S. Canard
 Len H. Marie
 Edward B. Gola
 Kenneth P. Penworth
 Virgil E. Nick
 Earl Black
 John H. Giddings
 Thomas J. Wellem
 Anne Mary Lemmy
 Dale H. Roff
 Ann Jones
 Mayone Luth
 Blanche Martinez
 R. A. Roff
 Nancy Abate
 Howard B. Jones
 Bill A. Ruff
 F. L. HARRIS
 Geneva Rabke
 Aile Littlejohn
 Karl Bonmann
 Eddy Caspariano
 Guilyn Pansano
 Earl Radiff
 Lenora Kefiiaa
 Donald S. Bruck
 Don M. Connor
 Darlo J. Seaman
 Fred B. Luciffigo
 Charles A. Roff
 Charles A. Dery
 Richard Martin
 George W. Morgan
 Joe D. Mastro
 Richard T. Kirkpatrick
 James H. Haver
 William E. Frazier
 Earl L. Wa

Alfred A. Sweeney
 Leg E. Hilbert
 Donald S. Skelt
 Peter L. Duxter
 Henry C. Guy
 Donna Black Cloud
 Alvin Waseta
 Harry Painter
 Anthony Gengade
 Cecil Corner
 Donald W. Woods
 Nedumell
 Jack P. Miller
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 Labui Pansano
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 Mike Del Mastro
 John Radoslovich
 Edward Romero
 Michael Weller
 Ron Larson
 Richard Ward
 Isaac E. Jorg
 George H. Lucas
 James B. Spence
 John C. Ott
 Trini Romo
 Sam Sosa Jr.



Delipso Abaita
Celestino Lucas
JOHN H. MULLER
Karl R. Chapin
George George
Dwight Lewis
Thomas K. McCarty
Eugene Hudson
Frances Gayala
E. Husby
Maria Pedro
Raymond J. Abaita
Fred W. Key
Edna L. Wendt
Jewel Thompson
Betty Kinnard
Fred E. Mottusberg
William J. McNamara
Stuart Silas
Tom J. Lucas
J. Roy Bennett
Elin J. Sigil
Bill DeGor
John W. Gayala, Jr.
Elmer A. Volkow Jr.
Klenn Duggles
Fred J. Stagg
Paul Garding
Halbur Hagen
Juanita Johnson

