

Q 20 4/15

Dr. Jack C. Robertson
Acting Indian Health Area Director

June 15, 1967

Area Public Information Specialist

Newspapers in Claremore and Tahlequah Service Units, and Oklahoma Press Association

This will give you a quick rundown on the trip to Tahlequah and enough detail to allow you to query me on points which interest you.

Friday morning, June 9, I left to Muskogee on Highway 40 to go by way of Okemah, Henryetta and Checotah. Since I seldom get to Oklahoma Journal, Oklahoma City (Midwest City), in the morning hours, I stopped to visit with Bill Duncan before he headed for Press Room at the State Capitol.

The newspaper at Okemah has lost its owner, Leland Tenney, but we have lost nothing for Indian Health, in that he sold to Scully, the former editor of the Henryetta newspaper. Tenny has kept his Weleetka newspaper, and is teaching press work at Okmulgee Tech., an OSU development working closely with Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of Economic Opportunity.

Also, since I would be seeing the Muskogee Phoenix people at OPA over the weekend, I went to the home of Marie Wadley in Muskogee to allow her to bring me current on BIA dealings with newspaper people. I particularly wanted to inquire about a venerable political writer, Tom Root. I knew that I would have opportunity to visit with Stone, Managing Editor, and wanted Marie's idea of how Stone was currently utilizing the services of Root.

I arrived at Western Hills in time for dinner with Dr. and Mrs. Joe Holland, Head, O. U. School of Journalism. They had with them Mary Ellen Lewis, graduate student who reads Journalism school's weekly newspapers. She knows the small town editors rather well and was interested in my work. In the future she will take note of Indian interest and help me keep current.

Saturday I joined Dr. James Dennis, Head, School of Medicine, who was an OPA speaker for Public Affairs Institute. For this occasion I included another young graduate student from OSU. She is Charlotte Curtin, daughter of the late owner of Watonga Republican. Her mother, Virginia, an M. D., has been trying to hold this paper together since the death of the father. The son and daughter, both journalism majors, are taking over for the summer. The mother writes a column called "Making Rounds," to remind

Watonga that she is primarily a doctor. (Someday when you have time let me tell you about this family's experience with Indians in the Cheyenne-Arapaho country.)

Saturday afternoon was given to the wives of publishers and many of our key newspapers were represented, including Mrs. Bixby, wife of owner of Muskogee Phoenix; and Mrs. Lokey, co-publisher of Tishomingo's county newspaper. I believe that I told you that he is president of Oklahoma Press Association this year.

My cousin, Sue Ann Saltsman Graham, (half Creek) is Director of Wagoner County Department of Public Welfare and keeps up with newspapers in northeastern Oklahoma. She joined me for part of the activities with wives.

Jim Nicholson and his wife from Talihina invited us to join them for the OPA dance, but I had been invited to spend the evening with Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Victory in Tahlequah.

Sunday morning I was to drive the Victories to visit one of his cousins who is a friend of mine, but on this trip my transmission went out. We got my car into a garage, and I spent the day instead with Mrs. Victory's scrap books on Indian Affairs . . . a very real privilege.

Because the new owners of Tahlequah's "Pictorial Press" did not attend OPA, Doctor Farley (SUD) thought I should go to see them. This is the newspaper which was bombed. Tahlequah has three newspapers, which is very unusual for this size town, and Pictorial Press, printed offset and partially owned by a Senator Berry, is a subject of interest among OPA members. So I made the decision to spend Monday morning allowing Mr. Victory to show me the new Cherokee Cultural Center developments and the afternoon with Tahlequah publishers, including Mrs. Lorena Travis, freelance writer, who is Indian Health's prime asset today.

I returned Tuesday by way of Tulsa, calling on the World and Tribune staffs - news and editorial. Since Jenkin Lloyd Jones (Tribune) has been critical of Public Health Service administration of Indian Health at times, and thinks PHS is "going political" it was a good opportunity to visit with him and Joe Howell, who had done a remarkably good job of reporting C. C. Victory's Indian speech when the congressional group toured northeast Oklahoma industrial sites. (For your information, Claremore and Tahlequah read the Tribune more than the World, whereas McAlester and Talihina people read the World more than the Tribune. The timing of their local papers make the difference.)

Jenkin Lloyd Jones' son "Jenk Junior," suggested that I go to see

Victor Barnett in a Tulsa nursing home. Since Mr. Barnett is the seasoned Republican newspaper man who trained Jenk Senior for the grandfather in early Tulsa days, and the family would appreciate this, I followed through. I was personally obligated to Mr. Barnett for he has been my escort during his widower days to important Tulsa public affairs. I visited him at Skyline Nursing Center and took the Turner Turnpike from an entrance in that section of Tulsa. Returned via Stroud, which is in Shawnee Service Unit,

As a summary, I found Oklahoma publishers with a keener interest in public health changes than at any time in the past ten years. They are particularly interested in county health departments and the possibility of family medical centers owned by local doctors, and are just beginning to ask how these two groups of people can be helped to work together.

I found most of the OPA men I talked to very interested that ~~an~~⁺ Oklahoman, who has served in Talihina Service Unit, will be their next Indian Health Area Director, and I believe eager to help in any way that they can. They will receive the letter from you concerning "Talking Leaves" this week and if we get more than 2% response we will have a fair gauge on this interest.

Sula Saltsman Goodman

P. S. Altho' I took a day longer to see Tahlequah people, I will report but 6 quarters per diem to stay closer to limitation on travel funds.