

November 10, 1967

AIRMAIL

Mrs. Sula Saltsman Goodman
1614 Britton Road
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73120

Dear Sula:

Although you had indicated it might come, we were surprised to learn of your formal notice that your work was "not of an acceptable level of competence for purposes of with-in grade increase." We have talked with some of the people here informally. We have delayed doing anything formally until we could consider the total picture and decide what might be best.

We agree with you, reluctantly, that the best thing for you to do at this point is to get out of there. From what you have written us and from what we can learn locally, the prospects for working the thing out there are not at all good.

Have you sought a transfer to another office within the Public Health Service's Division of Indian Health? It seems a shame for you to leave behind all your knowledge of Oklahoma, its newspapers and its leaders and all your contacts there, but there's something to beginning all over again. Actually, it isn't really that. You start out with a clean slate but you find that the stored-up knowledge you thought wouldn't be applicable is most useful in a new situation, too. I know. I have done it.

Congressman Albert is out of town, so I am writing this as Charlie Ward to Sula Goodman and not as a communication ~~from~~ a Congressman to a constituent and friend. I believe from what you told us when he came to Washington and from what he has said since he has been here that Bob Drew is your friend. I think I would seek some advice and counsel from him. I like him more all the time. I don't mean I always agree with him nor he with me, but we can communicate with each other which is something.

The criticisms of your performance are the type that could be made about anybody and perhaps easily proven. They are not the type that can be easily answered, although you did a pretty good job to us. My point is that you could possibly win a preliminary battle on this but lose the war. Your best point is made in the story and photographs in the Daily Oklahoman for November 7, but this likely won't mean much to those who have criticized you.

Congressman Albert has been so immersed in the horribly heavy responsibilities of his leadership job that he hasn't had an opportunity to really dig into your case. I know we both had at first thought that a communication with Dr. Robertson might be helpful. Now I don't believe it would, although it might appear to be on the surface.

Since the Oklahoma jobs you wanted haven't panned out, the transfer within Public Health Service seems to be a suggestable move. I think it is most important that you get into a situation where you can be productive and can get back a good performance rating. If you can't elsewhere in Oklahoma, then let it be somewhere other than there with PHS.

I wish I could be more helpful. I hope it is some consolation to know that we are all as sorry as we can be that you are having to go through all this. It has happened to others, though, and those who have kept their heads high and haven't let it defeat them have gone on to some pretty fine futures.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Ward

CLW/ia