

March 8, 1967

The Honorable Overton James
6033 Glencove Place
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73132

Dear Governor Overton:

Thank you very much for sending us a copy of the Resolution presented by our good friend, Chief Harry J. W. Belvin, and adopted by The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes at the March 2 meeting at Arrowhead Lodge. We have noted that an original of the resolution went to Dr. Rabeau and that copies went to other members of the Oklahoma Congressional delegation, Secretary Gardner, members of the House Sub-Committee on Indian Affairs and Mr. Belindo of the National Congress of American Indians.

You know of our efforts in this important matter. Chief Belvin and I had a nice visit in my office about it Tuesday. We will continue to do everything we can toward working out a satisfactory solution.

My warm personal regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

CARL ALBERT, M.C.
Third District, Oklahoma

CA/Wnu

The Honorable Overton James
6033 Glentove Place
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73132

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You know of our efforts in this important matter. Chief Belvin and I had a nice visit in my office about it Tuesday. We will continue do everything we can toward working out a to ~~try to work out a satisfactory~~ satisfactory solution. ~~xxx~~

My warm personal regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,

CA

The INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL
of the FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 3RD, 1950



March 3, 1967

Honorable Carl Albert
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Albert:

There is forwarded to you Resolution presented by Chairman, Resolution Committee, Harry J. W. Belvin, and adopted by The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes in special session on March 2, 1967, at Arrowhead Lodge, near Eufaula, Oklahoma.

This Resolution is forwarded for your consideration and favorable action.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Overton James".

Overton James, President
The Inter-Tribal Council of the
Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma

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OVERTON JAMES
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ALTERNATE CHAPLAIN
DR. B. FRANK BELVIN
817 SOUTH WOODLAWN
OKMULGEE, OKLA. 74447

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the founding fathers held the rights of the people of this country so sacred that they in their farsighted wisdom saw fit to embody in the language, "The congress shall make no law respecting the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances," and

WHEREAS, we, the members of The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes in special meeting assembled at Arrowhead Lodge near Eufaula, Oklahoma, this the 2nd day of March, 1967, interpret the above language to include the Indian people, and from this assumption have met for the express purpose of using the right of petition as guaranteed to the citizens of our country by the Constitution of the United States; that from time immemorial, it has been the sad lot of the American Indian to have to accept decisions, programs, and policy makings pertaining to his own welfare, as emanating from the program makers without consultation with, or consent of, the Indian people, and

WHEREAS, the trial and error method employed in the past that has to do with all phases of Indian welfare, and even his very existence, provides stark testimony to the colossal failure of the program makers in reaching the Indians because of the simple lack of including them as a vibrant, living part of the scheme to make them blend into the cultural pattern surrounding them, and

WHEREAS, the programmers insist with unforgivable short-sightedness on doing things for the Indians rather than doing things with the Indians, and wherein they fail miserably to understand that the Indians are people, too; that with multiplied decades of unrelenting effort on the part of the program makers to knock everything that is Indian out of the Indian, he still clings, tenaciously and without peer, to his pride of race, his loyalties, his love of country, and his surprising determination to survive in a hostile environment, and

WHEREAS, the average life span of the American Indian approximates two-thirds that of the general population, yet, in addition to the general health services available to all Americans, including the Indians, the Division of Indian Health, USPHS, maintains a sprawling system of health facilities, including Indian Hospitals, to augment the health benefits of the Indians throughout the United States; that with all these facilities, the American Indian loses

one-third the average life span of the general population, a sad commentary on the effectiveness of the program makers who continue to program for program's sake; that it is current knowledge that the Indian Health Program in Oklahoma is the poorest of any area under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Public Health Service, and that the Assistant Surgeon General, Chief, Division of Indian Health has averred that to correct this situation, he was obliged to start at the top, and

WHEREAS, without consulting the Indians of Oklahoma, he proceeded to make, what he termed lateral, transfers of people in top ranking positions evidently oblivious to the concept that Indians should have some right of expression after the white man has, for multiplied decades demonstrated his dismal lack of understanding of how an Indian thinks; that by transferring the Area Director of Indian Health from the Oklahoma City Area Office to a top position in the Washington Office, then transferring a man from Anchorage, Alaska, an old buddy and side kick of the Oklahoma City Area Director, to the Executive Officer's position in the Oklahoma City Area Office, he unwittingly failed to remove the fester that brought about the critical illness of the Oklahoma Indian Health Program in the first place; that it is an historical fact and generally known that it is a racial characteristic for Indians to forever distrust those who have incurred their distrust; that by the same token, they will trust a friend until he proves he cannot be trusted, consequently, they will not trust the setup that will leave the transferred Oklahoma Area Director of Indian Health in virtual command, the thing he is fighting so hard to achieve through letters attempting to allay the trepidations of the Indian people of Oklahoma; that when E. V. Downing retired as Executive Officer of the Oklahoma City Area Office, December 30, 1966, an announcement went out that applications would be accepted until January 14, 1967, and

WHEREAS, John Spaan, who is already with the Division of Indian Health in the Oklahoma City Area Office, made proper application in due time, which was refused consideration because the lateral transfer of the Anchorage Alaska man was evidently made ten days or so before the deadline, January 14, to become effective April 1, 1967, obviously to scuttle the application of Mr. Spaan; that the Indian people who know John Spaan trust him as a friend and as a workman worthy of his hire; that he is possessed with an unsurpassed dedication to the Indian Health Program, with a heart for the underprivileged Indian, and with the milk of human kindness in his heart so necessary to the success of any program designed for people; that John Spaan is sympathetic to their needs, and that he knows them as human beings and not as human guinea pigs; that all the top positions in the Oklahoma City Area Office are being filled with people from far away places, who will be in position to be very amenable to the guiding hand of the Oklahoma Director of Indian Health when he assumes one of the top jobs in the Washington office, and

WHEREAS, many of the Indian leaders of Oklahoma have received letters from the present Area Director of Indian Health in Oklahoma

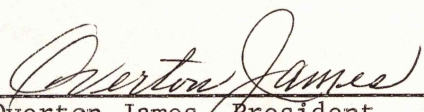
urging them to be pleased with the new personnel, people whom the good doctor knows personally, and who will do a bang up job-- according to this judgment--; that according to the chronological order of his letters, they were timed for an explicit purpose; that he is fighting with a passion to perpetuate his policies (which have already been condemned) through his former associates; that it is this type of arrogance and inconsideration that breeds distrust and suspicion among the Indian people,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of The Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma, predicating our right to petition upon the supreme law of the land, the Constitution of the United States of America, hereby respectfully pray that you give profound consideration to the recitation of our grievances as outlined in this Resolution, and that our recommendation that John Spaan, 4905 N.W. 35th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73122, be given favorable consideration for the position of Executive Officer, Oklahoma City Area Office, Division of Indian Health, U.S. Public Health Service, to the end that he will be placed in this position thereby convincing the Indian beneficiaries of the Indian Health Program in Oklahoma that they are being considered as a people, and that this concession has been made in keeping with the justification as set out above.

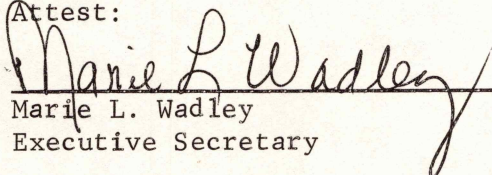
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the original of this resolution be sent to Dr. E. S. Rabeau, Assistant Surgeon General, Chief, Division of Indian Health, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 7915 Eastern Avenue, Silver Springs, Maryland, 20910, and that a copy be sent to the following:

Each member of the Oklahoma Delegation in Congress,
Washington, D. C.
The Honorable John Gardner, Secretary of Health,
Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C.
Each member of the House Sub-Committee on Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.
John Belindo, National Congress of American Indians,
Washington, D. C.

Adopted this 2nd day of March, 1967, in special session at Arrowhead Lodge, near Eufaula, Oklahoma.


Overton James, President
Inter-Tribal Council of the
Five Civilized Tribes of
Oklahoma

Attest:


Marie L. Wadley
Executive Secretary