

Senator ABOUREZK. Lucy Covington, you are the final witness of the day and I just might announce that Mrs. Covington's testimony will terminate the hearings on this legislation.

We are very happy to have you today, Mrs. Covington. We have talked to Mrs. Covington before, and we know her concern and interest in this area.

**STATEMENT OF LUCY COVINGTON, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT,
NORTHWEST AFFILIATED TRIBES**

Mrs. COVINGTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am the delegate from the Northwest Affiliated Tribes where I serve as first vice president because the president did not have tribal funds to come and present the affiliated tribes statement. I am also representing the Colville Confederated Tribes of the State of Washington.

We, the northwest tribes, have experienced the effects of the lack of proper education for Indian children for several generations. We have seen Indian people attempt to better their lives and the lives of their families only to be put down because of their lack of education and training.

Due to this lack of education, the Indian people of this country have been unable to serve equally in public office or otherwise participate in Government.

Therefore we have not had a voice in policy decisions affecting our destiny. How long has Johnson-O'Malley been available? The Indians haven't known how to control the Johnson-O'Malley program. This must not happen again.

We will manage and direct the use of these funds this time. The money must be tribally controlled. Indian schools belong in Indian communities. If the old way of sending Indian students out of the Indian communities had been successful, we would be educated by now.

Sir, I believe in that part of the statement somewhere the stenographer left out some wording. This does not mean that we do not wish to continue with boarding schools, we do. And, I don't want this to be misunderstood.

This situation is clearly the result of two factors to which we have been subjected over the last 100 years or more. First there was and still is the fact of discrimination against Indians by the non-Indian community.

Second, there has been the lack of implementing programs by local, State and Federal governments for the advancement of educational opportunities for Indians. Education is a valuable tool for the survival and dignity of any people.

A concerted effort has been made in this country to keep this tool out of the hands of the Indian. This, however, has not worked. We have educated ourselves in many other ways. We have passed on our traditions. We will persist in our Indian ways.

It is against this background that we wish to express our support for S. 1017, the Indian Self-determination and Education Reform Act of 1973. We support this bill and its attempt to recognize the rights of the Indian people for self-determination.

In addition, we support it because it attempts to increase the quantity and quality of educational services and opportunities to be made available to Indian children and adults.

This will provide the tools of self-determination and progress necessary to strengthen our people. We Indian people wish to solve our own problems and only ask that we be given an equal opportunity and equal resources to use for that purpose.

This bill has many of the favorable features of the Johnson-O'Malley Act. First, it includes programs for pre-kindergarten and adult education. We look forward to the availability of adult education programs in our community. These programs will allow the development of needed skills in those persons who were neglected by the system of the past.

Our youth are our greatest resource in building an Indian future. Early childhood programs carefully designed to meet the special needs of our Indian children will enable all our youth to realize their full potential in life.

The section concerning school construction will be a real help in overcoming the problems of poor school systems in various Indian communities. Our problem is a shortage of Indian teachers and administrators as well as a shortage of curriculum and student services to serve Indian communities.

School facilities have been poorly located and sadly neglected. The provisions of this act for new construction will meet an urgent need in many Indian communities.

The summer months when our students are not enrolled in educational programs provide an excellent opportunity for them to participate in the proposed youth intern program. The fields involved in the youth intern program can provide useful experience for Indian youth in activities related to their future choice of careers on Indian reservations.

Requiring the Secretary to carry out the specified negotiations in these fields will insure the quality of the program. We wish to suggest that particular efforts be made to maintain this program in such Government agencies that are responsible for the management and protection of our Indian natural resources and are located on and bordering the reservation.

The portion of the act which allows for the development of professionals in Indian education is urgently needed. We have too long been in the position of having to depend on non-Indians to meet the educational needs of our Indian people. Despite good intentions, a non-Indian cannot really understand the needs, desires, and frustrations of an Indian in this country.

He must always stand outside any full understanding of Indian problems and position. One of the results of the educational situation in Indian communities has been the lack of trained professionals in Indian education.

The Johnson-O'Malley Act which was designed to help in the development of those professionals has never been sufficiently implemented in this area. The related section of the proposed bill recognizes this need for the expanded professional involvement of Indian people in the Indian education.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of schools controlled and operated by tribes as part of the tribal government

function. Under this bill available benefits will be restricted to State public schools. For example, on the Colville Reservation we are in the process of obtaining control of an elementary boarding school for our Indian children. Under the definition in the proposed bill the tribal school will not be eligible for the benefits under this program.

Because of the restrictive definition of the "local education agency," tribal schools in the past have been ineligible to apply for and receive the financial resources of specific Federal programs. Thus, if the present bill is not amended to include these schools owned and operated by tribal governments, they will be unable to obtain the benefits of the Indian Self-determination and Educational Reform Act of 1973.

We therefore request that this section of the bill be amended so that the definition of school and school desires include our important tribal schools and other nonlocal educational agencies.

Under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, parent advisory committees have been frustrated by their purely advisory capacity. They have not had the authority or power to implement the parent advisory committee's desired programs.

Such a committee can never hope to overcome the challenges presented by the local school board determined not to carry out Indian educational reform. We believe that an effective community education committee should be tied into the already existing structures of local tribal government or local Indian organizations.

Tribal governments or Indian organizations already have the structural knowledge and resources to evaluate decisions and programs in the local community. Such a tie-in would provide the local community educational committee of Indian parents with the authority to implement needed educational reform. We therefore request that this section of the bill be amended to insure this authority on the part of the community education committee.

Increased funding for public health services and facilities for Indians must be provided under this act, including funds for sanitation projects and existing homes, and so forth.

Sir, this is something that was left out completely so it will be submitted to you. Unless increased appropriations are aggressively sought through the directive spelled out in this legislation, Indian tribes might well find themselves merely contracting the frustrations of Public Health Service administrators.

The Northwest Affiliated Tribes support the passage of Senate bill 1017, with the suggested amendments. Creative administration of this educational reform program will be necessary if it is to be effective. Indian people must have the opportunity and responsibility for the control of this program.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I also have some statements here from Roger Jim, concerning S. 1342, and S. 1343 and S. 1340.

Senator ABOUREZK. We will accept those statements and have them printed into the record in full, and we thank you.

[Statement of Mr. Jim follows:]

Statement of

Roger R. Jim, Sr., President

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

S-1342

The act attempts to reach at the main items Indians have been deprived of.

Education has been statistically below standard. Only those who were determined to get ahead progressed above the government school and went into higher education.

Medical attention is limited because money is not appropriated to assist or provide enough, or adequate, services for the Indian people. Clinics are over-crowded and do not fit the present demand. Personnel is, at this time, in fear of being replaced by Indians, which should have happened a long time ago. Relief of distress has been nonexistent, to my knowledge. The need for health facilities in the Northwest is great because of the few clinics on the reservations and the one available hospital at Seattle.

The bill refers to transfer of maintenance and operation of hospitals and health facilities to PHS for Indians. The hospital at Seattle could easily fit in this area and provide more care for Indian people. The Northwest is in need of health facilities for Indian people. The Section 9 only refers to detailing of personnel to assist tribes and have no reference to facilities.

Social welfare is a big problem on Indian reservations. The State has held very few fair hearings for Indian people. They would rather deny, than assist them in their problems. The Indian people of the Northwest want the eligibility requirements changed in regard to trust resources. Trust property and trust income should not be an available resource.

Welfare problems of Indians can be reduced by understanding social workers and utilization of the law to its fullest. Today it appears that local officials are the hardest upon their neighbors in regard to need of assistance.

URGE PASSAGE OF THIS BILL.

Statement of

Roger R. Jim, Sr., President

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

S-1343

The Indian tribes that are in position to assume control have been waiting for such a bill as S-1343. The reasons being many: negativeness of civil service employees to Indian wants and progressiveness is only one. Fear of being replaced is high among career officers in PHS.

Many programs do not reach the people intended, or do not do an adequate job in accomplishment. The Yakima Nation is directing the P.L. 86-121 Project on the reservation, and the monies under the program is doing a better quality job under direction of the Tribal Council for its members.

Many services under BIA and PHS can be directed by the Indian leaders who can do a better job than is now being done.

URGE PASSAGE OF THIS BILL THAT WILL ALLOW SELF-DETERMINATION WITHOUT TERMINATION.

STATEMENT OF

ROGER R. JIM, SR., PRESIDENT

AFFILIATED TRIBES OF NORTHWEST INDIANS

S-1340

Directing their own programs on their reservations has been one of the priorities set for tribal leaders. It has been denied for one reason or another up to this date. Enaction of the bill would allow for this. But the question is in regard to employee's position regarding his termination, for whatever reason the tribe felt was necessary, and of the procedure after the act of dismissal.

The tribes have asked for direction of the federal programs because of the negative attitude of some civil service employees. The tribe could not affect any change in personnel because of the various laws for the federal employee protecting him from tribal recommendations for termination. This change would give the tribe the right to change or replace any employee for whatever reason that was necessary. The move for a government employee to retain his civil service status when working for the tribe is good.

The tribes have always rejected paying taxes, and, undoubtedly, this means paying a tax for the civil service benefits.

In the move for self-determination, the Indians must have input into the regulations the President prescribes to carry out the intent of this act.

URGE ENACTMENT OF THIS BILL, BUT WITH RESERVATION OF PAYING TAXES.

Senator ABOUREZK. Mrs. Covington, I wish to compliment you and commend you for a well thought out statement. And I want you to know that Senator Jackson and I both very much appreciate your endorsement of S. 1017, and I further want to say that I think you are extremely lucky to have a Senator like Senator Jackson who takes the interest of the Indian people at heart and is willing to work hard and to provide assistance to our subcommittee, and of course to the full Interior Committee for the implementation of Indian self-determination.

And, I think you should be proud of your Senator out there; he has done an excellent job in that area.

Mrs. COVINGTON. Thank you very much. For the first time we didn't have to fight a bill, it was one we could support and I am very proud of that.

Senator ABOUREZK. That doesn't happen too often, does it?

Thank you very much. Does any of the staff have any questions?

Mr. GERARD. Mrs. Covington, just one question. You referred to a contract school in your testimony, is that a former Bureau school or a mission school?

Mrs. COVINGTON. It is the St. Mary's Mission School, it has been in existence probably since before my time, and at the present time—the tribe is taking over because it has a very difficult time to exist. The tribe supplements funds to it and most of our students who come out of this school are good college material.

Mr. GERARD. We can't answer your question right at the moment but we will take that fact into account as the staff deliberates further with the Senators on the bill.

Mr. COVINGTON. I believe most of the papers are just about ready and most of them are signed, it is just a transfer from St. Mary's Mission to the Colville Tribe. It is the only school we have had in existence on the Colville Reservation. As you know, we don't have any other nearby.

Senator ABOUREZK. Thank you very much, Mrs. Covington.

These hearings are now adjourned. That is the extent of the testimony on this particular legislation.

The next hearings of this subcommittee are scheduled for June 12, on S. 1786, which is a bill to require that the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service come back to this Congress for annual authorizations.

[Whereupon, at 12 :20 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]