

NOTES TO THE NATION MARCH 1, 2009

CHIEF'S RESPONSE TO CONGRESS'S LETTER OF FEBRUARY 17, 2009

On February 17 the Congress met in Special Session to consider recent actions of the Chief which we consider to be violations of Osage law. We voted to send a letter outlining our allegations to the Chief and gave him 10 days to respond. I sent a copy of that letter to Osage citizens that night, together with a copy of our attorney's opinion. (If you are getting the Notes to the Nation for the first time, you may not have these documents. If you want copies, email me and I will send them to you.)

I am attaching a full copy of the Chief's response we received Friday, February 27. I will comment only on the first page where he says to the Speaker: *"I would caution you and other members of Congress against supporting a rush to judgment and issuing public statements and opinions which condemn Executive Branch actions. To do so not only appears unethical, but also irresponsible, in that it is seemingly contrary to our three branch system of government."* Oddly, he apparently considered it ethical and responsible to make these untrue statements about Congress: *They want an Internal Audit Department to do witch hunts and They have cut educational funds 25%.* There's more, but you get the idea. My grandfather used to say about such things: *"It all depends on whose ox is being gored."* Additionally, he says, *"My constitutional duties include a mandate to implement, administer and enforce the laws of this Nation"*, but he does not enforce these laws: Open Meetings Law, Competitive Bidding Law, Office of Fiscal and Performance Review Act (has failed to comply with 6 legal requests for information), portions of the Gaming Reform Act. etc.—I won't go on through the rest of the letter. Tomorrow, we will begin analyzing the response and most likely it will be referred to an attorney.

CONGRESS TO HIRE ATTORNEY

The Osage Nation Congressional Affairs Committee will meet next week to consider hiring an attorney. There are several issues that need to be addressed in addition to the problem mentioned above. Some of them are allegations that: the Chief has used the line item veto to change the intent of legislation and has, in effect, made appropriations—which is outside his constitutional authority. Also, we have the current lawsuits involving Congress that the Chief has initiated and the tobacco tax on the Osage tobacco retailers is becoming an issue.

PAWHUSKA DRUMKEEPER SETS DATE FOR JUNE DANCE

Bruce Cass, Drumkeeper for the Pawhuska District, and his committee have set the date for this year's In Lon Shka to be June 25 thru 28.

COLLEGE ASSISTANCE FOR OSAGE STUDENTS RAISED

The Osage Congress Education Committee met with members of the Education Department last Friday. During the discussion it was discovered that there had been a misunderstanding about the application of funds. After the correction, the maximum a full time Osage college student can receive, if also going to summer school and with adequate grades, is: **\$10,100 per year. How about that, Pat Cullen- Carol?**

Members of Congress were introduced to the four new Education Field Facilitators who will be working with students in all the schools in Osage County. They are: Tim Shadlow, Mandy McKinley, Mike Davis and Maureen Wright.

CULTURAL COMMITTEE MEETS TOMORROW AT 10:00 AM

The Cultural Committee will be discussing the prioritization of cultural projects and the Sugar Loaf Mound proposal. Meeting is scheduled to be from 10:00 AM to Noon, tomorrow, March 2, at the Chambers.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETS TOMORROW AT 1:30 PM

Governmental Operations Committee will be discussing a single issue tomorrow: Smoke Shop Retailer Issues. This will center on the tobacco tax rate recently enacted in the new Tobacco Tax Compact with the State of Oklahoma. As always, these committee meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend.

NEWS ARTICLES FROM THE PAST

These articles are taken from Kansas newspapers from the late 1800's. The news was written from the white man's point of view and sometimes the Osage didn't get treated fairly. These excerpts are passed on for their historical value only.

Arkansas City Traveler, December 14, 1881.

Prominent Osages Passing Away.

The leading men of the above tribe in years past are rapidly passing away as will be seen by the following items, but we trust that their places will be filled by men who are better calculated to lead them in the paths of civilization, which it is imperative upon them to follow if they desire to still live in the annals of American history.

Big Chief, for fifteen years the head chief of the Osages, under Governor Joe, took his departure for the Happy hunting grounds on Dec. 1st, 1881. He was in every sense of the term a good Indian and his influence upon the members of his tribe had been most salutary for many years past. No stronger proof of his having overcome the superstitions of his race is needed than when visited on his deathbed by his Indian friends he particularly requested that no scalp be taken for him and not even a mourning party be sent out, thus verifying in a singular manner the appropriateness of his Indian name, "Che-sho-hun-kah" or the "Peace clan." He will long be missed in the councils of his tribe.

Wah-cun-tah-o-ke-ah, in English, "Talk to God," for many years Great Medicine Man of the Big Hill band of Osages, has shaken off the mortal coil and we presume is now talking face to face with the Great Father in the Happy Hunting Grounds that constitute the heaven of the primitive Red Man.

Old Beaugard, being known as an *habitué* of the Agency where he was a general favorite, has recently been gathered to his fathers.

Strike Axe, the head chief of the Little Osages, is reported being at the point of death.