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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20202

OCT 23 1974

*File -
Indian
Education Bill*

Mr. Gerald Pete Jemison
Education Director
Seneca Nation of Indians
Box 201
Irving, New York 14081

Dear Mr. Jemison:

President Ford has asked me to thank you for your letter of September 11 requesting information on funding levels for Part A of the Indian Education Act (Title IV, P.L. 92-318) for Fiscal Year 1975; asking whether any Native Americans will be appointed to high level administrative positions in the Office of Indian Education; and asking whether Native American national organizations and tribal representatives will have an opportunity to express their views on Indian needs and goals.

As you know, the President's budget did not request funds in Fiscal Year 1975 for Part A of the Act which is a service-oriented program. It was felt that in order to improve the quality of education for Indian children and to insure more effective use of Part A funds in the future, information was needed about effective educational practices, curriculum and delivery systems for American Indians. While this information was being sought (through the BIA/OE study, program evaluation, and other information gathering efforts), the Fiscal Year 1975 budget proposed to concentrate funds on special project authorities under Parts B and C of the Act rather than on Part A. This focus on special projects would help improve the quality of educational practices and delivery systems and would provide the Indian community with an opportunity to play a significant role in the development and operation of educational programs directed toward their needs.

OE's position has, of course, been altered by Congressional action. The President signed P.L. 93-404 on August 31 which provides funds in Fiscal Year 1975 for Part A in the amount of \$25 million.

With regard to your request for information on Indians in high level positions in U.S.O.E., as you know, the Indian Education Act authorizes the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education. This is one of my highest priorities at the present time, and I am working very closely with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education to accomplish this to the satisfaction of the Indian community. In the meantime I have appointed Mr. Purnell Swett, a Lumbee from North Carolina, as Acting Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education. In addition, Mr. Swett is the Program Manager for Parts B and C of the Act. Dr. William Demmert, a Tlingit/Sioux, is Program Manager for Part A of the Act.



Page 2 - Mr. Gerald Pete Jemison

While we recognize there is still much to be accomplished in programs for American Indians, we are making progress in increasing the number of Indians involved in the Federal Government's decision making processes. For example, Native American groups and individuals participated in reviewing the proposed rules and regulations for the Title IV program prior to their publication in the 1973 Federal Register. We now have four Indian Advisory Councils at the national level (i.e., Indian Health, Civil Rights, Office of Indian Education, and Department of Labor) as well as Indians appointed to other National Councils (i.e., Bilingual Education Advisory Council, Fund for Post Secondary Education, and National Advisory Council on Equality of Education Opportunity).

I can assure you that this Administration will continue its efforts to establish a meaningful process for representatives of the Indian community to voice their needs and goals.

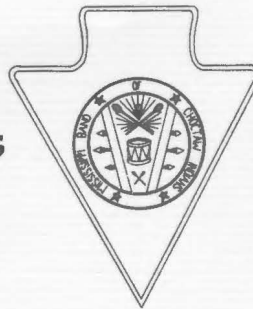
Sincerely,

(Sgd.) T. H. Bell

T. H. Bell
U.S. Commissioner
of Education



MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS



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October 9, 1974

Mr. Brad Patterson
Office of the President
Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C.

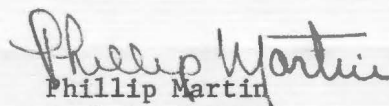
Dear Mr. Patterson:

As you probably know, S. 1017, the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Reform Act is delayed in the House Indian Affairs Subcommittee due to failure to obtain a quorum.

This legislation is extremely important to the implementation of the Administration's policy of Indian self-determination and to the improvement of Indian educational programs. I have sent telegrams to members of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on this matter, and think it would be well advised for members of the Executive Branch to get involved in seeing that this legislation is passed before the end of this session.

Any aid which the White House could lend in the passage of S. 1017 would certainly be appreciated by the Indian people, both on- and off-reservation.

Sincerely,


Phillip Martin
Tribal Chairman

PM/rjt

cc: National Congress of American Indians
National Tribal Chairmen's Association
Americans for Indian Opportunity

"CHOCTAW SELF-DETERMINATION"

