

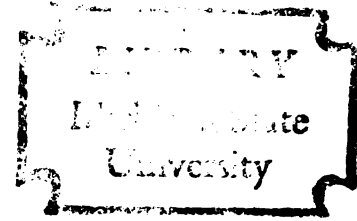




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## ABSTRACT

### THE AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION: ITS HISTORY, ACTIVITIES, AND ORGANIZATION

By

Don Arthur Christensen

This study is an examination of the activities of the American Indian Press Association and an assessment of its role as a cohesive element in the movement for solidarity among American Indians. The study begins with events which led to the formation of the American Indian Press Association in the fall of 1970 and concludes with a profile of the association as it existed in the fall of 1973. It traces the association's financial struggle, identifies sources of income, touches on its relationship with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and explores the association's efforts to sensitize the mass media to Indian concerns. It also offers some insight into the operation of Indian newspapers and provides a limited directory of American Indian publications.

Since its inception, the American Indian Press Association has attracted into its membership more than 150 Indian publications and issued several hundred official press cards to Indian editors. By conducting communications workshops and providing neophyte editors with professionally written news releases, photographs, cartoons, book reviews, and editorials--all on Indian-related issues--the association is attempting to bring to Indian publications an awareness of national issues and

a higher level of reportage. Simultaneously, it is working to educate and sensitize practitioners in the mass media to Native American concerns.

Because precious little has been written on matters germane to the American Indian press, this study is based almost entirely on interviews, correspondence with Indian editors, attendance at Indian communications workshops and conventions, and an analysis of association files conducted over a period of three years.

The study concludes that the association has made noteworthy progress in its efforts to assist Indian editors in taking a more catholic approach to reporting Indian affairs. In addition, ample evidence was found to indicate that the association has had some impact in sensitizing mass media to Indian concerns.



THE AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION: ITS  
HISTORY, ACTIVITIES, AND ORGANIZATION

By

Don Arthur Christensen

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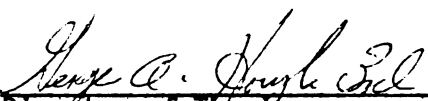
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of Communication Arts, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

  
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Director of Thesis

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## INTRODUCTION

Historically, the American Indian has been cast as a near-naked savage who communicates via tom-tom, sign language, smoke signals, or unintelligible ughs, grunts, and pidgin English. At best he has been regarded as simply uncommunicative, mute, or "wooden." Yet flying in the face of these stereotypes is the fact that American Indians were publishing their own newspapers almost 150 years ago.

American Indian journalism was born February 21, 1828, in the Cherokee capital city of New Echota, located in what is now the north-western section of the state of Georgia.<sup>1</sup> The first effort appeared under the name plate of the Cherokee Phoenix, a four-page publication printed in both English and Cherokee and edited by Elias Boudinot, a mixed blood and "probably the best educated Cherokee citizen."<sup>2</sup> It was Boudinot who proclaimed in the prospectus for the new publication that the Phoenix would "answer false charges and seek the support of its white friends." And it was Boudinot in the years that followed who saw to it that the Phoenix fulfilled that promise, successfully parrying the thrusts of the white southern press and for a time delaying the removal of the Cherokee

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<sup>1</sup>Cullen, Joe Holland, "The Cherokee Indian Newspapers, 1828-1906: The Tribal Voice of a People in Transition" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1956), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

Nation from Georgia to Oklahoma by gaining the sympathy of the northern newspapers.

On May 31, 1834, the debt-encumbered Phoenix suspended publication.<sup>3</sup> But during the slightly more than six years the Phoenix was published, it served as an effective voice against unjust treatment of the Cherokees. Its impact is attested by the fact that soon after publication was suspended, the printing equipment was seized by state and federal soldiers.<sup>4</sup>

Noteworthy is the fact that the Phoenix marks both the beginning of American Indian journalism and the first serious attempt at reversing the flow of information on which opinion of the American Indian was based. In the Phoenix the Indian found a vehicle through which he could share with the White community and other Indians his perspective on the issues that affected him.

Other native American Indian newspapers imbued with this same independent spirit followed the Phoenix. The Shawanoë Sun appeared on March 1, 1835, less than a year after the demise of the Phoenix.<sup>5</sup> This quarter-page news sheet, published exclusively in the Indian language, marked the beginning of Kansas journalism. Under the editorship of the Rev. Johnston Lykins, the Sun shone weekly until its Baptist founder was forced by ill health to discontinue publication in 1839.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>5</sup>James Melvin Lee, History of American Journalism (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917), p. 232.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



A second Cherokee newspaper, the Advocate, was begun at Tahlequah, Oklahoma, on September 26, 1844, by William P. Ross.<sup>7</sup> Like the Phoenix, it was published in both the English and Cherokee languages. Subscription rates were three dollars per year "except to those persons who read only the Cherokee language and they shall pay two dollars." Publication was eventually suspended on September 28, 1853, when the Cherokee Nation encountered financial problems and the Advocate could no longer afford sufficient printing help. Seventeen years later, the Advocate was revived, and the new version was published until the Cherokee Nation was disbanded on March 3, 1906.<sup>8</sup>

Another early Indian publication, the Vindicator, was started by J. H. Moore at New Boggy, Oklahoma, in June, 1872, to serve the Choctaws and Chickasaws.<sup>9</sup> Later, the Vindicator merged with the Oklahoma Star. Lastly, in May, 1876, one M. P. Roberts is reported to have founded the Indian Journal, which eventually became the official organ of the Creek Nation.<sup>10</sup>

Like the Phoenix, these tribal newspapers sought to counter-balance the reporting of Indian activities by frontier newspapers of the day. The task was one of Herculean proportions, for the frontier press was often irresponsible and inflammatory in its reporting on Indian affairs. General George Crook once testified "It is too often the case,

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<sup>7</sup>Holland, Cherokee Newspapers, p. 211.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 590.

<sup>9</sup>Lee, History of American Journalism, p. 236.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

that border newspapers . . . disseminate all sorts of exaggerations and falsehoods about Indians, which are copied in papers of high character and wide circulation, in other parts of the country, while the Indians' side of the case is rarely ever heard."<sup>11</sup>

Typical were the malevolent roles played by the Arizona Citizen and the Weekly Arizonan of Tucson and the Arizona Miner of Prescott in the little known Camp Grant Massacre of April 30, 1871, in which more than 100 Indians were slain, only eight of whom were men.<sup>12</sup> A 1968 study of the actions of these three newspapers prior to the massacre prompted one researcher to conclude that "the newspapers' greatest contribution to the Camp Grant tragedy appears to have been their reinforcement of anti-Indian sentiment."<sup>13</sup>

Despite the fact that during the 1800s the vast majority of Indians could neither read nor write, there exists ample evidence that they were well aware of the inaccurate and often inflammatory reportage which appeared in the frontier newspapers. Geronimo, famed warrior-leader of the Chiricahuas, fled the reservation with a handful of followers when the local newspapers began calling for his execution. Later in Mexico a meeting was arranged at which Geronimo told General George Crook: "I want the papers sent you to tell the truth about me, because I want to do what is right. Very often there are stories put in the newspapers

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<sup>11</sup>U. S., Department of War, Report of the Secretary of War, 1883, p. 167.

<sup>12</sup>William B. Blankenburg, "The Role of the Press in an Indian Massacre, 1871," Journalism Quarterly, Spring, 1968, p. 61.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

that I am to be hanged. I don't want that anymore. When a man tries to do right, such stories ought not to be put in the newspapers."<sup>14</sup>

Without benefit of a broad press of his own, the Indian was virtually powerless to rebut these charges. Angered and frustrated, he often struck back at his detractors. In 1862, for example, Indians attacked the Sioux Falls Democrat, sacked the paper's offices, and carried off the type, which they later fashioned into ornamental pipes and sold to settlers.<sup>15</sup>

Those few early native American publications which did exist not only presented the Indian perspective, but also served as organs of cohesion. They bonded peoples together by perpetuating tribal traditions and customs. When it became apparent to whites in the late 1800s and early 1900s that the continuation of these native customs, games, and rites only impeded the speed at which the Indian could be assimilated into the white society, the native newspapers were suppressed.

The termination of these few remaining Indian newspapers produced a communications void. Scattered about the reservations in places often inaccessible by road and without electricity, the Indian was physically isolated and effectively held incommunicado with the outside world. So complete was his isolation that Rose Robinson, a Hopi Indian, recalled that "I didn't realize I was poor until I left the reservation."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>U. S., Congress, Senate, Sen. Doc. 88, 51st Cong., 1st Sess., 1890, IX, 12.

<sup>15</sup>Sidney Kobre, Development of American Journalism (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1969), p. 297.

<sup>16</sup>Rose Robinson, extemporaneous talk at American Indian Mass Communications Conference, Minnesota Church Center, Minneapolis, June 8, 1972.

World War II shattered the isolationist existence of the Indian just as it shattered the isolationism of the United States. From 1941 through 1945, nearly 25,000 Indians were inducted into the armed forces.<sup>17</sup> In addition, with the home labor market depleted by the war, other Indians, ineligible to serve for various reasons, accepted off-reservation employment. For the first time since the defeat of their forefathers, thousands of Indians left the reservations.

The impact was immeasurable. In Europe, Asia, and America, Indians were exposed to new life styles. They became schooled in the ways of all peoples. They proved themselves on the battlefield and in business and industry. With the conclusion of the war, the Indian returned to the reservation wise in the ways of the outside world, but still holding tenaciously to the belief that the tribal way was best.

In recognition of the Indian role in the war, President Harry S. Truman, acting on the advice of the Hoover Commission, began seeking "complete integration" for the Indian.<sup>18</sup> It was an honor that the Indian was fully prepared to reject. Indeed, he was prepared to fight it. The war had ended Indian passivism. Indian veterans were forming the vanguard of a resurgent Indian movement which adopted "self-determination" as its byword. The seeds were sown for a national unification of Indians.

Still, a national or Pan-Indian movement was little more than a dream. With few exceptions, first loyalties in the post-war years,

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<sup>17</sup>Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 19.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

the 1950s and 1960s remained with the tribe. "A man is a Sioux, Apache, or Chippewa before he is an Indian," observed Charles Trimble, an Oglala Sioux. "Even to the extent of being a Mescalero Apache or Rosebud Sioux. You can misspell his name, but you don't dare mistake his tribe."<sup>19</sup>

To this extent, the Indian newspapers which arose after World War II spoke to tribal needs and problems. Coverage was restricted to reservation affairs and council news; editors were professionally isolated. In fact, it was 1969 before Charles Trimble, the editor of a small Denver-based Indian publication, began opening the lines of communications among Indian editors. It is these efforts by Trimble and the resultant unification of Indian editors which provide the focal point for this study.

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<sup>19</sup>Charles Trimble, private interview held in the offices of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, February 12, 1972.

## CHAPTER I

### AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION: A SEED IS SOWN

By 1969 there were approximately 150 weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, and irregularly appearing publications by and for American Indians.<sup>1</sup> Geographically, they ranged from the controversial Akwesasne Notes, official voice of the Kanienkahako (Mohawk Nation), in upper New York State, to the Florida-based Alligator Times of the Seminole Indians, to the Southern Ute Drum, in Ignacio, Colorado, to the Coyote in Davis, California, on up to the Tundra Times at Fairbanks, Alaska.

Printed by offset, letterpress, mimeo, and ditto processes, and funded by tribal councils, grants, donations, subscriptions, and a modicum of advertising, these native American publications were largely provincial in scope and amateurish in makeup. Their coverage was confined to reservation or community life; their limited editorial staffs were untrained in journalistic technique. Almost without exception, these native American publications had extremely small circulations, for even in the later half of the twentieth century, the newspaper was more a novelty than an accepted means of communication among Indians.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Trimble estimated that there were 100 to 150 such publications in 1969. A list of Indian-interest publications compiled by the American Indian Press Association in 1971 showed more than 175 native American newspapers, newsletters, and magazines.

In a report issued on the first planning conference for an American Indian Press Association, Charles Trimble, an Oglala Sioux and conference coordinator, assessed the Indian-press relationship thus: "Indian society is not dependent, or reliant, on the printed word as is the White Society. This is not to say that Indian society has nobly resisted the printed word; it has grown accustomed to doing without the benefits of that medium."<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, Trimble cautioned that the impotence of the existing Indian newspapers was not to be construed as testimony that Indian society did not need a strong press.

It is often noted, by observers of Indians, that the "moccasin telegraph" is as effective a medium of communications among Indian people as the sophisticated media of the modern age. The "moccasin telegraph" is the word-of-mouth process to which Indian people are generally resigned, in the absence of conventional channels, for news. And the "moccasin telegraph" is only as reliable as its non-Indian counterpart--the rumor mill.<sup>3</sup>

Trimble's concern over the lack of printed communication among Indians was sparked in 1969 while he was attending graduate school in journalism at the University of Colorado and editing the Indian Times for the White Buffalo Council of American Indians in Denver. The editorship of the Indian Times was more an extra-curricular activity for Trimble than anything else, though he approached it seriously. To the task he brought a sense of graphics, having received a fine arts degree

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Trimble, "Report on a Planning Meeting for an American Indian Journalist Conference and an American Indian News Service Organization," (unpublished report issued following an exploratory meeting of Indian editors in Spokane, July 23-25, 1970), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

in advertising art from the University of South Dakota.<sup>4</sup> Quickly he refined the appearance of the publication, polished the writing, and incorporated humor in the form of "Luke Warm Water," an Indian cartoon character who pointed up the ludicrous manner in which the Indian is often regarded by whites.

Response to these alterations and additions was quite favorable, Trimble recalls. Yet, he derived little satisfaction from what he was doing. "The loneliness" of the job troubled him. Frequently he complained to his wife, Anne, of the lack of "interchange among Indian editors" that made him feel as though he were "operating in a vacuum." As a result, he began attempting to stimulate some contact by exchanging publications and ideas with several other Indian editors. During the course of his correspondence it became clear to him that the tribes and organizations sorely needed the help of professional communications to improve their services to Indian people.

Trimble next discussed the problem with the Denver-based American Indian Development, Incorporated, a non-profit, educational organization whose primary function is to identify outstanding American Indian young adults and assist them in becoming leaders in the Indian community. At the time, Trimble was vice president of this organization.<sup>5</sup>

Convinced the problem was a significant one, American Indian Development began seeking funds for a national conference of Indian journalists out of which would possibly emerge an Indian news service.

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<sup>4</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



Finally, after numerous rejections, American Indian Development received assurances from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in June, 1970, that it would provide limited funds to continue efforts toward the development of an Indian communications program.<sup>6</sup>

Encouraged by the promise of funding, American Indian Development scheduled a three-day planning and feasibility meeting, July 23 through 25, 1970, at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane, Washington. The meeting was to coincide with an American Indian Development workshop, thereby allowing students in the workshop to "observe yet another example of Indian concern for progress."<sup>7</sup>

In choosing editors to participate in the meeting, Trimble and his colleagues sought a cross-section of tribal newspapers, inter-tribal newspapers, national Indian publications, and urban-Indian publications. Consideration was also given to geographical representation of Indian groups. Of those who received invitations, seven agreed to meet with Trimble in Spokane on July 23, 1970, to lay the groundwork for what was to become the American Indian Press Association.

Program participants were James Jefferson, editor of the Southern Ute Drum; Carole Wright, editor of the Native Nevadan; Frank LaPointe, editor of the Rosebud Sioux Herald, official publication of the Rosebud Sioux; Gwen Owle, editor of the Cherokee One Feather; seventy-five-year-old Marie Potts, a Maidu Indian and editor of Smoke Signals, publication of the Federated Indians of California; Mary Baca,

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<sup>6</sup>Trimble, "Planning Conference Report," p. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

editor of the Jicarilla Chieftain; and Rupert Costo, editor of the Indian Historian. Also in attendance were Father Thomas Connolly, editor of the Northwest Indian, official publication of the Spokane Kalispel, and Coeur d'Alene tribes; and Mary Nelson, director of Indian Studies, Central Washington State College, Cheney, and a guest of Costo.<sup>8</sup>

Marshall Tome, originator of the Navajo Times; Jerry Gambill, editor of Akwesasne Notes; and Dean C. Welsh, editor of Smoke Signals, Colorado River tribes, were invited, but could not attend for various reasons.<sup>9</sup>

The first day of the conference was devoted entirely to general discussion of communications in Indian affairs with each participant making a presentation on his publication and specific problems. Despite the diversity of interests and publications, certain major problems were common to all situations. Oft shared problems included lack of information on outside reservation activities, financial dependency and its effect on editorial objectivity, insufficient staff to develop interest building copy, Indian humor and comic strips, and lack of proper interpretation of Indian activities by the mass media.

The second day was devoted to a discussion of the merits and possibilities of establishing an organization to assist Indian newspapers in upgrading their services and thereby improving communications among Indian people. The following were listed as possible functions of an Indian news service:

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

Help improve the mechanical and editorial quality of Indian newspapers through courses set up by the American Indian Press Association.

Provide interpretations of legal and technical information affecting Indian people.

Form an organization for Indian journalists which would provide strength to Indian journalists and minimize infringements on their journalistic freedom.

Assist Indian newspapers in obtaining funding by interceding for them or by assisting them in establishing methods of getting revenue through advertising or subscription methods.

Provide a central point of exchange of information for Indian newspapers, thereby enhancing possibilities of greater unity among Indian people.

Provide an organization for Indian people and Indian causes to deal laterally with mass media, assuring proper interpretation of Indian matters by the mass media.

Seek out and assist qualified Indian youth to enter the field of mass communications.

Provide informational and entertainment items to Indian newspapers to help them gain readership.

Provide a source of Indian expertise to assist in the education of the general public in regard to Indian affairs.<sup>10</sup>

A portion of the second day and all of the last day of the conference were used to plan further research, establish areas of responsibility, set up schedules for further meetings, and formulate resolutions. To facilitate a survey of the other Indian publications, the United States was divided into nine sections. Conference participants were assigned areas, in teams, to conduct research and enlist support for further development of an Indian news service among Indian journalists in their respective areas.

Region one included the reservation and urban Indians in the states of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. Jerry Gambill, editor, Akwesasne Notes, was named representative for the area.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

Region two encompassed the states of Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia on the north, and Florida to the south. Its western perimeter coincided with the western boundaries of Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia. Within this region resides the Cherokees, Choctaws, Seminoles, and a few smaller tribes. Gwen Owle, editor of the Cherokee One Feather, was chosen to represent this south-east region.

The Chippewas and Potowatomis of Michigan fell into region three along with the urban Indians of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Militant Russell Means, editor of The Warrior, a publication of the American Indian Center, Chicago, was given the job of coordinating activities in region three.

Loretta Ellis of the National Congress of American Indians was appointed representative for the fourth area composed of Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota and such tribes as the Chippewa, Menominee, Sac and Fox, and Winnabago.

Region five consisted of Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma with its relatively heavy concentration of Indians--Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Wichita, Delaware, and Cadda in the southwest portion of the state, Creek, Chickasaw, Chotaw, Osage, Pawnee, and a few other tribes scattered throughout the rest of the state. Representative for region five was Anna Kilpatrick, editor of the Chey-Arap Bulletin, El Reno, Oklahoma.

Region six was primarily Sioux country. Included were the Dakotas, Nebraska, Colorado, and Wyoming with its Wind River Arapahoes and Shoshones. Frank LaPointe, editor of the independent Rosebud Sioux

Herald, assumed responsibility for this area, while Trimble agreed to assist with the canvass of Indian editors.

New Mexico and Arizona, two states with relatively high concentrations of Indians, composed region seven. Scattered throughout this area are the remnants of the once powerful Apache tribes, the Pueblo, and the Navajo, largest of the present day tribes. The region also dipped into Colorado to include the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain tribes. Representing this area were Mary Baca, editor of the Jicarilla Chieftain, and James Jefferson, editor of the Southern Ute Drum.

The northwest--Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska--with its clusters of smaller tribes was designated as region eight. Delegates for the northwest region were Father Thomas Connolly, editor, Northwest Indian Times, and Howard Rock, editor, Tundra Times, Fairbanks, Alaska.

The ninth and final region encompassed California, Nevada, and Utah. Here the dominant tribes are Paiute and Shoshone, but there also exists within the confines of this vast area numerous smaller tribes with all but forgotten names like Modoc and Maidu. A trio of Indian editors--Rupert Costo, editor of the Indian Historian, American Indian Historical Society; Marie Potts, editor, Smoke Signals, Federated Indians of California; and Carole Wright, editor, The Native Nevadan--was selected to represent this three-state region.<sup>11</sup>

Some months later, consolidations resulted in the formation of seven regions from the original nine. Regions one and two (except for

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-11.

Louisiana which was incorporated into the original region five) were combined, as were regions three and four. Colorado was officially included in region seven.

Later, under a constitution drafted in early 1971, the American Indian Press Association provided for the selection of two board members from each of the seven areas. These board members became official area representatives with responsibility for contacting by letter, telephone, or in person other Indian editors and news staffs in order to develop strong regional associations of the working Indian press.

Other duties eventually delegated to board members included the development of press relations with the mass media, preparation and submission to the association of pertinent news articles and news commentary, solicitation of advertising for their own and other Indian newspapers in their regions, and the identification and seeking of solutions to the problems peculiar to the Indian press of their respective regions.

At that July, 1970 meeting in Spokane, however, the principal charge to the area representatives was to survey Indian editors in their respective regions on the problems confronting them, and be prepared to report the findings at a second conference scheduled for Denver in the latter part of September. Before adjourning, resolutions were passed thanking American Indian Development for putting together the planning conference; selecting Charles Trimble as temporary chairman and coordinator; requesting American Indian Development to raise the necessary funds for the continuing effort; and opposing the granting of funds to Metropolitan State College for a survey of Indian people in the Denver area.

Prior to the second meeting in September, Trimble moved to Durango, Colorado, to teach contemporary Indian affairs at Fort Lewis College, a small state-supported college at which Indians can enroll tuition free.<sup>12</sup> As a matter of convenience, the meeting originally planned for Denver was held September 18 through 20 in Durango. Rupert Costo, who, according to Trimble, complained that he was not notified in time, was absent. New participants included Rose Robinson, who came as an observer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs; Leo Vocu, an Oglala Sioux and editor of the Oglala War Cry; and Russell Means, editor of the Cleveland Crier, a publication of the Cleveland, Ohio, Indian Center. Means, known for his radical posture, was asked to participate after the board decided at its Spokane meeting that it needed at least one militant for complete representation.<sup>13</sup>

At the Durango meeting the board reviewed the survey of Indian editors and concluded that the results only reinforced its discussions at Spokane. The most pressing problems among Indian editors were: (1) lack of a common news source, and (2) dependence for financial support on tribal government.

Financing for the Durango meeting was drawn from a \$5,000 grant made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in September to support communications research and explore the possibility of developing an American

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<sup>12</sup>"Indians Charge Broken Colorado Pact," New York Times, April 5, 1971, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup>Charles Trimble, telephone interview, February 23, 1973.

Indian Press Association.<sup>14</sup> With the initial grant came the promise of additional funding if the idea proved feasible. In November, 1970, Trimble received a written commitment from the Bureau of Indian Affairs for an additional \$19,265 for the project.

With the promise of these funds, Trimble felt the activities of the press group could be accelerated. He quickly arranged a third meeting to be held in San Francisco at the offices of the American Indian Historical Association. It was here that the AIPA began taking on formal organizational structure. Trimble was named executive director and James Jefferson was chosen as board chairman.

In addition, Jefferson issued his first statement to the press on behalf of the AIPA. He noted that "misinterpretation and the wrong perspective on priorities and Indian events indicates a need for Indian input in the mass media." Responding to the somewhat spectacular reportage of Indian affairs of the day, Jefferson added, "Sensationalizing sit-ins in Bureau of Indian Affairs offices across the country, Alcatraz, and the Pit River situation may get the public interested, but many of the stories don't fully cover why these events are happening."<sup>15</sup> To rectify the situation, Jefferson announced an American Indian Press Association was being formed with headquarters in Denver, Colorado.

An adverse effect of the elections was the internal politics which spawned ill feelings among some of the participants. Disgusted

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<sup>14</sup>Letter from Willis A. Selden, chief, Communications Service, Community Relations Service, U. S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., February 23, 1973.

<sup>15</sup>"Indian Press Association Aims at Altering Attitudes," Denver Post, November 30, 1970, p. 16.



with the maneuvering and bickering, and shaken by the almost simultaneous deaths of her husband and a parent, Mary Baca resigned shortly after the first meeting. Then in January, Costo left after a clash with Trimble. Later, Robert Benn, editor of the Choctaw Community News, was added to the board. But he, too, resigned when he was given an administrative position within the tribe and had to relinquish his editorial duties.<sup>16</sup> While creating some bitterness, these resignations did little to deter the progress of the association.

In January, 1971, Trimble contacted the Community Relations Service of the United States Justice Department in hopes of obtaining financial and professional support for the neonatal association of Indian editors. Initially Trimble sought funds for a steering committee meeting to write bylaws and a constitution. In response, the Community Relations Service employed Clayton Willis, who had been the public affairs director for the National Council of Indian Opportunity, to work with Trimble and the steering committee, beginning in January, 1971.<sup>17</sup>

Later that month Willis filed a report suggesting an approach which was approved by Gilbert Pompa, associate director for national services, Community Relations Service. Citizens' letters providing for transportation and \$25 a day for room and board were issued to five board members, and the proposed meeting was held February 1 through 3, 1971,

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<sup>16</sup>Richard LaCourse, private interview held in the offices of the American Indian Press Association, Washington, D.C., January 26, 1973.

<sup>17</sup>Selden, letter, February 23, 1973.

at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.<sup>18</sup> The bylaws and constitution were drafted and were confirmed later that month along with the articles of incorporation when the entire board met in Denver.

Essentially the two-page constitution reiterated the purposes of the AIPA as proclaimed by Board Chairman Jefferson in San Francisco, ". . . to develop and to improve communications among Indian people, and between Indians and the non-Indian public." To these ends, it enumerated four areas of operational emphasis:

The American Indian Press Association will help improve the technical and editorial quality of newspapers and other periodicals directed at Indian readership.

It will provide unified organizational strength for journalists involved in publications directed at Indian readership, thereby assuring their ability to perform objective services and minimizing any infringement on their journalistic freedom.

It will provide an organization to deal laterally with the mass media in matters of Indian affairs. It will assist the media to inform and educate the general public regarding Indian people and Indian issues, and assure proper interpretations and priorities in Indian affairs.

It will encourage Indians to enter fields of mass communications.

The constitution also outlined membership requirements, provided for the election of officers and board members, defined the regularity with which meetings would be held, and established as a quorum for the transaction of business, a majority of the members of the board of directors and 25 per cent of the total regular membership at any regularly called annual or special meeting. Two articles in the bylaws specified the duties of the officers and dealt with voting and delegation of votes.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

The AIPA took as its headquarters an office in the Zook Building, 431 West Colfax, Denver. The paneled office was provided rent free by American Indian Development, and secretarial help was volunteered by Anne Trimble. Office furnishings, in those early days, included bookshelves, tables, and chairs which soon became cluttered with Indian periodicals and Indian-related paperback references and official correspondence. A headdress adorned one wall, while in the reception area hung an original cartoon by Oliphant depicting a tourist bus marked "Bureau of Indian Affairs" filled to capacity with camera-toting bureaucrats excitedly snapping pictures of an emancipated Indian and his scrawny dog alongside the road.

Because Trimble lived in Colorado, free space was available through American Indian Development, and the location was about as geographically central to all tribes as could be hoped, Denver was a logical choice for the administrative headquarters of the AIPA. It was felt, however, that the AIPA could best serve its members and the mass media by establishing a news bureau in Washington, D.C. Here, the issues and legislation regulating the American Indian were formulated and could best be monitored. Here, too, the AIPA could share the Indian perspective on treaties, new Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, and federal court statutes with non-Indian reporters.

Thus, in April, 1971, Thomas Edwards and Richard LaCourse were hired as correspondents and sent to Washington, D.C., "with a ream of paper and a few stencils," to establish a news bureau in an old conference room which was part of a cluster of offices rented by the National

Congress of American Indians at 1346 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest.<sup>19</sup>

In exchange for the rent-free space, the two men agreed to assist the National Congress of American Indians with its publication chores.

Prior to joining the AIPA, both Edwards and LaCourse were reporters for major daily newspapers. Edwards, a non-Indian and veteran of eight years with the Scripps-Howard newspapers, was on the staff of the Cincinnati Post and Times-Star where he specialized in environmental reporting. LaCourse, a Yakima Indian, had been employed by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer for five years. While there he covered Indian affairs and Black Panther activities in the Seattle area.

For LaCourse, who had never before been East, the first eight weeks in the nation's capital were a "period of puzzlement and shock." Gradually he acclimated himself, however, began making contacts, and established a weekly news service patterned after the Associated Press. In a few short weeks he and Edwards were issuing an average of ten news releases a week. It wasn't long, however, before Edwards, whose non-Indian heritage caused rumblings among AIPA board members, decided to resign. As a result, the news bureau became a one-man operation assisted only sporadically by outside contributors.

From the beginning the AIPA solicited contributions to its news service. Among the early respondents were Vine Deloria, Jr., Rose Robinson, and Trimble who provided humor in the form of Horsefeathers, a cartoon character who pointed up such things as bureaucratic waste and contradictions in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

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<sup>19</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

About 80 per cent of the material in these early press releases was straight reporting, Trimble recalled. The rest was commentary of a type he characterized as "liberal as hell." Because of this provocative reporting, both Trimble and LaCourse at one time or another received threats on their lives.

Reaction to the first news packets was marked by a significant amount of "bitching over the use of big words." One editor commented succinctly: "Copy too long and wordy. We print tabloid and spaces are at a premium. More use of easy to understand words and writing. Most of our readership uses English as a second language."<sup>20</sup>

Another noted: "Most of the articles we have received would have been more readable had they been written more simply. We appreciate the length and depth of the articles; however, we rewrite most of them to make the meaning clearer to the population the newspaper is aimed at."<sup>21</sup>

Generally, the reaction was favorable, however. Typical were the remarks of one editor, who saw in the AIPA real hope for the future: "For the first time, news pertaining to Indian issues and personalities have reached those in remote places. This is very good. We need more of this type of news. People of this area are already looking forward to more news."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Response by editor, Choctaw Community News, to questionnaire issued by the American Indian Press Association, May, 1971.

<sup>21</sup>Response by editor, Standing Rock Star, to questionnaire, May, 1971.

<sup>22</sup>Response by editor, Fort Yuma Newsletter, to questionnaire, May, 1971.

## CHAPTER II

### A FINANCIAL STRUGGLE

Called upon to deliver the treasurer's report at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association in Denver, November 16 through 18, 1972, the Reverend Thomas Connolly prefaced his statement with the observation that the "American Indian Press Association deals in miracles."<sup>1</sup> Connolly, whose association with the AIPA dates back to July, 1970, when Indian editors first gathered in Spokane to explore the possibilities for improving written communication among Indians, commented that he had seen a "lot bigger organizations do a lot less on a lot larger budgets." In light of the obstacles the AIPA overcame in its maiden year, the remark could well have been an epitaph.

From its inception, the AIPA had financial difficulties which severely limited the size of its staff and scope of its activities. While it maintained what must have seemed like grandiose plans for a total communications system with an annual budget of \$225,000,<sup>2</sup> the AIPA, in reality, lived an almost hand to mouth existence. The frustration

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Connolly, extemporaneous remarks delivered at annual convention of American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 18, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Trimble, "Proposal for an American Indian Mass Communications Development Program," American Indian Press Association, n.d., p. 12.

which resulted from stillborn programs and payless paydays prompted Richard LaCourse, AIPA news director and at the time one of only two salaried staff members, to confess sadness to a group of fellow editors "over what we can not do because we have a dollar noose around our throat."<sup>3</sup>

As executive director of the AIPA, Charles Trimble was primarily responsible for maintaining slack in the financial noose. For several reasons it was not an enviable task. Indian publications, as previously noted, operate on tight budgets, often without benefit of advertising revenue, and frequently through direct appropriations from the tribal council. Trimble and his colleagues knew that before they could charge even a modest membership fee, they would first have to demonstrate the value of AIPA services to Indian editors and the tribal councils. Thus, for the first year the AIPA offered a free news service in hopes of demonstrating its viability and generating enough interest to begin charging subscription fees the following year. In the meantime, the AIPA began looking down other avenues for financial support.

As might be expected, the first appeal was made to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agency of the Department of Interior and the most powerful determinant of Indian life in the United States. The bureau responded with a pledge of approximately \$25,000 to support the idea of an Indian press association. An advance of \$5,000 was made in September,

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<sup>3</sup>Richard LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks delivered at American Indian Communications Conference, Minnesota Church Center, Minneapolis, June 8, 1972.

1970, for the formative meetings.<sup>4</sup> Two months later, the AIPA received a letter of commitment for the balance of the funds. It was the confirmation of this second grant that triggered the actual formation of the AIPA.

Trimble contends that the bureau later promised an additional \$40,000 to \$100,000.<sup>5</sup> This money was never received, however, because, Trimble contends, an upheaval in the bureau resulted in some significant personnel and policy changes. And, indeed, there was a major shakeup in the bureau during this period.

In August, 1969, Louis R. Bruce, Jr., whose father was a Mohawk and whose mother was an Oglala Sioux, was named Commissioner of Indian Affairs, succeeding Robert L. Bennett who resigned after attacking the Nixon Administration for not being "sensitive to the Indian problem." Bruce quickly appointed a group of young Indian activists who eventually became known as the "fearless fourteen" to "galvanize a complacent and predominantly white bureaucracy."<sup>6</sup> In the months that followed, Bruce was moderately successful in reinvigorating the bureau thanks largely to the support of then Secretary of the Interior, Walter J. Hickel. But with the dismissal of Hickel by President Nixon and the subsequent appointment of Rogers C. B. Morton as Secretary of the Interior, the reform movement was badly crippled. Morton allied himself with the

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<sup>4</sup>Selden, letter, February 23, 1973.

<sup>5</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

<sup>6</sup>Benjamin Welles, "American Indian Activists Winning Bureau Reform," New York Times, January 9, 1972, p. 1.



"embattled bureaucrats and their allies, a group of conservative tribal chiefs who complained that Mr. Bruce was packing the bureau with young 'red power' militants."<sup>7</sup>

In July, 1971, Morton appointed as Deputy Indian Commissioner, John O. Crow, an old-line official and Cherokee from Oklahoma. With his appointment, Crow was given the power to redelegate authority, even that which had been reserved for Bruce.

Within three weeks, three Indians in the bureau, including one outspoken critic of United States policy, received notices of transfer. One of them, William H. Veeder, a sixty-year-old lawyer, claimed he received an "ultimatum" to move to Arizona or be "fired." The threatened dilution of Bruce's reform movement within the bureau became a rallying point for the young Indian activists. Finally in September, 1971, the young activists attempted a house arrest of Crow. The demonstration brought word from President Nixon to Morton to halt his shake-up of the bureau.<sup>8</sup> As a result, Veeder's transfer was rescinded and Bruce was allowed to continue, though not unrestricted, with his reform of the bureau.

It was, of course, during this tempestuous period that Trimble maintains all hope of future funding from the bureau was lost. In addition, Trimble noted, "the reason we didn't get the money from the bureau is that by then we had already become something other than what they

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

(Bureau of Indian Affairs) thought we would be."<sup>9</sup> Certainly the AIPA had wasted no time in making it known that it would not serve as a public relations arm of the bureau. Its early press releases included satirical jabs at the bureau, frequently referring to it as the "Burro of Indian Affairs" for its alleged sluggish responses to the needs of Indians.

Next, Trimble turned to the major foundations for assistance. But since the AIPA did not have a non-profit tax status, few foundations were willing to consider proposals from the fledgling organization. Moreover, the foundations found the concept of an Indian press association unexciting. They suggested the AIPA venture into electronic media, movies, or prepare multi-media presentations.

Finally, in the summer of 1971, Tillie Walker of the United Church of Christ's Indian Ministry suggested to Trimble that he draft a proposal for presentation before the Joint Strategy and Action Committee, a consortium of fifteen churches which had grown out of the racial chaos and inner-city rioting by blacks during the 1960s. Ten task forces had been established within the Joint Strategy and Action Committee, including one on Indian affairs. The intent of each was to consider projects seeking funding and make recommendations as to which appeared to merit consideration.<sup>10</sup>

Chairman of the strategy and screening task force was Kent FitzGerald, a Chippewa from Minnesota and lay official in the Episcopal Church. Prior to the submission of the AIPA proposal by Trimble, the

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<sup>9</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

<sup>10</sup>Kent FitzGerald, private interview held during first annual convention of American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 18, 1972.

strategy and screening task force under FitzGerald's guidance had decided that the lack of communication among Indians was one of four of five significant problems facing the American Indian.

Thus, the opportune proposal by Trimble was readily screened and approved, and a recommendation went out to the fifteen-member churches that they support AIPA activities.

As a consequence of that recommendation, churches donated more than \$31,000 to the AIPA during the period of April 1, 1972 through October 31, 1972. These contributions included \$5,000 from the Episcopal Church's Council for American Indian Ministry; \$1,000 from the United Church of Christ; \$20,000 raised through the United Thank Offering of the Episcopal Church; \$4,500 from the World Relief of the Lutheran Church; and a grant of \$600 earmarked for the AIPA's summer training program from the Church of the Brethren.<sup>11</sup>

While churches contributed significantly to the AIPA's cash receipts during its second year of operation, they gave little in the first year. From April 19, 1971 to March 31, 1972, a period which marks the AIPA's first year of operation, the association showed an income of \$30,090.50.<sup>12</sup> Of this amount slightly less than \$25,000 came from the

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<sup>11</sup>Summer internships in the Washington, D.C. office of the American Indian Press Association are awarded annually to Indian students interested in journalism. Among the first to participate in this program was Bruce Davis, an Oglala Sioux and student at Wesleyan University. Davis, like those who followed him in the program, was not a journalism student.

<sup>12</sup>Report of a financial audit of the American Indian Press Association for the period April 19, 1971 through March 31, 1972, by Sumerwell and Mulhern, Certified Public Accountants, Denver, October 16, 1972, p. 4.

Bureau of Indian Affairs. The balance was provided through grants; the sale of Shove It, a book of Indian photos and irreverent captions; a camera raffle; and dues.

As director of the AIPA, Trimble received an annual salary of \$10,300. LaCourse, who ran the association's Washington-based news bureau, was paid about \$8,000 a year. Major operating expenses during the first year included: travel, almost \$2,000; office supplies, \$1,557.94; telephone, \$1,590.57; and printing, \$923.89. Total expenses, April 19, 1971 through March 31, 1972, were \$29,528.08, or just \$562.42 less than income.<sup>13</sup>

So precarious was the AIPA's financial footing in that first year that Trimble confided to friends at various low points that he was not certain how it could continue without immediate help. By the time the AIPA had completed the last of three geographically scattered communications workshops in Minneapolis in early June, 1972, it had \$400 in the bank.

Reflecting on the first full year of operation at the annual convention in Denver, AIPA President, James Jefferson, recalled that "a lot of people didn't believe we would ever get it off the ground. A lot of our expenses came out of our own pockets."<sup>14</sup>

Insufficient funding resulted in continual alterations of plans and scaling down of projects. Once the AIPA developed some organizational

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>James Jefferson, extemporaneous remarks delivered at first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 16, 1972.

structure at its Washington, D.C. meeting in February, 1971, it began seeking funds to bring all Indian editors together for a national Indian communications workshop. Trimble, in particular, felt the survey of Indian editors taken in the summer of 1970 had sparked interest in the AIPA and believed a conference would build the momentum. Thus, he submitted a proposal to the Community Relations Service of the United States Department of Justice, requesting that it provide \$27,000 for an organizational workshop. The estimated budget included: travel for 100 editors at \$200 each, \$20,000; two days of food and lodging for 100 people at \$30 per day, \$6,000; and miscellaneous expenses for meeting rooms, reproduction costs, and organizational activities, \$1,000.<sup>15</sup>

Later this proposal was revised to provide for three regional meetings instead of a single national convention. Purposes of the workshops were to (1) provide a forum for people involved in communications among Indian people to air problems and seek solutions to these problems, and (2) review the performance of the mass media regarding Indian affairs and to suggest and provide for the improvement of their performance. Budget requirements were estimated at \$2,405.80.<sup>16</sup>

In November, 1971, the concept of three regional workshops was approved by the Community Relations Service, and in February the final

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<sup>15</sup>Proposal for organizational workshop of the American Indian Press Association prepared by Charles Trimble for the Community Relations Service of the United States Department of Justice, n.d.

<sup>16</sup>Charles Trimble, "A Proposal to the Community Relations Service of the United States Department of Justice for American Indian Mass Media Conferences," January 5, 1972, p. 10.

proposal was submitted and subsequently approved. The workshops were to be held in Sacramento, Albuquerque, and Minneapolis. The west coast meeting was designed for representatives of Indian publications in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, California, and Alaska. The Albuquerque workshop was to encompass Indian publications in Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and Oklahoma. The Minneapolis workshop was to serve the Plains tribes, Great Lakes tribes, major urban areas of Minneapolis and Chicago, and the eastern seaboard.

First of the three conferences on American Indian mass communications was scheduled for May 11 through 13, 1972, at Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University in Davis, California.<sup>17</sup> It was a logical selection. The 640-acre campus had been an army communications center until it was abandoned late in 1970. Immediately thereafter, Indians occupied the ground, and on April 2, 1971 title to the land was deeded to the Indians who, with a group of Chicanos, established a university named after Deganawidah, founder of the Iroquois Federation, and Quetzalcoatl, an Aztec diety. Run by a board of thirty-two Indians and Chicanos, the university teaches such things as tribal business procedures, and requires of its faculty members neither a degree nor good command of the English language.<sup>18</sup>

Conference registration was set at \$12 per person, which included an Indian foods dinner. Dress was casual, and program

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<sup>17</sup>Charles Trimble, letter to Indian editors announcing communications workshops, n.d.

<sup>18</sup>Steven V. Roberts, "University for Indians and Chicanos Faces Problems," New York Times, May 9, 1971, p. 45.

participants were encouraged to bring sleeping bags. Guaranteed accommodations included shelter and toilet facilities.

At the last minute, the decision was made to hold the workshop at the Sacramento Indian Center because the university requested what AIPA officials felt was an unreasonable rental fee for the facilities.

Chief difficulty with the proposed mass communication conferences was that most Indian publications with their restrictive budgets could ill afford to send representatives. To circumvent this problem and to attract as many Indian editors as possible, the AIPA sought travel grants from several federal agencies. But in an undated letter, no doubt written just prior to the first regional meeting in California, Trimble announced that the AIPA had been unsuccessful in its attempt to obtain funding for transportation for all who wished to attend the conferences. The AIPA did, however, enclose a letter to the editor's sponsor or publisher urging that he assume travel and expenses to the conference.<sup>19</sup>

That the AIPA was successful from time to time in securing travel grants was noted in the treasurer's report at the first annual conference, November 16, 1972. The Reverend Thomas Connolly reported that since its inception, the AIPA had received from federal agencies "about \$10,000 in travel vouchers which did not show on the books" because the grants were made directly to individuals.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Trimble, letter to Indian editors, n.d.

<sup>20</sup>Thomas Connolly, treasurer's report delivered at first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 18, 1972.

While the speakers varied from workshop to workshop, the format and discussion topics remained unaltered from California to New Mexico to Minnesota. Typical discussion topics were: "Indians and the mass media," "The Tribe and communications," "Inter-tribal communications," and "Communications in off-reservation Indian communities." Editors were asked to bring copies of their latest editions of newspapers and periodicals to exchange with other editors, and the sale of books, posters, buttons, and related items was encouraged.

The AIPA carried out the planning and presentations, but the workshops were not billed as an association function. Rather, they were offered as "Mass Communication Conferences for Indians." At each conference, Trimble took time to explain the functions of the AIPA and distribute a brochure on the AIPA. Still, the major thrust of the conferences was to explore Indian communications problems and present some basic journalistic techniques.

Each workshop was multi-media in nature, providing for presentations by radio and television as well as the print medium. One of the speakers at the Minneapolis workshop was Tanna Beebe, a Kowish Indian and reporter for KIRO-TV in Seattle, who told of how she was hired because she was a "minority." This, she said, "bred resentment" among the staff. She related how she had learned to be aggressive and battle the resentment. "Coming from a tribe of about 1,600 non-aggressive Indians," Miss Beebe said, "reporting went against everything I had been taught."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Tanna Beebe, extemporaneous remarks delivered at American Indian Communications Conference, Minnesota Church Center, Minneapolis, June 8, 1972.



Another speaker, Truman Bear, who co-directs "Indian to Indian," an Indian radio program on WDET-FM, Detroit, told how an informal experiment in broadcasting for 6,000 Indians in the three-county Detroit area was well received.<sup>22</sup>

The presentations by Beebe and Bear served to illustrate the fact that the AIPA was open to all communications approaches, providing the end was improved communications among Indians. "Indians respond to gestures and sounds," LaCourse explained. "So perhaps television is the ultimate answer."<sup>23</sup>

An integral part of these three communications workshops was a session on the mechanics of journalism. The reason for the session, explained Rose Robinson, Hopi Indian and AIPA secretary, is that "most Indian editors are just recruited, or told to do the job. They have very little expertise and there's quite a bit of turnover."<sup>24</sup> Richard LaCourse conducted the Minneapolis session on journalism mechanics. Emphasis was on the rudiments of layout, content, and use of graphics. A list of basic layout rules included such things as: Headlines summarize essence of story; always break up grey areas of type with visual effects to please the eye; avoid group photos; and the heaviest headlines appear at top of page, with lightest toward the bottom. Many terms familiar to

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<sup>22</sup>Truman Bear, extemporaneous remarks delivered to American Indian Communications Conference, Minnesota Church Center, Minneapolis, June 9, 1972.

<sup>23</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis conference, June 8, 1972.

<sup>24</sup>Robinson, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis conference, June 8, 1972.

journalists such as staggered heads, cropped photos, and grey areas appeared in quotes, indicating their unfamiliarity to the Indian editors.

Each workshop attracted about sixty Indian editors. The consensus seemed to be that the workshops were successful and the AIPA was a viable organization. As a result, AIPA officials felt the association was ready to embark on a program of paid membership.

On April 1, 1972, slightly more than a year after its incorporation, the AIPA defined three areas of membership and began charging membership fees. Regular membership was accorded any periodical that met the following requirements: (1) Must be directed at informing Indian people; (2) if it is sponsored by an organization, either profit or non-profit, the governing body of that organization must be predominantly Indian; and (3) its news content must qualify it as a valid news source rather than a medium to promote the ideological or religious views of an individual or organization.<sup>25</sup>

Dues for regular membership were \$40 per year for the periodical. Staff members of the periodical automatically became individual members. Benefits to the member periodical included a continuing news service, full voting rights, press credentials, workshops and conferences, and an internal organization periodical.

A second classification was available to any periodical designed to promote knowledge and understanding of Indian people and Indian issues, but which did not meet the qualifications for regular

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<sup>25</sup> American Indian Press Association, membership qualification requirements and fees, mimeo.

membership. Associate memberships cost \$60 annually and, like the regular membership, entitled all staff members of a publication to individual memberships. Associate members received the news service, membership cards, and the internal organizational periodical. The chief difference from regular membership status was the lack of voting rights.<sup>26</sup>

A final category provided for institutional membership. Under this umbrella were periodicals published by schools, trade schools, youth organizations, and other institutions and organizations, "providing the sponsoring organization's governing body was predominantly Indian, and the purpose of the periodical was to inform Indian people or to inform its readership about Indian people and issues." Institutional membership cost \$40 per year for the periodical, and benefits included the continuing news service and internal organizational periodical.<sup>27</sup>

For libraries, newspapers, and individuals who fit none of the other categories but wished to receive the news service, the charge was \$100 annually.<sup>28</sup>

By June 8, 1972, the AIPA had enrolled more than seventy publications on a paying basis. Still, LaCourse revealed, "If we enrolled all those who were on our initial list, we would only obtain enough money to cover 10 per cent of our operating expenses."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis conference, June 8, 1972.

When first year subscriptions expired on January 19, 1973, AIPA had about 130 subscribers. By late January, renewals were coming in at the rate of four or five a day. Thus, the imposition of a fee for its services appeared to do little to discourage membership. Indeed, LaCourse even found himself faced with the ticklish possibility of denying membership to some publications in 1973. One of these was the Gallup Independent in Gallup, New Mexico. A daily newspaper, the Independent paid \$100 annually for the privilege of receiving the AIPA's news service. Nearby was the Navajo Times, a weekly publication with the largest circulation of all Indian newspapers and a regular member in the AIPA. As a daily newspaper, the Independent has a natural advantage over the weekly Navajo Times. Because the AIPA's foremost purpose is to upgrade the level of Indian communications, LaCourse thought it might be necessary to deny the Independent the benefit of a subscription to the AIPA news service.

Despite a tight financial squeeze the AIPA managed a number of significant accomplishments during its first year and a half. In addition to establishing offices in both Denver and Washington, D.C., and going through the rigamarole of writing a constitution, establishing bylaws, electing officers, and incorporating, the AIPA prepared a comprehensive listing of all Indian and Indian-interest periodicals. It prepared and mailed weekly news stories, features, and editorial cartoons to Indian publications, and it prepared and published the National Congress of American Indians' monthly newsletter, Sentinel Bulletin, and special quarterly magazine issues.

The AIPA also assisted general mass media reporters in providing better coverage and perspective of Indian events and issues to its non-Indian readership by arranging interviews with key leaders in Indian affairs and providing press coverage and press relations work at the following meetings: National Conference on Indian Self-Determination, Kansas City, Missouri, March, 1971; Organizational meetings of the National Tribal Chairmen's Association, Billings, Montana; Pierre, South Dakota; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Winslow Rock, Arizona; National Economic Development Conference and Industrial Show, Chicago, October, 1971; and National Congress of American Indians' annual convention, Reno, November, 1971.<sup>30</sup>

Reflecting on the financial barriers and accomplishments of the first year, Trimble commented: "We existed on will power."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>American Indian Press Association, list of accomplishments during the 1972 calendar year, circa., January, 1973.

<sup>31</sup>Trimble, extemporaneous remarks delivered at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 16, 1972.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MEMBERSHIP

By its own definition, the American Indian Press Association is "an organization of periodicals involved in communications efforts among Indian people."<sup>1</sup> As such, it mirrors the temperament of its membership in much the same manner a church reflects the character of its congregation. Indeed, to understand the AIPA, one must first know something of the problems and makeup of contemporary American Indian newspapers.

Native American publications can be found through the United States. As might be expected, however, the bulk of the more than 200 such publications is concentrated in the southwest, west, and northwest regions of the country, for it was on acreage of marginal value in these geographic areas that the federal government ultimately established most of the reservations. The concentrations are readily apparent in the following state by state breakdown of Indian publications.<sup>2</sup>

ALASKA--Arctic Reporter, post office box 253, Barrow, 99723;  
Arctic Village Echoes, Arctic Village School, Arctic Village, 99722;  
Native News and Bureau of Indian Affairs Bulletin, post office box 3-8000,

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<sup>1</sup>American Indian Press Association, Const., art. 2, sec. 1.

<sup>2</sup>American Indian Press Association, compilation of Indian and Indian-interest publications by state, mimeo, n.d.

Juneau, 99801; Point Hope News, Native Village of Point Hope, Point Hope, 99766; Spectrum Press, Anchorage Community College, 2533 Providence Avenue, Anchorage, 99504; Tundra Times, post office box 1287, Fairbanks, 99707; and Voice of Brotherhood, 423 Seward Street, Juneau, 99801.

ARIZONA--Apache Drumbeat, Bylas, 85530; Awathm Awahan, Salt River Tribal Office, route 1, box 120, Scottsdale, 85251; DNA In Action, Window Rock, 86515; Fort Apache Scout, post office box 86, White River, 85941; Dine' Baa-Hani', box 527, Fort Defiance, 86504; Fort Yuma News-letter, post office box 890, Yuma, 85364; Gila River News, post office box 97, Sacaton, 85247; Gum-U (How Are You?), Supai, 86425; Hopi Action News, (a segment of the Winslow Mail), Winslow, 86047; Hopi Crier, Hopi Day School, Oraibi; ICAP Newsletter, Arizona State University, Tempe, 85281; Indian Highways, Cook Christian School, 708 South Lindon Lane, Tempe, 85281; Indian Mailman, 4402 North First Avenue, Phoenix, 88013; Indian Programs, University of Arizona, Tucson, 85721; Journal of American Indian Education, Arizona State University, College of Education, Tempe, 85281; Navajo Education Newsletter, Navajo Area Bureau of Indian Affairs, Window Rock, 86515, Navajo Times, Window Rock, 86515; Padre's Trail, Saint Michaels, 86511; Papago Bulletin, post office box 364, Sells, 85364; Quechan News, post office box 1169, Yuma, 85364; River Tribes Review, Colorado River Agency, Parker, 85344; Rough Rock News, Demonstration School, Chinle, 86503; Sandpainter, post office box 791, Chinle, 86503; Smoke Signals, route 1, box 23-B, Parker, 85344; Yaqui Bulletin, 4730 West Calle Tetakusin, Tucson, 85710; Yoida Nava, Indian Club, Arizona Western College, Yuma, 85364.

CALIFORNIA--American Indian, 3053 Sixteenth Street, San Francisco, 94103; News, American Indian Culture Center, 3221 Campbell Hall, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, 90024; California League for American Indians, post office box 389, Sacramento, 95802; Chemehuevi Newsletter, 2804 West Avenue 31, Los Angeles, 90065; Cherokee Examiner, post office box 687, South Pasadena; Newsletter, Committee of Concern for the Traditional Indian, post office box 5167, San Francisco, 94101; Coyote, Powhatan Press, route 1, box 2170, Davis, 95616; Early American, California Indian Education Association, 708 Mills Avenue, Modesto, 95350; Five Feathers News, Tribe of Five Feathers, post office box W, Lompoc, 93436; Indian Archives, Antelope Indian Circle, post office box 790, Susanville, 96130; Indian Historian, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, 94117; Indians Illustrated, 3028 West Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, 90057; Indian Newsletter, post office box 106, Pala, 92059; Indians of All Tribes, 4339 California Street, San Francisco, 94118; Indian Voice, post office box 2033, Santa Clara, 95051; Lassen-Modoc Newsletter, post office box 266, Susanville, 96130; Namequa Speaks, Native American Woman's Action Council, 4339 California Street, San Francisco, 94118; Smoke Signal, Federated Indians of California, 2727 Santa Clara Way, Sacramento, 95817; Smoke Signals, post office box 2477, Santa Clara, 95051; Speaking Leaves, American Indian Cultural Group, post office box 2000, Vacaville, 95688; Talking Leaf, Indian Center, Incorporated, 3446 West First Street, Los Angeles, 90004; Teepee Talk, post office box 501, Porterville, 93258; Tehipite Topics, post office box 5396, Fresno, 93755; Tribal Spokesman, Inter-Tribal Council, 2991 Fulton Avenue, Sacramento, 96821; Tsen-Akamak, route 1, box 2170, Davis,



95616; Uida Reporter, suite 307, 1541 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, 90017; and Warpath, United Native Americans, post office box 26149, San Francisco, 94126.

COLORADO--Indian Times, post office box 4131, Santa Fe Station, Denver, 80204; Southern Ute Drum, Ignacio, 81137; and the USS News, United Scholarship Service, post office box 18285, Capitol Hill Station, Denver, 80218.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA--AIO Legislative Alert, Americans for Indian Opportunity, 1822 Jefferson Place, Northwest, 20036; Indian Record, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1951 Constitution Avenue, Northwest, 20242; Legislative Review, Indian Legal Information Development Service, 1785 Massachusetts, Northwest, 20036; NCAI Sentinel, National Congress of American Indians, 1346 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest, 20036; and the NCIO Update, National Council on Indian Opportunity, 726 Jackson Place, Northwest, 20036.

FLORIDA--Alligator Times, Seminole Tribe Community Action Program, 6073 Sterling Road, Hollywood, 33024.

IDAHO--NSAS-NW Newsletter, University of Idaho, Moscow, 83843; Nee-Me-Poo Tum Tyne, Lapwai, 93540; New Breed News, North American Indian League, post office box 7309, Boise, 83707; and the Sho-Ban News, Fort Hall, 83203.

ILLINOIS--News, American Indian Center, 411 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, 60605; Amerindian, 1263 West Pratt Boulevard, Chicago, 60626; Cross & Calumet, Saint Augustine Center, 4710 North Sheridan Road, Chicago, 60640; Indian Voices, University of Chicago, 1126 East Fifty-Ninth Street, Chicago, 60637; Native American Publication, 2850 Elston

Avenue, Chicago, 60618; and Warrior, 1630 West Wilson Avenue, Chicago, 60640.

INDIANA--Indian Progress, 1095 Division Street, Noblesville, 46060; and the Tosan, 318 North Tacoma Street, Indianapolis, 46201.

IOWA--City Smoke Signals, 1114 West Sixth Street, Sioux City, 51103.

KANSAS--Indian Leader, Haskell Junior College, Lawrence, 66044; and the News, Indian Center of Topeka, 407 West Lyman Road, Topeka, 66608.

MAINE--Aroostock Indian, post office box 223, Houlton, 04730; and the Maine Indian Newsletter, Pine Street, Freeport, 04023.

MARYLAND--Evening Sun, Calvert and Center Streets, Baltimore, 21200.

MASSACHUSETTS--Newsletter, Boston Indian Council, 150 Tremont Street, Boston, 02111.

MICHIGAN--Great Lakes Voice, box 305, Saint Ignace, 49781; Nishnawbe News, 214 Kaye Hall, Marquette, 49855; Tribal Trails, 911 Franklin Street, Petoskey, 49770; and the Michigan Indian, Commission on Indian Affairs, Department of Social Services, suite 1020, 300 South Capitol Avenue, Lansing, 48926.

MINNESOTA--A.I.M. News, American Indian Movement, 1337 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, 55404; Focus Newsletter, Capitol Square Building, Indian Education, Saint Paul, 55101; ICAP Newsletter, Bemidji State College, Bemidji, 56601; Mille Lac News, Omania, 56359; Moccasin Telegraph, Community Action Program, Grand Portage, 55605; Nett Lake News, Nett Lake, 55772; Red Lake Newsletter, Red Lake, 56671; Seventh Fire, American Indian Movement, 261 East Eighth Street, Saint Paul,

55101; Smoke Signals, Saint Paul Indian Center, 475 Cedar, Saint Paul, 55102; Tri-State ICAP Newsletter, box 26, Cass Lake, 56601; White Earth Reservation, post office box 274, White Earth; and the Wig-I-Wam, Department of Indian Work, Minnesota Council of Churches, 3045 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, 55407.

MISSISSIPPI--Choctaw Community News, route 7, box 21, Philadelphia, 39350.

MISSOURI--Heart of American Indian Center, 3220 Independence Avenue, Kansas City, 64124.

MONTANA--Absaraka, Crow Indian Agency, Crow Agency, 59022; the Arrow, Saint Labre's Indian School, Ashland, 59003; Birney Arrow, post office box 552, Busby, 59016; Blackfeet CAP News, Browning, 59801; Browning Sentinel, post office box 340, Browning, 59417; Buffalo Grass Newsletter, 508 Toole, Missoula, 59801; Camp Crier, Fort Belknap Agency, Harlem, 59526; Char-Koostah, Confederation Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Dixon, 59831; Eyapi Oaye, Assiniboine and Sioux, Poplar, 59255; Glacier Reporter, Browning, 59417; Hi-Line Herald, 426 First Street, Havre, 59501; Ho Tanka, Brockton High School, Brockton, 59213; the Hunter, North American Indian League, box 7, Deer Lodge, 59772; Indian Signs, Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, Browning, 59417; Morning Star News, Lame Deer, 59043; Northern Cheyenne News, Lame Deer, 59043; Official Rumors, Lame Deer, 59043; Rocky Boy News, Rocky Boy Route, Box Elder; and the Wotanin, box 11, Poplar, 59255.

NEBRASKA--Indian Progress, Committee of Friends, 1403 Twenty-First Street, Central City, 68826; Native American, Indian Center

Industry Association, 2224 Leavenworth Street, Omaha, 68102; and the Nebraska Trails, 902 "O" Street, Lincoln, 68508.

NEVADA--Many Smokes, post office box 5895, Reno, 89503; the Native Navadan, 1995 East Second Street, Reno, 89502; Newsletter, Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, Nixon, 89424; Valley-Round-Up, Sho-Pai Business Council, Owyhee, 89832; Warpath, Stewart Indian School, Stewart, 89437; and the WRPT Newsletter, Walker River Indian Reservation, Schurz, 89427.

NEW JERSEY--Pow Wow Trails, box 258, South Plainfield, 07080.

NEW MEXICO--Aborigine, post office box 892, Gallup, 87301; American Indian Law Newsletter, Law School, University of New Mexico, 1915 Roma Avenue, Northeast, Albuquerque, 87106; Americans Before Columbus, National Indian Youth Council, 3102 Central, Southeast, Albuquerque, 87106; the Apache Scout, Mescalero, 88340; Broncos Monthly News, Sanostee Boarding School, Guidance Department, Sanostee Rural Station, Shiprock; Capital News, Santo Domingo, 87052; the Concerned Indian, Amerind, Incorporated, post office box 482, Albuquerque, 87103; Drumbeat, Institute of American Indian Arts, Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, 87501; Eight Northern Pueblos News, route 1, box 71, Santa Fe, 87528; Indian Extension News, Cooperative Extension Service, New Mexico University, Las Cruces, 88001; Jicarilla Chieftain, Dulce, 87528; the Keresan, post office box 3151, Laguna, 87026; Native American Scholar, Higher Education Program, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 123 Fourth Street, Southwest, Albuquerque, 87101; Navajo Assistance, post office box 96, Gallup, 87301; Southern Pueblos Agency Bulletin, 1000 Indian School Road, Northwest, Albuquerque, 87103; Southwestern Association on Indian Affairs, box 1964, Santa Fe, 87501; Thunderbird, Albuquerque Indian School, 1000 Indian School Road,



Northwest, Albuquerque, 87103; and the Zuni Tribal Newsletter, Zuni Pueblo, Zuni, 87327.

NEW YORK--Akwesasne Notes, Rooseveltown, 13683; American Indian Horizon, box 18 Church Street Station, New York, 10008; American Indian News, 5 Tudor City Place, New York, 10017; Indian Affairs, Association on American Indian Affairs, 432 Park Avenue South, New York, 10016; Kinzua Planning Newsletter, Seneca Nation of Indians, box 231, Salamanca, 14779; O He Yoh Noh, Alleghany Indian Reservation, Salamanca; Si Wong Geh, Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, box 97, Versailles, 14168; Tonawanda Indian News, Bloomingdale Road, Akron, 14001; and the War Drums Newsletter, American Indian Cultural Workshop, 144-09 161 Street, Jamaica, 11434.

NORTH CAROLINA--Cherokee Boys Club Newsletter, box 507, Cherokee, 29719; Cherokee One Feather, Cherokee, 28719; Cherokee Times, Cherokee, 28719; and the Qualla Reservation News, Cherokee Agency, Cherokee, 28719.

NORTH DAKOTA--Arrow News, Mandaree High School, Mandaree, 58737; Action News, Community Action Program, post office box 605, New Town, 58763; Bells of Saint Ann, Saint Ann's Indian Mission, Belcourt, 58316; Northern Lights, Saint Michael's Mission School, Saint Michael; Sentinel, White Shield School, Roseglen; Three Tribes Herald, Parshall, 58770; Turtle Mountain Echoes, post office box 1B, Belcourt, 58316; and the Weekly Bulletin, Wahpeton, 59075.

OHIO--Cleveland Crier, 2600 Church Avenue, Northwest, Cleveland, 44113.

OKLAHOMA--American Baptist Voice, Okmulgee, 74447; American Indian Crafts & Culture, post office box 3538, Tulsa, 74152; Buckskin, Eufaula, 74432; the Cavo Transporter, Chey-Arap Veterans Organization, post office box 34, Concho, 73022; Cherokee Nation News, Cherokee Industrial Site, post office box 119, Tahlequah, 74464; Cherokee Report, Original Cherokee Community Organization, Tahlequah, 74464; Chey-Arap Bulletin, 108 East Cavanaugh, El Reno, 73036; Drumbeat Magazine, post office box 3504, Tulsa, 74152; Indian Journal, Indian Journal Printing Company, Eufaula, 74432; Indian School Journal, Chilocco Indian School, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Chilocco, 74635; OIO Newsletter, Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity, 555 Constitution, Norman, 73069; Smoke Dreams, Riverside High School, Anadarko; and the Talking Leaves, Skiatook, 74070.

OREGON--Chemawa American, Chemawa, 97822; Rainbow People, box 164, John Day, 97845; and the Tomahawk, Warm Springs, 99761.

PENNSYLVANIA--Indian Truth, Indian Rights Association, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia, 19102; and the Pan-American Indians Newsletter, League of Nations, 1139 Lehman Place, Johnston, 15902.

SOUTH DAKOTA--Newsletter, American Indian Culture Research Center, Marvin; Blue Cloud Quarterly, Blue Cloud Abbey, Marvin; Flandreau Spirit, Flandreau Indian School, Flandreau, 57028; Great Plains Observer, 218 South Egan, Madison, 57042; Keyapi, Fort Thompson, 57339; Letan Wankatakiya, room 18 Dakota Hall, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, 57069; Luchip Spearhead, Lutheran Church and Indian People, Lutheran Social Services, 600 West Twelfth Street, Sioux Falls, 57104; News, United Sioux Tribes, Star Route 3, Pierre, 57501; Oglala

Nation News, Pine Ridge, 57770; News Bulletin, Cheyenne River Agency, Eagle Butte, 57625; Paha Sapa Wahosi, Indian Club, Black Hills State College, Spearfish, 57783; Pierre Chieftain, Pierre Indian School, Pierre, 57501; Red Cloud Country, Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, 47770; Rosebud Sioux Herald, Rosebud, 57570; Scout, Episcopal Church, Lower Brule; Shannon County News, Pine Ridge, 57770; Sioux Journal, Eagle Butte, 57625; Sioux San Sun, PHS Indian Hospital, Rapid City, 57701; Sisseton Agency News, Sisseton Agency, Sisseton, 57262; Standing Rock Star, box 202, Bullhead, 57621; and Woyakapi, Saint Francis Mission, Saint Francis, 57572.

TENNESSEE--Chahta Anumpa, Choctaw Times, box 12392, Nashville, 37212.

TEXAS--Raven Speaks, post office box 35733, Dallas, 75235; and the Talking Leaves, American Indian Center, 722 North Beacon Street, Dallas.

UTAH--Eagle Views, Intermountain Indian School, Brigham City; Eagle's Eye, Brigham Young University, Provo, 84601; Indian Affairs, Brigham Young University, Provo, 84601; Indian Liahona, 115 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, 84111; Outlook, post office box 1249, University Station, University of Utah, Logan, 84321; Newsletter, Saint Christopher's Mission, Episcopal Church, Bluff; and the Ute Bulletin, Ute Indian Tribe, Fort Duchesne, 84026.

WASHINGTON--Alaska Native Brotherhood, 1521 Sixteenth Avenue East, Seattle, 98102; Anica News, 1306 Second Avenue, Seattle, 98101; Independent American, Star Route, Coulee Dam, 99116; Indian Center News, 1900 Boren Avenue, Seattle, 98101; Indian Notes, post office box 66,



Wellpinit, 99040; Indian Voice, Small Tribes of Western Washington, 33324 Pacific Highway, Federal Way, 98002; Kee-Yoka, Community Action Program, LaConner, 98257; Makah Newsletter, Makah Tribal Council, Neah Bay, 98357; Northwest Indian Times, Gonzaga University, Spokane, 99202; Nugquam, post office box 1118, Taholah, 98587; Our Heritage, post office box 451, Nespelem, 99155; Quileute Newsletter, Quileute Tribal Community Action Program, LaPush, 98350; Rawhide Press, Wellpinit, 99040; Renegade, Survival of American Indians Association, box 719, Tacoma, 98401; Renegade, Franks Landing, Nisqually, 98501; See Yahtsub, Marysville; Squol-Quol News, Marietta, 98268; Tribal Tribune, Colville Tribe, Nespelem, 99155; Yakima Nation Review, post office box 151, Toppenish, 98948; and the Yakima Reservation News, Yakima County Extension Service, Yakima.

WISCONSIN--Great Lakes Agency News, Great Lakes Indian Agency, Ashland, 54806; Menominee County and Town News, Keshena, 54135; Menominee News, Neopit, 54150; Menominee Prints, Keshena, 54135; the Voice, Loana, 54541; We-Sa-Mi-Dong, route 2, Hayward, 54843; and the Native American Council, 204 Hagestad Student Center, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, 54022.

WYOMING--American Indian News, post office box 217, Fort Washakie, 82514; and the Smoke Signals, All American Indian Days, post office box 451, Sheridan, 82801.

While Indian publications can be traced back into the 1800s, the majority of the publications in the list above were founded after World War II. Many are outgrowths of the pan-Indian and red pride movements that exhibited no discernible muscle until the late 1960s. As a natural consequence, most Indian publications preach Indian brotherhood

and separatism to some degree, yet all but a few are printed in English. "I know of only two newspapers in other languages," reported Charles Trimble, "one in Cree, a second in Cherokee."<sup>3</sup> "The difficulty," explained Rose Robinson, "is that Indians are used to speaking, not reading, and in producing an Indian language publication, the editors would have to spell phonetically."<sup>4</sup>

With the exception of publication in the English language, skimpy budgets, and recurring themes of brotherhood and separatism, few similarities exist among Indian publications. Format varies from newsletter to magazine to newspaper to magapaper. Content includes hard news, features, fiction, and poetry, and makeup ranges from two to eight columns. Some publications print handsome illustrations amid aesthetically pleasing layouts; others feature tombstone heads and fuzzy, poorly cropped photographs. An unfortunately large number makes "no distinction between points of view and hard news."<sup>5</sup>

In May, 1972, the AIPA mailed questionnaires to more than 150 Indian publications. Purpose of the survey was to obtain specific information on such things as methods and frequency of publication, circulation, staff, size, and ratio of editorial to advertising, if any. The AIPA also was interested in determining the degree of acceptance of

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<sup>3</sup>Trimble, American Indian Communications Conference, Minneapolis, June 8, 1972.

<sup>4</sup>Robinson, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis Conference, June 8, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis Conference, June 9, 1972.

its news releases and whether Indian editors would be favorably disposed to paying a nominal fee for membership.

Fifty-two publications responded to the survey--sixteen tribal publications; nineteen newsletters, papers, or similar publications produced by groups such as the Organization of North American Indian Students of Northern Michigan University; eight institution or school publications; five published by government agencies; and four privately owned publications.<sup>6</sup>

These fifty-two publications confirmed what essentially was known all along--Indian publications are published irregularly, poorly funded, and are of an amateurish makeup. Many serve as the mouthpiece of the tribal council and are supported entirely through council funds. Editors generally avoid delving into tribal politics or other internal controversies for fear of losing their jobs.

Of the fifty-two respondents, more than half reported they published with a frequency of once a month or less. Fifteen publications appeared fortnightly; six published weekly. Weeklies were: the Cherokee One Feather, a tribal paper of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians; the Tundra Times, which is directed at the native people of Alaska; the Navajo Times, largest of the tribal papers with a circulation of more than 17,000; Eyapaha, a privately-owned publication distributed as a section in two county newspapers; Nebraska Trails, published by the Indian Center in Lincoln, Nebraska; and the BSC-ICAP Newsletter,

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<sup>6</sup>Data compiled from individual survey sheets provided by the American Indian Press Association.

co-sponsored by Bemidji State College and the Indian Community Action Program in Bemidji, Minnesota.<sup>7</sup>

The primitive appearance of many of these publications is reflected by the fact that sixteen editors reported they printed with a mimeograph. Four others responded that they used a ditto machine; twenty-eight said they employed the offset process; and four used letter-press.

Circulation for the fifty-two publications ranged from less than 250 to more than 18,000. A majority, thirty one, reported circulations of less than 2,000. Staff size ranged from an unassisted editor to more than twelve persons, with most publications reporting three or fewer staff members. In almost all instances, editors relied on volunteers. The number of volunteers varied from one to more than a dozen in the case of some school or institutional newspapers. Occasionally, a newspaper was staffed entirely by volunteers.<sup>8</sup>

Thirteen of the fifty-two editors indicated that they printed advertisements. Of these, only four estimated that advertising occupied more than 20 per cent of the total content. Space rates were generally determined by the column inch and ranged from approximately one dollar to two dollars and fifty cents per column inch.

Forty editors reported they occasionally used illustrations; thirty-five respondents said they had the capabilities for printing photographs.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

One explanation for the unprofessional appearance of most of these publications is that until recently, at least, being an editor of an Indian publication was "no big deal."<sup>9</sup> In addition, Indians with any sort of formal journalism training are almost non-existent. LaCourse flatly states that "not one Indian editor has ever had university training in journalism."<sup>10</sup> In view of the fact that only a small percentage of Indians ever finish high school, it is not unreasonable to assume that LaCourse's observation is accurate. Most tribal councils seem content to hire an editor with a high school diploma and some college training, regardless of the interest area.

Typical is Rowena Cody, a twenty-eight-year-old Apache woman who is "editor, reporter, photographer, copy boy and advertising salesman for the Fort Apache Scout." Because her husband was unable to make enough money as a construction worker to cover family expenses, she approached the tribal council looking for work and was promptly made editor of the tribal paper. Her qualifications for the job included one semester of college, typing skills, and a knowledge of photography with a 35mm camera.

As editor, she increased monthly circulation from 400 free copies to 920 paid and began selling advertising to businessmen in Show Low and Pinetop. Despite this success, she has not been happy in her work and feels a "woman's place should be in the home." When it comes

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<sup>9</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

<sup>10</sup>LaCourse, interview, January 26, 1973.

to reporting tribal news, she confesses "touchy stories" are cleared with the tribal council, and "some things do not get in the paper."<sup>11</sup>

Youthful Darlene Brown, editor of the Tribal Spokesman, is another example of an Indian editor who has been to college but received no real exposure to journalism prior to assuming an editorship of an Indian publication. Miss Brown attended Sacramento Community College for two years before becoming editor of the eight-page Tribal Spokesman, official organ of the California Inter-Tribal Council. She learned journalistic skills on the job from an old-time reporter from the Sacramento Union.

Like Miss Brown, many neophyte Indian editors receive technical assistance and financial help for their publications from outside sources. Father Thomas Connolly, a Catholic priest and early member of the American Indian Press Association, helped the Flathead tribe establish a newspaper. Northern Michigan University aided Michael Wright, a thirty-six-year-old Ojibway Indian and student at the university, in founding the Nishnawbe News.

A few Indian publications operate without tribal support or a benefactor, but these maverick publications frequently face a difficult struggle. Typically their circulations are not large enough to attract advertising. Their readers are widely scattered either throughout the country or across the reservation where road systems are so crude that

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<sup>11</sup>Robert L. Thomas, "Woman Edits Apache Newspaper, But She'd Really Rather Be Home," Arizona Republic, April 8, 1972, p. 33.

deliveries are hampered. Tribal leaders also exert pressures that influence readership and dry up advertising.

One of those who succeeded in publishing an independent paper is Leo Vocu, an Oglala Sioux. As a charter member of the American Indian Press Association and a former executive director of the National Council of American Indians, Vocu is a strong supporter of the AIPA and its efforts to bring national Indian issues to reservation and regional Indian publications. He confesses, however, that he succeeded because he stuck mostly to local news. "People like to read about themselves," Vocu observed.<sup>12</sup>

Another who has had some success as an independent publisher is Aaron De Sersa. As a boy, De Sersa, who is three-fourths French and one-quarter Sioux, worked as a political writer for the Shannon County News (South Dakota), owned by his uncle. After the death of his uncle, the paper declined badly. When De Sersa assumed the editorship in 1966, there were only thirty-seven paid subscribers. In three years he built circulation back up to 500 and managed to attract some advertising. By June, 1972, he had 1,700 paid subscribers and more than 3,000 over-the-counter sales. In addition, he had eight regular advertisers.<sup>13</sup>

De Sersa, who was trained as a barber and hair stylist in Chicago, hopes one day to have newspapers on all eight South Dakota

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<sup>12</sup>Leo Vocu, private interview held during first annual convention of American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 18, 1972.

<sup>13</sup>Aaron De Sersa, private interview held during a communications workshop for Indians, Minneapolis, June 9, 1972.

reservations. His ambitious plans have already been challenged, however, with the introduction of the Oglala Nation News on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The new publication, developed with the assistance of Trimble and LaCourse, serves as the official tribal paper.

In contrast with the independents, the tribal papers tend to skirt controversial local issues. Almost without exception, the tribal council holds the purse strings. Any editor concerned with perpetuating his editorship either avoids controversy or conceals his exposés in fables, parables, or reports of kindred dealings on other reservations. LaCourse explained that some Indian editors "print a story of an activity which occurred on another reservation 2,000 miles away on the first page. It's a secret sign that activity also occurs on the paper's reservation."<sup>14</sup>

The need for more editorial spine on the part of the newspapers was the focal point of a speech delivered by Vine Deloria, Jr., at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association. Said Deloria: "I realize a lot of you are working for tribal councils that don't want anything but the basketball tournament reported. But you must write editorials and force people into taking a stand . . . if these issues aren't raised on the local level . . . we are simply going to remain victims of bureaucratic manipulation."<sup>15</sup>

Those who overtly buck the establishment, be they editors of reservation publications or independent publishers, often find the

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<sup>14</sup>LaCourse, interview, January 26, 1973.

<sup>15</sup>Vine Deloria, Jr., remarks delivered at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, November 17, 1972.



sanctions severe. Aaron De Sersa, who served as media relations spokesman for the militant band of Indians which occupied the settlement of Wounded Knee in early 1973, claimed that the fire-bombing of his house was a direct result of his involvement with the radical American Indian Movement. Gerald Gamble, or Rarihokwats (fact finder) as he is known among friends in the Mohawk nation, embraced an editorial philosophy "that many voices be heard, not just the voice of the tribal chairmen." He soon learned that this stance was "not all together popular with some people."<sup>16</sup> As a result of his work as editor of the iconoclastic Akwesasne Notes, Rarihokwats was fired by the Canadian-Indian Affairs Office in 1968 and faced deportation until a federal court in Buffalo ruled in his favor in 1973. That Rarihokwats is more than a rabble-rouser was attested to in November, 1972, when the AIPA presented him with the first "Marie Potts Award" for "outstanding contributions to the field of mass communications."

Today, Akwesasne Notes is regarded as one of the more professional examples of Indian journalism. Yet, its future is uncertain. It receives no financial support from the tribal council. It has no paid subscribers, and none of its staff is salaried. It carries no advertising, and printing charges for a press run in excess of 40,000 are almost \$3,000, while each mailing costs more than \$600.<sup>17</sup> Akwesasne

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<sup>16</sup>Rarihokwats, remarks delivered at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, November 17, 1972.

<sup>17</sup>"Money, Money . . . To Subscribe," Akwesasne Notes, July-August, 1972, p. 3.

Notes exists on contributions. Volunteers write and publish the newspaper, clothing is donated, and the staff is fed with food which it raises.

Volunteers and outside contributions frequently provide the life blood for publications which have chosen to challenge the tribal councils. Half of the eight-man staff of the Dine Baa-Hani, the counter-voice to the council-supported Navajo Times, are volunteers. Of those considered regular staff members on other publications, few receive even a small stipend.

Typical is the Nishnawbe (first or original man) News, an adjunct to the Organization of North American Indian Students, founded by Indian students at Northern Michigan University. Purpose of the newspaper is to "report developments of both general and local interests to Indians in the fields of civil rights, education, welfare, health, housing, and employment opportunity."<sup>18</sup> The newspaper, which has a circulation in excess of 8,000, is edited by Michael Wright, a former autoworker who began his college career at the age of thirty-six. Until recently, Wright, along with everyone else on the staff of the Nishnawbe News, received no compensation for his work. Funds for the newspaper were obtained from various sources. Northern Michigan University furnished an office and telephone and \$400 for the first month's printing bill. Even today, staff members are motivated by "a strong desire to serve their people."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>"Indians Get Their Own Newspaper," Alpena News, June 5, 1971, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Motivation and willpower seldom are enough, however. Finding a means of providing revenue so that Indian newspapers can operate openly and independently has been a concern of the AIPA since its inception. Advertising would seem to be the logical solution, but small circulations and the limited buying power of Indians generally make these publications unattractive to potential advertisers.

The advertising in Indian publications is predominantly local. Advertisements in Indian Times tout jewelry, arts, crafts, pottery, handmade shawls, and beads. The Indian Voice, billed as "America's Only Indian Magazine," prints the same type of advertising. Though advertising is sparse throughout Indian publications, a large percentage of that which does appear is service advertising. In the Cherokee One Feather of Wednesday, November 8, 1972, there appeared advertisements for a plumbing and electrical service, interior and exterior painting, paving and dirt hauling. Perhaps the widest range of advertising is carried by the River Times. In a 1972 pre-election issue the River Times printed advertisements for an air taxi service, the Alaska National Bank of the North, a liquor store, bar, fabric store, travel agency, office equipment supplier, and numerous political candidates. Throughout Indian publications, however, there is a noticeable absence of advertising by manufacturers of national brand merchandise.

Aaron De Sersa, editor of the independent Shannon County News, maintains he has no time to solicit advertising. When he took over the newspaper, it had no advertisers; it now has eight. Entrepreneur De Sersa also owns a gas station and a second-hand shop. He is also commodity-food service director for the reservation. Subscriptions pay

for the printing of the newspaper, and he obtains about \$7,200 annually from the county for printing legal notices. His 1971 salary from the newspaper was approximately \$6,200; his wife, who does the bookkeeping for the newspaper, earned about \$4,500.<sup>20</sup>

In February, 1972, Trimble talked about consolidating the many small tribal publications and forming area newspapers with circulations large enough to make them viable and attractive to advertisers. "Consolidation would build an economic base, and editors could localize these area papers with inserts,"<sup>21</sup> Trimble explained. That the idea is feasible is demonstrated by the Native Nevadan, a consolidation newspaper representing scattered tribes with kindred interests.

The need for "state or regional advertising pools" was reiterated by LaCourse in late January, 1973. He noted that "among the most influential papers" were the Navajo Times, Cherokee One Feather, and Tundra Times--all of which carry advertising. In addition, those which have crusaded, embraced a cause, or stirred controversy on the reservation have suffered loss of funding. "Akwesasne Notes is almost at war with its Council,"<sup>22</sup> LaCourse said.

The issue is bound to be an important one in the years ahead. Its successful resolution is vital to the inseparable futures of Indian publications and the AIPA.

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<sup>20</sup>De Sersa, interview, June 9, 1972.

<sup>21</sup>Trimble, interview, February 12, 1972.

<sup>22</sup>LaCourse, interview, January 26, 1973.

## CHAPTER IV

### A MEDIA LOOK AT THE AIPA

Speaking at an AIPA workshop in Minneapolis in June, 1972, Richard LaCourse postulated that "only an informed people controls its destiny." While it is not specifically stated in the bylaws or constitution of the AIPA, LaCourse's observation may be taken as the guiding philosophy of the AIPA.

From its inception, the AIPA has directed its energies toward creating an informed Indian nation by bringing to the one million Indians in the United States news of events with an active or latent potential for altering their lives. It has sought to create an awareness that what concerns one tribe concerns all tribes, to demonstrate that the shock waves of a seemingly isolated incident can reach Indians everywhere.

To create an informed people, the AIPA has relied primarily on a single tool of information dissemination--the news release. These releases, which are prepared as stories arise, are mailed on an approximate weekly basis to member publications, Indian radio programmers, and non-Indian subscribers. Each story is printed under a red AIPA letterhead on white mimeograph paper. Each carries an identifying slug in the upper left-hand corner and the name of the writer, centered at the top of the first page. Each release is assigned a code number which indicates the day and month in which the story was prepared and whether it

was the first, second, or third story prepared on that day. All stories are datelined. Copy is single-spaced with double spacing between paragraphs, and the style of news writing generally follows the Associated Press Stylebook.

Due to the limited size of its staff, the AIPA covers only stories which have implications for Indians throughout the nation. Local news is left to local Indian newspapers "except in areas of political confusion and corruption."<sup>1</sup> Subject matter contained in AIPA news releases includes congressional legislation and proposed legislation affecting Indians, activities within the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Interior, national Indian conferences, and hot spots of Indian activity.

Although the AIPA has been mailing press packets to Indian editors since 1971, it is still one of the most controversial activities in which the AIPA is involved. From the many factions within the Indian movement has come criticism that the AIPA is too radical and too conservative in its reportage. AIPA news releases have brought both praise and death threats to Trimble and LaCourse.

Because these news releases are such an integral part of the AIPA's operation, feedback is constantly being sought. In May, 1972, the AIPA mailed questionnaires to some 150 Indian publications in which editors were asked to evaluate seventeen AIPA news releases mailed out over a span of four months. Editors were asked to indicate whether they

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<sup>1</sup>Richard LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks delivered at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 16, 1972.

had published the releases. If they had not published a specific release, they were requested to indicate whether the subject matter was or was not of interest to them.

The seventeen news releases dealt with the following: (1) the commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Affairs policy, (2) an Indian press conference, (3) a conference of tribal chairmen in Billings, Montana, (4) a conference on self-determination held in Kansas City, (5) Ernie Stevens' resignation, (6) an interview with Russell Means, (7) dissent by Indian students at Ft. Lewis College, (8) a powwow at the Cleveland Indian Center, (9) Secretary Morton and the Indian environmentalists, (10) the 1970 Indian census, (11) a meeting in Phoenix of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Planning Council, (12) the arrest of Roger Jourdain for making a bomb threat, (13) the Kennedy education bill, (14) highlights of the Kennedy education bill, (15) a meeting of the tribal chairmen's organization in Pierre, South Dakota, (16) the Kennedy bill hearings, and (17) a summary of the Kennedy bill hearings.

In addition to indicating whether they used the stories or were interested or uninterested in the material, each editor was asked to give any impressions he might have of the seventeen stories.<sup>2</sup>

Fifty-two editors responded to the AIPA survey. Most of them completed the section dealing with the seventeen AIPA news releases. The vast majority indicated they had either used the material or were

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<sup>2</sup>Original survey responses are on file with the American Indian Press Association in Washington, D.C. Photo copies of the material are in the possession of the author.

interested in it, but for a variety of reasons did not publish certain stories. The editor of the Navajo Times, largest of the reservation newspapers, responded that he printed all but a handful of the stories. Several, he maintained, were never received; a few were not used because they duplicated stories received earlier from other sources. Commented Navajo Times editor, Chet MacRoriex: "Stories are generally good. Some have been previously received from other sources. By using Associated Press concepts of picking up, and possibly doing further research of stories carried in various Indian publications, or other publications carrying news of Indians, I think you could build an effective news service."

In contrast, the editor of Dine Baa-Hani, a Navajo publication independent of the tribal council, responded that he used about one-third of the seventeen releases. He said that the editors of Dine Baa-Hani sought substantive news on issues facing the Navajo Nation and not superficial stories on "birthdays, weddings, promotions or just meetings or conferences with no action."

Space considerations prevented many editors from printing much of the AIPA written material. Lamented Gwen Owle, editor of the Cherokee One Feather: "All the stories thus far have been well written, reflecting a high quality of journalism--if I had the space I would use all of them."

Howard Rock, editor of the Tundra Times and 1973 recipient of the Marie Potts Award presented by the AIPA in recognition of outstanding Indian journalism, echoed Gwen Owle's remarks: "I think the stories that have been released by AIPA are well done and professional. I regret that I don't always use them partly through lack of space and partly through



relevancy and pertinency of the material we handle up here in Alaska." Similarly, the editor of the Choctaw Times noted that he was "interested in all but severely limited for space due to irregular publication."

A common complaint was that many releases were either never received or that they arrived so late they were no longer newsworthy. Replied one editor: "Articles are well written--sometimes received too late, i.e., Kennedy education hearings scheduled for 5/6/71, and Roger Jourdain bomb threat (local news carried story ten days prior to receipt of AIPA release). Some articles were not received." Commented another: "Very informative and assembled excellently. Need to reach us sooner." The editor of the American Indian News agreed: "The stories are excellent and this is a much needed service. They occasionally arrive after our deadline so we use other sources."

A recurring criticism of the material was that it was too lengthy and at a readability level that was much too difficult for the average Indian. "Too wordy--lose interest," was the terse reply of Carole Wright, editor of the Native Nevadan. Like criticism was received from Robert Benn, editor of the Choctaw Community News and former AIPA board member: "Copy too long and wordy. We print tabloid and space is at a premium. More use of easy-to-understand words and writing. Most of our readership uses English as a second language." Sharing Benn's sentiments was David Gipp of the Standing Rock Star who observed: "Most of the articles we have received would have been more readable had they been written more simply. We appreciate the length and depth of the articles; however, we rewrite most of them to make the meaning clearer to the population the newspaper is aimed at."

Among the most negative responses was that offered by the editor of the Quileute Newsletter. After indicating that he had neither printed nor was interested in any of the seventeen news releases, the editor said: "It is presumptuous as all hell to ask the members of the tribe to be interested in congressional legislation (Kennedy bill), etc. The AIPA news service is valuable, I think, but more for big-time tribes and less for us."

Aspects of the service which drew special praise were "Commentary" and "Horse Feathers," the latter a series of satirical cartoons drawn by Charles Trimble.

While there has been no follow-up survey by the AIPA to determine acceptance of its news releases, unsolicited comments are frequently received and informal feedback is encouraged. In addition, the AIPA monitors Indian newspapers to determine the degree to which they are using AIPA material.

A frequent criticism, and one that AIPA staff members feel is unjustified, is that the AIPA supports the left-wing ideologies of the American Indian Movement because of the extensive coverage it has given the activities of this organization. LaCourse vehemently denies this, contending that such an aggressive organization cannot be ignored. He cautions, however, that "coverage should not be construed as endorsement."<sup>3</sup>

Because the tone of AIPA releases is established almost entirely by two individuals, LaCourse and congressional reporter, Karen

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<sup>3</sup>LaCourse, interview, January 26, 1973.

Ducheneaux, the views of a single correspondent may be taken by some as those of the entire organization. Trimble maintains that the addition of Miss Ducheneaux, a Cheyenne River Sioux, has lent a more conservative tone to AIPA news releases. In general, however, the membership seems satisfied with the efforts of the AIPA. This satisfaction is reflected in the fact that membership has grown. In addition, there comes to light, from time to time, open signs of support. The following excerpt from the Indian Voice is indicative:

The significance of AIPA is not the short-run effects, however; it is in the long-range effects the organization will have in bringing the Indian people of this country closer together, and keeping them well-informed on Indian events and federal policy. Without AIPA, the Indian news scene is very fragmented; the only news from Washington that a local tribal paper is likely to carry is news from a visit the tribal chairman makes to the Capital, and the news is almost certain to be limited to items of interest to only the local people. With the enormous coverage AIPA has given its Indian newspaper clients, all of our horizons have broadened. We can keep up with what is going on in Washington, which for Indians is very important.<sup>4</sup>

An undesirable side effect has been that in some circles the AIPA is being watched for its political impact. Though LaCourse steadfastly maintains that "our political impact is not our business; the dissemination of information is our business,"<sup>5</sup> he admits that the AIPA has been "accepted with interest in Washington"<sup>6</sup> and that its work has brought death threats to both he and Trimble. Many of these threats and much of the criticism of the AIPA have been prompted by the fact that

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<sup>4</sup>"Indian World News," Indian Voice, July, 1972, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis Conference, June 8, 1972.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

the AIPA poses a threat to what Trimble refers to as "a politic of news" among Indians.<sup>7</sup> Trimble contends that tribal leaders or editors often withhold information to enhance their own knowledge and power on the reservation. The advent of the AIPA, with its goal of creating an informed Indian people through the wide dissemination of information germane to the future of these people, is naturally perceived as a threat by certain members of the Indian power structure.

Such problems are considered minor, however, in light of the job many Indian journalists feel the AIPA must perform to enlighten the mass media on Indian issues. A common complaint from Indians is that the mass media simply does not understand Indian issues. LaCourse is of the opinion that "the majority press is racist,"<sup>8</sup> and Dean Chavers, managing editor of the Indian Voice and a doctoral candidate in communications at Stanford University, has charged that "In general, the press, when it has not been anti-Indian, has been rabidly pro-white, and in the process has failed the Indian people almost completely."<sup>9</sup>

There are those Indians like Tanna Beebe, a reporter for KIRO-TV in Seattle, who believe that only minorities should report on minorities. LaCourse, Trimble, and others maintain that while this may be desirable, there are many reporters who, with proper backgrounding in

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<sup>7</sup>Trimble, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis Conference, June 8, 1972.

<sup>8</sup>LaCourse, interview, January 26, 1973.

<sup>9</sup>Dean Chavers, speech delivered at the first annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Denver, November 16, 1972.

Indian affairs, are capable of making sound judgments and reporting with reasonable accuracy on Indian affairs. All agree, however, that Indians must begin to exert greater influence on the mass media. Commented Gerald Wilkinson, director of CEE-TRUTH, a media sensitivity and training project in Albuquerque:

The fight is in winning control (of the media). Attempts at protesting Daniel Boone or this or that commercial are admirable, necessary, lofty, and above all meaningless. For unless we have some basic control over media policy, the distortions of Indian people by the media will continue in accordance with the appetite of the public at large impels them to feed on.<sup>10</sup>

The onus for rectifying this situation--for preparing Indian journalists and sensitizing the media to Indian issues--has fallen on the shoulders of the AIPA. The AIPA has responded by training young Indians interested in journalism and supplying background material to representatives of the mass media. It has also urged Indian editors to approach the mass media and prestige publications throughout the United States. Typical was LaCourse's urging at a communications workshop in Minneapolis to "end the timidity among Indians for approaching Harpers, Atlantic, the Washington Post, and other publications."<sup>11</sup>

To a surprising degree the AIPA has been successful in reaching representatives of the mass media and reporters of Indian affairs. It has helped to provide them with a fresh perspective by acting as a resource service and backgrounding reporters in the underlying issues of the event.

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<sup>10</sup>Gerald Wilkinson, "Colonialism through the Media," Medium Rare, January, 1974, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Minneapolis Conference, June 9, 1972.

As part of this study, the author sent questionnaires to thirty-eight representatives of the print and electronic media. The purposes of this questionnaire were to determine the extent to which the AIPA is known by members of the mass media, and to receive some indication of the services the AIPA has performed. Individuals, whose names were furnished by the AIPA, were asked to describe their present jobs and relate their experience in reporting Indian affairs. They also were asked if they had ever had occasion to contact the American Indian Press Association. If they replied affirmatively, they were requested to explain how they learned of the AIPA, with whom they had had contact, and the extent of that contact.

A seventh question asked whether they subscribed to the AIPA news service. If so, they were asked to explain in what manner they used the material and which aspect they found most useful.

To determine if those who received assistance from the AIPA had a clearer understanding of Indian affairs, individuals were asked if they covered the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs by Indians in 1972 and the takeover of Wounded Knee in 1973. Those that replied affirmatively were asked to enumerate what they felt were the underlying causes for these actions. These incidents were selected because they are generally regarded as classic examples of modern day misunderstanding by the media of Indian affairs.

A final question, which asked whether the respondent was a native American, was discarded because of its ambiguity.

There were fourteen respondents. Among them were employees of United Press International, the Associated Press, Scripps-Howard

Newspapers, the Minneapolis Tribune, the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Washington Post, the Tulsa World, and the National Broadcasting Company.

In almost all instances, the respondents were not solely assigned to covering Indian or racial affairs. Typically, they were general assignment reporters, regional editors or bureau chiefs, and diplomatic correspondents who reported on Indian affairs as a natural consequence of a broader assignment.

For example, William E. Clayton, Jr., southwest regional reporter for United Press International, noted that he reported on Indian affairs "only inasmuch as Indian matters have arisen concerning the nine states of the Southwest I cover." Similarly, John N. MacLean, a correspondent with the Chicago Tribune whose beat is the State Department and Pentagon, has "covered Indian affairs off and on as a matter of personal interest during the nearly four years I have been in Washington." This, he noted, "is not part of my regular assignment, although my bureau has been cooperative in giving me time to pursue this subject."

Only Steve Nickeson of the Race Relations Reporter Magazine and Newsletter indicated that his primary responsibility was the reporting of racial events and trends with an emphasis on Indian affairs. Not surprising is the fact that Nickeson's contact with AIPA staff members has been so extensive that it has "evolved into personal friendships with several on AIPA's D.C. staff."

Ten of the fourteen respondents said that they had contacted the AIPA on at least one occasion. Of these, the majority were familiar with Richard LaCourse's name. Six respondents reported that they had

dealt with Karen Duchaneaux, AIPA associate news director, one or more times, and an equal number said they had worked with Charles Trimble. Only four of the respondents reported having had contact with Rose Robinson, AIPA's executive director.

Acquaintance with AIPA staffers was reported to have come about in a variety of ways. Most of the respondents said that they had been introduced to AIPA staff members by colleagues. Frank Wright, Washington, D.C., bureau chief for the Minneapolis Tribune, responded that he learned of the AIPA through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. John MacLean of the Chicago Tribune credited "word of mouth."

Others reported encountering AIPA representatives at major news events involving Indians. Peggy Simpson of the Associated Press said that she had met Richard LaCourse at a Senate Indian affairs hearing. Dirck Halstead, a contract photographer for Time magazine, replied that he was introduced to LaCourse at Wounded Knee. Donald Baker of the Washington Post "met some of its (AIPA) personnel during the BIA takeover."

The degree of association has ranged from "fairly limited--to check out some aspect of an Indian issue"--to continued and extensive contact over a long period. Finlay Lewis of the Minneapolis Tribune reported: "Their sources are good, and LaCourse and Trimble in particular have a good feel for different situations. LaCourse, for example, was on one occasion very useful in assessing the influence that various key staff people on the hill would have on the work of the two Indian affairs subcommittees."

Despite the fact that nearly all respondents characterized the AIPA as a credible source for information on Indians and Indian



affairs, none subscribed to the AIPA's news service. While the majority simply replied without elaboration that they did not subscribe to the service, some volunteered that they "probably should" or that they had read copies of the news releases and suggested that their publication begin subscribing.

Steve Nickeson of the Race Relations Information Center reported that although his organization was not a subscriber, it did receive a majority of the reservation and Indian community newspapers and thus was exposed indirectly to the work of the AIPA. From this material the center gleaned story ideas and background information for "our own reporting and writing."

Few respondents reported having been assigned to either the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the takeover of Wounded Knee. Those that were, however, appeared to have a clearer understanding of the situations than did many reporters who covered these events for major newspapers, magazines, the wire services, radio and television networks. Steve Nickeson, who covered the occupation of Wounded Knee, outlined the following reasons for the event:

- I. The structure and context of the Pine Ridge Tribal government would not allow Dick Wilson and the majority of the council to govern the tribe effectively unless the administration became dictatorial.

- A. The structure does not allow for any checks and balances and limits decision making to a central group.

- B. The government and its context are out of phase with one another.

1. The tribal history, social make-up, and mixed-blood/full-blood factions block tribal unity.

2. The tribal government's relation to the Interior Department and Justice Department does not allow the government to mature and refine itself.

- II. The powerlessness of those outside tribal government, when mixed with hope provided by the overall Indian movement, made radical political action appear to be the only option available

by which the administration (Wilson) could be made more responsive to more tribal members.

III. Russell Means' search for power in a new field.

IV. It appeared to be a three or four party, intra-tribal power fight; it was complicated by the federal government's wish to retain power over Pine Ridge and the press's misreading of the situation.

Nickeson's insightful appraisal of the events leading up to the occupation of Wounded Knee contrasts harshly with accounts which appeared in many publications. Indeed, these inaccurate accounts were so numerous as to prompt accusations that by and large media coverage of the events at Wounded Knee was deplorably superficial and inaccurate. A four-part series in TV Guide in December, 1973, asked: "Was the Truth Buried at Wounded Knee?" Following suit, Time magazine probed the "Trap at Wounded Knee" in the press section of its March 14, 1973 issue. Then in the June, 1973 issue of Harper's, correspondent Terri Schultz confessed: "The reporters shredded the stories into pieces, tossed them into the air, and recreated them as they fell into designs of their own choosing . . . We wrote good cowboy-and-Indian stories because we thought it was what the public wanted, and they were harmless, even if they were not true. For the truth is buried in too many centuries of lies like fossils embedded in layers of shale."<sup>12</sup>

If, as Terri Schultz has suggested, the truth is buried, the AIPA has taken it upon itself to resurrect it. During 1973, the AIPA offered background information and an Indian perspective on a variety of issues to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., Australian television,

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<sup>12</sup>Terri Schultz, "Bamboozle Me Not at Wounded Knee," Harper's Magazine, June, 1973, p. 56.

the U.S.I.A., the Race Relations Reporter, Time magazine, three reporters for the New York Times, the Gallup Independent, Newsweek, German Public Television, Tulsa World, the Militant, Minneapolis Tribune, Washington Post, the Advocates, Youth Magazine, and the Associated Press.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to offering a fresh perspective on white-Indian relations in America and interpreting contemporary Indian movements and concerns, the AIPA also broke major stories and in a broad sense used the mass media to champion the Indian cause.

For example, prior to the 1972 presidential election, the AIPA was able to obtain material which showed that President Richard M. Nixon was proposing a \$50 million cut in the Bureau of Indian Affairs budget. The AIPA made photo copies of the tables and related material documenting the proposed cut, and distributed this material to the mass media. The upshot was that the appearance of this story in a number of the nation's leading newspapers aroused enough concern and indignation within both the Indian and white communities that the President was forced to change his mind. According to LaCourse, one ramification of this issue was a serious rebuke of Commissioner Bruce by President Nixon for violating the confidentiality of their correspondence on the proposed cut.<sup>14</sup>

Because it is now headquartered in Washington, D.C., much of the assistance the AIPA gives the mass media is concerned with providing

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<sup>13</sup>Names and sources furnished by the American Indian Press Association.

<sup>14</sup>LaCourse, extemporaneous remarks at Denver Conference, November 16, 1972.

the Indian perspective on legislative matters which are apt to directly or indirectly affect the American Indian. The AIPA is also vitally interested in interpreting for the mass media those events which may affect Indians throughout the country. Of particular concern are newsworthy actions which occur on or around Indian reservations. For it is in these areas that some of the greatest distortions occur, contends Dean Chavers, an Indian journalist and doctoral candidate in communications at Stanford University. The reason, Chavers explained in a speech at the first annual convention of the AIPA, is that reporting in such instances is left to white newspapers in towns neighboring the reservations, and it is in these towns that racial prejudice often exhibits its ugliest side. Said Chavers:

A survey would show, I am sure, that the majority of stories about Indians in the U.S. press do not come from the major papers. The urban dailies are far removed from Indian affairs, in general, simply because of geography. And what is left, the papers in the reservation towns, and those towns close to the reservations--Gallup, Norman, Oklahoma City, Rapid City, Denver, Billings, Reno, Spokane, Browning, Winslow, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Claremore, and the like--the papers in these towns are among the most rabid anti-Indian papers in the nation. The coverage they give of Indian affairs is assured to be slanted, biased against the Indian, full of distortions and prejudice, and, at the very least, paternalistic and against any form of self-determination for Indian people.<sup>15</sup>

To rectify this situation, the AIPA has attempted coverage of major stories involving Indians, regardless of the location. Chavers noted in the same speech:

Despite not being funded during most of this time, with the realization that it cannot exist without outside funding, the association has covered all the major stories in Indian country for the past fifteen months. The fight of the Quinault tribe to

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<sup>15</sup>Chavers, speech, November 16, 1972.

control its timber resources, the shelving of the Kennedy Education Bill and the passing of a much weaker substitute, the fishing rights struggle on the Northwest Coast, and the fight of the Pitt River Tribe to regain some of its ancestral land, the murder of Richard Oakes, Raymond Yellow Thunder, Billy Smith, Bunky Ferris, Shenandoah, and several others, and the important fight within the power structure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.<sup>16</sup>

While the subject matter contained in the news releases issued by the AIPA varies, there is a common element--all the material is topical. The emphasis is on current Indian affairs. Trimble contends that Indians know they are Indians, and they don't need historical news. What they do need, he insists, is information which will enable them to cope with the problems of today and plan for those which might arise. Thus, relating Indian history is a function of the AIPA only when it serves to illuminate a hazy aspect of a current Indian concern.

Judging by responses received from Indian editors and Indian affairs reporters, this emphasis on providing the Indian perspective on present and future issues germane to the life of the Native American is a successful and popular approach.

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since its formation late in 1970, the AIPA has dedicated itself to the improvement of American Indian journalism and the encouragement of aspiring Indian journalists. Entering at a time when virtually no communication existed among Indian editors, the AIPA brought native American journalists together for the first time in a series of regional communications conferences. In the course of these meetings, it revealed that problems such as insufficient operating revenue, censorship by the tribal government, and lack of a credible national news source which most editors felt were peculiar to their own operation, were not unique at all.

After it revealed this commonality of concerns, the AIPA embarked on a program of solution seeking services. It initiated an Indian news service and began providing summer internships in its Washington, D.C. office for Indian students with an interest in journalism. It offered individual assistance to Indian publications and sponsored the first national convention for Indian journalists at which it conducted educational workshops and presented an award for outstanding Indian journalism.

Simultaneously, the AIPA maintained a subordinate interest in sensitizing the mass media to the Indian way. In contrast with its

efforts to improve Indian journalism, which have been characterized by structured activities and distinct services, the AIPA approach to educating the media on Indian issues has been informal. Media contacts have resulted more from casual encounters than direct solicitation. The reputation of the AIPA as a reliable source of information on Indian affairs has been achieved by word of mouth rather than through public exposure. Yet, despite its rather casual method, the AIPA has achieved impressive results. At one time or another, it has assisted representatives of the most prestigious publications, news services, television networks, and radio stations in the world.

It can be fairly concluded then that given its limited financial and human resources, the AIPA has made significant strides in its program to upgrade Indian journalism and create an awareness of Indian concerns among representatives of the mass media. If a single criticism can be leveled, it is that the AIPA has, at times, demonstrated a propensity for impulsive action and an inability to set long-range goals.

Clearly, the original intent of the AIPA was to serve Indian publications. The founding fathers were print-oriented. The constitution which these men and women drafted is permeated with references to "editors" and "member publications." Yet, the AIPA has recently shifted from this narrow purpose to embrace other forms of communication, most notably radio and television.

The inclusion of Indian radio and television in the activities of the AIPA can be traced to the regional conferences held in the spring and summer of 1972. At the Midwest conference in Minneapolis, Indian representatives of radio and television made lengthy presentations.

While some Indian editors, such as Aaron De Sersa, objected to the appearance of these speakers on the program--contending that they were competitors and not a part of the AIPA--the vast majority of those attending the conference seemed to find talk of radio and television full of promise for Indians.

AIPA interest in the electronic media was further fueled when AIPA officers visited the Alberta Native Communications Society in Alberta, Canada. The multi-media capabilities of the Canadian organization greatly impressed Trimble, LaCourse, and the others and resulted in the Canadian group being invited to make a presentation at the first national AIPA convention in Denver, November, 1972. Following that convention, the AIPA began a radio news service and several AIPA officials conjectured that since Indians, historically, were not print-oriented, radio and television were perhaps the communication avenues which should be most aggressively followed.

One year later, when members of the AIPA convened in Tulsa for their second annual convention, they found a program weighted heavily with presentations dealing with communication by radio, television, and film, the most startling of which was made by members of the All Indian Pueblo Council concerning a National Media Training Center for Indians. As proposed, the \$5 million project would provide facilities for training Indians in all fields of communications. Faculty support would be provided by New Mexico State University which has designed a two-year associate degree in journalism and mass communications, specifically for the proposed National Media Training Center for Indians. Following the



presentation, a resolution was introduced seeking AIPA endorsement of the project.

Clearly, by the second convention, the AIPA had wandered far afield of its original, narrow purpose of assisting Indian publications. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that a delegate from the Northwest region later proposed that the AIPA clarify its purview and scope of operation by changing its name to the American Indian Media Association.

Today there is a strong need for the AIPA to redefine its mission. Questions which now arise are: Shall the AIPA continue to dissipate its meager resources over a broadening range of communications needs? Should it concentrate on a specific area as originally intended, i.e., serving the print media? Or should it make a concentrated effort to raise additional revenue to expand its staff and offer a multiplicity of communication services?

At present, the AIPA operates with three full-time staff members--Rose Robinson, the executive director; Richard LaCourse, news director; and Karen Ducheneaux, news correspondent--and an occasional student intern. All have backgrounds in publications; each works long hours and receives what can be considered less than average wages. While the staff has demonstrated its ability to serve a print audience, it is too small and inexperienced to contribute much to the areas of radio and television.

Despite this fact, the AIPA daily slips ever deeper into communications areas involving other than newspapers and magazines. Recently, it released a comprehensive directory of more than 600 American Indian newspapers, magazines, news services, publishing houses, radio

broadcasts, television training centers and telecasters, film production enterprises, music listings and theater organizations, agencies, groups, and programs. While it is a valuable reference work which should provide some revenue to the AIPA, the directory can also be regarded as symptomatic of the AIPA's slack-reined policy to take in, regardless of its capacity for serving them, a growing number of individuals and organizations whose relationship to the AIPA is tenuous, at best.

If the AIPA is going to adopt a multi-media approach to Indian communications, it will need additional manpower and increased revenue. The former, of course, is heavily dependent on the latter, and the raising of funds to pay the staff and finance organizational activities has been a bitter struggle for the AIPA since its inception. Fund-raising has been hampered by the fact that the Internal Revenue Service has classified the AIPA as a professional league and does not accord it tax exempt status--a factor which has severely limited the amount of assistance the AIPA receives from large foundations.

At present, the AIPA raises funds by charging annual membership dues, selling subscriptions to its news service, and contracting with various agencies to handle their convention planning and press relations. Money is also raised through the sale of such items as media directories, buttons, bumper stickers, and posters.

In the past, the AIPA has received substantial grants from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Protestant Churches. For a number of reasons--ranging from incompatible politics to simple unavailability of funds--the AIPA can no longer rely on these organizations for support.

To raise the funds necessary to meet its growing needs, the AIPA must obtain a non-profit tax status, 501 (c) (3), for at least the educational portion of its program. If such a status is granted, a number of philanthropic organizations, including the Donner Foundation, have indicated support would be forthcoming.

There are, however, some close to the AIPA who are reluctant to take this step. One such person is Charles Trimble, AIPA board member and former executive secretary. Trimble contends, "You begin accepting large foundation grants and you end up beholden to people."<sup>1</sup> This, he believes, can be disastrous when you're operating a news service.

A logical arrangement would appear to be one similar to that enjoyed by the Education Writers Association. The Education Writers Association is classified as a professional association without tax exempt status. Operating in conjunction with this association, but as a separate and distinct arm thereof, is the National Council for the Advancement of Education Writing. A clear line of demarcation exists between association and council functions, and the bailiwicks of each are sharply defined. As a result of this separation, the Internal Revenue Service has granted the National Council for the Advancement of Education Writing a 501 (c) (3) classification.

The desirability of such an arrangement for the American Indian Press Association is obvious. By creating an educational arm, the AIPA could accept tax exempt donations and expand its ongoing program of education for Indian journalists. At the same time, it could maintain

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Trimble, interview during the second annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Tulsa, October 26, 1973.

a separate and distinct news agency whose integrity would not be compromised by large contributions. Funding for this aspect of the program would be derived from traditional means such as membership dues and the sale of incidentals.

One source of funds which has not been exploited as extensively as it might be and which could create a relatively significant amount of revenue is the "subscriber" category of the AIPA's news service. To date, the AIPA has concentrated on enrolling as many Indian publications as possible. This is understandable, since the AIPA views its primary function as service to Indian publications. Yet, the sale of the news service to a non-Indian audience looms as a far more lucrative way to raise money and insure the continuation of the AIPA. Annual membership for regular Indian publications is presently \$40. For a school, library, individual, or non-Indian publication to subscribe to the AIPA news service, the cost is \$100 a year. For \$100, the subscriber receives only the regular news service. He is accorded neither a voice in AIPA policy making, nor a vote at its annual convention. Since the AIPA is already producing news releases for its member publications, it would require little additional effort to duplicate additional copies for interested subscribers.

Yet in the closing months of 1973, the AIPA could boast only twenty subscribers as contrasted with more than 160 regular and associate members.<sup>2</sup> Part of the reason, LaCourse explains, is that daily

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<sup>2</sup>Rose Robinson, interview during the second annual convention of the American Indian Press Association, Tulsa, October 27, 1973.

newspapers such as the Gallup (New Mexico) Independent, which subscribe to the news service, are often in competition with Indian publications. By extending the news service to these publications, the AIPA is putting its principal target, the Indian newspapers, at a distinct disadvantage. However, if the AIPA is going to offer its service to all who are willing to pay the \$100 subscription fee, such conflicts are bound to arise. One solution would seem to be the development of a separate news service for the mass media. A second alternative would be to simply reject applications for the service from media publications in the circulation areas of subscribing Indian publications.

In any event, the problem would be minimized if the AIPA expended more energy in attempting to sell subscriptions to the thousands of public and private libraries, university departments of journalism, and minority studies programs which have proliferated on college campuses in recent years. In addition to raising money for its program, the AIPA could make a substantial educational impact. With institutions of higher learning rushing about in an attempt to establish special minority programs, the time has never been more ripe for offering the Indian perspective for a price.

While the subject of fund-raising is a critical one, it is, nevertheless, not the core issue. The AIPA has long survived on a skimpy budget. By and large, what sustained it was the will of two men--Charles Trimble and Richard LaCourse. Of late other responsibilities have greatly diminished Trimble's role in the AIPA. LaCourse, with his exceptional writing talent and keen mind, appears destined to be pulled away from the AIPA. The future of the AIPA will be determined to a

large degree by whether it can supplant these strong personalities with a professional organizational system of governance.

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF**  
**THE AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION**

## ARTICLE I

Section 1. The NAME of the Association shall be the AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION.

## ARTICLE II

Section 1. The American Indian Press Association is an organization of periodicals involved in communications efforts among Indian people. The Association seeks to develop and to improve communications among Indian people, and between Indians and the non-Indian public.

It will promote the highest ideals in journalism and the exchange of journalistic ideas and experiences.

Section 2.

- a. The American Indian Press Association will help improve the technical and editorial quality of newspapers and other periodicals directed at Indian readership.
- b. It will provide unified organizational strength for journalists involved in publications directed at Indian readership, thereby assuring their ability to perform objective services and minimizing any infringement on their journalistic freedom.
- c. It will provide an organization to deal laterally with the mass media in matters of Indian affairs. It will assist the media to inform and educate the general public regarding Indian people and Indian issues, and assure proper interpretations and priorities in Indian affairs.
- d. It will encourage Indians to enter fields of mass communications.

## ARTICLE III

Section 1. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP. The full, active voting membership shall be vested in the periodicals accepted for admission as Regular Members by the Board of Directors or a committee appointed by the Board to perform such duties. A periodical shall be considered for Regular Membership if, in the judgment of the Board or its committee, it meets the following qualifications:

- a. It must be directed primarily at informing Indian people.
- b. If it is sponsored by an organization, either profit or non-profit, the governing body of that organization must be predominantly Indian.
- c. Its news content must qualify it as a valid news source rather than a medium to promote the ideological or religious views of an individual or organization.
- d. There shall be one vote per Regular Membership and the duly accredited representative of that member periodical shall be the one to cast the vote.

Section 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. Associate Membership shall be vested in periodicals and individuals interested in promoting knowledge and understanding of Indian people and Indian issues, but do not qualify for Regular Membership status as defined in Section 1 of ARTICLE III.

Associate Members shall not have the privilege to vote.

Section 3. INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP. Institutional Membership shall be granted to periodicals in schools, colleges, trade schools, youth organizations, and other institutions and organizations, provided they meet qualifications as follows:

- a. The sponsoring organization's governing body must be predominantly Indian.
- b. The purpose of the periodical must be to inform Indian people or to inform the readership of Indian people and issues.

Institutional Members shall not have the privilege to vote.

Section 4. NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION. The Board of Directors may require periodicals applying for membership in the Association to submit answers to questions, and adequate proof thereof, regarding circulation, tribal background of staff and organization sponsorship, and other matters bearing upon a newspaper's qualifications for association with the A.I.P.A. The Board of Directors, or their committee, shall decide, by simple majority vote, providing a quorum is present, whether or not they will accept periodicals and individuals for membership to A.I.P.A.

Section 5. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW AND RENEWAL. Each year, prior to the annual meeting of the Association, each member periodical and individual will be reviewed prior to renewal of membership. Periodically the Board or its committee may review new applications, or existing memberships which may have changed their policies sufficiently to justify reconsideration of their membership.

## ARTICLE IV

- Section 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The Board of Directors shall be the governing body of the Association and shall consist of two representatives from each of the regions defined by the Board of Directors.
- Section 2. Prior to the annual meeting, certified member periodicals shall elect by caucus on a regional basis one regional Board Member for a two-year term. He shall serve as a regional coordinator of the Association.
- Section 3. The Board of Directors, by majority action, shall have responsibility over the management and control of the affairs of the Association, shall hire all professional staff personnel, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed in the By-Laws or by a majority vote of the Association at any regular or special meeting.
- Section 4. At the time of election, all Board Members shall be certified representatives of member periodicals. If after election, a Board Member ceases to be associated with a member periodical, he may continue to serve out his elected term of office until the next annual meeting.

## ARTICLE V

- Section 1. The officers of the Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, each of whom shall be elected by the year.
- Section 2. The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected by the newly-elected Board of Directors from among their members and shall continue in office until their duly elected successors are installed.
- Election of officers shall take place at the annual meeting.
- Section 3. Any vacancies in the offices, except the office of President, occurring more than one month before the annual meeting, shall be filled for the unexpired term of the vacated office by appointment of the President, ratified by majority vote of the Board of Directors, either by mail or in meeting. Vacancy of the office of President shall be filled by the Vice-President who, in turn, shall appoint a new Vice-President, as provided herein. Officers of the Board may be removed from office for due cause by two-thirds of the membership of the Board.

## ARTICLE VI

- Section 1. QUORUM. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- Section 2. Twenty-five per cent (25%) of the total regular membership shall constitute a quorum at any regularly called annual or special meeting. A simple majority vote shall be required on any subject pertaining to Association business.

## ARTICLE VII

- Section 1. MEETINGS. There shall be one regular annual meeting of the general membership of the Association and such special meetings as shall be determined necessary by the Board. Ten per cent (10%) of the general membership may petition for a special Board meeting. At least 30 days notice must be given before any regular or special meeting of the general membership. All meetings of the Board and the general membership shall be open.

## ARTICLE VIII

- Section 1. AMENDMENTS. This Association may amend or annul all or any part of the Constitution and By-Laws at any annual or regularly-called special meeting of the regular membership. No change shall be made unless the official call for such meeting, issued 30 days prior to the meeting, shall state that such changes will be considered, and shall give generally the purport and tenor of such proposed changes, along with the recommendation of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws may be adopted only by two-thirds vote of the Regular Members present.



## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I

#### Duties of Officers

- Section 1. The President shall preside at all general membership meetings of the organization and meetings of the Board of Directors, and other such meetings that may be deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.
- The President shall appoint all committees unless otherwise provided.
- Section 2. The Vice-President shall assume the responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President, and shall carry on such other duties as are assigned by the Board of Directors.
- Section 3. The Secretary shall perform the duties set forth in the Constitution usually performed by a Secretary, and such additional duties as shall be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the President.
- Section 4. The Treasurer shall be specifically charged with the duties of maintaining a continuing record of the financial affairs and for an annual audit and condition of the Association and shall make periodic reports jointly with the Secretary. The Treasurer, together with the Secretary, shall at all times provide adequate bookkeeping records subject to approval of the Board of Directors, to provide a complete record of the funds of the organization. The Treasurer shall have such other duties as are usually incumbent upon the office of Treasurer of a corporation.
- Section 5. Regional Coordinators shall have the duties of coordinating affairs of the A.I.P.A. in their respective regions. They will conduct necessary regional elections to select two regional Board Members before each annual meeting of the A.I.P.A.

### ARTICLE II

#### Votes

- Section 1. Each member periodical will have one vote in the selection of regional Board Members from the appropriate region.

Section 2. No proxy votes will be allowed in any elections.

Section 3. Each regular member periodical will have one vote in determining policies and procedures of the Association at meetings of the General Assembly.

**APPENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE USED BY AIPA TO DETERMINE**

**MEMBERSHIP REACTION TO THE ASSOCIATION'S NEWS SERVICE**

# QUESTIONNAIRE

- I. NAME OF PUBLICATION \_\_\_\_\_
- II. ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_
- III. PUBLISHER OR SPONSOR \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tribe ( ) Gov't Agency ( ) Organization ( )  
 Religious Group ( ) School or Institution ( )  
 Business ( ) Individual/Private ( )
- IV. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH? Weekly ( ) Bi-Weekly ( ) Monthly ( )  
 Other ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- V. DEADLINE (Day of week or Date of month) \_\_\_\_\_
- VI. METHOD OF PRINTING: Mimeo ( ) Offset ( ) Ditto ( ) Hot Type ( )  
 Other ( ) \_\_\_\_\_
- VII. DOES YOUR PUBLICATION USE PHOTOS? \_\_\_\_\_ RATES \_\_\_\_\_
- VIII. APPROX. % SPACE DEVOTED TO ADVERTISING \_\_\_\_\_ RATES \_\_\_\_\_
- IX. READERSHIP YOUR PUBLICATION IS DIRECTED AT (Tribe, Urban Indian  
 Community, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- X. TOTAL CIRCULATION \_\_\_\_\_ PAID \_\_\_\_\_ FREE \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_
- XI. EDITOR \_\_\_\_\_ TRIBE OF EDITOR \_\_\_\_\_ LOW LONG EDITOR \_\_\_\_\_
- XII. NUMBER OF STAFF \_\_\_\_\_ INDIANS ON STAFF \_\_\_\_\_ VOLUNTEERS ON  
 STAFF \_\_\_\_\_
- XIII. You should have received the following news stories from the AIPA  
 News Service. Please check those you used; those you were interested  
 in but did not use and those that did not interest you at all:
- | STORIES:  | Used | Interested | Not Int. |
|---|------|------------|----------|
| 1. Commissioner on BIA Policy<br>(1/4)                    |      |            |          |
| 2. Indian Press Conference a<br>First (1/4)               |      |            |          |
| 3. Billings Tribal Chairmen's<br>Conference (2/22)        |      |            |          |
| 4. Kansas City Conf. Indian Self-<br>Determination (3/15) |      |            |          |
| 5. Ernie Stevens Resigns (3/16)                           |      |            |          |
| 6. Ft. Lewis Indian Students<br>Dissent (4/15)            |      |            |          |

- |     |   |      |            |          |
|-----|---|------|------------|----------|
| 7.  | Russ Means Interview (4/19)                         | Used | Interested | Not Int. |
| 8.  | Cleveland Indian Center<br>Pow Wow (4/19)           |      |            |          |
| 9.  | Sec. Morton - Indian Environ-<br>mentalists (4/19)  |      |            |          |
| 10. | 1970 Indian Census Figures<br>(4/19)                |      |            |          |
| 11. | Phoenix Meeting - BIA Planning<br>Council (4/22)    |      |            |          |
| 12. | Rodger Jourdain Bomb Threat<br>Arrest (4/23)        |      |            |          |
| 13. | Kennedy Education Bill (4/23)                       |      |            |          |
| 14. | Kennedy Education Bill High-<br>lights (4/23)       |      |            |          |
| 15. | Tribal Chairmen's Organiza-<br>tion - Pierre (4/28) |      |            |          |
| 16. | Bulletin on Kennedy Bill<br>Hearing (4/30)          |      |            |          |
| 17. | Summary on Kennedy Bill<br>Hearings (4/30)          |      |            |          |

XIV. On the reverse side of this sheet, please give your general impressions of the stories mentioned above:

XV. Would you be willing to subscribe to and become a member of the American Indian Press Association at a nominal fee (i.e. \$25-\$50 per year)? \_\_\_\_\_

FOR CONTINUED NEWS SERVICE, PLEASE MAIL COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE, PLUS THE THREE EDITIONS OF YOUR PUBLICATION TO AIPA AT THE ADDRESS BELOW BY JUNE 1, 1971. IN ADDITION, PLEASE PUT THE AIPA ON YOUR MAILING LIST OF EXCHANGE OR COMPLIMENTARY CIRCULATION.

AMERICAN INDIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION  
Room 306, 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**APPENDIX C**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO DETERMINE**  
**MEDIA OPINIONS OF AIPA**

Return to:

D. A. Christensen  
1151 Palmer Lane  
East Lansing, Mi. 48823

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Employer \_\_\_\_\_

1) Briefly describe the nature of your present job.

2) What experience have you had reporting Indian affairs?

3) In your work, have you ever had occasion to contact the American Indian Press Association? (If you answered "no," skip to question 8.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

4) In what way did you learn of the American Indian Press Association?

5) With whom have you had contact at the American Indian Press Association?

Rose Robinson \_\_\_\_\_

Richard LaCourse \_\_\_\_\_

Karen Duchaneaux \_\_\_\_\_

Charles Trimble \_\_\_\_\_

Bruce Davies \_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

6) What have been the reasons for and the extent of this contact?

6 cont.)

- 7) Do you subscribe to the American Indian Press Association's news service? If "yes," indicate (a) in what way you use the material and (b) which aspect you find the most useful.
- 8) Did you cover the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs by Indians in 1972?
- 9) Did you cover the occupation of Wounded Knee by Indians this year?
- 10) If you answered "yes" to 8 or 9, enumerate what you believe were the underlying causes for these actions.
- 11) Are you a native American?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No





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