

I-S Wiessbrodt papers

CHIEF KOOGH-SEE
FROM HOONAH

"We would like to ask Governor question, Why the people get arrested and tried in court?"

Governor Brady: "For violating the laws that we have on our books."

"Yes, I heard that our people get arrested and tried in Court because they broke law. I was not quite sure, that is why I asked the question. It is true what Kah-du-shan has said; we believed that Alaska belongs to us.

"In all this country long time ago before we ever saw white men, our fathers and grandfathers told us we owned it. In those days we had our own customs. We believed and done things our way in those days, but lately missionaries came here and commenced to tell us different.

"They tell us that everything that is on this earth, wood, water and everything else, is created by God. The trees grow for the purpose that we can make use of them and make houses of. And different animals were created by God for purposes of giving us clothing and food. Now deers is made for purpose to eat; bears and other animals also.

"Now you see up to the present time blankets are made out of marten skins. That is the kind of blankets we used to have long time ago out of lynx, fox and bear. God made the rivers for the purpose that we drink the water and he also made fish for to go in the river. We have been living here a long time.

"Our ancestors used to live here and had possession of different creeks and different places. Since white man came to this country things have changed. They take these things away from us for the purpose of enriching themselves.

"There are lots of things here which white men can make money out of. There is lots of gold in this country. We do not know anything about mining. White men can mine. We do not want them to interfere with us. We make our living by trapping and fishing and hunting and white men take all these places away from us; they constantly interfere with us.

"Now not very far from the place where I live is Lituya Bay, where our people, our ancestors, use to go hunting for sea otters and hair seals. Now that place is taken away from us. Great many schooners going there. White people are there now.

"These white men when they make camp they make lots of smoke. That scares animals; sea otters especially. That ground is very good to sea otter hunting. We went up there, 20 to 30 canoes and hunted around all summer and did not get any. The smoke scares the animals away. And when we talk to those white men they say that country does not belong to us, belongs to Washington. We have no

thing to do with that ground.

"All our people believe that Alaska is our country. I have been down to Seattle, and Tacoma. I have seen nice towns. I have seen how white men live and I like it very much. Now supposing I come back here and tell my people, the leading man such as Kah-du-shan to go down to Seattle and Tacoma.

"I have seen white men rasi-at those towns all kinds of fruit and vegetables. Suppose I tell those people to go with me on certain days to burn certain ground and next day same thing and third day do same thing and destroy all these things, don't you suppose the white people would say something to us if we destroyed all these grounds by fire and get on places where white people goats and other animals and commenced to shoot them.

"That is why I ask you, Governor, to return all these things which white men took away from us. Creeks, for instance, where we make dry fish; places where we trap. We make our living altogether by trapping and hunting and I ask you to give all those places back. And if white men should like to take possession of any of those places, we should like to ask you to tell them to not take them for nothing, but to pay for them."

CHIEF KAH-EA-TCHISS
FROM HOONAH

"Ever since I have been a little boy, I have heard of the white people. I heard that the Russians lived in Sitka. Tlingit by the name of Lin-ko-lich came over to our place and told us about it. Our people have a language of our own and this man Lin-ko-lich acted as interpreter.

"This Lin-do-lich told us that the white people came here it would be much better for us. We have found out at last. We know how it is now. We believe now Lin-ko-lich everything he said. He said there will be no fort or blockade. The Tlingit are not going to kill any white people. They are going to be friendly with them.

Our ancestors used to deal in furs. They had blankets made out of different furs. We are different from them. We dress different. Now our fathers told us where they used to go and hunt the sea otter. This many who spoke before me said the truth. They used to go to a place called Lituya Bay. Used to get lots of otter there for making clothes and blankets. I have got a paper here that I would like the Governor to see and also a medal that my ancestors got from the Russians. (Document in Russian language, dated July 23, 1840. Small silver medal.)

"I feel very bad now the way the white men treat us. I would like you to tell white people to pay us for the ground. When a man goes in a store and buys different things he pays for them. He does not take those things for nothing when he leaves

the store. That is why I should like you to tell your people to do the same thing to us. When we tell the white people to pay for this ground they refuse to make any payment, for the ground and say this land belongs to Washington, we have nothing to do with it.

"Now in early days we used to kill lots of sea otter at Lituya Bay; now we kill but very few. The white people makes lots of smoke and smoke drives sea otter away from those grounds. Lots of schooners are going to that bay and different boats. The sea otter are scared and keep away from those ground. We would like the white people to pay us a little for going into that bay."

CHIEF SHOO-WE-KAH
FROM JUNEAU

"Much has been said by the white chiefs to our people but nothing has been accomplished and now we want to talk good so it will have some weight to do some good.

"In the beginning of this place (Juneau) I was here all by myself. Only one house and I was living in that house. Dick Harris is here and Joe Juneau is another who knew me at that time. After that I went over to Sitka and on arrival there the head man at the town of Sitka called me over to his house. That Chief gave me a paper which I have in my pocket. (Letter of recommendation given by Mr. Bean dated 1880)

"I give you that for purpose that you would not think I was not telling truth. He said then that white people will come to your place and that 'I want you to take good care of them. White people will do the same thing to you. They will look after you. Not only yourself but all your friends."

"Right there on the beach in front of the town, now I have a garden and on that clear place white people camped. Now you have heard today the complaints of several of our people. They claimed that the white people imposed upon them and I would like to ask you today something to help us.

"Here in the basin (near Juneau) I discovered a fine rock and made a mark on that rock and afterwards took white people there and showed them the place. When I was doing that I thought white people would take good care of us, to look after us and especially take good care of me when I got old. But white men did not do as I expected.

"Now with us Tlingit, when a chief want to pay a certain man a piece of ground, he says, you take this ground and take possession of it. White men to not do that. We are at a loss to know what to do.

"And in different villages our people have property just like this house and I would ask you to take good care of it and see that no one interferes with it.

The canoe rocks; we do not know what will become of us."