1	BEFORE THE CHEROKEE NATION			
2	CONSTITUTION CONVENTION COMMISSION			
3				
4				
5	NOVEMBER 7, 1998			
6	MAYES COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS			
7	PRYOR, OKLAHOMA			
8				
9				
10		* * * * * * * * * *		
11		APPEARANCES		
12	COMMISSIONERS:	Paul Thomas Jay Hannah		
13		George Wickliffe Luella Coon		
14		George Underwood		
15		* * * *		
13		INDEX		
16	SPEAKERS			
17	Joseph Thomas Herod Page 2-5		2-5	
18	Molly Silversmith Page 6-2		6-20	
19	Hoover Crittenden Page 21-		21-29	
20	Irving Anderson Page 30-3			30-32
21	Rufus Silversmith Page 33-5			33-50
22	Reporter's Certificate Page 51		51	
23	COURTEMANCHE REPORTING SERVICE			
24	P.O. BOX 1196 MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA 74402-1196			
25	(918) 683-3087 FAX (918) 683-3686			

1	Thereupon, the following proceedings were had:
2	
3	JOSEPH THOMAS HEROD
4	MR. HEROD: I'm Joseph Thomas Herod
5	from Grove, Oklahoma.
6	MR. THOMAS: Joseph Thomas Herod,
7	Grove, Oklahoma?
8	MR. HEROD: Right.
9	MR. THOMAS: And you have been
10	identified as a Cherokee Nation citizen. Have a seat and
11	tell us what is on your mind, Joe.
12	MR. HEROD: What is on my mind is
13	about the judges that we have. I think they should be
14	appointed. They should be like our Supreme Judges. They
15	should be there until one of them dies or they retire,
16	not wait for one, like the Chief or something to get mad
17	and throw them out. That's no good.
18	MR. THOMAS: They're on six-year
19	terms now.
20	MR. HEROD: Right, but they should be
21	on there like our Supreme Court.
22	MR. THOMAS: Yes, sir. What else?
23	MR. HEROD: That's my point.
24	MR. THOMAS: That one thing was

MR. HEROD: And like on the term

1 limit of the Council people. They should be like two

- 2 terms, and they should lay out one term before they can
- 3 run again, if they have not run for another office.
- 4 MR. THOMAS: Anything else on
- 5 anything?
- 6 MR. HEROD: Well, no, I don't guess
- 7 so.
- 8 MR. THOMAS: There's plenty to talk
- 9 about.
- 10 MR. HEROD: But it probably wouldn't
- 11 amount to the Constitution. I think the Chief and the
- 12 people down there should abide by the Constitution, which
- 13 they don't do -- they haven't done, I'll put it that way.
- 14 MR. THOMAS: Would you like something
- 15 maybe to -- something in the Constitution to be sure and
- 16 catch violations of any kind?
- 17 MR. HEROD: Right, if they don't
- 18 abide by the Constitution, they should be impeached.
- 19 MR. THOMAS: What do you think ought
- 20 to happen?
- 21 MR. HEROD: They should be impeached
- 22 if they don't abide by the Constitution because that's
- 23 what it's there for, for him to follow. If they don't
- 24 follow it, we don't need him. Ain't no sense in having a
- 25 Constitution if they ain't going to abide by it.

- 1 That's all I have to say.
- 2 MR. WICKLIFFE: Let me ask you one
- 3 thing you said about the Supreme Justices. Do you
- 4 believe that maybe the Judicial review, the way that we
- 5 title that should be maybe changed to Cherokee Supreme
- 6 Court or something like that?
- 7 MR. HEROD: Well, whatever it takes
- 8 for them to be there like our Supreme Court. I don't
- 9 know. I'm not that smart to figure that out, but I know
- 10 that they are smarter people than me, like Mr. Underwood
- 11 there. I know him; he used to be my neighbor.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: We've had people
- 13 suggest a change in the way that we call our court. The
- 14 way it is now, if our Chief gets mad at them, he throws
- 15 them out. That shouldn't be allowed. They should be
- 16 under the same -- we did have one person make a
- 17 suggestion. I think I can repeat that. "Maybe they
- 18 should be elected."
- 19 MR. HANNAH: Mr. Herod, do you have
- 20 any thoughts along the line of their appointment? Should
- 21 it come from the Council; should it be strictly from the
- 22 Executive branch of the Tribe; or should we elect these
- 23 people?
- 24 MR. HEROD: I think we should elect
- 25 them and then they stay in office until they retire or

1 die, like your Supreme Court does. I think our Supreme 2 Court that we have is appointed by the President, if I 3 ain't mistaken. But, also, if they don't follow the 5 Constitution, they should be kicked out, too, under that 6 circumstance. Because if they don't, ain't no sense in 7 having a Constitution. That's the way I look at it. If 8 we go to all of this bother to get it, they should abide 9 by it. 10 Anybody else have any questions that I might 11 goof up on? That's about all I have. 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

22

23

24

	SILVERSMITH

- 2 MS. SILVERSMITH: I'm Molly
- 3 Silversmith from Salina, Oklahoma.
- 4 MR. THOMAS: And you do have the
- 5 credentials or you wouldn't be here in that chair, so
- 6 just feel free to tell us what is on your mind,
- 7 Ms. Silversmith.
- 8 MS. SILVERSMITH: Well, I'm one of
- 9 many guilty of not even reading my Constitution, so I'm
- 10 not real familiar with it. So the only thing I can go is
- 11 with my own feeling of what I have heard; what I have
- 12 seen; and what I know. I don't have this to back what
- 13 I'm saying. I'm not real familiar with it, which is a
- 14 shame.
- MR. THOMAS: You go right ahead.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: From what I have
- 17 seen and heard, I am not happy with the way our election
- 18 system has gone. I am not happy with the way our
- 19 Councilmen have represented myself. I can only speak for
- 20 myself.
- 21 The terms of office should be amended. It
- 22 just doesn't seem like the Cherokee people are included
- 23 in our government. Closed meetings. It seems that our
- 24 own people that are on Councils, on committees, elected
- 25 officials keep telling me what I need. They don't listen

1 to what I tell them I need. And sometimes what they tell

- 2 me I need is not what I need.
- 3 They need to hear me. They need to know my
- 4 needs. They don't seem to care what my needs are. They
- 5 tell me what I need, and it may not necessarily mean
- 6 that's what I need.
- 7 I don't feel my Councilmen listen to me. I
- 8 don't feel they even care if I'm there. I have gone to
- 9 meetings. They seem to rush -- this man right here, I
- 10 don't really even know him. I only know him by name. I
- 11 feel from what he has said and I've heard in meetings.
- 12 I've never officially introduced myself to this man.
- But I've been in meetings where he has spoken,
- 14 and he has said things that I wanted to say. I get
- 15 emotional. I want my people to know that somebody cares,
- 16 and that we're not getting lost in bureaucracy in things
- 17 that matter to our people. I have gone to meetings and
- 18 didn't even know what they were saying. They speak in a
- 19 language that I don't understand.
- 20 My mother, she fought for this among her
- 21 children, among our family, among the Tribe. She's gone
- 22 now, and it almost saddened her, and it saddened me that
- 23 we as a people that want so much can't work together.
- 24 We're all striving and saying we're striving
- 25 for the very same thing, but it seems we're divided. And

1 when I go to these meetings and hear these Councilmen

- 2 talk, they're not talking to me. They're not hearing me.
- 3 There, again, they're telling me what I need.
- I would like the election -- I love the
- 5 election of the officials, that we can elect rather than
- 6 appoint. I don't like appointment. I want to be
- 7 involved to elect a person that I feel best to represent
- 8 me because when they are elected, that is exactly what
- 9 they're doing, they're representing me.
- 10 I don't want to go into someplace where I have
- 11 elected an official and they're not saying what I said at
- 12 all. But what can I do about it? What can I do about
- 13 it? The term is too long. I'm old enough, been in the
- 14 workplace long enough, that if you do a job long enough,
- 15 you're not going to be as sharp. You're going to be
- 16 knowledgeable, but you're not going to be as sharp.
- 17 You're not going to be as aggressive. You're not going
- 18 to be as attentive to issues as you were on your first
- 19 day.
- 20 Your first week on a new job, you're doing
- 21 your very, very best. Thirty-one years later, you're not
- 22 doing your very, very best. A year later, you're not
- 23 doing your very, very, very best. You get relaxed. You
- 24 start not caring. You start not pushing and giving that
- 25 extra effort. All the things that you said to get

- 1 elected, start waning.
- 2 So I think the terms of Councilmen should be
- 3 limited, very limited. There needs to be a turnover for
- 4 new ideas. You can stay in one place too long. You get
- 5 lazy about what is going on. You're not in tune to the
- 6 people anymore. New ideas.
- 7 I think there's too much power entrusted to
- 8 the Chief. I don't think the Chief has a watch dog, and
- 9 I don't like that word. Every time I hear a "watch dog,"
- 10 I think of the BIA. But we must have someone in there or
- 11 a group of people that can also not give the Chief all
- 12 the power that he has that I have seen and heard and
- 13 read. That's too much power for one person that's
- 14 representing a Tribe of people.
- 15 And that takes us back to where the people
- 16 don't have a say. Then they start telling us what we
- 17 need, and there's nothing we can do about it. So I think
- 18 the Chief has too much power. The power of the people is
- 19 not there. The power of the people has been taken out of
- 20 the Council, I think, from what I have seen.
- 21 And when you start talking on those terms, and
- 22 I've heard this man right hear speak of those terms, they
- 23 want to get rid of you, just like you're talking about.
- 24 They don't want to hear it. I wouldn't go as far as
- 25 saying assassinate you, but it has happened.

1 So when you start talking the truth, the

- 2 Council, as of now, the Council people as of today that
- 3 are in office do not listen to me, and a lot of the
- 4 Tribe.
- 5 You were talking about the people not coming.
- 6 Why should they come if they're not heard? That's why
- 7 they're staying away. It's fruitless for them to come
- 8 say anything and get anything done. They don't come.
- 9 And when they're spoken back to and given an answer, they
- 10 don't understand what the answer is. It's a bunch of
- 11 gibberish, double-talk, "I'll get to you later."
- 12 Our Councilmen that are in office right now, I
- 13 do not have faith in. I would not re-elect a one of
- 14 them. I don't know if any of them are sitting in this
- 15 audience or not. I don't think so.
- MR. THOMAS: We could care a less.
- 17 MS. SILVERSMITH: Our Chief has been
- 18 a disgrace. I am Cherokee, meaning, I am one of many.
- 19 We must have a revision to where the Chief cannot have
- 20 the power, cannot put himself behind closed doors, away
- 21 from the people. I could not walk down there. I tried
- 22 to, to get an audience with him, it is impossible.
- 23 How is he going to know what I want to know?
- 24 How is he going to know what I need if I can't get in to
- 25 talk to him? That is why the revision is in here, as I

1 said, I don't know it as well as I should, but I'm going

- 2 to. I'm going to. I want to know this.
- I have been out of step with the Cherokee
- 4 people, my people, living my life, doing my thing, and
- 5 really not involving myself with my people. They were in
- 6 my heart, but I wasn't out doing what I should be doing
- 7 out among them, out hearing them, out knowing them. But
- 8 I'm going to.
- 9 What I've read in the paper and what has
- 10 happened over this rein of Joe Byrd, awakened me. I must
- 11 get involved with my people, and I'm sure there's a lot
- 12 of other Cherokees just as guilty as I am of not
- 13 participating. And namely myself, personally, is because
- 14 I never felt they heard me, so I didn't care.
- So in the Constitution, the powers of the
- 16 Chief need to be looked at. The powers of the Council
- 17 need to be looked at. The terms of the Council need to
- 18 be looked at. The terms of the Chief need to be looked
- 19 at. Some kind of watch dog, for lack of a better word,
- 20 over the Chief and what he does.
- 21 MR. THOMAS: Some committee or
- 22 something?
- MS. SILVERSMITH: Something like that
- 24 that he has to go through. More than one person. When
- 25 he wants to make a decision, there again, the people are

1 not involved. We don't know what decisions have been

- 2 made, why they've been made. We don't know. And all we
- 3 hear is "for the people." What does that mean, "For the
- 4 people"? Nobody tells me. Nobody asked my opinion.
- 5 All I read is they have done something for me.
- 6 They didn't ask me if I wanted it this way. They just
- 7 told me, "I did it for the good of you." I really don't
- 8 feel comfortable with that.
- 9 So, namely, that the Chief, the Councilors,
- 10 the governing body needs to be looked into on terms.
- MR. THOMAS: Staggered terms?
- MS. SILVERSMITH: The terms of
- 13 office.
- MR. THOMAS: What would you suggest?
- MS. SILVERSMITH: I think two-year
- 16 terms for the Councilmen is plenty.
- 17 MR. THOMAS: They have to lay out a
- 18 term then?
- 19 MS. SILVERSMITH: I would say they
- 20 could go two terms for two years, lay out a year, and go
- 21 back because you have some good Councilmen. This man
- 22 right here. I would love to see him in my government. I
- 23 don't know this man. I know his name. But I have heard
- 24 him speak. (Referring to George Wickliffe)
- 25 You're going to have some good Councilmen as

1 in any organization. I'm not just talking about the

- 2 Cherokee. Any organization you're going to have some
- 3 rotten apples. So in order to keep the good ones and get
- 4 the bad ones out, you're going to have to let the good
- 5 ones stay awhile and be re-elected again.
- 6 So I say two two-year terms, two consecutive
- 7 two-year terms, lay out a year, and go back for two more
- 8 consecutive terms on the Councilmen. I am not real
- 9 familiar with the Judicial system of my Tribe, except
- 10 what I read in the newspapers, and I only believe half of
- 11 that, if that.
- MR. THOMAS: They're appointed for
- 13 six-year terms by the Chief.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: They're appointed
- 15 for six-year terms by the Chief? I think that should be
- 16 changed. I think more of the government should be
- 17 given --
- 18 MR. THOMAS: They have to be okayed
- 19 by the Council.
- MR. HANNAH: Yes.
- 21 MS. SILVERSMITH: I think more of the
- 22 government should be back with the people. The people
- 23 are getting left out of everything. I think you could
- 24 stop on the street and ask the average Cherokee member
- 25 any question politically that you want, they could not

- 1 answer you. They're not informed, or they're
- 2 misinformed, or they don't care. Not because they're bad
- 3 Cherokees; nobody listens to them anyway.
- I think more of the government needs to be the
- 5 people. They keep saying "for the people." But the
- 6 people are not involved in the decision-making things.
- 7 MR. UNDERWOOD: Would you elect the
- 8 judges?
- 9 MS. SILVERSMITH: I think the judges
- 10 should be elected by the people, the people. Put the
- 11 people back in government.
- 12 MS. WICKLIFFE: I need to ask you
- 13 something also about the court system. Do you think
- 14 there should be District Courts located away from
- 15 Tahlequah and in the Supreme Court or Judicial Court in
- 16 Tahlequah? We used to have that years ago. We had one
- 17 at Gore and we had one at --
- MS. SILVERSMITH: There, again, I'm
- 19 very ignorant on the Constitution or what has been in the
- 20 past or what has worked and hasn't worked, so I really
- 21 couldn't answer that. I know we need the Judicial system
- 22 of the Supreme Judges, I guess.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: Reworked?
- 24 Fine-tuned?
- MS. SILVERSMITH: Fine-tuned,

1 reworked. I can't say enough; put the people back in

- 2 charge. When an official is elected, it doesn't mean
- 3 they speak for me without me knowing it. They came to me
- 4 for their vote. They'll come to your house for your
- 5 vote, but would they come to my house to ask me what ${\tt I}$
- 6 needed, what I wanted?
- 7 Once they're elected, they don't even know who
- 8 I am. They don't care what I have to say.
- 9 MR. HANNAH: Ms. Silversmith, I hear
- 10 your frustration with representation that you feel we
- 11 have under Tribal Council and, of course, under our
- 12 existing Constitution. The districts are represented by
- 13 Council members based on population. Some districts have
- 14 two, some have one.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: Elected by the
- 16 people.
- 17 MR. HANNAH: This is true, and that's
- 18 the way that it stands at this time. Do you believe that
- 19 we should have, or we should look into some redesign of
- 20 the representation system? And I hold that out under
- 21 another historic note that prior to the dissolution of
- 22 our Tribe's electoral government in 1906, we had a
- 23 bicameral house, very much like the United States
- 24 Congress, we had two governing bodies.
- There was a Cherokee Senate, and then a

- 1 National Council, very much like our representatives
- 2 which, I know that that's quote, unquote, more "elected
- 3 officials," but at the same time, there was a much
- 4 broader base of representation from the district of the
- 5 Cherokee Nation.
- 6 And I hear your frustration in that you feel
- 7 you're not being listened to by your Tribal Council
- 8 members, and I'm anxious to know if you have any ideas.
- 9 MS. SILVERSMITH: Isn't there some
- 10 kind of bylaws -- I'm at a loss of words here -- that the
- 11 elected Councilmen must go by, like meetings, open
- 12 meetings, how many meetings, where they can hold them to
- 13 get the people in, people's forums? Is that all in there
- 14 for the Councilmen that they're supposed to go by some
- 15 kind of a --
- MR. HANNAH: To my knowledge, there
- 17 are no standing rules or guidelines that require Council
- 18 members to hold specified meetings within the district.
- 19 MS. SILVERSMITH: They certainly need
- 20 to do it. I need to be heard. I need to talk to my
- 21 Councilman.
- 22 MS. THOMAS: There are no quidelines
- 23 for getting rid of these people either.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: We need that too.
- 25 MR. THOMAS: As to their behavior,

- 1 none, get rid of them, none.
- 2 MS. SILVERSMITH: We need that too.
- 3 You made a statement awhile ago about making the money
- 4 and not earning it. When I go to work, I have to work
- 5 eight hours or I don't get paid. These Councilmen were
- 6 elected to do a job that they're getting paid for. Are
- 7 they getting paid for this? Then they need to work for
- 8 me.
- 9 I elected them; I'm paying them; they need to
- 10 listen to me. They need to be available to me. They
- 11 need to have some guidelines they hold a meeting certain
- 12 time every month so there won't be any mix-up on when is
- 13 the meeting; where is the meeting; well, I missed it; I
- 14 didn't know it was going on.
- 15 So we need some kind of, just like this,
- 16 something in writing that holds them to doing their job.
- 17 MR. HANNAH: Within the district that
- 18 they represent?
- 19 MS. SILVERSMITH: Within the district
- 20 that they represent. They need a mini Constitution, for
- 21 lack of better word. Something that will hold them
- 22 legally and binding to do their job.
- 23 Mostly the election, people doing their jobs.
- 24 Your question -- you were interrupted. You were telling
- 25 me they used to have --

1 MR. WICKLIFFE: They did, they had, I

- 2 think it was under 1839 Constitution, they had District
- 3 Courts. They had one they called (inaudible); there was
- 4 another one at Gore. Most things, I guess things are
- 5 filed according to District. If you are in a district
- 6 and you have a complaint that goes before the Cherokee
- 7 Nation courts, you'll fall down there.
- 8 MS. SILVERSMITH: If it can't be
- 9 resolved, it goes to the higher court. We do not have
- 10 that system now?
- 11 MR. WICKLIFFE: We do have a District
- 12 Court. I think it's been moved now. I think it used to
- 13 be in the same building; it's been moved to the Cherokee
- 14 Nation, and moved back by the Justices, and has not been
- 15 moved back.
- 16 MS. SILVERSMITH: From what you're
- 17 telling me, we definitely need to revise probably our
- 18 Judicial system in our Constitution also.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: Really, in my
- 20 opinion, that's what you are saying.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: Back to the people
- 22 is what I'm saying.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: Sure, back to the
- 24 people.
- 25 MS. SILVERSMITH: The entire system

1 of our Cherokee government needs to include the people.

- 2 The people have been excluded.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: The suggestion you're
- 4 making here, if it fine-tunes our system where it will
- 5 work, where no one else can get away with what has
- 6 happened, with several people involved --
- 7 MS. SILVERSMITH: How many people in
- 8 here know what BIA stands for? Boss Indian around.
- 9 MR. WICKLIFFE: In other words, what
- 10 we're coming up with, if I have understood what you have
- 11 said, you want something that will work so this will not
- 12 happen to us again.
- MS. SILVERSMITH: We have to.
- MR. WICKLIFFE: It will be to the
- 15 people.
- 16 MS. SILVERSMITH: Or we're not going
- 17 to exist.
- 18 MR. WICKLIFFE: All right. Okay.
- 19 That is what I think you're saying.
- 20 MS. SILVERSMITH: That's exactly what
- 21 I'm saying. We will no longer be a Tribe if we don't do
- 22 something. There will be no longer a Cherokee Tribe as
- 23 we know it this very day this Saturday if we don't do
- 24 something, and it can't be done without the Cherokee
- 25 people.

1	MR. UNDERWOOD: May I make a
2	suggestion? You have covered a tremendous amount of
3	ground in all of the facets that you've discussed. Take
4	that box number, itemize these and make your strong
5	suggestions, whether it's two-year terms, or whatever,
6	and mail it to that box number.
7	MS. SILVERSMITH: I will.
8	MR. THOMAS: You've been nothing less
9	than inspirational. Thank God for you, and I wish there
10	was one hundred ninety-two thousand Cherokees just like
11	you.
12	MS. SILVERSMITH: There are if you
13	will let them. There are if you will let them.
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1 HOOVER CRITTENDEN

- 2 MR. THOMAS: This is Hoover
- 3 Crittenden, and he's authorized to speak because he has
- 4 the necessary credentials. You have the floor, sir.
- 5 MR. CRITTENDEN: Well, first of all,
- 6 I am no spokesman, but the lady that was ahead of me, I
- 7 think covers a lot of what I would have to say.
- 8 There's a lot of things that I've seen, a lot
- 9 of things that I've heard at the Council, so-called
- 10 Council meetings, but yet, at the same time, I get the
- 11 feeling that everything that is set up down there and
- 12 what I have observed is all buddy-buddy stuff. I don't
- 13 care what organization you go into, there is always, I
- 14 find, it's friends or buddy-buddy stuff. You scratch my
- 15 back; I'll scratch yours.
- I think Cherokee Nation is set up on those
- 17 basis. We all got friends down there. If you have a
- 18 good buddy, if you've got money, you get in. You're in.
- 19 Once you're in, as like some of your Council members,
- 20 we've got some down there has been on twenty-five, thirty
- 21 years, then they brag about it. "If they want me off,
- 22 all they've got to do is kick me off; vote me out."
- 23 How come they stayed there as long as they
- 24 did? Through friendship. Through "you scratch my back,
- 25 I'll scratch yours." Like I said, you're going to hear

1 from an old red-neck boy here. I don't have any of these

- 2 big words, but this is just how I feel.
- 3 Another thing is about power. We were talking
- 4 about power awhile ago. To me, you give a person power,
- 5 I guess it would go to your head. I never had power
- 6 myself. I was always took orders. I took orders when I
- 7 was in the service, and I obeyed what commandments I was
- 8 told.
- 9 I am saying this -- as to your Chief -- I
- 10 don't understand the Constitution. I have never read it
- 11 through. I don't know what all it says, but what I have
- 12 gathered in the past eight or ten months, every
- 13 Constitution that has been written, I guess, has been
- 14 broken. Nobody standing by it.
- 15 Who has got the power? I want to know who has
- 16 the power. We are supposed to have three branches of
- 17 service, right? Is this not run the same way in the
- 18 Constitution of the United States?
- I was told here not too long ago, there was
- 20 nothing I could do about what my Chief did. You can't do
- 21 nothing about it. He's the Chief. It's just like the
- 22 President of the United States; you can't do nothing with
- 23 him. He's untouchable.
- In my way of thinking, just like the lady was
- 25 telling you awhile ago, we are the people. We are

1 supposed to be the government. Are we not, or have I

- 2 misinterpreted that? We are supposed to be the
- 3 government; are we not?
- We put the man in; I didn't put him in.
- 5 Somebody put that man in there, and if he's wrong of what
- 6 he is accused of -- I mean, I'm not the judge. I can't
- 7 judge him. If he's wrong for what he's accused of, in my
- 8 way of thinking, he's wrong. Why can't the people have
- 9 the power to replace him just like we are taking action
- 10 with our President of the United States? We should have
- 11 the same authority of the Cherokee Nation.
- 12 There's a lot of things I disagree with just
- 13 like those terms that I'm telling you about.
- 14 Twenty-five, thirty years on the Council members. Who
- 15 are you representing? The guy that tells you how to
- 16 vote. He's not -- they're not representing us.
- 17 And you've got your law enforcement. We had
- 18 that. I suppose it don't even in existence now. What do
- 19 we have? Is all we've got is the office down there where
- 20 the Chief sits? Is that the only branch of service we've
- 21 got now with the Cherokee Nation?
- How can we survive with one, or are we just
- 23 like Castro? "Hey, I've got the power; you're going to
- 24 do what I'm telling you to do." Is that what we are
- 25 under here?

1 I'd just like to see -- again, I don't know

- 2 how long a Council member is supposed to be in office
- 3 now. Two years, three years, four years?
- 4 MR. THOMAS: Four-year terms.
- 5 MR. CRITTENDEN: Four-year terms.
- 6 Well, a four-year term is not really that bad, I don't
- 7 suppose, but I guess it could be -- but really, I'm not
- 8 going to make a point out of it. Four years is plenty
- 9 for any person I do think if he does his job. No more
- 10 than three term limits; that's what I would say.
- MR. THOMAS: Twelve years?
- MR. CRITTENDEN: Yeah, I mean it
- 13 would be all right with me, but like I say, I'm just one
- 14 person. This is my opinion. When other Cherokees come
- 15 together, whatever they feel more strongly toward, I
- 16 think that's how it should be, but I don't think it
- 17 should be any more than three-year term.
- 18 MR. UNDERWOOD: You don't like twenty
- 19 years, but twelve is all right?
- MR. CRITTENDEN: Well, twelve is too
- 21 much too, but I'm saying, it should be less than that. I
- 22 tell you what, any time you give a person a little
- 23 leeway, he is not going to perform like he did the first
- 24 year, year-and-a-half you put him in there. From that
- 25 time on, he's going to relax. I've got my feet inside

1 the door now. That's the feeling people get. I would

- 2 get that probably, no doubt. I don't know.
- But what I'm saying is, once you're in there,
- 4 you think people like you because we have no choice to do
- 5 nothing about it. We can holler and scream; nobody
- 6 listens to us. We have done it down there at the
- 7 meetings. We have tried to get our point over. What do
- 8 they do? They throw you outside. They'll, stick you out
- 9 there in the rain. You laugh or whatever you want, but
- 10 it's true.
- 11 There was a guy down there got stuck out in
- 12 the rain that one day. They wouldn't even listen to him,
- 13 wouldn't hear you, close the doors. And I still think,
- 14 again, being a Cherokee, I haven't been involved in the
- 15 Cherokee business for many years. I left this part of
- 16 the country. I made my living in different states, and
- 17 then when I do come back, I thought I was pretty proud of
- 18 myself coming back to my old home place where I was
- 19 raised. Then I find this mess.
- 20 That don't show me much. That don't show me
- 21 hardly much of anything, my own people fighting against
- 22 themselves. So I really and truly would like to see some
- 23 things changing. Just like he said, three, four branches
- 24 of government, I'd like to see that back. Don't let one
- 25 person dictate to you.

- 1 That's what we're under today is a
- 2 dictatorship, I feel. And I think I have the right to
- 3 say that. I think there's some of us fought for the
- 4 freedom for what we could say, freedom for speech. I
- 5 think we have a right to voice our opinion.
- 6 So that's about all I want to say right now.
- 7 Just like I said, I do believe each branch of those
- 8 services should have authority, or say so, whatever you
- 9 want to say. Like I said, I don't have no words, but a
- 10 lot of times I'd like to express myself.
- But if we're going to be a government, run
- 12 like a government, run it like one. Listen to what we've
- 13 got to say. Listen to what we've got to feel. I know
- 14 right here there's probably not two people have the same
- 15 opinion, but let's get these opinions together and see.
- And one more question, I guess I would like to
- 17 ask, and that is the Constitution. That's all I've heard
- 18 here lately is Constitution. And I know law and
- 19 everything else are broken daily, but how come a person
- 20 can break a law and then get away with it without any
- 21 punishment?
- 22 In my time, I'm not going to tell you how many
- 23 times I got picked up or anything, or got stopped by the
- 24 cops or anything, but what I'm saying is, when we're
- 25 wrong, I'm a firm believer that we should pay for our

1 wrong. That's how I believe. I have paid for my wrong,

- 2 and I'll probably pay for some more.
- 3 That's about all I've got to say. I don't
- 4 know if I said anything or not, but you've got it.
- 5 MR. UNDERWOOD: You have covered a
- 6 lot of ground also, but we need something specific, like
- 7 the terms that you mentioned. Some people have said
- 8 two-year terms and they can have two of them, but this is
- 9 the type of suggestions that we need.
- 10 MR. CRITTENDEN: Oh, well, just like
- 11 I told you, I said earlier, if you're going to pin me
- 12 down to a term basis, I would say two years. Two years
- 13 is plenty for anybody to show what he stands for. A
- 14 two-year term and no more than that. Like I say, again,
- 15 this is just my opinion. Three terms as of right now.
- 16 That's how I feel.
- 17 MR. UNDERWOOD: Three two-year terms?
- 18 MR. CRITTENDEN: Right. And the
- 19 other thing about your Councilors meeting with the
- 20 people, I think they should at least meet with the
- 21 community or the people that they're representing at
- 22 least twice a year. At least twice a year to discuss the
- 23 things that are going on, the things that are happening
- 24 in the government, and how we are feeling about it.
- 25 And the Chief -- I want to add this -- the

- 1 Chief also should be reprimanded for stuff that he is
- 2 breaking in the Constitutional laws, bylaws or whatever
- 3 it may be. He is no better than the people that he is
- 4 serving or any better than your Councilors or anyone
- 5 that's under him.
- To me, he's like I am. He ain't no better
- 7 than I am. That's how I look at things. I know we're
- 8 not equal as far as education-wise is concerned,
- 9 financial-wise is concerned, but I look at us as people.
- 10 God made us people. That's how I look at it. No better
- 11 than one another.
- MR. UNDERWOOD: We need some things
- 13 specific that we can use to the Chief if we were able to.
- 14 Right now about all we can do is cuss at him.
- 15 MR. CRITTENDEN: Like I say, I would
- 16 like to see a law that we could do like we were supposed
- 17 to, but he took our laws out. Why can't we get it back
- 18 in?
- 19 MR. UNDERWOOD: We obviously didn't
- 20 have very much of a law, or he wouldn't have taken it
- 21 out. That's what we're here about on this
- 22 Constitution.
- MR. CRITTENDEN: I want something in
- 24 that Constitution then that's, like I said, don't put him
- 25 above nobody.

Τ		MR. THOMAS. Do you want a mechanism
2	in there to impeach	people?
3		MR. CRITTENDEN: Yeah, right. That's
4	what I'm saying.	
5		MR. THOMAS: You need to specify.
6		MR. CRITTENDEN: If that's what you
7	have asked me, yes,	I think we should be able to impeach
8	whoever is in office	e.
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

1 IRVING ANDERSON

- 2 MR. ANDERSON: I'd like to tell them
- 3 a story to break the monotony about a schoolhouse. I'm
- 4 an old Cherokee. January I'll be ninety-three years old.
- 5 It's a funny story, and it's true. Then I want to tell
- 6 you what it will take to straighten this Cherokee
- 7 government out.
- I'm not a member of any organized party. I'm
- 9 a Democrat. I'm part Cherokee. I first want to tell you
- 10 about the schoolhouse down in Sequoyah County, south of
- 11 Tahlequah. We lived down there one time. I was less
- 12 than seven years old. My father hauled two doors and
- 13 nails back in the mountains called Cookson Hills to build
- 14 a school house. That's all the money they had to spare.
- 15 They donated their labor in the community to build the
- 16 house.
- 17 And we got to Evening Shade, and it was hot
- 18 and they waited until evening and the sun went down over
- 19 the mountain, and they worked in the shade. That's how
- 20 come it to be called Evening Shade.
- 21 But the first teacher -- I'm not sure of
- 22 this -- was Ester McCoy, first graduate Northeastern.
- 23 She was very good teacher. I was less than seven years
- 24 old. I walked two miles to get to school. They cut
- 25 their logs, made the shingles in the wood, and donated

- 1 their labor to building the schoolhouse.
- My father hauled two doors, they just put one
- 3 of them up in the front. The other run through the
- 4 cracks, in the corner was Ester's desk. Must have been
- 5 somewhere around forty or fifty country kids. It was a
- 6 school there. She taught all the grades.
- But this is kind of peculiar. She picked a
- 8 little girl up crying one day at recess. She said, "Any
- 9 of you boys got any chewing tobacco"? Them days all the
- 10 boys chewed tobacco. "No, no." Said, "Now, speak up.
- 11 I'm not going to punish you. I know some of you have got
- 12 some chewing tobacco, and a wasp stung this little girl,
- 13 and I want to put it on the wasp sting." Every one of
- 14 them went for the hip pocket. But that's enough of that.
- 15 Cherokee government, friends, all of the money
- 16 going to the Cherokee government needs to go into a
- 17 original fund and be appropriated by the Council. That
- 18 Council is supreme. Before it can be spent, be approved
- 19 by that Council.
- The Council members, if they can't attend them
- 21 meetings and they skipped as much as two a night, they
- 22 should be canned, fired, get another one out there. They
- 23 can't stand on their own oath.
- I didn't get very much of that education, but
- 25 I learned more in my lifetime then you can stack in all

1 the rooms in this building in construction work. I was 2 born in the Indian Territory, Illinois district. My father's and mother's house burned down 4 that night, burnt up everything they had. I was born 5 next door at the neighbor's house while my father gone 6 down to get the doctor. When they got there, they had a 7 baby.

1 RUFUS SILVERSMITH

- 2 MR. THOMAS: Rufus Silversmith from
- 3 across over here, he's newly come home. He and his wife,
- 4 like the rest of us, went west to the land of milk and
- 5 honey. Some of us found it and some didn't. We're home.
- 6 We're glad to have both you back, so sit down right there
- 7 and talk to us.
- 8 MR. SILVERSMITH: First of the all,
- 9 I'd like to start out with a little sense of humor. I
- 10 left looking for milk and honey, but what I didn't know
- 11 was, I went out there and got a lot of milk, and it got
- 12 sour. I came home and found my honey. We got married,
- 13 and here I am. I am down here getting involved in
- 14 whatever it is with her.
- I also would like to enlighten everyone to
- 16 know that I'm one of the products of the government
- 17 educated kids taken them from wherever they was at,
- 18 putting them in an education system, of which I went to
- 19 Wyandotte, and went from there to Indian School, Ponca
- 20 City or Newkirk.
- 21 A lot of stuff that I saw was the fact that
- 22 I'd been denied this stuff about being a Cherokee when I
- 23 was a kid. I was taught to be ashamed and all of that
- 24 kind of stuff. I heard a guy talking awhile ago, he
- 25 didn't have any rights to do anything. What I had

1 learned was, from a kid I was the same way. As a kid, I

- 2 didn't know what rights was.
- I knew I was less than the white kids and that
- 4 kind of stuff, but what it basically did is, it entailed
- 5 me to go out and find education, and find out where I fit
- 6 in this world, unbeknownst to my mother, who was
- 7 divorced.
- 8 So there was a lot of stuff going on, and
- 9 that's what I see in this Tribe today. I see a lot of
- 10 stuff that's dysfunctional. There's a lot of enabling
- 11 going on. There's a lot of liability that's not being
- 12 addressed. And like the man said, there should be a
- 13 process here whenever someone fails to realize the
- 14 responsibility to people.
- 15 Having grown up out of, perhaps similar
- 16 conditions, what I've learned to do is turn negatives
- 17 into positives. And one of the things I see as positive
- 18 is a thing called impeachment. Should a person not be
- 19 able to do things, and not just a spat on the hand.
- 20 Sometimes spats on the hand before then was
- 21 like spankings. Kids get spankings when they are little
- 22 bitty. When they get a little bit older, you start to
- 23 prune them when you start to see discrepancies in their
- 24 structure. As far as the statutes are concerned, they're
- 25 meters.

1 We seem to have become a Tribe of people whom

- 2 are seeking dignity or integrity or whatever it is that
- 3 we are as a people in this world today, one to another as
- 4 equals, but yet I don't see that.
- I too left this part of the country, my
- 6 birthplace, Oklahoma, out in the country. Didn't get an
- 7 opportunity to go to the hospital because we couldn't
- 8 afford a car to be born in the hospital. I went out in
- 9 the world, went to California and I saw Japan,
- 10 Scandinavia, Europe, anywhere they were coming in --
- 11 Australians -- and I got to meet a lot of people and I
- 12 know how they work. I got the opportunity to say I'm a
- 13 Cherokee Indian, but I don't wear a feather in my hat. I
- 14 wear a sweatband.
- What it is, I'm a living, breathing human
- 16 being who is concerned about the fact that I am a people
- 17 who have been oppressed, not conquered. There's a lot of
- 18 kids out there that said, "I read in the history books
- 19 that you were conquered. We conquered this country." I
- 20 said, "Wait a minute. This is not the way it is. There
- 21 was a hand of hospitality that was extended at one time
- 22 or another, and this is how you got one vacation called
- 23 paid vacation by the people who negotiate those
- 24 conditions. It's called Thanksgiving. You get a day off
- 25 to give thanks."

1 We don't absolutely have that in our favor

- 2 today, where I'm grateful that we have leaders who seek
- 3 to be a decent man, and yet, whenever they get messed up,
- 4 I think they should be reprimanded. If impeachment
- 5 becomes necessary, I think there is a process that needs
- 6 to be brough in because we do have a Judicial order in
- 7 there and Executive of which we have several branches,
- 8 and we should be able to conduct hearings, in the sense
- 9 that if somebody is wrongdoing as a leader, they should
- 10 be called on it to the discrepancy of the people because
- 11 this, what we're talking about is integrity of the
- 12 leadership of our people.
- 13 I seen them become a business. I see a lot of
- 14 people who are Cherokee today; I look at them and I see
- 15 dollar signs. But the cash register isn't ringing
- 16 because why; I don't see a budget. I don't see costs of
- 17 liabilities; I don't see costs of profitability.
- 18 And I'm talking about dollars and cents, and
- 19 when you put the two together, we should be able to
- 20 function, at which time we could be a proper people as in
- 21 pride, as a people to be able to recognize one another
- 22 and look each other square in the eye and know that we
- 23 walk in truth, one with another, but we don't see that.
- And yet when we talk about law enforcement,
- 25 and I hear we had our officers of the Cherokee Nation

- 1 impeached or distraught, I find out later there was
- 2 moneys appropriated to reinstate them, and that money
- 3 went by the wayside.
- What happened with those people, now I could
- 5 have been misled. I stand to be corrected. I stand to
- 6 be corrected in the sense that what I think we should
- 7 have had was those kind of people to go and investigate
- 8 or take written reports so they can be turned back to the
- 9 Council in the event of wrongdoing.
- 10 But when you do away with law enforcement, you
- 11 lose out on one-third of what it is that is structured
- 12 that was signed under Ross Swimmer's statement that he
- 13 signed back when the Constitution was being derived for
- 14 these three different Executive branches and this
- 15 government.
- I see some things that need to be
- 17 re-addressed. Now, when we have people -- I don't know
- 18 if there's a committee or not that would police these
- 19 things. This is what I find that our Chief, our
- 20 Principal Chief is in charge of. You see, now, if he's
- 21 doing something illegal as in Mr. Clinton, there are
- 22 hearings to be conducted. I don't think we should be
- 23 taking this on for like two or three years.
- 24 Wrong is wrong. If you take somebody who robs
- 25 a bank, you don't give them three or four chances to go

1 back in and keep robbing the bank and give him the key to

- 2 the vault. You just don't do that.
- 3 We have moral issues that law enforcement
- 4 within the Tribe would entail, and if we're going to do
- 5 away with our people who would be enabled with that
- 6 responsibility and that endorsement to go out and
- 7 investigate wrongdoing, that should be supported by all
- 8 of the members of this Tribe and we the Cherokees as a
- 9 people.
- 10 Because what is, it's no different than any
- 11 law. If you don't have people to enforce and to live by
- 12 them, to amend them and such, to become more pertinent to
- 13 the change of times, because today we don't live in
- 14 well-house facilitated dwellings; we have running water.
- 15 We have indoor toilets or plumbing. Some people don't
- 16 understand what that is. They go in and tear up a house.
- 17 But, nevertheless, I'm getting off and beating
- 18 a dead horse. But my point is that there's disorder,
- 19 dysfunction within the Tribe that we don't address as a
- 20 people. We do not see it. We've become envious. We've
- 21 become taunting. We've become finger-pointing. We've
- 22 begun to be fault-finding.
- But like today, we have an opportunity to
- 24 voice our grievances. I think this is a positive, only
- 25 if it's acted on. We may not get all of these issues

- 1 addressed, but yet they're on a referendum to be
- 2 addressed some time or another through various committees
- 3 and/or people who are endowed with the jurisdiction to
- 4 meet and resolve these things and meet with the Chief.
- 5 But the Chief seems to be way off out in left
- 6 field, out in the field of dreams. He doesn't play at
- 7 Yankee Stadium. What this guy is doing, he's alienating
- 8 each and every one of us.
- 9 I know people -- my neighbor down across the
- 10 street from me doesn't even talk to me. I go down and
- 11 talk to them, and they go down and talk to the people
- 12 down there, and they're treated with disrespect, in a
- 13 sense that they look at you like you're going down there
- 14 for a handout. Those people down there under the present
- 15 Principal Chief has no idea what is going on.
- 16 When we go down there looking for assistance
- 17 or something as a matter of integrity because we are a
- 18 people, he wouldn't have a job if all of those Cherokees
- 19 left and become a Delaware. If we became Shawnee, had
- 20 Don Greenfeather telling us what to do, we wouldn't have
- 21 to worry about what he's doing down there with this
- 22 Executive structure, with the Judicial structure.
- He's got people down there he's not even
- 24 utilizing. There's a building down there. We should be
- 25 a Tribe of people who would be looked upon by the rest of

1 the Nation, all of these Nations, including the Navaho,

- 2 that we can govern ourselves and do it effectively with
- 3 dignity.
- 4 And when the President or Department of
- 5 Interior comes down, he comes down with the fact that he
- 6 is meeting with representatives of those, us people which
- 7 are someone to be recognized and dealt with respect.
- When he comes to visit, he comes as a
- 9 dignitary. He comes down here to be paid homage to us.
- 10 Because you have people who are leaders of people, and
- 11 when you come together, there's something to be realized
- 12 that what we're doing is not playing politics. What
- 13 we're doing is, we're being as in a host and a guest.
- 14 When someone comes in, even if it's from Washington,
- 15 they're a guest because they come to the land of the
- 16 Cherokee people.
- But that ain't the way I see it. When we
- 18 pledge allegiance to the flag, it's almost like you're
- 19 putting Cherokee heritage behind you, and you're suddenly
- 20 a part of that thing when I learned as a kid. You don't
- 21 talk Cherokee in class.
- 22 When I was going to school when I was a kid,
- 23 now I speak more English and very little Cherokee because
- 24 they did not allow us to. And they're educated. This is
- 25 an education institution we're talking about, took away

1 our language. And I strongly identify when I heard those

- 2 guys, this group in the seventies saying about the
- 3 Cherokee Nation whose speech and language has been
- 4 lifted. It had been taken away.
- 5 And I relate to them. I'm one of those
- 6 Cherokees. I looked at that, and I thought, gee, I'm a
- 7 very proud person. A lot of these people, I try to treat
- 8 them with openness, receptive behavior. In other words,
- 9 whatever they had with their cultures, I tried to be a
- 10 better person within my own people.
- 11 When I came home, I was very proud there were
- 12 people here like yourself whom were in meetings and
- 13 conferences like this to try to resolve what your
- 14 differences are in a positive nature.
- 15 Again on the negative things about law
- 16 enforcement, we have a problem with drugs and alcohol.
- 17 We've got people down in Kenwood that absolutely speed,
- 18 break the laws, do whatever it is simply because no one
- 19 even at a family level is respecting authority.
- 20 These kids grow up and become responsible
- 21 adults such as we're seeking to be in ourselves, as
- 22 trying to find and resolve what it is that we seek
- 23 solutions to some of our problems and misunderstandings.
- I really don't know who to vote for if Joe
- 25 Byrd was gone. Sometimes a bird in a hand is worth two

1 in a bush. I heard that, but I didn't know if they were

- 2 talking about grains of sand through an hourglass, if it
- 3 was a gallon or a half a gallon.
- 4 What I guess I'm basically going to wind up
- 5 with in a sense is that, I'll go back to that little
- 6 sense of humor that I said, I'm glad I married my wife.
- 7 I'm glad she had the courage to marry somebody like
- 8 myself, as complex as I am.
- 9 Sometimes I get very in-depth about things
- 10 because it hits me at the heart and in the seat of my
- 11 pants. It isn't the fact that I'm knowledgeable about
- 12 something, but what it is that I feel in here, I know
- 13 what it is to be thankful that I am of a people who
- 14 should be respected and identified with respect and
- 15 dignity.
- That's what I see happening in this room.
- 17 I've gone to several of these things now in the court
- 18 down on the thing, and I saw a young man who sought to be
- 19 involved in the law practice of the Tribe, to be a
- 20 representative, William Smith. And this man, I saw him
- 21 on TV being mauled out here by our Tribal leaders on the
- 22 courthouse lawn.
- I thought, if that's the way we act and this
- 24 stuff gets in the papers -- those guys in the Kremlin
- 25 really like this kind of stuff. I think they're

1 wondering why they never stirred it up to find out why so

- 2 they couldn't come have a crack at this land. You know,
- 3 I could get into that kind of complication. It's not
- 4 worth laughing about.
- 5 But what I basically would like to find is
- 6 that I could maintain this whatever it is I grew up to
- 7 be, an adult Indian, mature adult. I may not be that
- 8 intelligent to have answers for everyone, but at least
- 9 I'm willing to communicate and have a heartfelt ear that
- 10 would listen to their problems and their complaints.
- 11 Perhaps we together can find a resolve by at
- 12 least understanding one another. Maybe we should be able
- 13 to go to the Council meetings down in Tahlequah together.
- 14 But when we're divided, "I don't care what that guy gets
- 15 because I got mine."
- 16 When I encountered that and I see that in
- 17 these rooms, it's hard to relate. I can only speak for
- 18 myself, but yet I say it as a Cherokee, of a people. I
- 19 speak for myself only that I'm glad that I am where I am
- 20 today, simply because I had the enlightenment by someone
- 21 that said that I could be a better person if I could work
- 22 on it and do something for somebody.
- 23 Keep doing and keep moving and don't sit down
- 24 and rest on my laurels because what happened? I seen a
- 25 brand new car sit in the grass under a shade tree and

1 fade because the sun eventually got to it with the

- 2 changing of the seasons. That's how I see myself.
- 3 Whatever brings out the brightness and color of my
- 4 character, it's going to be faded if I just sit on my
- 5 laurels and don't do anything about it.
- 6 This thing about the Cherokees can go right
- 7 down the tubes. It happened to the Delaware. But yet,
- 8 what happened with us today is, I would like to see where
- 9 we could be a better people by believing in our leader.
- 10 A Principal Chief is a person whom we should
- 11 be able to look at, not with scorn, envy, or anger, or
- 12 resentment, but we should look at him and be proud that
- 13 we can go down there and talk to him sometime because he
- 14 has a receptive ear to those of us.
- I don't know if we can get this in the
- 16 Constitution as I'm saying, but it sure would help a lot
- 17 if we could just get someone to be able to talk to this
- 18 guy where he can understand us. We're concerned about
- 19 his behavior. We're concerned about his ineffectiveness
- 20 is being noted by those of us who don't care anymore.
- I was like that when I was a kid. I didn't
- 22 care. I was going to go out and get mine, but yet today,
- 23 it ain't going to hurt me to drive a little person to the
- 24 store to pick up something for them. I'm willing to go
- 25 down to Tahlequah and sit down there and talk with these

1 people about educating people so we can be a better

- 2 people. We can learn to be leaders amongst our own
- 3 people, and in turn, like I said, go out into the world
- 4 and be reflective of those of us who are people,
- 5 Cherokee.
- I don't know if that's possible. That's one
- 7 to say John Glenn shouldn't be one of seventy-seven and
- 8 go to the moon, but he did it, so nothing is impossible.
- 9 There's nothing gained when there's no effort, no
- 10 imagination.
- 11 And for whatever it's worth, the gentleman
- 12 that was speaking up here before me, I related when he
- 13 said that it's been said that, what can you do? You
- 14 can't do nothing. This man is beyond all of that, like
- 15 Clinton.
- 16 It's strange that I would have heard that over
- 17 whatever all else he said. I felt intimidated. I felt a
- 18 personal attack when I heard him say that because he's a
- 19 Cherokee. If it affected me, I don't know how many other
- 20 people would do that. It affected me as such, I thought,
- 21 I don't want him to feel that way. I don't want him feel
- 22 like he's ineffective because he believes whatever it is
- 23 he does and should he come to believe that he can't do
- 24 anything continue do anything.
- 25 I don't know how many people come to Tahlequah

1 or even if you represent that facet. Today I would like

- 2 to, as we leave these rooms, I'd like to leave you in
- 3 this room to think about how we could be a better person.
- 4 I heard a sharp attack on a young lady we sought out --
- 5 we talk about affirmative action out in the world.
- 6 That's a promotion of the minority people like myself in
- 7 the job market so we can go out and be a contributor to
- 8 whatever it is with our talents and our imaginations and
- 9 creativity.
- 10 I found that every so often there have been
- 11 women who were outstanding in their job performances, but
- 12 how are they going to succeed if there are those of us
- 13 who are going to sit back and enviously, without a total
- 14 understanding, appreciate a person doing that job,
- 15 whether it be a woman or a man in whatever job.
- 16 It reflects the government -- I've been
- 17 watching a lot of movies here lately about the Calvary
- 18 and the Indians, Wounded Knee, in reference to Black Elk.
- 19 I've been hearing a lot of stuff like that. I think,
- 20 gee, it might have been nice to live in those days when
- 21 at least everybody's horse was going in the same
- 22 direction, even if they were retreating.
- 23 Sometimes there's times when you've got to
- 24 retreat, like now, we've go to do something, even if we
- 25 retreat, regroup, reinforce, and redirect our energies, I

1 just found that a marvelous sight. Tomorrow is always --

- 2 it's going to be a better day.
- 3 But as far as impeachment, if it takes
- 4 impeachment, that is not to be looked in my opinion as a
- 5 derogatory or detriment of this man's character, his
- 6 inability, but what it is, the man's done something
- 7 wrong, or woman.
- We have had Principal Chiefs who would have
- 9 done things that were questionable. When I was in
- 10 California, I wrote back here and tried to get on this
- 11 thing, get a schedule of meetings, get things so I could
- 12 fly back and get involved. I don't know if I was out
- 13 there and they figured maybe they would never hear from
- 14 me, or maybe I would just go away, but here I am. I
- 15 would like to be involved. I want to go to these
- 16 meetings and sit in on these.
- 17 I'll tell you, to close my statements of
- 18 effect here, I was in Kenwood a week or so ago, and there
- 19 was something going on down there. I dropped a young man
- 20 off and took him home. He had done some work for me. He
- 21 changed his clothes and said he was going to go back down
- 22 to the Community Center. I didn't know he was going go
- 23 down, there was some sort of a government function down
- 24 there that had to do with our Tribal affairs.
- 25 He went to that thing, and the next day he was

1 telling where he went, and I heard from another man he

- 2 was down there at that meeting. I didn't know anything
- 3 about it at all. I was just right on the road with the
- 4 guy. I dropped him off, and nothing was ever said to
- 5 me
- 6 And this is what I think of our communication
- 7 as people who are concerned about one another. If we
- 8 don't share the information, we'll never ever really get
- 9 the exposure. If I had been told, I could have told four
- 10 or five other people, and it starts to multiply, like
- 11 that woman in the hair commercial about the shampoo. She
- 12 tells this one, and she tells another one, and next
- 13 thing, you've got five hundred people that are in line
- 14 about this shampoo.
- 15 Yesterday in the meetings I used that word
- 16 "shampoo" in whatever it is I was talking about. I'm
- 17 going to shampoo my -- get rid of my stuff. I've got to
- 18 unload it. That's what I find this. When I talk about
- 19 our law enforcement, these are strategic things I think
- 20 we need to be focused on here because I'm aware about
- 21 throwing people out of meetings that become unruly and
- 22 the history of Ross Swimmer and those guys.
- I don't know the Constitution inside and out,
- 24 and that's what I come to these meetings for so I can be
- 25 a more learned Tribal member. I want to be a part.

1 At this time, I'd like to thank you for

- 2 listening to me. Those of you who are in the room that
- 3 have formed your own opinions about whether you agree or
- 4 disagree, I would hope so. The Constitution of the
- 5 United States was founded on controversy. And we had
- 6 some people come up and write something like that for the
- 7 good of this Nation, as a people. And that's what I
- 8 would welcome is that if there were some of those who
- 9 listen, maybe I awakened some, maybe I put some of you to
- 10 sleep.
- 11 But nevertheless, it's my stuff that I'm aware
- 12 of, and I would like to learn as I'm going along. Along
- 13 with the criticism I hear, I'd like to hear solutions,
- 14 you know, ideas that I can pass it along about, "this is
- 15 what I heard; how do you feel about that"? It's not to
- 16 find fault with the negative sense of the word
- 17 whatsoever.
- 18 That's why I think to keep the type of law
- 19 enforcement necessary for those differences, perhaps
- 20 maybe a disturbance that come about or conflict which
- 21 becomes physical, and I hear a lot of that stuff goes on.
- 22 It's too bad. Absolutely too bad.
- MR. THOMAS: If you'd like to, we
- 24 would appreciate it if you want to write specifics down
- 25 and mail them in to that box number. I'll give you that

1 box number and they'll be carefully looked at. That is 2 Box 1931, and address it to the Constitution Convention 3 Commission, P.O. Box 1931, Tahlequah.

1	STATE OF OKLAHOMA)				
2	COUNTY OF MUSKOGEE)				
3					
4	I, Marla J. Cullison, a Certified				
5	Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of Oklahoma, DC				
6	HEREBY CERTIFY that the said Transcript of Proceedings				
7	was taken by me in stenograph on the 7th day of November				
8	1998, and that the foregoing Proceedings was later				
9	reduced to computer-aided transcription form under my				
10	supervision, and that the same is a full, true, correct,				
11	and complete transcript of said Proceedings.				
12	I FURTHER CERTIFY, that I am not an				
13	attorney for, nor relative of any of the parties involved				
14	in this action.				
15	WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this day				
16	of November, 1998.				
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					