

having you and thank you for your presentation. Thank you, Mr. Simpson.

Mr. SIMPSON. Thank you very much, we're glad to help the committee.

Mr. EDMONDSON. The next witness scheduled here is Mrs. Vyola Ortner. Mrs. Ortner, would you come forward, please.

Mrs. ORTNER. I might say, Mr. Edmondson, I met you in Oklahoma a few years ago, and it's delightful to see you again. Mr. Sigler, whom I worked with when I was tribal chairman, I have a lot of respect for, and I'm glad to see you as counsel with the committee.

Mr. EDMONDSON. Would you identify the gentleman with you?

Mrs. ORTNER. My attorney, Mr. Edward Bailey, of Long Beach.

Mr. EDMONDSON. All right, would you proceed, please, Mrs. Ortner.

**STATEMENT OF VYOLA ORTNER, MEMBER OF THE AGUA CALIENTE
BAND OF MISSION INDIANS; ACCOMPANIED BY EDWARD BAILEY,
ATTORNEY, LONG BEACH**

Mrs. ORTNER. My name is Mrs. Vyola Ortner. I reside at 30524 Oceanaire Drive, Palos Verdes Peninsula. I am a member of the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians, at Palm Springs, and am guardian of my two minor children, Benita Joyce Olinger, age 18, and Debra Sue Olinger, age 15.

As a member of this tribe I feel that it is my duty to express my personal views.

Although I have never seen the petition of grievances, I am in full accord with having the conservators, guardians, and all other interested persons investigated. I personally was involved with the Guardians & Conservators Association in its very beginning and served on the constitution and bylaws committee. I did not, however, agree with the voting procedures that were set forth nor with the fact that the assessments were to be made against each estate, even if they did not wish to join the association. I felt this was unfair and therefore left the association.

The Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, in his letter to Congressman Wayne Aspinall, states that the blame lies at the door of some members of the local bar and court. Regarding the court, my only personal conflicts with the local court have been very minor, and I felt then, and I still do, that all the guardianships under the California State law, whether Indian or non-Indian, should be handled alike. In all fairness to the local court, my associations have always been fair and pleasant, and when I was questioned by Mr. Cox of the task force, I stated this position. I personally feel that the blame lies with the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

I feel if inequity and injustice are being practiced, they surely must be corrected. Mr. Udall in his letter further indicated that the situation present in Palm Springs had flourished under Federal supervision. Where does the blame really lay?

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has time after time unofficially approved court petitions knowing well in advance of the court hearing date, and could have protested it if they felt the Indians were being treated unfairly or were being taken advantage of, but no, they always