

Statement of Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Vice Chairman, Committee on Indian Affairs
Hearing on the Nomination of Neal A. McCaleb
To Be Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs

June 13, 2001

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Before Sen. Inouye leaves I want to take this opportunity to congratulate him on re-assuming the gavel after many faithful and loyal years in the Minority. As we have done in the past, I pledge to you that this Committee's unique spirit of non-partisanship will be foremost in my mind as I undertake the duties of Vice Chairman.

With that I want to welcome Neal McCaleb, an enrolled Chickasaw, to the Committee and also welcome Gov. Bill Anoatubby, Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, and Chief Tillman of the Osage Nation to this morning's hearing on the nomination of Neal McCaleb to be Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs.

Neal and I have had opportunities to speak privately about what I see as the challenges confronting the incoming Assistant Secretary and they are no secret to anyone that is involved in Indian affairs:

1. Resolving the Trust Funds Mess;
2. Educating Indian youngsters and making sure Schools are built;
3. Resolving the Trust Funds Mess;
4. Law enforcement and Crime reduction in Native communities;
5. Resolving the Trust Funds Mess;
6. Improving the Health status of all Native people;
7. Resolving the Trust Funds mess;
8. Building Private Sector economies;
9. Resolving the Trust Funds Mess;
10. A Whole Host of Others, like Resolving the Trust Funds Mess.

I think you get the idea of what I think the problems we confront really are.

These are not simple issues to deal with but along with the Chairman and every member of this Committee I am committed to working with you, with Secretary Norton and the President to make sure we make the necessary progress during this Administration's tenure.

In the interests of time I will submit for the Record my formal statement as well as the various letters of support for Mr. McCaleb we have received from Indian tribes.

* * *