# *Tom Bias*

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Wilma P. Mankiller
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation
Route 4, Box 110
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Dear Chief Mankiller:

Enclosed please find the April issue of Bulletin in Defense of Marxism, which contains my review of your book on page 22. As should be evident from the review, I am quite excited by the work you are doing, and I expect--and hope--that BIDOM's readers are going to want to know more about what your administration has accomplished since 1985 and what your plans are for the Cherokee Nation in the future. I would like to follow up my book review with an article or series of articles which would report on: (1) economic redevelopment in the Cherokee Nation; (2) Cherokee cultural revival, including increasing knowledge of and literacy in the Cherokee language; and (3) the interaction between the tribal administration and the state and federal governments. Another issue which interests me and probably my readers as well is the process by which you, as a veteran of the direct-action struggles of the late 1960s-early 1970s period--and someone who continues to fight against war, sexism, and racism--have been able to earn the trust and respect of the people in your corner of Oklahoma.

What would work best, I think, would be for me to pack up a camera, cassette recorder, and laptop, and come out to Tahlequah to meet with you and other tribal leaders and see for myself what you all are doing. We had a similar piece in BIDOM last year on Rigoberta Menchú's work in Guatemala--Janet Melvin, an activist from Philadelphia, went down there, met with peasant leaders and Menchú herself, and took some terrific photos. If you are agreeable to this suggestion, please let me know when would be a good time, and we can begin to make plans.

In my review I mentioned some family history, and I expect you might be curious who I am and what my connection is to the Cherokee Nation. I don't know to what extent the Bias family is known in Adair County. I expect I'm related to a large percentage of the population in Sequoyah County. My grandmother, Olean Pack Bias, was born in Blackgum in 1907. Both she and my grandfather, Guy H. Bias, Sr. (born in Checotah in 1902) were mixed-blood Cherokee, though I don't know the genealogy. All of my father's grandparents, with the exception of my great-grandmother Daisy Kettner Pack, were illiterate, so we don't have a whole lot of family records. My grandfather was working for a pipeline company out at Seminole when my father (Guy H. Bias, Jr.) was