

PRELIMINARY CONVERSATION: ANTI-PEYOTE LEGISLATION

(Conversation begins as Jess is showing me a recent issue of the Native American Church Newsletter.--jj)

Now there's a bill in the Oklahoma State Legislature--Bill 7032--I haven't got that yet. I wrote to Senator Baker from Kingfisher that covers this area--Blaine County--and I told him I was going to write for the bill but I didn't know the number then. I still got to write to him about it--to send me a copy of the bill.

(Are they going to pass a law, too?)

I don't know what it looks like. I don't know what it is. The Oklahoma Legislature in the Territorial days--1906-- the year before statehood-- took action when the Capitol was in Guthrie, and they declared that thereafter there would be no attitude against peyote--against the Indians using it. So they adopted that. This Durant--Bill Durant--he's a good friend of mine. He passed away years ago. He was the doorkeeper there. He was a kind of doorman, anyhow. He made a motion that all the superintendents and the agents that were there that morning with their concoctions and peyote-- to find fault with the use of it by Indians--he ordered out of the room. So the governor at that time--I forgot who it was--ordered all the officials out of there. They took this matter up with the Indians. That was on September 6, 1906. Quanah Parker was there, and our chiefs here, and some Kiowas--Apache Ben was there--Some of the Indians even took peyote. They was talking--to show that they were not made drunk or that it didn't have no effect on their mind. This State Legislature--Territorial Legislature-- provided that there would be no more, thereafter--it would be positively recognized--publicly recognized--that there would be no attitude against peyote, the use of it by the Indians. But I don't know what this bill is.