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For Immediate Release: December 21, 1953
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Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay has extended through June 30, 1954, the terms of office of three principal chiefs of Oklahoma Indian tribes - William W. Keeler, Cherokee, Harry J. W. Belvin, Choctaw and Marcy Cully, Seminole. Mr. Keeler's present term expired on November 30, while the terms of the other two would expire December 31.

The extensions are made to give Commissioner Glenn L. Emmons J an opportunity to study questions involved in the office of principal chief. The study will include relationships of the tribes with the Department of the Interior. The need for the services of a principal chief in each case will also be studied with the question of salary and expense allowance and the financing of such items. The manner in which the chiefs are chosen, and possible need for new legislation will be considered. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will seek the views of members of the tribes.

Under Federal law the authority to appoint a principal chief for each of the three tribes is vested in the President of the United States. This authority, however, has been delegated to the Secretary of the Interior.