

Readers' Forum

Dear Ms. Conner,
Well its over the Unity Conference that is and I for one am glad. I felt really good about the things Rev. Michael Cummings had to say and I was glad he was at the opening of the conference. His comments did a lot for me spiritually and they set the tone for the Conference. I didn't agree with all he said but that was OK, I feel Federal Recognition can be a good thing for our people. Now before I go any further, this is my idea on what I would like to see done next year. I believe a healing ceremony needs to take place before and after the Conference, because often before one can have Unity a healing process must take place. Of course everyone asked my opinion of the Constitution problem, which I stated I didn't see it as a problem. What the Lumbee's are experiencing is called growing pains, and I can't take sides with either parties.

You know Ms. Conner when I stated this I got the funniest looks, it was as if they were disappointed. I guess they wanted me to take a side and had enough the other side. In my mind I heard the words found in Proverbs 6:16-19, as matter of fact everyone should take some time out and read this scripture. Why you may ask, it contains the seven things the Lord hates, and I will draw your attention to verse 19. "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he hath sown discord among brethren". Need I say more, this is why as children we often heard people say, "If you can't say anything good about a person don't say anything at all".

When you look at the issues as they are and not allow your emotions to take over, everything takes on a different light. As mature Christians and as traditionalists, we are to control three things; our minds, body and yes our emotions. I know you say it is impossible to control our emotions,

that is why we should start with the mind. If you learn to stop feeding your mind negative and evil thoughts your emotions will slowly come under control. Just like Federal Recognition nothing worth having comes easy, I feel all good things take a long time. True it is not easy, yet we must take up our cross and follow Jesus and he will see us through this.

I agree the whole thing at first sounds like an LRDA witch hunt, but my question is, are all these people wrong? But the bottom line is LRDA is a private corporation and really doesn't have to answer to the public, not technically. I also have an answer to the question "Has the Carolina Indian Voice Engaged in a Conspiracy to Defame the LRDA and its leaders"? No it is not, they only print the letters of the people, no one at the Indian Voice makes up all these letters. I also heard that a certain person stepped out of bounds and went way beyond what was requested of them. Now if I give you money for a project I would make sure you understood what I expect and more importantly what I don't want done.

What really got to me was all the rumors of secret meetings to try and stop the process from going any further. People this is the same thing that happen years ago when we almost had Federal Recognition, but a few people told Washington the people didn't want it. All you ended up with was a name, no status as Indians, no rights as Indians, so please no more secret meetings. The Indian way is no one person can speak for everyone. I can only speak for myself and you must do the same. The most important thing is the reason we are going through it, is for the future (the children) and to set things straight with our past (The Elders) we owe it to them.

As I stated earlier what you Lumbees are going through is nothing

more than growing pains. As you grow out of the adolescent period, you are developing a new relationship one based on equal ground. We will no longer look up to anyone because how much money they have in their pockets, but once again a person's worth will be determine by their character. Remember as a teenager how you thought your parents were uncool, well guess who made them that way. Now you see them as friends who will never let you down, this whole thing is about an increase awareness. I see this whole experience empowering the people, which will help families become a major part in people's lives because they will have had a hand in this empowerment process. As churches grow and develop so will our schools and we all recall the pride we had in communities when our schools meant something. As I told a friend it is good that all this is happening now so the air can be cleared later. It's like the Good Book says this too shall pass, so let's put all this behind us, she said business to aside and move forward.

Their is way to much at stake for it to end now, I don't want another hundred and thirty years to go by and our great, great grandchildren will still be fighting the same battle. Besides we are not the enemy, this isn't our problem, we shouldn't be at each others throat.

More than ever we need to come together and fight this cause as one. Mark my words this will pay off in the long run. We will become again Robeson County Indian, Not Lumbees, Cheraws, Cherokees, or Tuscaroras, but a people from many different walks. We must not lose sight of our objective, if we are able to keep sight of our objective it will bring us together, stronger than ever.

In the True Way,
Derek Lowry.

Some Comments on Morton vs Maynor Case and Tuscarora History

When I was two years old I was adopted to a white class and taught to be non-Indian. When I finished school I wanted to trace back my roots of my real family. I ended up in Robeson County, Pembroke, North Carolina. I started searching with an agency known as LRDA (Lumbee Regional Development Association). They knew little about sovereign Native People. They also were spending a lot of money on research but could not tell me of any Nations in Robeson County that had ties with the Federal Government. Also I did some checking for myself around in the community of Robeson County. I came across a sign that read Sovereign Territory that pointed to a track of land known as the Tuscarora Nation. I looked around and what a surprise I did get when I saw a longhouse and a museum. I knew then that I wanted to meet the people of this sovereign land. They are known as the Haudenosaunee-LongHouse People- Tuscarora Nation. After I met these people and I found out that they were under the clan system with clan mothers and clan chiefs, they governed themselves under the "Great Law of Peace," they have medicine women and men that deal with mother earth. They have their own cultural school that teaches their children their culture and traditions.

On the outside of their museum a wampum belt represents the friendship of the nation. Now I am happy to know that I can work with the clan mothers on the research of my people and find all of my roots and also I can help them to determine the nations destination. I knew then that I had found the right way. We have our own

culture and don't have to borrow from the western culture which is against the sovereign ways of Native people.

During my research with the Clan mothers of the Tuscarora Nation I found out that there had been a conflict of interest between Arlinda Locklear who claimed that she worked for the Tuscaroras National in 1974, Maynor vs. Morton. In my opinion I would like to know why she did not come back to the Tuscarora Nation and show what the Dept. of the Interior drafted to the B.I.A. by three panel judges that ruled that Morton was unconstitutional against the Tuscaroras of North Carolina. I found out that Tom Tureen a lawyer from Calis, Maine, was representing the case (Maynor vs. Morton) and superceded through the court and agreed with the judges that he would see that a constitution with an agreement with the Tuscarora Nation would be drafted out and a settlement would be reached.

The Tuscaroras did not know that Arlinda Locklear was in the picture at this time to Draft a constitution in 1974. But she came down in 1975 to the Tuscarora Nation to draft their constitution. The Tuscaroras denied her "because" she did not have a resolution from the clerk of the court from Washington DC or from Tom Tureen. The Indian claims commission has the right to separate the Tuscarora Nation from the constitution of the Lumbees under genocide, when Lumbees is a genocide name established upon Nations of sovereign.

In 1976 the B.I.A. and the Dept. of the Interior came down to Lumberton North Carolina and drafted out a constitution that would work with the

Tuscarora Nation on a housing administration under the research that I found. The Dept. of the Interior at that time ordered the B.I.A. to bring all Tuscaroras together and give them the rights to establish the nation and the rights within the state to be seated with the Indian claims commission if they saw fit for the claims within the state for the nation. My opinion is if the Lumbees cannot work among themselves how can they work with the sovereign people of the Tuscarora nation. I feel like that all splinter groups such as Tuscarora Tribe of NC Inc., Cecil Hunt Tuscarora Nation, Leon Locklear, and Hatteras-Tuscaroras-Vernon Locklear have gone up under the umbrella of genocide of the state of NC Lumbee bill united. Also in my opinion the constitution under the Hatteras-Tuscaroras and the B.I.A. needs to be attended too, because the court did not order any change of names over to the Dept. of Interior, and the Dept. of the Interior did not draft a changed name back to the court known as Hatteras-Tuscarora. This is why the Tuscarora Nation says that the Hatteras-Tuscarora and the B.I.A. genocides against them in name calling and attacked in my opinion this should be looked into. The Hatteras-Tuscarora did not have any right drafting and causing genocide against the Tuscarora nation because the Tuscarora Nation is under Treaties with the State of North Carolina and Hatteras-Tuscarora does not own any treaties in the state of North Carolina. Who ever drafted this from the B.I.A. to Hatteras Tuscarora genocides against the court order of the Tuscaroras.

Timothy Little Bear Lowrie

Reader feels objective reporting needed on Lumbee Tribal Constitution

A debate has begun among leaders and members of the Lumbee tribe about the form of self-government that the tribe will adopt in the future. The debate was sparked by the efforts of the tribe to achieve federal recognition. It seems that in recent weeks, there has been much unfounded rumors and allegations about problems among Indian leaders, in my opinion, but there has been little coverage of the heart of the debate. The matter of self-government of the Lumbee is a very sensitive and complex matter

that should be dealt with in an objective manner by the news media.

I think that it is unfortunate that a draft constitution has been produced but that there has been no reporting on that draft or its potential impact upon Indian people in Robeson and adjoining counties. I think that your readers deserve to learn about the contents of the draft constitution. I think that responsive and objective news media should report on the heart of the debate.

Ben Jacobs
LRDA Employee

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