

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

Craig Dorsay, tribal attorney, prevented my letter to the editor from being printed last month, even though it contained similar information that was printed. He claimed I "may be subject to appropriate legal action." I have Tribal Court judgments of approximately \$3,800 against me to pay Dorsay's legal fees already paid by the tribe. Thus, I am simply stating documented facts and posing questions for tribal members to consider.

At the August General Council meeting, Tribal Police Chief Norman Counts, on duty and **armed**, was present for the entire meeting. Why? I informed the membership that, in March 1999, Norman Counts came to my home in Portland and threatened to arrest me for theft. He has no jurisdiction anywhere other than reservation land. With these "goon squad" tactics, can any tribal member anywhere feel safe?

Also at the meeting, this "renegade" council stated that Craig Dorsay blamed me for initiating the investigation that led to the Notice of Violation (see www.nigc.gov). I responded that it is untrue. I have documented proof that the complaint came from the casino by someone who, according to the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), wishes to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation. Who would you believe – someone who has proof or someone who cannot substantiate the claim? And speaking from experience, I believe the "messenger" has cause to fear retaliation.

Delores Pigsley, Bonnie Petersen, Dolly Fisher, Rosemary Landis, Gerald Ben, Jessie Davis, Jane John, and JoAnn Miller, along with Mike Darcy, have been ordered by NIGC to **personally** repay amounts ranging from \$1,043.46 to \$2,868.23 to our casino. Because they have refused, NIGC is now assessing fines of \$25,000 per day per violation that the tribe (in essence, tribal members) must pay. How could these eight individuals so callously put our casino at risk?

And are you aware that funds in Contract Health Services will be depleted by this fall, leaving tribal members without health care coverage to the end of the year? Why haven't gaming revenues been used for tribal members, especially for basic health care needs?

How did our tribe get into such a state of despair? According to the Ethics Code, "Members of the Tribal Council will maintain

To the editor:

Accountability. What can we do when Council doesn't specifically address questions and concerns put to it? Or when Council and administration control the attorneys, the content of the ordinances, the money, and can do as they please? What can we do when Council won't hold its managers accountable for their mistakes just as tribal members/employees are held accountable? Or when Council won't fund Court adequately or create "fair" ordinances? Or if they do create Courts, but don't fund them?

We can bitch at General Council, write letters to the newspaper, or go to federal agencies that control the contracts we manage. If Council chooses to not respond to these questions in a forthright manner, it necessitates that action.

Do we want to do that? I don't, but will if need be.

It's ironic that it was stated that the NIGC actions violated the tribe's "due process" rights when it's the Council that is proposing to limit due process rights by a constitutional amendment that would allow Council to control Tribal Court.

What about the third-party billings money at the clinic? How much money was in that account and where did it go? We are talking about at least a couple million dollars. Instead of vague statements regarding our budgets, tribal members have a right to **all** information and to hold individuals accountable.

How many tribal members have been fired, or denied services, or had services discontinued because they violated a "rule"? Has anybody else noticed that Councilpersons or managers are rarely held accountable for their mistakes? Why? As most of us know, rules are for those who have no political connections or the wrong ones! We have created an authoritative, chain-of-command structure and the "bosses" want tribal members/employees to follow the rules, which is fine but it goes two ways. Managers/Council members must be held accountable also, or disharmony and low morale are created.

The problem with Council being the Board of Everything is it turns the system into a popularity contest and politics. When Council began naming itself as the Board of Everything, there were some who argued against it, stating that it created a conflict of interest. After recall, this argument was forgotten and Council continued as the Board of Everything. This issue with comps reflects the conflict of interest. If Council would write and enact a strong Council ethics ordinance, these issues would be dealt with.

Next month I will submit an idea about creating a districting system that will reduce block voting and family-controlled Councils. Nine districts would be created and anybody could run for them. They would represent the interests of that district, in addition to tribal-wide issues.

Ray Blacketer

high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and other ethical and moral conduct and to avoid any actions whether on or off duty which could reflect adversely on the Tribal Council or the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon. The **elected** position of Tribal Council is one of taking action in the interest of General Council."

Think about it. President Nixon resigned when he was caught. Think about it.

Sincerely,
Pat Duncan

To the editor:

What is a rumor? It is something that is made up about someone that is not true. A rumor can hurt family lives and ruin reputations. Why do people listen to rumors? Either they are bored and have no life or their lives are full of "in the closet stuff." I am a firm believer that "he who is without sin, cast the first stone." I thank God that he is my judge and not people.

Joella Strong