

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Lessons from Recent National Election

After a traumatic month that riveted our attention on the controversial Florida election, George W. Bush has won the presidency of the United States. Apart from the obvious need to improve the electoral process, the trauma Americans have been put through has taught us some important lessons about our democracy and how we must conduct ourselves whatever the outcome. Vice-President Al Gore and Gov. Bush responded with dignity once the Supreme Court handed down its decision.

Gore's speech has already been praised universally as an eloquent expression of dignity in the face of defeat.

Gore said "... what remains of partisan rancor must now be put aside, and may God bless the stewardship of this country." And referring to the Supreme Court decision, he said, "Let there be no doubt; while I strongly disagree with the court's decision, I accept it ... and tonight, for the sake of our unity of the people and strength of democracy, I offer my concession ... I also accept my responsibility, which I will discharge unconditionally to honor the new president-elect ..."

As the Siletz Tribe faces another general election, we should take to heart the vice-president's words of accepting with dignity the outcome of the tribal election, help heal political wounds, and move forward for the good of the tribe. Unfortunately, defeated candidates in the past have been consumed by "partisan rancor" long after the election was over. There is no doubt that differences will exist among us, as there are between Democrats and Republicans, but hopefully we will be able to address our tribal issues on a constructive and productive basis.

Tribal Team Negotiating with NIGC

On Dec. 7, a tribal team met with National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) attorneys to negotiate a settlement on the Notice of Violation (NOV) that was issued against the Siletz Tribe last June.

I believe it was a productive meeting. Hopefully, it will lead to a negotiated settlement in the near future. Again, we will keep you posted.

Siletz Tribe Buys Land Adjacent to Casino

As many of you know, parking is a critical need at Chinook Winds Casino & Convention Center during the tourist months or whenever special events are held there.

With this in mind, the Tribal Council signed an agreement with Mark Hemstreet, owner of Lincoln Shores Property, for the purchase of 12 acres of land adjacent to Chinook Winds, which will accommodate needed additional parking spaces. The parcels, located on prime resort property overlooking the ocean, have other great economic development potential in addition to parking.

Chinook Winds Revenues

The chief financial officer of Chinook Winds recently reported to the Siletz Gaming Board that the year 2000 is proving to be a profitable one. He said that we will meet our targeted excess revenues for tribal purposes this year, as I had announced earlier to our tribal members. This



Chairman Delores Pigsley

means that during the year 2000, under Gaming Board direction, casino management has been successful in controlling costs while at the same time generating increased revenues.

Fourth Annual Tribal-State Conference

On Dec. 12, representatives of Oregon tribes met once again, face-to-face, with Gov. John Kitzhaber and officials of Oregon state departments during the fourth annual government-to-government conference at Portland State University.

The governor initiated these high-level conferences. His 1996 executive order directed all state department heads to recognize and respect the sovereignty of Indian tribes and to deal with tribes on a government-to-government basis.

We are fortunate in Oregon because we have had governors who have endeavored to treat Indian tribes as sovereigns. Twenty-five years ago, Gov. Vic Atiyeh, then president of the Senate, took the lead in establishing the Oregon Commission on Indian Services. This group, composed of tribal officials and state legislators, addresses Oregon Indian issues.

Indian affairs in Oregon received a major boost when Gov. Kitzhaber issued his executive order, which provided the policy and framework for Oregon tribes and state government to work together. The governor has ensured the order's implementation, as demonstrated by these conferences.

Each year, cluster groups form (Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Education, Health and Human Services, Economic Development, and Community Services and Public Safety), allowing tribal and state representatives to address current, concrete Indian issues.

The role of the state has occupied growing importance in Indian affairs. Although major funding continues to flow to Indian tribes from the Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the state of Oregon has been playing an increasingly important role in such areas as human resources and environmental and natural resources issues.

Tribes in other states where antagonism and conflict persist are not as blessed as we are in Oregon. Although we have had our differences with Gov. Kitzhaber (and I suspect we will have in the future), he has demonstrated an understanding of tribal sovereignty and a willingness to listen and work with us on a government-to-government basis.

23rd Restoration Pow-Wow

On Nov. 18, we held another successful pow-wow to celebrate the 23 years that the Siletz Tribe has been "restored."

We were honored to have as guest speakers Nelson Wallulatum and Bernice Mitchell, Council members and elders from the Warm Springs Tribe. Both of them spoke eloquently of their pride in being associated with the Siletz people. They also noted their support of our Restoration efforts and their pride in the progress the Siletz Tribe has made since it was restored.

Stan Speaks, Portland Area Director of the BIA, also spoke of how the Siletz Tribe has grown and matured, as evidenced by Chinook Winds and other developments, and the satisfaction he feels in having been a part of this impressive development. Zak Zakoji, a consultant to the tribe, spoke not only of the struggles endured by the tribe historically and of its remarkable accomplishments since Restoration, but of the challenges ahead.

A special feature of the celebration was a videotape of the legacy of Joe DeLaCruz, which was shown at the recent National Congress of

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