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Rudolph C. Rýser, Ph.D., Chair of the Board

MEMORANDUM

TO: G6
FROM: Rudolph C. Rýser
DATE: 12 SEPTEMBER 1998
SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHT UPDATE: SOVEREIGNTY LIAISON AND EDUCATION PROJECT

The governments of Quinault and Lummi invited the Center For World Indigenous Studies to develop and help implement Eagle Defender: Tribal Sovereignty Plan of Action with particular emphasis on carrying out the Sovereignty Liaison and Education Project. Eagle Defender is expected to require a commitment of four years from Indian governments and from non-governmental and inter-tribal organizations. The Sovereignty Liaison and Education Project focuses on two aspects of the Eagle Defender Plan of Action: Intergovernmental Liaison and Research (Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution Mechanism between tribes, state and federal governments; and protecting treaties in connection with the Convention on Biodiversity, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Organization of American States Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.) and Leadership Education (Leadership forums, Sovereignty Workshops and Indian Affairs Seminars).

\$48,000 spent in six months

The Sovereignty Liaison and Education Project was begun in March 1998 and formally initiated in May 1998. Averaging a cost of \$8,000 per month (personnel, consultants, travel, telephone, postage, insurance, etc.) the project has spent about \$48,000.00 of which Quinault Nation has contributed \$1,500 and the Lummi Nation has contributed \$3,500. Squaxin Island has contributed in-kind office at a level of \$1,500. Drawing on loans, delayed payments and general funds the Center for World Indigenous Studies has covered the remaining \$41,500 in anticipation of other tribal support to reimburse. An average expenditure of \$38,000 per month over the next several months is currently projected to carry out the current mandates for the Sovereignty Liaison and Education Project. Such a level of expenditure is anticipated in connection with implementing the Tribally driven Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution Mechanism and the "constituency building" leadership education effort.

Intergovernmental Liaison and Research

A major effort of this component has been to counter the political impact and adverse affects of Senator Slade Gorton's legislative proposals and PR efforts aimed at undermining tribal sovereignty. Also, the other emphasis of this component has been to build a consensus among leaders of Indian governments, discuss and evaluate the interests of Washington State officials and state organizations, and to discuss and evaluate the interests of the US government. Numerous tribal meetings, meetings with state and federal officials as well as with private consultants have been conducted to make an initial assessment of the climate (favorable or unfavorable) for consideration of an

intergovernmental conflict mechanism as an alternative to “brushfire politics” and a federal or state driven approach to solving tribal, state and federal conflict problems.

- We determined that the climate is unparalleled in history for achieving a breakthrough in the political relations between these governments.
- We also determined that focusing on the establishment of more permanent and structured relations between tribal, state and federal governments is the best counter to Senator Gorton’s political challenges to the sovereignty of tribal governments.
- We determined that intergovernmental relations between Indian governments are at an all-time low, and this aspect of the triangular governmental relationship requires serious shoring up.
- CWIS has begun to organize intergovernmental talks between the state and Indian governments, and in preparation for formal government-to-government discussions about structuring an intergovernmental mechanism we have begun establishing an Intertribal Working Group on Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution.
- CWIS has begun establishing the Intertribal Contact Group of tribal officials with the support of a Legal Working Group and a Policy Analysis Working Group to meet with the Department of State to address elevating tribal self-determination and sovereignty to their full and normal status.
- CWIS has addressed the need for the US government to authorize its own participation in talks with tribal governments in the structuring of an intergovernmental mechanism.
- CWIS has offered guidance and formal briefings to the Washington State Democratic Party (at their request) concerning appropriate issues in Indian Affairs.
- CWIS has met with US officials in Washington DC and in Albuquerque and Tukwilla to discuss the potential for abrogation of Indian treaties should the US government ratify the Convention on Biodiversity. In addition, CWIS has conducted extensive discussions with non-governmental organizations and the National Congress of American Indians regarding measures necessary to achieve full protection of Indian treaties.
- CWIS has consulted with the Department of State and the Organization of American States regarding the adverse affects of the current draft of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples now before the Organization of American States.
- CWIS has provided individual briefings to tribal officials and to tribal councils on issues concerning abrogation of Indian treaties, attacks on tribal sovereignty and the need for closer communications and collaboration between Indian governments.
- CWIS has addressed the controversy over the Habitat Conservation Plan and worked to dovetail this important issue into the broader discussion of the intergovernmental conflict resolution mechanism.
- CWIS has met in Hawaii with representatives of “island nations” to determine their willingness to collaborate with and support the sovereignty efforts of the G6.

Leadership Education

CWIS has undertaken extensive research, writing and program development initiatives to establish the three components of the Leadership Education effort under this project. Mr. Sherwin Broadhead, Mr. Joe DeLaCruz and Mr A. Rodney Bobiwash and Dr. Leslie Korn have worked with Dr. Ryser to present some initial materials to the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, but primary emphasis has been on the development of materials. The Leadership Education effort has lagged for lack of resources, but is perhaps the single most important part of the effort—and time sensitive. The main emphasis of this effort is to build constructive and cooperative relations within the G6 tribes to support the external effort of establishing an intergovernmental mechanism and for protecting Indian treaties. The focus is on supporting tribal leaders, informing tribal council and professional staff and building an internal tribal consensus supporting tribal sovereignty. In addition, this effort emphasizes building leadership for the long-term advancement of tribal goals. Each presentation is planned to be tailored to each tribal government’s particular needs and circumstances while including broader materials.

CWIS has issued two "Sovereignty Briefs" for the edification of tribal leaders in the G6.

Research on a "Tribal Sovereignty Manual"

Collating tribal constitutions, treaties, and other agreements.

Design of audio visual materials for pedagogical support.

Establishing a schedule for training sessions for tribal councils.

Develop of "Ryser's Terms of Reference" book on intergovernmental terms and their definitions.

Development of a paper providing the "meaning of government to government relations."

Much of the work will greatly accelerate if and when CWIS receives funds to pay for its current efforts (last six months) and to cover costs for the coming months.