



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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USET Resolution No. 2011:057

EXPRESSING DEEP CONCERN OVER THE USE OF “GERONIMO” AS THE CODE NAME FOR OSAMA BIN LADEN OR EVEN FOR THE MISSION, AND RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT PRESIDENT OBAMA LEAD A NATIONAL DEBATE ON RACIAL STEREOTYPING OF AMERICAN INDIANS

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes, Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET member Tribes applaud the extraordinary intelligence and military success resulting in the death of Osama Bin Laden, a mass murderer of the highest order; and
- WHEREAS,** the USET member Tribes further applaud the courage and leadership demonstrated by President Obama in ordering this mission to go forward; and
- WHEREAS,** notwithstanding the success of the mission, it is a matter of the utmost concern to the USET Member Tribes that the codename for Osama Bin Laden, or even for the mission, was “Geronimo,” the name of one of the most respected leaders in American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) history; and
- WHEREAS,** associating a great Native leader with one of the most reviled figures of the last decade is an insult to American Indians, distorts history and perpetuates racial stereotypes that continue to harm Native communities in very real ways everyday; and
- WHEREAS,** the military never would have chosen a codename for Osama Bin Laden, or even for the mission, that was a figure from the civil rights movement, or a founding father, like George Washington, and yet Federal officials adopted and used the “Geronimo” codename in discussions about the mission apparently without shame, apology or self-awareness as to its offensive character; and
- WHEREAS,** there has been a slew of recent, high-profile racially insensitive or ignorant comments about AI/AN that have received almost no attention, such as the legal arguments made by military lawyers that effectively compared the Seminole Tribe of Florida's resistance to Andrew Jackson's war-making to Al Qaeda horrific activities, or New York City Mayor Bloomberg's statement to the New York governor that “You know, get yourself a cowboy hat and a shotgun. If there's ever a great video, it's you standing in the middle of the New York State Thruway saying, you know, 'Read my lips: The law of the land is this and we're going to enforce the law.’”, or, finally, as reflected in John Stoessel's shocking piece on Fox stating that Indians who benefit from Bureau of Indian Affairs programs are “freeloaders;” therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors condemns the use of Native imagery in ways that promote harmful and negative stereotypes, distort history and otherwise show a racist disregard for American Indian/Alaska Native culture and identity; and, be it further

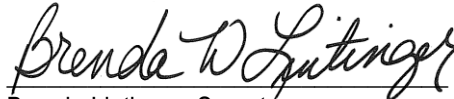
RESOLVED the USET Board of Directors calls upon President Barack Obama to lead a national discussion on the racial stereotyping of American Indian/Alaska Native.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Marksville, LA, Thursday, May 19, 2011.



Brian Patterson, President
United South and Eastern Tribe, Inc.



Brenda Lintinger, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

“Because there is strength in Unity”