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USET SPF Response to President Trump Tweet

Once again, encapsulated within a 24 word tweet today, President Trump has demonstrated his authentic disrespect and disregard towards Indian Country. While we often hear his Administration's repeated statements about respect for Indian Country, respect for Tribal Nation sovereignty, and honoring promises, his true sentiment is expressed within this tweet, as well as its deeper layers, and it stands in complete contradiction to the hollow rhetoric often espoused by this Administration.

Calls from Indian Country for the President to cease his use of Pocahontas' name in a disparaging manner and concerns expressed by Indian Country about this Administration's effort to take land out of trust fall only on deaf ears. Unfortunately, these are just two examples of this Administration's shameful lack of respect for Native Americans and its disregard of the sacred trust and treaty obligations it supposedly honors.

The President's tweet also speaks of fairness and equality. However, this Administration is challenging the constitutionality of federal Indian programs, proposing disgraceful budgets, dismantling the White House Tribal Nations Conference, White House Policy Advisor for Native American Affairs, and the White House Council on Native American Affairs, demonstrating a lack of concern for protecting the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCA) as part of its efforts to undo the Affordable Care Act, deregulating at the expense of Indian Country concerns and interests, and displaying a lack of concern for the protection of sacred sites. These are just a few more examples of the truth beyond the rhetoric and are inconsistent with the President's concern for fairness and equality for Indian Country.

At the same time, while many of the actions of this Administration are cause for grave concern, let us not forget that it does not have a monopoly on the challenges that we are facing today. While the challenges being presented by this Administration are real and acutely in focus, we must also remember that there is an entire local, state, federal, and societal system and institution that is working against our interests.

Today's tweet should remind us all that these are hard and challenging times. During these times, in moments such as this, Indian Country must stand up in unity and express its outrage. We cannot allow ourselves to be silenced or to remain quiet for fear of political retribution. Most importantly, Indian Country must be on full alert or we will eventually discover the consequences of being asleep at the wheel.

USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)

Established in 2014, the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) is a non-profit, inter-Tribal organization representing twenty-seven (27) federally recognized Tribal Nations, from Maine to Florida to Texas. USET SPF is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and advancing the inherent sovereign rights and authorities of Tribal Nations and in assisting its membership in dealing effectively with public policy issues.

Because there is Strength in Unity