

Intervention Made by the Native American Council
of New York City
July 27, 1993

by Kent Lebsock, Secretary to the Council

Council Members
Alexander Ewen
(Purepecha)

*Director,
The Solidarity Foundation*

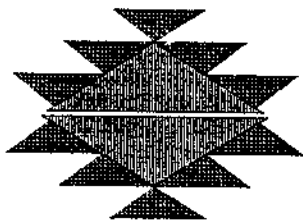
Tonya Connella Frichner, Esq.
(Onondaga)
*President, American
Indian Law Alliance*

Rudy Martin
(Tewa/Navajo/Apache)
*Public Relations Director,
American Indian
Community House*

Rosemary Richmond
(Mohawk)
*Executive Director, American
Indian Community House*

Mark A. Michaels, Esq.
Deputy Director to the Council

Kent Lebsock
(Lakota)
Secretary to the Council



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Madame Chairperson, I am speaking on behalf of the Native American Council of New York City. I am proud and honored to also be here as a delegate of the combined delegations of the Haudenosaunee and the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council under the treaty of friendship and cooperation between our peoples at Wounded Knee in 1973.

The Native American Council of New York City, because of our location in one of the world's centers, is able to be of service to Native nations and organizations from across the hemisphere and provide unique access to resources that might otherwise be unavailable to our peoples.

An issue of immediate concern to many Indigenous Peoples of North America is the manufacture and distribution of a product called "Crazy Horse Malt Liquor." As this Assembly is aware, Crazy Horse was a revered chief and spiritual leader of the Oglala Lakota Nation. To exploit the name of Crazy Horse in order to sell beer is, for our people, repugnant, like using the racial epithet "redskins" to name a football team. Crazy Horse Malt Liquor is simply inappropriate, an insult to the Lakota People and Indigenous peoples across the continent and a violation of our human rights.

Madame Chairperson, the exploitation of the name of one of our most revered political and spiritual leaders to sell alcohol, a substance that has exacted such a terrible toll on Indian societies, has drawn the universal outrage of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples in the United States suffer the highest incidence of alcoholism of any racial group, the highest rate of fetal alcohol syndrome, the highest death rate from cirrhosis of the liver and the highest death rate from exposure, diabetes, and other causes in which alcohol plays a role. We believe that the marketing strategy of Hornell Brewing Company and G. Heileman Industries, the manufacturers of Crazy Horse Malt Liquor, is designed to exploit Native American imagery for, at best, profit and, at worst, ethnocide.

Madame Chairperson, it is important that Indigenous peoples keep a constant vigil on every front to preserve our cultures and protect the lives of our people. We are warmed by the sense of unity shown this year between Indigenous delegates and look forward to increased cooperation and unity between our Peoples around the world. Accordingly, we are asking the delegates of this honored assembly to sign a petition of outrage against this deadly exploitation of Lakota culture and, in the same spirit, we hope that Indigenous peoples will call upon us for support of issues of immediate concerns to their organizations, territories and nations.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.

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