

TRIBAL CONSTITUTION

INTERPRETATION NO. 10-96

WHEREAS, The Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Executive Committee is the duly elected governing body of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, comprised of six member reservations (Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, and White Earth); and

WHEREAS, In a letter dated June 26, 1996, the Acting Area Director, Minneapolis Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs has stated that because of the "lack of constitutional direction" he possessed the legal authority to take "extraordinary measures", and that he has the power to remove duly elected members of a Tribal Council of a Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and establish rules for the operation of that Tribal Council; and

WHEREAS, The Tribal Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe established the principle, in its Constitutional Interpretation No. 4-81, on January 27 and 28, 1981 that the Tribal Executive Committee—

Is the only proper body to interpret the Constitution of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and that the United States, through its courts, solicitors, or employees, lacks the authority or jurisdiction to determine the meaning of the Constitution of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe in opposition to the interpretations or actions of the Tribal Executive Committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Tribal Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe does herewith reaffirm its long-held position that the officials of the government of the United States, including but not limited to the Acting Area Director of the Minneapolis Area Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, do not possess any legal authority to interpret the Constitution of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, or to remove sitting members of a government of a Band of the Tribe, or to establish rules for the operation of a government of a Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.

We do hereby certify that the foregoing Constitution Interpretation was duly presented and acted upon by a vote of 10 For, 0 Against, 0 Silent during a telephone conference meeting with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Executive Committee, a quorum present, held on July 3, 1996.

Norman W. Deschampe, President
THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE

ATTEST: Peter J. Defoe, Secretary
THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE

**THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE
TRIBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Special Meeting
July 3, 1996

A special meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Executive Committee was called to order by President Norman W. Deschampe at 2:25 p.m. on July 3, 1996, via conference call.

Roll Call: Present: Norman W. Deschampe, Gilbert Caribou, Gary Donald, David Morrison, Robert Peacock, Peter Defoe, Daniel Brown, Marge Anderson, David Matrious, Darrell Wadena, and Jerry Rawley.

Absent: Eli Hunt.

A quorum present.

Also Present: Gary S. Frazer; John Jacobson; Frank Annette; Joel Smith, Minnesota Agency; and Staff from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.

Discussion concerning letter from Larry Morin, Acting Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Minneapolis Area Office regarding Bureau's position on the leadership at the White Earth Reservation. The Tribal Executive Committee felt that Larry interpreted the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Constitution in making some of his decisions.

Motion made by Marge Anderson approving Constitution Interpretation 10-96 and letter to Acting Area Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Minneapolis Area Office with copies of this letter being sent to the Assistant Secretary, Ada Deer; Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt; and MN Congressional Delegation. Seconded by Robert Peacock. 10 For, 0 Against. Carried.

The Tribal Executive Committee expressed their feelings that they are not taking sides on the issues at White Earth and are not getting involved with the internal matters at White Earth. They felt that they are only reiterating their position that the Tribal Executive Committee is the only body that has the authority to interpret the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution and the Bureau was out of line in doing so.

Motion made by Peter Defoe to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Gary Donald. 10 For, 0 Against. Carried.