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Sullivan County casino no benefit to tribe

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

I read the article in your newspaper regarding the "tribe" visiting the Sullivan County casino deal in the Catskills. I would like to clarify a few statements. First, the Tribal Council does not constitute the "tribe" when you consider that less than 2 percent of the population of 8,000 voters elected these people who are questionable representatives of tribal matters. In the future, use the term "Tribal Council," not the generalization of the Mohawk tribe.

The tribal members do not receive any per-capita payments for the existing Akwesasne Mohawk Casino, but New York state receives 25 cents per every dollar played at this casino and the tribal members receive nothing. The rest goes toward the operating cost for this casino. So whose casino is it?

This casino rides on the backs of the name Akwesasne Mohawks but allows no benefit to the Mohawks. We are a laughingstock, and the recognized organization leaders are laughing with them. Eighty percent of the employees are non-natives at the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino. The employment would be for the Sullivan County residents and not the natives from Akwesasne. Can you imagine that households here would abandon their homes for weeks at a time to work for the casino in Sullivan County when they are not hired employees of the local casino?

Why any one of the members would want to support the Sullivan County pursuit by the Tribal Council is utterly ridiculous as the Tribal Council could not or refused to amend the Gaming Compact for the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino with the state of New York to benefit all who live here. What credible proof is there that would suggest the Tribal Council

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can manage a real, profitable deal for the people here for another casino using our name?

But yet they want to put us in debt for \$600 million to benefit again New York state. The spending of the casino profits are hidden from the members as the Tribal Council refuses to show itemization records to the members.

I just want your readership to hear from a member and to know the truth of being a member of this St. Regis Mohawk tribe. We are generalized as smugglers and we carry "tax-exempt" cards that are useless when all the stores refuse to recognize and honor these cards throughout New York state.

Agnes Terrance

Hogansburg

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