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**Written Testimony, Wausau, WI.**

**I began my work on the mascot/logo issue in the Winter of 1968. It was then I was the school mascot for the high school I attended, Shawano Senior High School in Shawano, WI. Even though when I started doing this I did not want to do it, I feel that the school name, "Indians" was made for good reasons. The main one being the word, "Shawano" is a Menominee word meaning, "To the South."**

**Over the years not only in Shawano, but in many schools in Wisconsin and across the Nation have changed their names and mascots. I will continue my work until all of these mascots and logos are gone.**

**In my work through, "Changing Winds" and as the, "Cultural Liaison" for the, "American Indian Center of the Fox Valley in Appleton, WI.", one of my monthly goings on is to visit the Native American group of inmates at the Oshkosh Correctional Institute in Oshkosh, WI. This past Tuesday, June 2, 2007, I asked members of the group to respond to two questions: 1) What are your feelings and/or ideas of the schools in Wisconsin using our names and images as mascots/logos? 2) What do you get out of this time (Drumming and Singing) here at OCI or any other input would you like to share with me on what this time mean to you in this location?**

**Because I am not allowed to bring anything into the room when I meet with these men, when I got back to my car I captured their responses the best I could. What follows are these responses. But, please also understand that there were nineteen (19) inmates present but because of the length of time we are allowed, these were the main ones I could recall.**

**Question 1:**

**"There is no respect in anything these schools do."**

**"I think that all the members of these teams might have different feelings about the name and the mascot."**

**"I think it started with President Andrew Jackson. He was the one who wanted to get rid of the Indians. So by all the things he did, he was the first one to make it OK to make fun of us. That's what the schools are still doing today. They aren't showing us any honor."**

**"I never paid any attention to the mascot stuff until you started coming here. The more I look into it, there is no honor in anything the schools do."**

**"I seen a football game on TV one time. It was a Packer game held in Green Bay and a bunch of people from Oneida and the Menominee rez came out onto the field at half-time. They were drumming and dancing. I thought it was great seeing the little ones dancing, too. Then I seen another game on TV one day and at half-time this white dude dressed up to look like an Indian came riding onto the field on a big white horse. The dude has a spear and war paint and the things he's doing are nuts! To me, this is the worst thing people can do to us."**

**"I don't think its right for these schools and teams to make money off our names and images."**

**Question 2:**

**"The drum is my medicine."**

**"I come here to pray and meet with my friends and brothers."**

**"I didn't grow up in this way (pointing to the drum). But I am trying to learn all the things I can so that when I get out I can learn more."**

**"What we do here is sacred. The drumming, the sweat lodge and being able to smudge. The songs we sing are special to us. In order for many of us to get through the day we look forward to this time. Some of**

**us have been here for a long time and we'll be here longer yet. But when we can hear the songs on your radio show, spend time with you and other people who come in here keep us who we are...Indian. Some people here and on the outside say we have no religion, but again, the songs we sing, the small things we're allowed in here help us stay, "Indian." Our religion may not look like the whiteman's, but we were here first and we're still trying to do it like we've been told how it was before the whiteman got here."**

## **CONCLUSION**

**I have said for over forty years: "How can a school, a team and/or a community be able to make money over a cartoon character of my Dad, my Grandparents and our forefathers? Show me the honor in a little non-Indian girl wearing, "War Paint" when in fact, "War Paint" is a Hollywood term. But most importantly, why do all of these people from Mishicot, Kewaunee and all the other schools in Wisconsin who call themselves, 'Indians' get to do this when they are not recognized by the Government of the United States of America as, 'Indian'?" No has yet been able to answer me these questions.**

**Our traditional ways are allowed by Law in correctional locations in Wisconsin. Our traditional ways are protected by Law made by the Government of the United States of America. Please pass this Bill so we can finally feel true honor.**

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