

Analysis of Best Practices in the Operation of Tribal Print Media

Submitted to the Master's in Public Administration in Tribal Governance Program

The Evergreen State College

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The press does not belong on anybody's team. If the press is to be of any use to itself and to the country, it must ruthlessly avoid partnership with any government, any institution, or any political party. The press must guard its independence with the utmost vigilance. The press must be a state unto itself. It must not just call itself the fourth estate, it must behave like a fourth estate. Partnership, membership on the team, does not produce news that informs; it produces cant and propaganda that confuses the mind.

Neil Sheehan

Introduction

Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote that, “The function of the press is very high. It is almost holy. It ought to serve as a forum for the people through which the people may know freely what is going on. To misstate or suppress the news is a breach of trust” (1912). Right sentiment and lofty goals to be certain, but hardly a reality in Indian Country where,

The “West” has sought to impose its vision of truth on non-Western peoples since the Middle Ages. In seeking the conquest of the earth, the Western colonizing nations of Europe and the derivative settler-colonized states produced by their colonial expansion have been sustained by a central idea: the West’s religion, civilization, and knowledge are superior to the religions, civilizations, and knowledge of non-Western Peoples. This superiority, in turn, is the redemptive source of the West’s presumed mandate to impose its vision of truth on non-Western peoples. (Williams 1999)

From images of heathen savages to noble Indians offering a reproach from the vices of Western civilization; from victims of federal policy to culturally fashionable activists; from dependent, incorrigibly corrupt societies to wealthy political insiders – [studies conducted on the portrayal of Indians in the national press] show that non-Indians’ portrayal of Native Americans has tended to reflect the views, norms, and desires of the majority, non-indigenous society. While the depiction of Indians has changed frequently, with the swaying of tribal-federal relations and the cultural norms of the majority, one constant has been the lack of Native American voice in the stories being told. (Henson and Taylor)

“One answer to this dilemma . . . was the creation of Indian-owned media, which would better reflect the issues and concerns of tribal communities” (Henson and Taylor). Having done so,

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Indian Country now needs to answer the question, “What is the role of tribal print media which serve reservation communities?”

Methodology

Analysis of Best Practices in the Operation of Tribal Print Media reviewed six tribal newspapers – the *Turtle Mountain Times* and the *Turtle Mountain Star* which serve the Turtle Mountain Tribe, the *Tribal Tribune* – The Official Publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the *S’Klallam News* – The monthly publication of the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, *See-Yaht-Sub* – The Weekly Newsletter of the Tulalip Tribes, and *Ha-Shilth-Sa* – Canada’s Oldest First Nations Newspaper – Serving the Nuu-chah-nulth (British Columbia) since 1974 – conducted a literature review, and sought direction from both the Native American Journalists Association and the National Congress of the American Indian, in order to determine what the Best Practices are and should be for tribal media seeking to overcome the “West’s presumed mandate to impose its vision of truth on non-Western peoples,” while at the same time “[serving] as a forum for the people through which the people may know freely what is going on.” Five of the six newspapers included in this study - *Turtle Mountain Times*, *Tribal Tribune*, *S’Klallam News*, *See-Yaht-Sub*, and *Ha-Shilth-Sa* - are funded by the tribes. Only the *Turtle Mountain Star* is independently operated.

What is the Function of Tribal Newspapers?

Eric Henson and J.B. Taylor et al in their report “Native Americans in the New Millennium,”

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part of *The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development*, noted of American Indians and the media –

Indian Country confronts two distinctly different problems when it comes to the media. For the national media, Native Americans face a press corps and an audience largely ignorant of the histories of tribes and, thus, of their unique political status and their relationship with the Federal Government. While the themes expressed in the national media have changed as federal policy has changed, evidence shows that the national media are more likely to misrepresent issues of importance to Native Americans by, for example, describing Indians in accordance with majority group norms, conceiving of all tribes as similar despite varying cultural differences, and combining the examination of Native Americans with moral judgments about them. In particular, what have been historically missing in the national news are the voices of the tribes themselves.

As an example of the premise, the Native American Journalist Association reviewed the recent controversy over Janet Jackson's exposed breast on national television, and the subsequent lack of concern about Outkast's demeaning of Indians on the Grammy Awards show –

For more than a week now, Native people across the United States and Canada have expressed their outrage over the stereotyped Outkast performance at the 46th Grammy Awards. The Native media has done an admirable job of covering the controversy, but in contrast to the wall-to-wall coverage generated by Janet Jackson's halftime show, the Outkast performance has raised barely a whisper among the mainstream media. Native people again find themselves out of sight, out of mind.

Outkast's performance began with what has been described as "powwow-sounding chanting." In reality, it was a Navajo prayer, intended for the healing of veterans. The comment that followed, about the Natives getting restless, should have set off alarm bells among both organizers and the media covering the awards. The dancers in stereotypical Indian garb gyrating in a sexual manner, too, should have at least raised eyebrows. What many Native people saw was the casual use of their institutions and spiritual lives for profane entertainment value. What's more, in contrast to the Superbowl incident, Outkast's performance seems to have been choreographed with the full knowledge of Grammy organizers.

This is news, this is a story - one quickly recognized by the Native media. But where was the coverage? Where was the inquisitive media, sensitive to the communities they cover? Native peoples are not artifacts living in a museum that can be trotted out to entertain. They are

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living peoples whose pain is alive and perpetuated by actions -- and the confounding lack of reaction by those who claim to know better.

Hensen and Taylor continue -

- The public media are largely ignorant of the history of tribes and thus their unique standing with the Federal Government. Non-Indians' portrayal of Native Americans has tended to reflect the views, norms and desires of the majority, non-indigenous society.
- In response, there has been a rise in Indian-owned media, and today there are approximately 600 tribal newspapers, 40 tribal radio stations, and a growing number of telecommunications programs oriented towards Indian communities.

The question remains, however, "what is the function of tribal newspapers?"

While offering a voice to Native Americans, tribally owned media still confront a difficult question: what purpose do they play in the creation of a civil society? Is their purpose to serve the citizens of the tribal nation by acting as an independent forum of ideas and printing discourse of concern to tribal citizens? Or, should the tribal media strive to serve tribes by restricting their role to the diffusion of information and items of general interest? (Henson and Taylor)

Diffusion of Information and Items of General Interest Model

All six of the newspapers involved in this study seek to keep their readers informed of issues of concern involving their respective tribes. The term "readers" is used instead of tribal members because some of the newspapers are distributed freely to all the tribal members (*Tribal Tribune*, *S'Klallam News*, *Ha-Shilth-Sa*, and *See-Yaht-Sub*), while two of the newspapers (*Turtle Mountain Times* and *Turtle Mountain Star*) are distributed on a pay per copy/subscription basis. Regardless if they are free or pay-per-view, all six keep the public aware. Each operates a tad differently, however. *The S'Klallam News*, as an example, is the only publication that is distributed on a monthly rather than weekly basis. Their news tends to revolve around issues of

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community, health, and education, although there is not a regular column from any particular individual. The articles are intended to be informational, not inflammatory. Cultural classes, The Evergreen State College's reservation-based program, flu, fever, Diabetes, asthma prevention, weddings, births, and an edition dedicated entirely to a "Photographic and Oral History of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Elders" (March 1994) filled the five editions that were reviewed. The Tribal Chairman, Ron Charles, included himself in two of the editions, but always because of an issue that demanded his attention. One was the Point-No-Point-Casino (January 2002), and the other was the drug, Oxycontin, and the growing problem that the Tribe was seeing in increased usage among tribal members (April 2004).

The *See-Yaht-Sub*, like the *S'Klallam News*, tends to be informative, but not controversial. A weekly publication, the *See-Yaht-Sub* includes regular columns and by-lines. Included within the body of the paper is a calendar of events, Tulalip Tribes Department News, In the News (events and individuals on and off the reservation), Sports, Health, Education, and Tulalip Veterans, Peoples Pages (letters, Vital Statistics (births and birthdays), anniversaries, poetry, Passings/In Memory, and a regular feature where four tribal members/employees are pictured and their answers to a question asked of them is included beneath each of their pictures. Again, *See-Yaht-Sub* is really intended to be informative, without being controversial, and in that regard it succeeds.

Include some rather feisty letters to the editor, and some Bureau of Indian Affairs information, and Colville's *Tribal Tribune* reads very much like Tulalip's *See-Yaht-Sub*. The

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Tribune takes in a greater number of people and districts, and stretches out over a much greater land base, but content-wise it is not that much different.

Confronting the Colonizer

Like the aforementioned tribal media, Nuu-chah-nulth's *Ha-Shilth-Sa* keeps "the fourteen Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations as well as other interested groups and individuals informed," but unlike the *S'Klallam News*, *See-Yaht-Sub*, and *Tribal Tribune*, *Ha-Shilth-Sa* does not avoid controversy. Most of its columns include by-lines and are intended to be informative, although "informative" goes way beyond just keeping the Band¹ informed as to department happenings, health information, and the comings and goings of local individuals. Many of the articles deal with the Band's on-going treaty negotiations with the Canadian Government, as well as the Band's relationship with Canada in general, so it is not unusual to find comments such as –

The United Church was the first to appeal, claiming they were not liable for things that happened at the Port Alberni Indian Residential School. Then Canada appealed claiming they were not liable for aggravated damages. We appealed that the judge did not find Canada and the United Church negligent of their fiduciary duties, and the damage awards were too low. (Grant qtd. in Wiwchar 2003)

And,

The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council has grave concerns that the Governance Act is nothing more than the federal government's attempt to absolve itself of legal liabilities and fiduciary obligations under the guise of "doing what's right for the Indians." (Atleo qtd. in Wiwchar 2003)

As well as,

When the Liberals came to power they announced almost immediately that Women's Centers

¹ Canada's First Nations most often use the term Band in place of Tribe.

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would cease to be funded. They directed Women's Centers to seek alternative funding by partnering with other service providers. "Well, who wants to partner with someone that's about to lose their funding anyway?" (Bate qtd. in August 2004)

in issue after issue. It is a voice of dissent that is missing from the *S'Klallam News*, *See-Yaht-Sub*, and *Tribal Tribune*. Hensen and Taylor say of the role of the media –

The media, through its conveyance of information, help contribute to the construction of a civil society through the creation of what has been termed a common consciousness. As the media inform, so too do they shape a community's social values, personal experiences, and public awareness by determining not only which issues get placed on the public's agenda, but the way those issues are portrayed. Thus, the media not only inform but they persuade.

Clearly, the editors and columnist of *Ha-Shilth-Sa* see their role as one of both informing the public, and of doing battle on behalf of the public they serve. They demand justice and are not afraid to take on the Master Race in order to get it.

Tribal Press and Tribal Governments

The *Turtle Mountain Star* serves the same role as Nuu-chah-nulth's *Ha-Shilth-Sa*, serving the people while doing battle with the gods that be. Sometimes those gods are in tribal government, an issue that none of the aforementioned tribal newspapers, editors, or columnists have dealt with. Although it has no ax to grind, and it does not go looking for controversy, The *Star* does not shy away from an issue if it exists. Because the writers are largely non-Indian, and the paper is not tribally controlled, there is little chance that the Tribe could exercise any kind of control over the editorial content, even if it wanted to. That is not the case with all tribally controlled newspapers, however. Despite the fact that the Indian Civil Rights Act states that –

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No Indian Tribe in exercising powers of self-government shall (1) make or enforce any law prohibiting the free exercise of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition for redress of grievances,

David Wilkins makes note in *American Indian Politics* (2002) of five recent cases where tribal journalists working for a tribally controlled newspaper have run afoul of the gods that be –

- In June 1998, Fredrick Lane, the editor of the Lummi Nation's tribal newspaper, *Squol Quol*, was fired by the Tribal Business Committee for printing a letter by a county councilwoman, Marlene Dawson, to U.S. Senator Slade Gorton in which she said that federally financed Lummi schools were "incubators of racism." Lane had been told not to run the letter because, according to the tribal chairman, the council was trying to improve its relationship with the county and federal governments.
- In July 1997 the entire staff of the Cherokee Nation government's bimonthly newspaper, the *Cherokee Nation*, was laid off after the newspaper ran stories covering allegations of wrongdoing by the nations chief, Joe Byrd.
- In October 1997 a journalist for the weekly Minnesota-based *Native American Press/Ojibwe News* was arrested on trespassing charges by tribal law enforcement officers while attending a meeting regarding a controversial land sale among Minnesota Chippewa Tribes.
- In 1994, the editor and staff of *Hopi Tutuvehni*, the tribal newspaper with a circulation of ten thousand on the Hopi Reservation, were dismissed. The paper was shut down after the tribal council stripped away its budget. The council complained that the paper was "not presenting balanced news." It was later reopened after the election of new tribal leaders, but censorship persists.
- In February 1998, Tom Arviso, editor of the *Navajo Times* in Window Rock, Arizona, endured two attempts by President Albert Hale's administration to have him removed because of the paper's investigation of alleged financial mismanagement by Hale. Mark Trahan, editor of the paper in the 1980s, had not been as lucky; he and his staff were summarily fired by the Navajo chairman, Peter MacDonald, after MacDonald's reelection in the fall of 1987.

Although none of the tribes/tribal media discussed by Wilkins were included in this study, it is apparent that crusading journalists do so at their own risk.

Battling Tribal Censorship

Because of the outrage caused by the censorship of tribal journalists at the hands of partisan councils and chairs, the National Congress of American Indians adopted a policy in support of Free Speech in 2003 –

On Nov 21, 2003, the governing council for the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) passed a resolution supporting a Free and Independent Native Press. The resolution . . . encourages all tribal nations to adopt policies, which ensure Freedom of the Press and further calls upon all tribal governments to pass similar policies that allow the unrestricted flow of information concerning news and news events. (NAJA) (See attached Resolution.)

And the Navajo Nation passed legislation protecting Free Speech at the Navajo Times –

The Native American Journalists Association extends congratulations and honor to the Navajo Nation Council for voting on October 23 to approve independence of the Navajo Times from the tribal government and the establishment of Navajo Times Publishing, Inc. The struggle to establish and maintain the rights of a free press is a continuing issue in Indian Country for our organization and our membership. A free press is essential for a vital democracy, and we believe the action taken by the Navajo Council will serve as an example for other sovereign tribal governments. (NAJA)

Today, there are sixty-eight tribes that have included freedom of the press in their written constitutions (Wilkins 2002), considerably less than what should be, but leastwise recognition of the job performed by a Free Press and their need to be unfettered by political machinations of business councils and chairs.

The Dilemma of Tribal Media

The dilemma that tribal journalists find themselves in, whether to “restrict their role to the diffusion of information and items of general interest”, or to act as investigative journalists, “[serving] the citizens of the tribal nation by . . . acting as an independent forum of ideas and

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printing discourse of concern to tribal citizens,” and in doing so risking the ire of tribal governments – which fund and operate the vast majority of tribal news services – or aiding “anti-tribal forces” (Henson and Taylor) is a serious issue. It is probably unrealistic to expect tribal journalists to take on the role of crusading avengers, especially on small reservations that are essentially closed communities where everyone is related to everyone else. And the lack of a budget independent of tribal control cannot be overlooked in the over all decision of what function the tribal press plays, and what role tribal journalists assume. Yet, it is the role of the serious investigative journalist to serve as a conduit through which, “the people may know freely what is going on. To misstate or suppress the news is a breach of trust” (Brandeis). As Edward Kennedy noted in his eulogy to his brother, Robert –

Few are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change a world that yields most painfully to change. And I believe that in this generation those with the courage to enter the moral conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the globe.

The future does not belong to those who are content with today, apathetic toward common problems and their fellow man alike, timid and fearful in the face of new ideas and bold projects. Rather it will belong to those who can blend vision, reason and courage in a personal commitment to the ideals and great enterprises of American Society. Our future may lay beyond our vision, but it is not completely beyond our control. It is the shaping impulse of America that neither fate nor nature nor the irresistible tides of history, but the work of our own hands, matched to reason and principle, that will determine our destiny. There is pride in that, even arrogance, but there is also experience and truth. In any event, it is the only way we can live.

And the Mahatma reminded us that, “Even if you are a minority of one, the truth is still the truth” (Fischer 1983).

Hearing from the People

And the case of Fredrick Lane suggests that letters to the editor are not free from scrutiny either, and that tribal media needs to be able to print letters without interference from tribal authority, so long as industry standards for slander and libel are observed. This protection is especially necessary for newspapers like the *Turtle Mountain Times* and the *Turtle Mountain Star*, both of which do an outstanding job of presenting the People's view in the form of letters to the editor. Both papers accept Justice William Brennan's view that the expression of ideas is a First Amendment guarantee –

All ideas having even the slightest redeeming social importance – unorthodox ideas, controversial ideas, even ideas hateful to the prevailing climate of opinion – have the full the full protection of the [First Amendment] guarantee, unless excludable because they encroach upon the limited area of more important interests. (Roth v. United States)

None of the other papers in this study, save for the *Tribal Tribune*, even included letters to the editor, and Colville's were pretty tame in comparison to either the *Star* or the *Times*. Both the *Times* and the *Star* regularly publish letters that are critical of decisions made by tribal authority, Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, etc. In a recent two week period (April 26, 2004 and May 3, 2004) the *Times* and *Star* included letters from tribal and non-tribal members critical of decisions made by the tribal chairman, and the chairman's response, as well as letters critical of individuals perceived as airing their own agendas in previous letters to the editor, criticism and response to smoking on the grounds and in front of children at St. John's Elementary School, and a call for a class action law suit against IHS for violation of treaty guarantees. There were other letters, too, but those acknowledged are typical of the kind of

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letters that both the *Times* and the *Star* print on a regular basis. Even though many of these letters are lengthy both newspapers try and print them in their entirety, reserving the right to edit for slander, libel, or personal attacks on individuals not deemed to be public figures. This right of the People to be heard is an obligation of the free press. And both the *Times* and *Star* have accepted the check and balance obligation that a free press plays in the operation of good government by informing the People, and by ensuring the People of a mechanism by which to openly and freely respond. Thomas Jefferson said of that obligation, “The only security at all is in a free press. The force of public opinion cannot be resisted, when permitted freely to be expressed. The agitation it produces must be submitted to. It is necessary to keep the waters pure” (Letter to Marquis de LaFayette).

Summary and Recommendations

So, what makes for Best Practices in tribally controlled media? As noted on page 3, it really depends the intent of the Tribe, “Is their purpose to serve the citizens of the tribal nation by acting as an independent forum of ideas and printing discourse of concern to tribal citizens? Or, should the tribal media strive to serve tribes by restricting their role to the diffusion of information and items of general interest?” Regardless if it is the latter or the former, the provisions demanded by the Native American Journalists Association and NCAI’s Resolution ABQ-03-042 for the freedom of the tribal press must be adhered to. There after, if the intent is to largely inform, sans real controversy, then the *S’Klallam News*, *See-Yaht-Sub*, *Tribal Tribune*, offer good examples of newspapers that are intended to educate and inform without necessarily

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accepting an obligation to act as the check and balance intended of the fourth estate. If, however, Justice Brandeis' view that, "The function of the press is . . . almost holy. It ought to serve as a forum for the people through which the people may know freely what is going on. To misstate or suppress the news is a breach of trust" is to prevail, then *Ha-Shilth-Sa*, the *Turtle Mountain Star*, and the *Turtle Mountain Times* (leastwise in so far as letters to the editor are concerned) are the newspapers that operate more along the lines of what the fourth estate is intended to do.

Regardless if one favors the latter or the former, Best Practices demand that –

- the press must have the freedoms noted earlier in this paragraph.
- The People must have the right to freely express their opinions on matters that interest or involve them.
- Ideally the press will be free of financial control by the Tribe. (The staff of the *Turtle Mountain Times*, for example, are paid by the Tribe, but they reimburse the Tribe through subscriptions, advertisements, etc. All printing cost are the responsibility of the *Times*.)
- The media must be intended for members both on and off the reservation. As Hensen and Taylor note in *Native Americans in the New Millennium*, "About 60% of self-identified American Indians and Alaska Natives reside off-reservation, and almost 50% (620,000) of the total non-reservation Native population lives in urban areas" and "While there are now intergenerational families of urban Indians and a growing suburban Indian population, many would prefer to move back to tribal lands if there was ample job opportunities." Tribal media must write so as to encompass all the members, not just the on-reservation members
- The Tribal Chair should not have a regular column in a newspaper that seeks to be independent of tribal control. (Initially I thought otherwise, but then I recalled the newspaper I received years ago from the Mississippi Choctaw. Tribal Chairman Phillip Martin's picture and name was on every front page. It didn't take me too long to understand why he was serving his sixth consecutive term, besides that fact that he was successful. Save for tribal elections, the tribal media should not be used as an electioneering tool for/by any tribal member.)

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- Because of their unique role as dispensers of information, the editor and/or staff have an obligation of taking a stand – editorializing - on issues involving the tribal welfare. The role of the press has always been to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, and the tribal press cannot shy away from that responsibility without doing grave damage to itself.

Beyond those fundamental rights and obligations, what the press includes in their respective editions should be determined by community standards. That is, almost all of the newspapers include health, education, and welfare concerns, as well as sports, births, marriages, anniversaries, and deaths, and tribal members in the military. Some include regular columns on tribal history, culture, and language. And both the *Star* and the *Times* include an inordinate amount of information from the Catholic Church, the only newspapers in my study that include anything from a religious body. Still, community standards demand it and lack of its inclusion would cause concern. In the end, however, a free press must act like a free press. As Neal Sheen stated, “The press does not belong on anybody's team. If the press is to be of any use to itself and to the [community it serves], it must ruthlessly avoid partnership with any government, any institution, or any political party. The press must guard its independence with the utmost vigilance. ***It must not just call itself the fourth estate, it must behave like a fourth estate!***”

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The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #ABQ-03-042

Title: Support of A Free and Independent Native Press

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the NCAI supports the Native American Journalists Association which can be reached at Native American Journalists Association, U of South Dakota, 414 E Clark Street, Vermillion, SD 57069 tel: 605.677.5282, fax: 866.694.4264, email: info@naja.com, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the adherence to the standards of accepted ethics of journalism as defined by these professional organizations; and

WHEREAS, those standards and ethics state that every person has the right to seek, receive and impart information and opinions freely, by any means of communication without any discrimination for reasons of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, economic status, birth or any other social condition, with equal opportunity; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of all Indian Tribes to respect the civil rights of their people set forth in their perspective Constitutions and Laws; and

WHEREAS, freedom of expression in all its forms and manifestations is a fundamental and inalienable right of all individuals; and

WHEREAS, restrictions to the free circulation of ideas and opinions, as well as the arbitrary imposition of information and the imposition of obstacles to the free flow of information violate the right to freedom of expression; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby affirm policies regarding a Free Press to ensure All Media, including Tribal Media have the independence to report objectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI supports the principles of free speech, free press, and the rights of the people to have access to information and/or to communicate and express freely information and carry out media in an independent manner; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI encourages Tribal Nations to ensure Freedom of the Press and develop those Media Policies so the rights of the People will not be abridged; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 60th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on November 21, 2003 with a quorum present.