

## David Bald Eagle & the Selection of Chiefs of the United Indigenous Nations - OSEU 7

Four of us were picked as a team, and the four, they never came to the meetings, and I couldn't say anything because I was picked as one of the four. No leader, nothing, so I never did say anything. I didn't call a meeting together or anything like that, but they did call a meeting of the chiefs together on this reservation two or three times, and no one went, just the two of us. And the other guy wasn't picked as a team, just myself and this guy attended.

The other three chiefs, they never did come, or this one passed away, this one passed away, so the other three didn't show up. So I decided, well, one of these days they might call a meeting, and I didn't pay attention until they invited me, where this call came from this morning, from Puerto Rico. They invited me down there, but they didn't tell me about picking any chiefs or anything. They just called me down there, so I went down there. The tribes wanted to see me down there, so I went down there.

Down there, they asked me if I wanted to be there or take a position as the chief. There was a whole auditorium full of leaders from different tribes, Greenland, Siberia, Guatemala, Australia, Brazil, all over. They came. Then there were some people in the front. There were about 12 of them sitting in the front. They had suits on. They didn't have any regalia of any kind, but they had suits on. And we were sitting up on a stage with a table like this. There were four of us.

The one that was leading from Puerto Rico, he got the meeting together of all the leaders from the world. And I was sitting in the middle. They told me to sit in the middle. I had my name on it, so I sat in the middle. As I sat there, there were some young Puerto Rican girls, hostesses or something, waitresses or something. They had aprons on and everything. One of them came over to me, and she said, would you care for some water or something? I said, that would be a good idea. I said, I'll get you some. So she left.

And while she was going to have the water, there was a lady who brought a glass of water. She put it in front of me. So I took it and put it in front of me. And here, one of these young girls came over, and she just went like this to me, and she took that water.

She took that water, so give me a drink before I tell you." And here she said, no, no, she said, we don't want you to drink that, she said, because it was open. And for a while I thought maybe they didn't want me to drink water or something. And here, this lady came back and she brought a bottle like this, where the cat water, here, drink this, she said, she put it on there. And here this guy from Puerto Rico that was sitting beside me, he says, Chief, you're in a safe place.

The reason they took that open water away from there, who knows what that woman's got in that water, you never know, dope or anything. But this water there, that girl brought you a safe because it's sealed. Oh, okay, I'm sorry I didn't catch on right away, I said, well, that's okay, that's all right, he says, now you know. They won't let you drink any water, you have to break the seal in order to drink it. And so that's the way it was, and you're being selected as a chief.

Four days from today, he says, you will let us know whether you accept it or not. During the meeting, I was taken in, they had me sit up there, and people, different words, spoke from the crowd, Greenland, Australia, Guatemala, Hawaii, they spoke, I listened to them. I noticed every one of those speakers, when they come out, they would take their pipe, whatever they have, they would point to the four corners of the earth, Mother Earth, and the universe, before they prayed.

Some of them were first named Mother Earth, but they prayed before they spoke. I noticed that, I watched them, Greenland did the same thing, Siberia, they did the same thing, Australia, they did the same thing, every place where the leaders came. I noticed that as I sat there, and each country that spoke, you know, they would ask me if it would be possible, if I would accept it, they wanted me to accept it.

But they didn't say why, so when I did accept it, the fourth day, when I said I would accept it, that's when this attorney got up, he says, I'm the president of the attorneys, there's 12 of us here today, leaders from different countries, he said, and selected me as the president of the attorneys, we're going to be your attorneys, and pro bono, he said, so thank you, I said, and here's the chief, you are not standing alone.

These attorneys that's here today, that is all of us sitting in the front here, I guess you realize that. We all have the same, we all have the same book together on the Indian Affairs in the indigenous nations. Someday you're going to be together and they want to hear you. Right now the leaders are the ones that are listening to you. Whatever you say, he says we'll go by that. That's why we're here. So after they got through speaking, the attorney said, it's your turn. So I stood up, I took the microphone and I said, I have little to say today.

You surprised me at first, I said I would like to let you know that. I didn't know I was being selected as chief of these other nations. And I don't know just exactly what to say, but I have a pretty good idea of what's happening. I noticed every one of you that spoke has the same prayers. I said, you have this, you pray to this great spirit. And I want to talk about that. You keep on whatever you believe in, the Indian way of life. You pray to the great spirits of all directions, the earth, mother earth, and the universe.

Our chiefs, our chiefs up in the north, I said we have seven great flames. I said, we call it Oceti Sakowin. We call it that. The reason we call it that is because when you look up

in the sky at night, there's a dipper. That's got seven stars. Each star represents our seven campfires. That's our flag with the blue banner. And so we have that. And that's the meaning of our seven campfires. Each one has a dialect. We speak Indian together. We speak, but we each understand each other. We're the same.

The women have a different language from the men, but we understand each other. Same way you people, when you pray, we understand what you're praying for. All of you. Whatever you believe in, you just keep on. Keep on. Each tribe, I don't want to change you. I don't want you to just because I'm a Lakota, it doesn't mean that you should turn towards me for prayers. You have your own, so you just keep on praying that same, whichever you use it. You have your same habits, same rules and regulations. You keep that.

Your same language, don't ever forget that. Don't ever forget your language. Everything the... way we were in this United States, they call it today, but we used to call it Spiritual Island. We still believe it that way. We have not turned yet, we're hanging on to that, and we always will. And here, that attorney, he said, Chief, he says, for that reason, that's the reason why we selected you as a Chief of the tribe. He said, because you believe in every tribe, you believe in every tribe the way they are.

Also, you were never defeated, and that's the reason why we want a chief that has never been defeated. We want you to know that. The United States, you said that this child, a lady, was covered with a flag, and it belonged to those ladies, Indian ladies and their children. That is true, he said. The United States flag, he says, they don't know what that flag means, so you're on the right track. You believe everything the way we believe. As you speak, he says, we could follow you. It's really easy to understand, in plain words.

So the attorney, I told the attorney, I said, I could understand you, I could understand you, but, I said, don't ever use highfalutin words, I said, because we don't understand that. Use plain English words, so we could understand. That's the way you talk to us. When you talk amongst yourself, you've got thousands of books around your office. Sometimes I wonder if you've read them all. Each book covers something. But when you talk to us, don't use them. Use our way of life, the way we can understand.

And you won't have so many in the penitentiary, that's what I told him. But there's a lot, I said, that afternoon, that I have never brought it up. But all the ones that did take in that meeting, they understood what I meant. We know what is right and what is wrong, and what to do, what's right, what not to do.