

Thank you for that kind introduction and for your continuing support and confidence.

First, let's give special recognition to our Elders.

We're all here on the shoulders of those who came before us. Their strong backs and busy hands made us all that we are today.

So to our Elders...we honor you.

Elders...please stand so that we may acknowledge and thank you.

There are times in our lives, in each generation, when either we define the moment, or it defines us.

I believe that tribes are now at one of those moments.

A moment when we define ourselves...not by the words we speak, but by the actions we take.

Through your Leadership...many strides have been made in Indian Country, but still...

- **Not all Indian children are being properly educated**
- **Indian health programs are not being properly funded**

●And, the last major frontier of civil rights...economic opportunity, still eludes us...in fact, many in Indian Country are still living in abject poverty

Just after Prop 5 passed, I asked the question to a group of Tribal Leaders who had gathered the date after the election victory, “Does the passage of the initiative mean that you now have the right to game in California?”

I answered my own question, by saying it did not. What the initiative gave you was the right to fight for gaming, every day, for the rest of your life.

You see, power in politics is never given...it’s taken. And it’s usually taken from somebody---and they want it back.

- You took power from racetracks**
- You took power from card clubs**
- You took power from local and state government**
- You took power from a lot of people and they want it back...especially now that some of you are making money.**

Look at what the courts are doing to your sovereignty...little by little, they are eating away at it. This is not about sovereignty...it’s a way of putting, what you hold dear, into jeopardy, in order to squeeze more resources from you.

Some of your wounds have been self-inflicted...but mostly you've seen that there are two sets of rules...rules for them...and rules for people like us. Otherwise, why would IBM, Microsoft...all the Fortune 500 Companies...be paying the state 8.89% in business tax, and this "Republican" Governor...is leveraging you for 25%?

Hmmm...a Republican Governor, that wants to raise taxes on business? Oh, let me correct that...the Governor isn't proposing to raises taxes on business, he's proposing to raise taxes on Indians...Doesn't that make you feel special?

This uneven playing field, is just another reason for you to build out your facilities as quickly as you can, "milk" that gaming "cash cow"...and begin diversifying your revenue streams. Because, you never know, how long this going to last. The voters giveth and the voters can taketh away.

You want to be in a position to use gaming as a tool, but not your only tool..to ensure the economic security of your nation. Building wealth internally is extremely important in this process.

Trading with yourselves, buying goods and services from members you set up for business, or from members that go into partnership with an equity position is an important long term strategy.

Have you ever seen the demographics of money? How many times a dollar travels within an ethnic community before leaving? In the Greek community, it's 8 times...that's why you have a small population and a high concentration of wealth...in the Jewish community, it's 7 times...for Armenians it's 6 times...going down to just over one time in the African American community...and less than once in the Latino community. The concentration of wealth can keep your personal revenue streams, from doing business with each other. In addition to any per capita...your businesses, have created many millionaires...the question is...how many have been Indians?

You should create a group of financial institutions, such as banks and an Indian Bankers Association, even your own Hedge fund for your long term security.

And you should invest heavily in your children's education, and encourage their participation through business, financial and other incentives...

But, this is not new thinking...

The one thing you have going for you is your sovereignty. Keep it as long as you can, try to expand it and defend it at every turn. Leverage it for the next 7 generations.

Stay in the political fight—because frankly, you can never give up. And you must constantly look for government leaders to cultivate, and since you know your business better than they do, be proactive. Tell them what to do.

Don't go to Sacramento or Washington for the answer, because when you go there, you don't get a practical answer, you get a political one.

I'd like to tell you a story about what can happen, when you let other people do your thinking for you. There was an old man, a young boy and a donkey...

- **The 3 were on their way to Sacramento**
- **Old man put the young boy on the donkey to ride**
- **Some local county supervisors passed by and were appalled...that the frail old man was walking and the healthy young boy was riding, so they switched on the advice of the supervisors...**

●Then some Congressmembers came and said it was silly to have a donkey and not ride, so again they took the advice and they both rode the donkey

●Later, a group of state legislators came by and complained that there was too much weight on the donkey, so the old man and the young boy decided the only thing left was to carry the donkey.

●On their journey, they were crossing a bridge when they lost their grip on the animal...and the donkey fell in the river and drowned,,,

●The moral of the story is...that if you try to do everything they tell you to do... you just might lose your “ass”.

The fight is worth it...your nation is depending on you.

Thank you for inviting me, have a great conference.