

# WHAT NEXT???

The economy apparently is suffering greatly as the much ballyhooed "shopping season" arrives. This is causing many, not only to fear the United States is entering a recession, but to worry about their obligations to friends, relatives and other loved ones since expectations always run high during the "holiday season." And, unfortunately the result often is stress rather than joy. This is a sad fact...it's an even sadder reality.

In November, over 200,000 jobs were lost and that was in the manufacturing sector alone. The auto industry experienced a loss of over 55,000 jobs and in the past six months one quarter of a million jobs were lost in the construction industry.

Our point? Be grateful and look around you. If you are working, you have much to be thankful for and perhaps you should consider the notion of helping others who are less fortunate.

We are not asking you to buy into a seasonal "feel-good" appeal or campaign, but that you genuinely evaluate your circumstances, be thankful for what you have, and to look about and reach out to a few of those less fortunate. Do it not for the warm feeling it brings to you or the recognition that might result, do it because you genuinely care for others who need a helping hand and because it is, in the final analysis, really "your" duty.

The season is geared to promote feelings of warmth, care, and love. Too bad it often only sinks into our psyche once a year. Our counsel...help others now and pledge to do whatever you can throughout the year. Caring should not be defined by the ever changing seasons. Enjoy the companionship...relish the comfort of family and friends...and challenge yourself to "do the right thing"...for as we know and have been reminded, "tomorrow is not promised!"

Simplicity. Many have praised its virtues and yet we live in a world compounded by complexity. We continue to struggle to make some sense of this "obvious" reality.

In talking with one wise companion, we were reminded how it previously was: little thought needed to be given to the idea of "right" and "wrong." Our parents knew. Our grandparents knew. It was simple. The standards were obvious. There was no need for debate or deep thought. This debate had occurred many times before and the

choice between "right" and "wrong" was quickly and easily defined and plainly if not painfully obvious to everyone. "Right" and "wrong" were clearly evident and our behavior conformed to this accepted and appreciated standard or we were surely destined to suffer the indisputable consequences. We need no "laws" to reinforce this standard...we lived by these self-evident principles and prospered.

But our world is now very complex. Simplicity is no longer relevant to some and many have chosen to ignore the wisdom history has shared with us. Consequently, as a nation and as a people, many suffer for the results of poor decisions and for unjustified, unmerited commitments.

When considering "right" vs. "wrong," many can benefit from a return to basics. This can truly be a liberating philosophy!

Our language owes a tremendous debt to the languages of the world. There is so much to be appreciated and perhaps much to be learned from this wondrous heritage.

In our readings we recently discovered (or rediscovered) the Italian expressions, *bonca rotta*, which literally means "broken bench." From this simple Italian phrase, we have developed a very modern expression.

In the Middle Ages, banking was conducted in open-air markets. When a banker went broke, the bench on which he conducted business was broken up. Hence, our word today, "bankrupt."

Perhaps serious consideration needs to be given to the literal meaning of "canca rotta" as we strive to deal with a few of our modern industries and individuals. Conceivably, and to us it appears to be in our best interest, "Chapter 11" should be literal!

History is so easily forgotten and the lessons therefore are often lost and must be re-learned again and again.

We feel people should dedicate a special time between now and the new year to not only research and remember, but to ponder the events and consequences of December 29th.

One hundred years ago, the Battle of Wounded Knee took place. We seem to quickly forget, and consequently, have much to learn!

# Along The Robeson Trail

By Dr. Stan Knick, Director of the P&U Native American Resource Center

One hundred years ago, on the 29th of December, 1890, one of the most tragic events in American history occurred. It happened on the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation, in what is now southwestern South Dakota. Just two weeks before, Sitting Bull had been killed while being arrested at Standing Rock Reservation, for what the U.S. government saw as inciting trouble amongst the Sioux by favoring the Ghost Dance. After Sitting Bull's death, many Sioux people fled their homes, fearing the soldiers who had recently been stationed in their homelands. There was great confusion. People were going in all directions.

One of the other leaders of the Sioux Nation was a man named Big Foot, of the Minneconjou Band. He was also a proponent of the Ghost Dance as a way to bring back the old ways, and had, along with Sitting Bull, continued to hold Ghost Dances after being told to stop by fearful government agents. When Big Foot found out about the killing of Sitting Bull, he began moving his people toward Pine Ridge in the belief that the great leader Red Cloud would there be able to prevent further violence.

On their way to Pine Ridge, they saw soldiers coming toward them. Big Foot, who was advanced in years and quite ill with pneumonia and thus forced to ride in a wagon, had a white flag raised as a signal to the cavalry that the Minneconjou wanted no trouble. The cavalry commander, Major Whitside, who was under orders to bring Big Foot to the reservation, escorted the Minneconjou to Pine Ridge.

As the sun went down on the evening of December 28th, Big Foot and his people, virtually surrounded by four troops of the Seventh Cavalry, stopped to make camp beside a stream which the Sioux called Chanke Opi Wakpala. Government maps showed it as Wounded Knee Creek. Major Whitside posted guards all around the Minneconjou encampment.

During the night, another cavalry detachment arrived, under command of Colonel J.W. Forsyth, who then assumed control of all the troops. Forsyth had orders to place Big Foot on a train to Omaha, where he was to be imprisoned. Probably everyone in the camp that night realized that some of these same Sioux warriors had been involved in the defeat of this same Seventh Cavalry Regiment at the Little Bighorn, in 1876.

On the cold morning of the 29th, the Sioux warriors were ordered to surrender their weapons, which most of them did. After a search of the Sioux lodges, the soldiers began searching individual warriors for other weapons. They found two rifles, one of which belonged to young Black Coyote, who announced that he had paid for his rifle and that he didn't think he should have to give it away. A survivor named Wasumaza would later report that Black Coyote intended to lay down his rifle with the others, but that, while being jostled by the soldiers trying to disarm him, the rifle accidentally discharged.

The surrounding soldiers immediately fired into the clustered Minneconjou. Within a very few minutes, more than half of the approximately 350 men, women, and children lay dead in the snow. According to American Horse, who testified the next year in Washington about what had happened at Wounded Knee, those who were not killed in the first volley ran in different directions but were shot as they tried to run away. American Horse also testified that after the shooting a call went out from the soldiers that anyone left alive should surrender, and that if they did they would not be harmed; but when some boys came forward they were immediately killed.

During the past hundred years, various accounts of this incident have been presented. On an 1891 U.S. government map showing the location, it was referred to as the "Affair at Wounded Knee." It has been called by government agents "a battle," and by many others "a massacre." The number of Sioux men, women, and children killed has been variously put at about 150, 200, and just over 300. In any case, what happened at Wounded Knee must be seen as a tragedy.

It was a tragedy in the modern sense of the word because so many people, unarmed, and many of them what we would now call "non-combatants" or "civilians," were senselessly killed. But it was also a tragedy in the earlier sense that a flawed government policy led directly to it—a policy in which treaties were broken, promises unkept, and sovereign nations treated like subjugated people. Whatever our view of Wounded Knee, as December 29th approaches we must not forget.

For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in Old Main Building, on the campus of Pembroke State University.

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