

# Sovereignty & Treaties

By,

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# Sovereignty



- What does it mean to you?
- Sovereignty by definition is independence: the right to self-government without interference from outside.
- What is American Indian Sovereignty?...

# Legal Concept of Sovereignty Challenged

- Indian Sovereignty was challenged by the State of Georgia in the 1820s.
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, John Marshall sat on the case.
- Marshall spent lots of time trying to understand the legal part of sovereignty and how it worked

# What Marshall decided

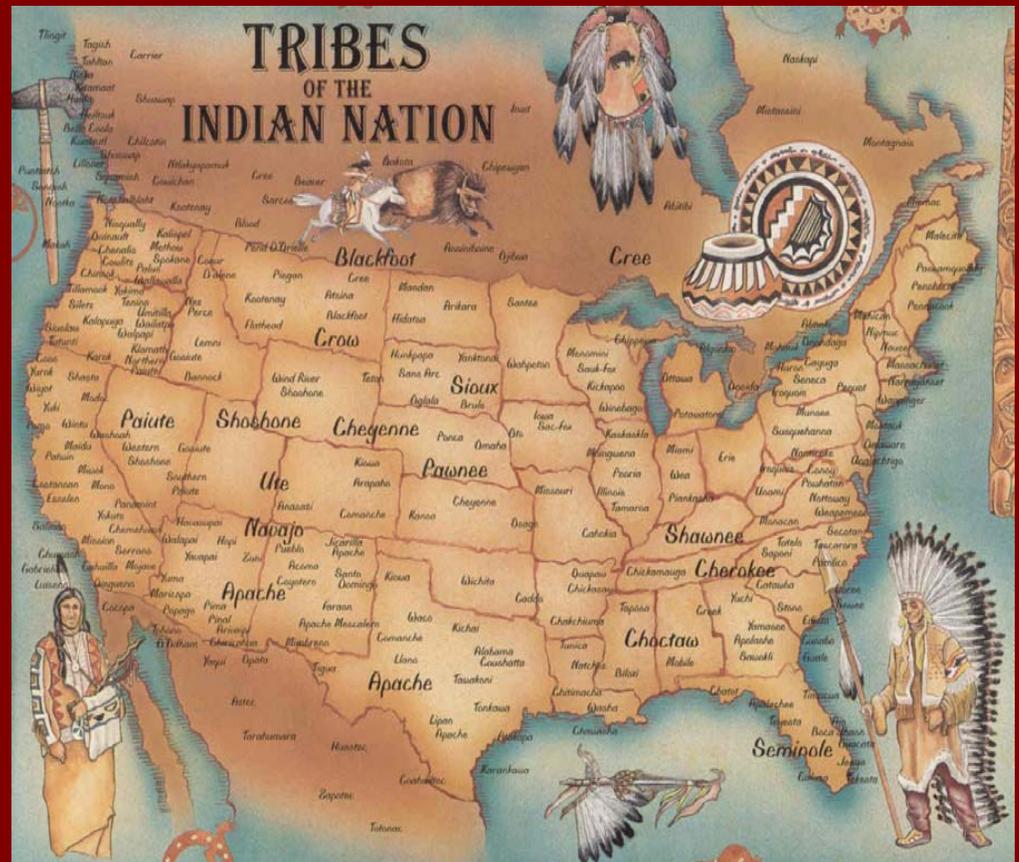
- Sovereignty exists when nations make negotiations and protects their rights and privileges.
- Indian nations granted rights to the US government in treaties
- When the Senate ratified treaties under Article VI (11), Clause 2 of the Constitution are the “supreme law of the land”

# How Marshall's Decisions Affect Tribes Today

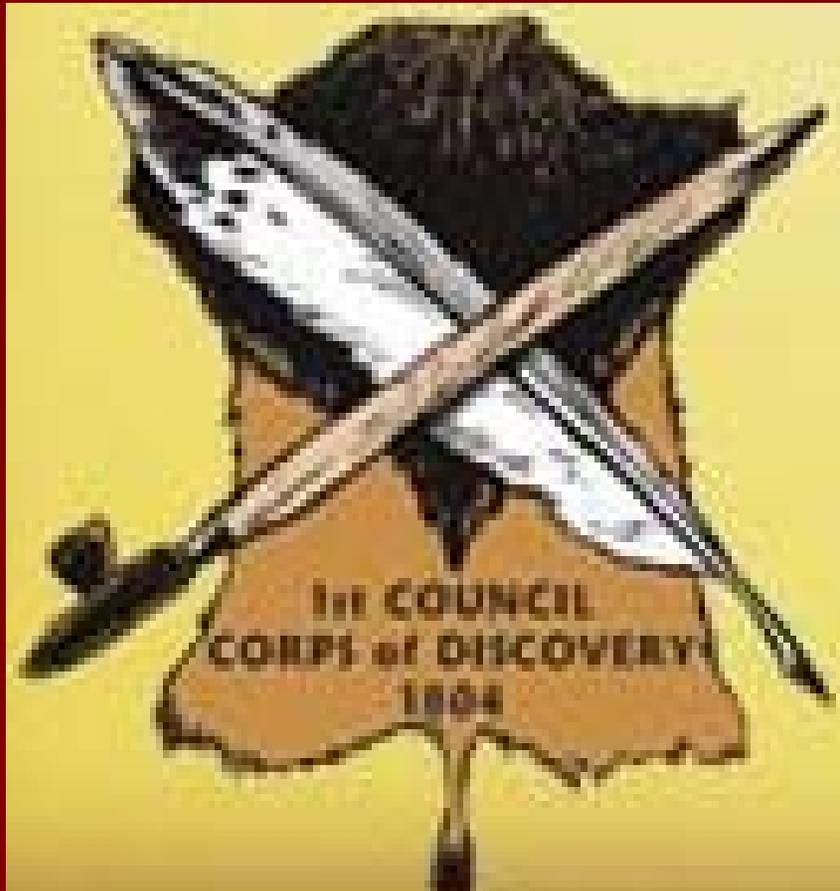
- Other Supreme Court Justices have challenged Marshall's opinion since the decision but have never been able to tear it apart.
- Tribes use Marshall's opinion as a source of power, to re-empower the treaties in court cases that sometimes go as high as the Supreme Court.

# American Indian Sovereignty

- “American Indian Sovereignty to me is Freedom. The freedom to do what I choose to do. What I was made to do on what I was taught and what I know.” –Lee Sekaquaptewa.
- “American Indian Sovereignty to me is Fairness. I expect to be treated fairly, and be allowed to drum, sing, and learn about my culture.” –Tonweya Miller-Young



# American Indian Sovereignty Cont.



- American Indian Sovereignty is the right to govern one's nation without outside interference.
- This means that we have the right to govern ourselves through a tribal council in which most have elected officials and people with the right to vote for what they believe.

# Who Dreamed It Up?

- Sovereignty was here before we were, the plants, animals, land, and water, and so therefore we have to take care of what came before us. It was the Creator who dreamed it up.



# Why Sovereignty Is Important To Me: Stick Games

- The reason why stick games is important to me is because it's part of my culture.
- To play Stick Games you need have to have eleven sticks and four sets of bones.
- Bones with lines are called Female. Bones without lines are Male.
- There has to be at least 2 people on each team, and two teams.

# Why Sovereignty Is Important To Me: Stick Games Cont.

- When you first start the game, the captain's of each team have a male and female bone.
- Throughout the singing, both captains are interchanging the bones between their hands. Finally, they stop and each choose a hand for the other to reveal.
- If they guess most of them right they have an eighty percent chance of winning.

# Why Sovereignty Is Important To Me: Stick Games Cont.

- If the Captain of the first team catches the male bone and the Captain of the second team catches the female bone then the first team wins the kick.
- And the kick is the 11<sup>th</sup> stick. So the team that lost for the kick only starts out with 5 sticks and the team that won the kick starts out with 6 sticks.

# Why Sovereignty Is Important To Me: Stick Games Cont.

- There are four different ways to guess. There is 1; outside, 2, down in the middle, 3; right, and 4; left.
- You have to keep trying to guess for the male bones and if you get them all you win the game.
- but if you end up getting all the female bones then you lose.

# What sovereignty means to me: Education

If you go to school everyday you can get a good education so you have a reason to stay away from people who are into drugs and alcohol. Education is important to me because it can help you to get a good job.

# Education and Sovereignty

Sovereignty allows me to have a good education in tribal schools. In the tribal school I have some Native teachers. It is important to me to have native teachers because they know what I'm going through

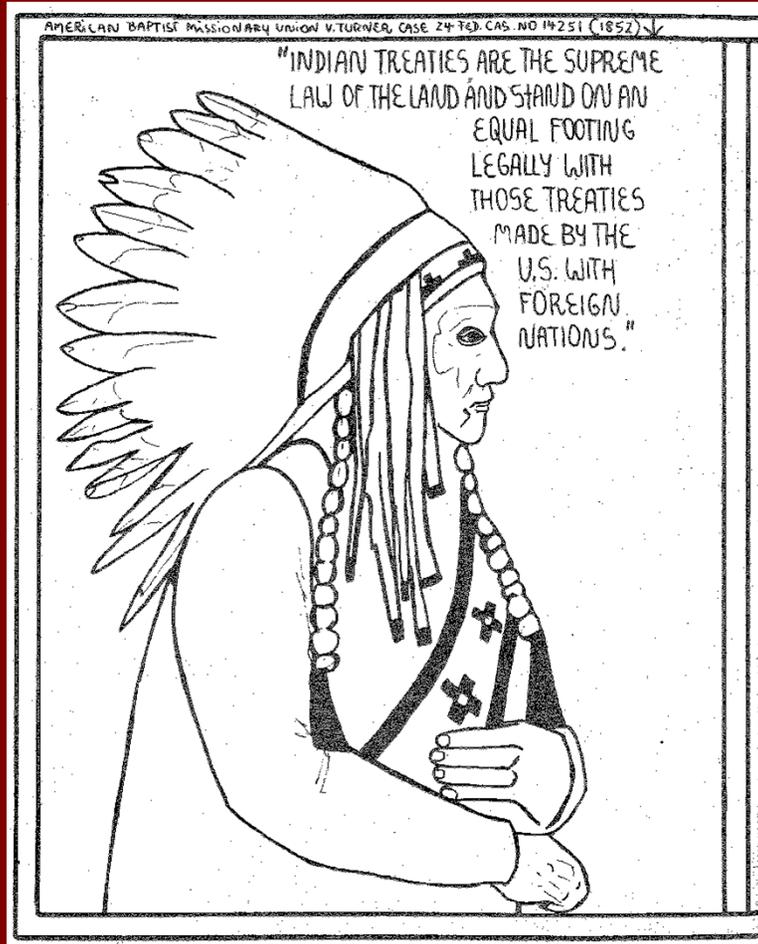
# Staying in School

I was telling one of my teachers that I want to drop out when I turn sixteen.

She told me that when she was in high school she dropped out when she was my age and she said that she wished that she didn't drop out of high school because she didn't have anything to do. None of her friends were around when she dropped out.

Now she's going back to school and she said it's even harder for her, because she has more work to do. Because back in high school she didn't do much work.

# What Makes Native Americans Sovereign?



- The Treaties made with the Government allowed us to maintain our own rights through which we govern ourselves.
- Tribal Government utilizes the needs of the people to make decisions on what to move on such as cultural resources, education, farming, grazing, health, housing, irrigation, recreation, roads, timber, and wildlife management.

# How Sovereignty Relates to Native Drumming and Singing

- Many traditional songs were lost over the years because we were put in schools with teachers that did not understand the Native ways
- Some parents and relatives became too afraid of what would happen to tell their children they were Native, or teach them the old ways
- Many people got in trouble or were beaten for being Native, or doing traditional drumming and singing.



A Native American Hand Drum

# The Treaty of Medicine Creek

- Made in 1854, included Nisqually, Puyallup, Steilacoom, and Squaxin tribes
- The treaty moves the tribes onto a reservation, and secures them farmland, and fishing, hunting, and gathering rights
- They receive a sum of money every year from the government, and are provided a school, blacksmith, carpenter, physician, and farmer
- However, the president has the power to relocate them at any time, and the tribes must acknowledge their dependence on the United States

# How the Treaty Relates to Sovereignty

- The Treaty of Medicine Creek shows that we were not sovereign. The United States moved us to reservations, put Native children in school, and made us dependent on the United States. The U.S. government deprived us of our rights to be sovereign.

# How is the U.S. Constitution the same with Treaties?

The Treaty of 1855 (Yakama)

# How is it similar to the U.S. Constitution?

- Article IV: Compensation for enrolled members for seizure of resources, is similar to Amendment V (...”Compensation for takings) in the Constitution.
- Article V: Build Schools to teach Native Americans industrial trade. Designate a representative like president or chief, is like Article II (election of president and eligibility and circumstances to be president.) in the Constitution
- Article VI: The president may move residents from one place to another on the reservation as the president sees fit at any time, is similar to Amendment V (that he has to have the credentials to seize land) in the Constitution.

# How is it similar to the U.S. Constitution? (Cont.)

- Article VIII: Agreement not to destroy themselves or property, or anyone else. Have to pay for destruction with annuities, No more war between each other, is like Amendment XVIII (Alcohol Prohibition, due to relations with Article IX of the Treaty as well as alcohol itself) in the Constitution.
- Article IX: No Liquor. Guilty will lose annuities, is similar to Amendment XVIII (Liquor Prohibition) in the Constitution.
- Article XI: Agreement/Ratification of the Treaty of 1855 with U.S. and signed tribes, is like Article VII (Ratification, signatures of all people involved) of the Constitution.

# My Feelings and Opinion

- I think that it is awful how the lack of Sovereignty almost caused our culture to be lost
- No one should have to fear for their life just because they are a different race
- I'm glad that I have the chance to learn traditional drumming, singing, and dancing, and more about my cultural history, unlike some Native children many years ago.
- By, Tonweya Miller-Young

# Why is this important to learn?

- This is important to learn because it is taking a broader view of history.
- This will be beneficiary to me to get know who I am and where I came from.
- It's a lot to learn and knowledge is power.
- It will cut-off stereotypes and change wrong information and misinterpretations of many negative portrayals.
- It will also give us a chance of survival of our heritage, our culture, our way of living.
- -Lee Sekaquaptewa

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Tonweya Miller-Young

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