I have always had a respect and sympathy for Native Americans and have taken interest in their problems and plights and claims and efforts to be heard and to gain back property rights and treaty protections that are owed to them. As a Young Gun I got involved in the American Indian Movement at the same time my Mother was working on the Farm Union Claims.

The issues are eerily the same --- the rightful owners displaced at gunpoint under color of law, only one group was red and the other was white. And now we have corporations seeking to displace everyone concerned, based on phony "citizenships" that don't exist.

If we don't wake up and develop both some Street Schmartz and backbone, Russell Means' parting shot, "Welcome to the Reservation!" will come true.

I have some advice and insight that needs to get widely dispersed --- the Romans used the word "tribes" to describe "uncivilized groups of people" who owed "tribute" to Rome.

So guess what? When you claim to be a "Lakota Sioux" or an "Athabascan" or an "Ahtna" or a "Ho-Chunka" or "Navajo"--- you are standing on solid ground and claiming an ancient and honorable estate as a free living one of your own people.

But when you claim to be a "Lakota Sioux Tribal Member" --- or to be part of a "Tribe" ---- you are admitting to be one of those uncivilized people who owe "tribute" ---- taxes and loyalty---- to Rome. Tribal Members are thus all converted into "citizens of the United States" by definition, Paupers and Federal Dependents.

The rats have laid another one of their little semantic traps for people, and eagerly await our stumbling into it, like a fresh cow pie disguised with leaves and dust.

If your Name has been "enrolled" and you are in receipt of "Federal Benefits" of any kind, think twice. This is the same Schtick, slightly different flavor, as the Birth Certificate or Social Security scam.

Like everyone else, you have to think twice to regain control of your name and reclaim your birthright ---- or at least not give away your birthright by calling yourself a "Tribal Member". Pretend you are playing poker, because you are.

There may be some entity called "JOHNNY TWO BLANKETS" enrolled as a Tribal Member, but he isn't you.

You are the only Johnny Two Blankets standing here, and you are a Lakota, a Navajo, a Ute, an Iroquois, a Winnebago, a Cherokee....

This is the same distinction everyone has to make between "US Citizen" and Minnesotan, Wisconsinite, Texan, New Yorker, Virginian....

You get to declare who you are and in what capacity you are acting, and by choosing wisely, you regain your standing as one of the People of this Land.

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