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March 2, 2020

Honorable David N. Hurd
United States District Court Judge
Alexander Pirnie Federal Bldg. and U.S. Courthouse
10 Broad Street
Utica, New York Y 13501

Re; *Cayuga Indian Nation of New York v. Village of Union Springs, et al.*
Case Number: 5:14-cv-01317-DNH-ATB

Dear Judge Hurd:

On behalf of the Mayor of the Village of Union Springs, and the community he represents, we write to convey deep concerns about the recent string of violence in Seneca Falls between warring factions of the Cayuga Nation and fear that violence will spread to the Village of Union Springs. The turmoil within the Cayuga Nation and resort to violent self-help has resulted in public actions that include (according to published reports) the current tribal leadership's overnight use of firearms and bulldozers to destroy buildings and crush internal opposition (February 27)¹ with protests of that action (February 29) turning violent including a ten minute brawl--apparently while state and local law enforcement monitored the situation.² The situation has drawn the attention of not just the national media, but Senator Schumer and the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of New York who decry the violence. The U.S. Attorney's Office issued a formal statement on February 27, 2020 condemning the violence, a copy of which is attached.

The lawless behavior is an affront to the rule of law and instills widespread concern about violence begetting violence. The Village of Union Springs has already experienced violence from internal tribal turmoil spilling into the community. People seeking to intimidate

¹Associated Press, Carolyn Thompson, February 25, 2020, "Indian nation destroys own buildings over leadership dispute, A leadership dispute is roiling the Cayuga Indian Nation in New York "available at <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/indian-nation-destroys-buildings-leadership-dispute-69213147>. "A leadership dispute within the Cayuga Indian Nation took a stunning turn over the weekend when nation leader Clint Halftown sent bulldozers to demolish a working daycare center, store, schoolhouse and other buildings controlled by tribe members who oppose his authority."

² <https://fingerlakes1.com/2020/03/01/tensions-reach-breaking-point-in-seneca-falls-over-cayuga-nation-leadership/>; <https://www.whec.com/news/fallout-after-fight-before-cayuga-press-conference/5660944/>; https://auburnpub.com/news/local/law-enforcement-responds-to-union-springs-after-dueling-cayuga-nation/article_342e8fee-42f5-5662-9958-76de381c4684.html.

Hon. David N. Hurd

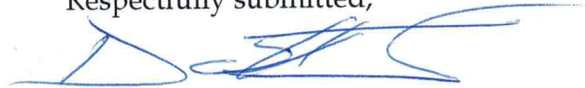
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and quell internal dissent using baseball bats (as in the previous incident in Union Springs) or guns and bulldozers (as was the case in Seneca Falls), put communities on edge and public safety at risk.

The Village asks this Court to resolve the above-captioned matter before the situation deteriorates further.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Tennant', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David H. Tennant

cc: David DeBruin



United States Department of Justice

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
WESTERN DISTRICT *of* NEW YORK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 27, 2020

**Statement Of U.S. Attorney Kennedy Regarding The Cayuga
Nation Of Indians Dispute In Seneca County, NY**

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The United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of New York shares the public's concerns regarding the impact that this internal dispute within the Cayuga Nation of Indians has on the public safety of all members of our community. My Office, together with the Department of Justice—Office of Tribal Justice (DOJ-OTJ), and other DOJ components, is collecting information regarding the pre-dawn events of February 22, 2020, and assessing whether any violations of applicable law occurred. We are engaged in ongoing discussions with Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), regarding both the circumstances giving rise to the incident, the incident itself, and potential responses. In addition, we have requested the assistance of both BIA as well as DOJ's Community Relations Service (CRS) in the dispute. Across the Department of Justice, our paramount objective is the preservation of public safety. We will continue to work with our federal, state, and local partners in pursuit of that goal, as we do all that we can to ensure that all involved exhibit respect not only for applicable law—but for one another as well.

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Topic(s):

Indian Country Law and Justice

Component(s):

USAO - New York, Western

Updated February 27, 2020