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*“To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men.”*

*... Abraham Lincoln*

Dear Editor:

In the March 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of *The Post Standard*, a rather embarrassing hypocrisy was revealed: the American Cancer Society is having its ‘Basket Ball’ at the epi-center of cigarette sales – the Turning Stone Casino! What this revelation illustrates is that, many times, compromises in principles are made in order to achieve some other objective.

The American Cancer Society puts its own financial interest ahead of its principles by, in the words of Coach Boeheim, ‘saving in the neighborhood of \$50,000 by going’ to the Turning Stone for the event - despite the fact that the Tribe is making huge profits from the sale of carcinogens. (180 million cigarettes sold since 1996).

The Cancer Society rationalizes its decision on another front: “We’re not going to get anywhere in the fight against cancer if we ignore certain populations where tobacco use is an issue.” One could easily ask, if the Cancer Society gives a pass to the tribe for being the source of so much cancer causing material, why not give a pass to restaurant and bar owners who think that they should be able to make decisions about the relative air quality in their establishments?

It seems obvious that where money is involved, all other principles take a back seat. The Cancer Society should be ashamed of their decision merely on the grounds that the tribes are taking advantage of smokers every bit as much as ‘big tobacco’ is.

They should also be ashamed to hold their event at a facility that refuses to pay its fair share of sales and property taxes to the governments that “represent” the very people that the tribe is helping to poison.

Spokesman Mark Emery inadvertently stumbled into the truth when he said, “The nation has an incredible commitment to stamp out cancer.” He’s right – the tribe’s commitment is incredible – nobody should believe it. If the tribe really wanted to stamp out cancer, they would get out of the lucrative cigarette sales business.

And if the Cancer Society had as much commitment to principle as they do to PR, they would join the fight to make Gov. Pataki enforce NY State tax laws that require tribes to tax non-Indian customers on all sales.

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