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Maine Indian rights the worst in the country

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• *Maine Indian rights the worst in the country*

To the Editor:

Does Michael L. Lane thoroughly research a subject before he using his pen? Responding to "All bets are off" (*Maine Campus* Feb. 16) Lane has addressed four separate issues in one commentary. This is typical, over-generalized bullshit when it comes to addressing Native American issues.

First, Lane, the recent court appeals rejection of the Passamaquoddy Nation's bid for a casino is not based in illegalities. The 1986 Indian Gaming Rights Act requires Indian Nations, wanting to construct casinos to enter into compacts with states in which their lands are within. In the case of Maine, the state is able to force a non-decision because of the wording of the act. If the state of Maine wanted to enter into a compact with any Indian nation, it could do so. This is how the Penobscot Nation is able to have bingo tournaments.

Second, Lane, when you ascribe the state as "dolling out concessions" you should be careful in your terminology. If you read all the public records surrounding negotiations of the 1980 Land Claims Settlement, you will find that the state was extremely preju-

dicial and uncompromising. The only reason the settlement was accomplished was because the federal government was ordered to intervene on behalf of the Indians. The only thing the state has doled out is a persistent non-recognition of Indian rights. Something of which it tries to infringe upon at every possible opportunity.

Editorial Policy

The editorial pages of *The Maine Campus* are for the free exchange of ideas among members of the university community. **Letters to the editor** should be no longer than 250 words. **Guest columns** should be approximately 600 words. Submissions must include full name, address and phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published without a *compelling* reason. Submissions may be edited for length, taste and libel. Direct inquiries to Michael L. Lane at 581-1269.

Third, with such grandiosity, you announced that Indians in Maine should be held accountable under laws of the state. Well Lane, surprise, surprise, they are. This is expressively written in the settlement known as the Maine Implementing Act. Its inclusion was the only way the state would agree to the settlement (which they had to, along with the Indians and federal government). It seems as though you're under the impression we get some sort of special treatment within this state. For your information Lane, the Passamaquoddys, Penobscots and Houlton Maliseets have less sovereign rights than any Indian Nation in this whole country.

Last, Lane, the Penobscot Nation distributed their land fees to their membership, not the Passamaquoddys. Tell me something, when non-Indians derive money from their land it is called income, but when Indians derive money from their land it is a "concession doled out by the state." Why is it Mr. Lane? Is it our "discrimination motif working again?" Try researching an issue before attacking it – it makes better journalism.

Eric R. Mannl
President American Indians at UMaine