



MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR NINE KILLED IN CHARLESTON SC
DONNA LORING
6/22/2015

I am Donna Loring, Penobscot Nation Tribal Elder.
Thank you Rachel Talbot Ross for inviting me to speak here today.

Chief Kirk Francis of the Penobscot Indian Nation sends his heartfelt condolences to the nine families of the murdered victims and to the Black Communities all over this country.

The Chief is conducting a ceremony for our Veterans at this moment.

I often wonder why we fought in so many wars, answer is we fought to end racism and hatred. We fought for freedom, freedom to live without fear, to worship without being molested or murdered. The sad truth is that none of these wars brought us those rights.

We continue to face genocide and extermination by the taking of our children, the jailing of our people and by the continued senseless killing of our people.

Yes, Black lives matter, Brown lives matter!

A white male who was educated and steeped in hatred murdered nine members of our extended family. He committed a senseless violent hate filled act. Not once, but Nine times. He said he wanted to start a race war. **I have news for him the race war started in 1492!** I haven't been able to stop thinking about this and the deep hatred that he must have had in order to be with these kind and caring people, for a whole hour, in a house of worship, and then to kill them as if they were less than human and their lives insignificant. That mind set must have taken an extensive education in hatred and white supremacy.

I am going to say some things that people will not like but I don't care.

I want to make a point and that is This "The gun" did not commit these murders.... Let me repeat that. "The gun" did not commit these murders! "The gun" was not the cause. The cause and the core of these murders and other murders and genocides that have occurred in this country can be traced to one thing and one thing only. RACISM and that is not an Indian problem that is not a Black problem that is not an Asian problem or Latina Problem that is an AMERICAN PROBLEM and the conversations across this country must address this Problem.

Loring speech cont.

We must not take the focus off racism by arguing gun control, or the meaning of a flag or the use of the N word. It seems that every kind of issue comes up to be taken apart and talked about except the real issue of RACISM. These many issues are not going to change anything just distract us from the real problem. We have some great minds in this Country and yes even here in Maine. We must focus our attention and our resources on addressing this **age old American Problem.**

We live in a different even more dangerous world today for people of color. We cannot go on with business as usual.

Lets stand United together, The Wabanaki Tribes of this State and the Communities of Color. Lets stand together against the terrible enemy Racism. Lets seriously focus and find ways to fight it.

The actress Anna Deavere Smith once said:

“Racism has been for everyone like a horrible, tragic car crash, and we've all been heavily sedated from it. If we don't come into consciousness of this tragedy, there's going to be a violent awakening we don't want. **The question is, can we wake up?**

Again the Penobscot Nation sends its deepest condolences to the families of the nine Black people murdered in Charleston our hearts are heavy and we mourn with you.

We leave you with a **WAKE UP CALL. WAKE UP AND LET US UNITE AND PUT OUR HEARTS AND MINDS TOGETHER TO WORK TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT RACIAL HATRED.**