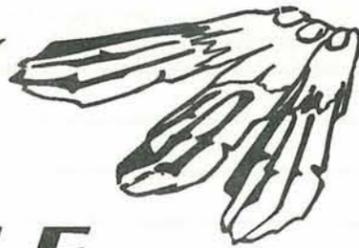


SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin April 1991

LEGAL JOURNAL

The forty-nine people who held out in the Treatment Center in Kanehsatake last summer have been accused of criminal acts and will stand trial in the course of this year. While the majority are Mohawks, several come from other Amerindian nations, including five women from British Columbia. The American lawyer who was with them faces similar charges. Men and women are in approximately equal numbers. All have now been set free on bail, with the exception of Dennis Nicholas who chose to plead guilty and is now serving a sentence of two years less a day in prison.

On Wednesday, September 26, 1990, when they left the Treatment Center, they were arrested and detained at Farnham by the Canadian Army. The women were set free on bail on Friday, September 28, and the men a week later. However, six among them were given in custody to the Sûreté du Québec and remained incarcerated, for they were considered dangerous. One was released shortly before Christmas, two others in March 1991 and the remaining two, on April 2, 1991. Apparently, they are no longer dangerous... In any case, no reasons have been given for their being considered more dangerous than their fellows.

On February 2, 1991, forty-one of the accused appeared in court for their preliminary hearing. They learned that they were to be subjected to a special procedure, direct indictment, which can only be or-

dered by the Minister of Justice, and which was requested by the Crown prosecutors. This procedure bypasses the preliminary hearing. The last time it was used was at the trial of members of the FLQ. To top off this injustice, they learned at the same time that their lawyers would no longer represent them, as there was no money to pay them.

At another hearing on February 28, the hundred or so accusations they face were presented, principally the following: participation in a riot, hindering the police in the execution of their duties, aggression, unauthorized possession of weapons and proffering death threats. The defendants refused to plead guilty or not guilty because they contest the jurisdiction of the Court (Québec Superior Court) in this matter. The judge recorded a plea of not guilty for them, with trial by judge and jury.

Three other defendants, Ronald Cross, Gordon Lazore and Roger Lazore, appeared on April 8. They face fifty-nine charges, essentially the same as those mentioned above. If found guilty, they risk very long prison terms.

But before the trials per se can begin, the prosecutors and defence lawyers must argue a number of preliminary motions submitted by both parties, but mainly by the defence, concerning: 1) the language that will be used during the trial - the prosecutors wish to present their case in French, which the defendants

do not understand; 2) the direct indictment, which is contested on procedural grounds by the Defence; 3) the legality of oaths sworn in accordance with Amerindian, rather than Judeo-Christian, traditions; 4) the jurisdiction of the Court, which is contested by the defendants; 5) the difficulty of finding an impartial jury in this case; 6) the legitimacy of the Army's presence last summer, as the Government had not convened Parliament as it ought to have; and, finally, 7) the withdrawal of all accusations.

The judge must decide on each of these motions. The Court will sit every working day, and will probably take four to six weeks to reach a decision. The trial could last three to four months. The defence lawyers are Owen Young from Ontario, Julio Peris and James O'Reilley, a specialist in Native issues who was a negociator for the James Bay Cree.

Two other defendants, Randy Horn and his wife, will have their preliminary hearing in April and three adolescents will stand trial in May before the Tribunal de la jeunesse. All have pleaded, or will plead, not guilty.

As you can see, this case is infinitely complex, and of great importance. We hope that the Mohawks, whose rights have been trodden upon for so many years, will find justice. Unfortunately, legal proceedings have scarcely begun and already this is doubtful.

The MacKenzie Institute and the Warriors TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

On April 3rd major news organizations accorded large headlines to accusations which had been made a day earlier by a certain MacKenzie Institute in regard to The Warrior Society. At that time a Native journalist described the Warriors as "a group of terrorists linked to important organized crime networks", an accusation which the Institute had already published within the pages of its pamphlet entitled *The Legacy of Oka*.

While the media reported these accusations, they furnished no proof for the Institute's claims, nor did they shed any light on the obvious question of who and what this accusing body is. Last February 21st, NDP Member of Parliament Robert E. Skelly did however present a highly revealing portrait of them.

Skelly noted that this so-called Institute has close ties with the National Citizen's Coalition (NCC), an extreme rightwing group (at least in English Canada). The two organizations share some of the same directors, one of whom - David Somerville - is the star spokesperson of the NCC.

Financed by corporations such as Bata Shoes (itself so often denounced for its racist conduct in South Africa), the NCC has gained an unseemly reputation among the thinking public for its opposition to, among other things: Canada's accepting Third World immigrants and most particularly South Asian 'Boat People'; salary equity for women; the public financing of feminist organizations (it supports the rightwing group REAL Women); and the right to strike. (They do however support Canada's partici-

pation in the American Star Wars project.) The list goes on and on and the Institute is even reputed to have links with the Prime Minister's Office.

Other colorful directors of the MacKenzie Institute include several former members of the Canadian military and Moris Tugwell, an expert in propaganda and psychological warfare from the British Army. He was quite active in Northern Ireland at the very time when Amnesty International was denouncing the various forms of torture practiced by the British Army under Mrs. Thatcher's orders. Tugwell and the University of New Brunswick's Centre for the Study of Conflict, of which he is the director, often find themselves in the employ of the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP and various police organizations across Canada, all in the name of fighting "anti-terrorist activities".

According to Skelly, Tugwell and company were employed by the government last summer in Kanehsatake and Kahnawake.

When one is aware of these connections which are at the very least questionable, one is better able to understand the MacKenzie Institute's attack on The Warriors and why their accusations were immediately followed by similar ones from the RCMP. Does this not constitute a concerted campaign, the target of which is not only The Warrior's Society, but which seeks to fundamentally denigrate the whole of the Mohawk Nation and to prepare the way for further army intervention in Kanehsatake, Akwesasne and Kahnawake.

A STRUGGLE FOR THE LAND

«If what you call the «Oka Crisis» had not happened, that is to say, if we had not struggled so hard to protect our land and our lives — if we had not been so patient under the stress of so great and armed assault — how many of us now here before you would be dead? And would you have buried us yourselves under your mountains of propaganda, crying even louder than you do now that we are but «criminals» and «terrorists», as you enshrined your rampaging S.Q. hoodlums as some sort of modern day heroes?

This was no Wounded Knee. We do not need to learn the same lesson twice.»

Those are the words of Kanehsatake's Longhouse People of the Pines in Ottawa on March 6th, when they presented a brief to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, whose members were conducting an *unofficial* inquiry into the events of last summer. The People of The Pines also pointed out that archeological artifacts attest to Mohawk presence on this same land some 1000 years B.C., well before the arrival of Europeans on these shores and certainly long before the Sulpicians took it upon themselves to found a mission...for Natives!

Among the Mohawks speaking in Ottawa were Ellen Gabriel and Walter David Sr. (the latter has been Secretary of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy Council of Kanehsatake since 1965). They informed the Committee that their sole reason for appearing in Ottawa was to affirm their sovereignty, their rights and their demands, not to render an accounting of their actions.

Rather, they demanded an accounting from the Members of Parliament. Among the questions which they addressed to the Committee were ones which - if ever answered - would shed embarrassing light on the events of 1990.

— Why have the Canadian and Quebec governments so steadfastly refused to hold an independent public inquiry?..

— Does Hydro-Quebec have plans to run high power lines through Kanehsatake, Akwesasne and Kahnawake as part of its James Bay II project?

— Who gave the order to the Sûreté du Québec SWAT team to attack on July 11th and why was the Canadian Army put on alert as of July 10th?

One could safely bet an even dollar that these questions will remain long unanswered.

Upcoming Activities

NATIVE FILM FESTIVAL

From April 18th to 21st, NFB Theater, Complexe Guy-Favreau. Information : 283-8229.

EARTH DAY

April 23rd, at 7:00 PM, NFB show in the Canadian Center of Architecture, 1920, Baile St., «Blockade : Algonquins defend the forest» et «Hunters and Bombers». Information : 283-4755.

MODERN NATIVE RESISTANCE : AN HISTORICAL RETROSPECTIVE

Lecture series, 7:30 - 9:30 PM : April 30: «Understanding the human dynamics of conflict»; May 7 «Where do we go from here?». YMCA Community Centre, 94 Douglas Shand, Pointe-Claire. Inf. : Bobi 697-8132.

IN YOUR NOTEBOOK

Friday, June 7th, at 7:30 PM, Public meeting with natives spokespersons. More information in the next edition of the bulletin...

THE REGROUPEMENT

The Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones is a coalition which came into being on July 11th, 1990 following the SQ invasion of Kanehsatake. For those of us who gathered in front of the SQ building in Montreal on July 12th, it was clear that the government and its police were not acting in our name. It was also clear that it was imperative to let the non-native population and especially Natives themselves know that an intolerable attack had been ordered against Natives who were already subject to a great injustice, and that there was no question of our remaining passive.

During the summer and autumn the Regroupement organized several activities to demonstrate our solidarity. In November, we decided to become a permanent organization, the objectives of which would be to establish a solidarity network with all Aboriginal Nations, the Mohawk Nation being our immediate priority.

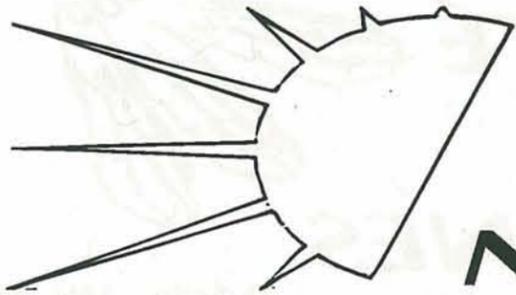
The Regroupement also decided to launch a campaign to raise money for the Mohawk defense fund, as those who were arrested and who are awaiting trial have enormous legal costs to cover. A benefit concert organized in December netted 2,000\$ for the fund.

For the coming months, the Regroupement plan to keep in touch with Mohawks National, produce a monthly bulletin to inform people and organize a public meeting for early June, etc.

The Regroupement is composed of individuals from all walks of life, both Anglophones and Francophones. If you wish to become a member, complete and return the coupon below.

Name : _____
Address : _____
Postal Code : _____
Telephone : _____

Mail to with \$5,00 : Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones, 1601, DeLorimier, Mtl, Qué., H2K 4M5



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin May 1991

WHY IS SIDDON IN SUCH A HURRY?

The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Tom Siddon, has decided to cut short: on May 31st, the Mohawks of Kanehsatake plebiscite which will settle the following question in a: "Which of the following two methods do you wish to be used to select the governing council of the Kanesatake Mohawk Band: 1— Election, by members of the Kanesatake Mohawk Band; or 2— Selection and appointment of the Grand Chief and Chiefs by the Six Nations Traditional Hereditary Clan Mothers".

Siddon's goal is crystal clear: to find "partners" in order to arrive at a "negotiated settlement" on the explosive land problem in Kanehsatake. It has become obvious for Siddon that the Six Nations Confederacy Hereditary Council of Chiefs can no longer play this role, given the extent in which they discredited themselves last summer. With the help of Lise Bourgault, MP for Argenteuil, Siddon has recently turned to the Mohawk Coalition of Kanehsatake, which claims to have gathered 400 names on a petition calling for the election of the Band Council through universal suffrage. Strangely, Ottawa has always refused to show this petition...

However Siddon's plan might not go easy. The People of the Pines' Longhouse, which have been at the very heart of the struggle for land and for the recognition of Mohawk sovereignty in Kanehsatake, have

taken the stand that this referendum represents a violation of the **Two-Row Wampum**, which regulates the relations of the Iroquois nations with the peoples who came from Europe since 1650.

According to this treaty, Haudenosaunee and Canadians are travelling down the same river, each in their own boat, with their own laws and customs, and "neither should try to steer the other's boat". But this is exactly what Ottawa is doing by trying to determine what kind of government the Kanehsatake community should have. The People of the Pines' Longhouse also considers that the Coalition stepped into the Canadian government's vessel, when it accepted a \$200,000 subsidy from Ottawa to achieve its goals.

Time is what is required!

Siddon cited the lack of leadership and the divisions within the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake to justify his intervention. In so doing, he ignores the fundamental fact that it is the federal government which is chiefly responsible for the present situation. In its efforts to impose the Indian Act at the end of the 19th century, Ottawa has brutally attempted to destroy the traditional forms of government which had ensured the unity and cohesion of Haudenosaunee nations for centuries.

It was only in 1964 that a Longhouse

was permitted to reappear publicly in Kanehsatake. Five years later, a group of 77 Mohawks decided to change the method for selecting the Band Council, reverting back to a so-called traditional form which was a hybrid mixture which satisfied no one. In fact, the selection of chiefs by filiation, or heredity, is not a provision of the Constitution of the Iroquois Confederacy which calls for all decisions to be based on a rigorous democratic process and the search of a consensus, which was obviously not the case in Kanehsatake.

Somehow the Department, and then the Ministry of Indian Affairs, managed to accept this imitation of traditional government while refusing any recognition of the real Longhouse. And now they claim it is urgent to change the situation, to bring it in line with the system prevailing in the other "Indian bands in Canada", to use the government's ethnocentric terminology.

On the contrary, for the women and men of the Longhouse, **what is required to solve the present problem is time, time to heal the wounds from the summer of 1990, time to rebuild the unity of the Mohawks of Kanehsatake...**

The Canadian government should grant them this time, instead of mingling in the internal affairs of the Mohawks and trying to force quick changes within their community. This would imply the imposition of a moratorium, which has been repeatedly called for, to prevent any development project on the part of the governments, the town of Oka or private developers, on the lands on which the Mohawks want to have their rights recognized.

The Kanehsatake community is far from reassured by the federal government's hurry in negotiating land which it bought last summer from the town of Oka for a price \$1.3 millions, knowing that the city had acquired them only two days earlier at a cost of \$50,000... This land is actually a swamp located behind the pine forest and represents only a part of the total land claim. But worse yet, Ottawa is not even willing to relinquish its ownership of this land, which it wants to retain supposedly for "their use and benefit".

Many Mohawks also believe that the federal government wants to bring back its own reunification project for the lands of Kanehsatake. This would open the door for the recognition of a reserve status, which has already been rejected by the vast majority of the community because it was dangerously narrowing down their territorial demands.

The Mohawks of Kanehsatake are justifiably afraid of more of their pines being cut down, by other plans to expand the golf course, such as condo projects, and other attempts to rob their ancestral land. And Siddon's plebiscite will certainly not cause them to relax their vigilance.

LEGAL UPDATE

The trial of Ronald Cross, Gordon Lazore and Roger Lazore has begun in St. Jerome. Seven preliminary motions must be argued before any witnesses are heard.

The first of these motions, submitted by Crown prosecutors, deals with the language of the proceedings. It has already been debated and two conflicting rulings have been handed down by different judges — Judge Greenberg, who is presiding at the Cross-Lazore trial, and Judge Tannenbaum, who will preside at the trial of 41 people charged in connection with the siege of Kanehsatake. The latter is due to begin in September.

Defence lawyers have appealed the Greenberg ruling, which authorizes equal use of English and French during the hearings. They have also requested that hearings be suspended

until the appeal court reaches a decision. The outcome of these applications should be known some time in May.

The Kanawake community also faces criminal charges arising from altercations between Mohawks and soldiers at the Mercier bridge barricades, and from the events that occurred on Tekakwitha island on September 18th and in the village on January 8th.

Of the twenty or so people who are facing charges, five appeared before a Longueuil court on May 3rd. Their trial has been deferred until September 6th.

It's not over yet — the community is expecting 200 more warrants for arrests. In other words, the witch hunt is on. Meanwhile, the Court has asked people who threw stones in Ville Lasalle to stop being naughty.

Upcoming Activities

PUBLIC MEETING

ONE YEAR SINCE OKA :

WHAT IS THE NATIVE'S SITUATION

Speakers :

From the Mohawks

- Joe Deom
- Deborah Etienne
- Kahn-Tineta Horn

From Lac Barrière' Algonquins

- Michel Thusky

From the Attikamek-Montagnais Council

- René Simon (to be confirm)

From the Crees Grand Council

- Matthew Mukash (to be confirm)

- Michel Chartrand

Friday, June 7th, 7:30pm

Centre St-Pierre

1212 Panet St. • Room 100 • Montréal • (metro Beaudry)

Organised by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones

Information : (514) 499-0314

THE AKWEKS FUND

The Mohawks who have been charged following this summer's events have set up a team to coordinate their legal defense.

Three of them have been appointed to coordinate the Fund: Akwesasne's Lorne Okes, Kanawake's Joe Deom and Joe David from Kanehsatake. They will be supported by a large group coming from all three communities to manage the Fund, carry out legal work such as legal research and tactics, develop public relation work, etc.

A new defense fund has been created. The Akweks Fund (Akweks is eagle in Mohawk) will be used only to cover legal costs incurred by the accused who were in the Treatment Center (the 41 and the 3), those who have been arrested at some of the S.Q./Army checkpoints, or at one of the barricades.

Basically those who, in one way or another, stood up to defend the territory. The Funds already existing in the three communities are now going to be used for local purposes.

Donations to the Akweks Fund will be credited to an account managed by the Canadian Federation of rights and liberties based in Ottawa. This organisation has been chosen because of its high reputation which should reassure the public concerning the Fund's management.

You can support the Akweks Fund by sending a cheque or money order to :

The Akweks Fund
Canadian Federation
of rights and liberties
323 Chapel St.
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7Z2
Phone : (613) 235-8978

Become a member of the regroupement

Name : _____

Address : _____

Postal Code : _____

Telephone : _____

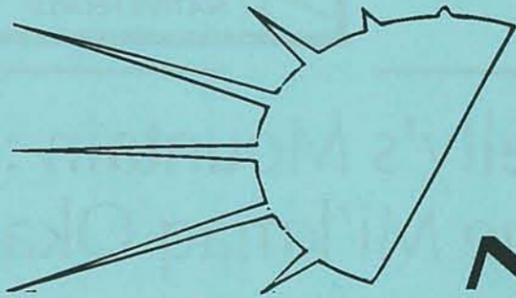
Mail to with \$5.00 : Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones, 1265, rue Berri, # 290, Montréal, Québec, H2L 4X4.

POW WOW MOHAWK

July 13 to 14 at Kanawake and about July 11th at Kanehsatake. To underline last summer events, Kanehsatake and Kanawake communities will hold Pow Wows. More informations in the next bulletin issue.

SEMINARS AND WORKSHOP

May 24 and 25 : White Justice/ Native Justice. May 31 to June second, Environment, Development and Native Nations. Organised by l'Institut Interculturel de Montréal. Inscription and information (514) 288-7229.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 3-4 June-July 1991

A DORMANT ANGER

■ "There's an anger which is dormant with the Native peoples, and we don't know what might happen." That's how Deborah Etienne put it, June 7th, during an evening conference organized by the Regroupement. The evening marked the first anniversary of the Oka Crisis and was held before a large audience of nearly 350. The audience was privileged sharing important moments of solidarity and political clarity which were very timely in the present climate of divi-

which now prevails in her community. A year later nothing has changed. The government continues to apply its racist policies. For the Mohawks, a lot of frustration and resentment has built up because of unkept promises. "The government's objective is an objective of genocide," she stated, "and that has hurt us. Nonetheless, we have achieved unity; however, Minister Siddon has tried everything to divide us — by refusing, for example, to deal with the Longhouse

René Simon, Matthew Mukash and Joe Deom reminded us of the political stakes of the natives' struggles in Canada.

René Simon warned the governments in a direct manner. "We are proud people who consider themselves master in their own land. As long as the governments will consider native peoples as a minority, as long as they will refuse us the right to self-determination, to our resources and to our lands,



From left to right : Deborah Etienne, Michel Thusky, Matthew Mukash, Kahn-Tineta Horn, Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, François Saillant, René Simon et Joe Deom

sion and denial of democratic rights. Michel Thusky, an Algonquin from Lac Barrière, Deborah Etienne of Kanehsatake, René Simon of the Attikamek-Montagnais Council, Kahn-Tineta Horn of Kahnawake, Matthew Mukash of the Grand Council of the Crees and Joe Deom of Kahnawake all explained this dormant anger and stated how, a year after Oka, it is still being fueled by the contempt, hatred and racism of the government of Canada.

Michel Thusky presented the demands of the Lac Barrières' Algonquins who are stuck — like many other bands across the country — with pulp and paper companies which walk hand in hand with the governments.

Deborah Etienne of the Kanehsatake Longhouse stressed the situation

representatives and by choosing himself who was going to represent us."

Deborah Etienne denounced the strip searching of young girls as well as the suffocating racism experienced by the young generation. She also recalled the importance of support by outside groups in "the process of community healing". Sweeping aside the simple slander which makes of each native a 'criminal' or a 'terrorist', she explained why the Mohawks refuse to lump all Québécois together : "We were taught to look at people from the inside and not from the outside." She concluded: "The people of Kanehsatake are standing up for their right to exist, to express themselves and for their right to grow".

there will be no easing of tension between our peoples."

The struggle of the Cree concerning James Bay, whose international repercussion are becoming more apparent every day, also raises the issue of the right to self-determination on territories which Québec inherited only in 1912 following a federal decision; however, Québec has now taken that property as its own, and is preparing it with bulldozers as it sees fit. For Matthew Mukash, "the Crees are also fighting for the future generations."

Kahn-Tineta Horn, a Mohawk activist for more than 20 years, delivered an unforgettable lesson in solidarity. Recalling the context of her people's struggle over the last thirty years, up until last summer's entrenchment episode in the treatment centre, she conveyed the key lessons of last year's events. "We discovered who the enemy was. For a long time, we believed it to be the non-natives, the Whites. The crisis showed that this was untrue. The non-natives, like the natives, were bullied by those who govern the country. Our enemy is the state, the bureaucratic structure, the governments which attempt to divide us. Oka had to happen. Everything had to come out, so that Canadians could know and so that we could know who our enemy is. The Canadians will never be free as long as native peoples are not free."

Referring to next Fall's trial in which she herself is involved, Kahn-Tineta Horn underlined that this could not be a fair trial because the system is so deeply biased. "I would like," she added "that all of you here be our jury!" We would also like that.

The spirit of international solidarity of the Regroupement's evening was heightened by the short speech of Father Mkhatchwa, African National Congress representative, by Madame Simone Monet-Chartrand's words of support and by the presence in the auditorium of Erythrean and Palestinian activists.

Saving Great Whale !

■ The main installation of the Great Whale River project will be located 25 miles north of Whapmagoostui. Living in this community, Matthew Mukash, Community Liaison Officer of Grand Council of the Cree for Whapmagoostui, states that it will have a considerable impact on their living conditions. "There is going to be 4 400km² underwater including the lakes and with that it is going to destroy most of the traplines and the hunting areas where our people have been hunting for the last 5 000 years. The area that is going to be flooded is probably the most productive area where wildlife reproduces." Furthermore, he dreads the impact the construction of roads will have on the surrounding nature, and the social equilibrium of his community.

"In the areas where you have access roads coming in there's a lot of problems with people coming in with drugs and alcohol, and in those communities now the suicide rates are very high among the youth. There's a lot of impacts like that that we don't agree with and we feel will hurt our people a lot in the future."

Legal Recourse

"We have instigated several court cases against Hydro-Québec, the government of Québec and the federal government, in the areas of jurisdiction and environmental impact assessments. The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreements signed in 1975 set out clear guidelines as to how the assessment should be done for future projects. All the parties involved, except the Cree and Inuit, have been trying to avoid following the guidelines and it is for those reasons that we brought those parties to court."

For Matthew Mukash, the future greatly depends on the decisions rendered by the judges, but even more so on the governments' reactions to those decisions. "There's a possibility that no matter what the courts say Québec will still want to go ahead because it claims it has full jurisdiction within the province. It is very important to watch because we suspect that the Bourassa government will ask the federal government not to be hard on the province as far as impact assessments are concerned, and the Québec government can use it as a bargaining tool to bring Québec into Canada. Whatever happens, the politics of all this may play a major role in what the outcome will be."

Unanimous opposition

Matthew Mukash explains, "In March, 1989, the Cree Nation as a whole decided to oppose any further development in the area because right after the commissioning of the generating station at La Grande, as soon as the government was able to bring in the power from La Grande, there was a lack of interest on the part of the federal and provincial governments to implement the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Ever since then we've been struggling to get them to

defend some of the establishments that were created under the Agreement: the Health Board, the School Boards and other agencies. Even the programs they promised to deliver to us under the Agreement were not properly delivered, if at all.

"The biggest problem is that of



Matthew Mukash

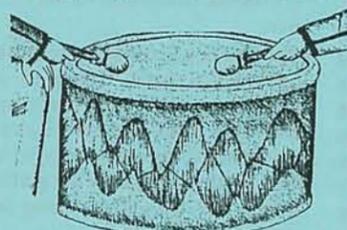
mercury in the reservoirs. We found out that Hydro-Québec had never foreseen the problem with the mercury when they claimed to have done studies before that. We have a serious question with regard to Hydro-Québec's studies. Because of that the Cree Nation in 1989 made a decision to oppose any further development of the project and in the subsequent general assembly of 1990 passed a resolution reaffirming the opposition to all the projects. We know that Hydro-Québec has said that there is only one or two communities opposing it but that is not true. We have general assembly resolutions that indicate that the whole Cree Nation is opposed to the project."

What they expect from the Québécois population

"What needs to be done is that the support has to be visible. We also have to remember that what Hydro-Québec does it is doing in the name of the Québec people. We have to remember that Hydro-Québec is owned by the province which means that shareholders are the people of Québec. Already we have seen deals in regard to the secret aluminum contracts in which the Québec people are the losers in these deals. I think it's important for the people of Québec to start asking questions why these things happen, why they subsidize these aluminum companies. These companies don't create jobs, they're multinationals that do nothing significant except pollute the St. Lawrence River and Québec soil! It is for these reasons that we feel Québec people should support us. We are not only fighting because we're native, but we are people in Québec. Hydro-Québec says the Québec people are going to pay very low rates — this might be true but we believe one way or another, either through taxes or pensions Québec people end up paying the debt that Hydro-Québec has created. So there are a lot of reasons why Québécois should stand up against all this meaningless development."

POW WOW

AT KANEHSATAKE AND KAHNAWAKE



- SINGING
- DANCING
- CEREMONIES
- CRAFT, etc.

In Kanehsatake
July 11-12-13-14
Information :
(514) 479-8321

In Kahnawake
July 13-14
Information :
(514) 638-0880

THANKS

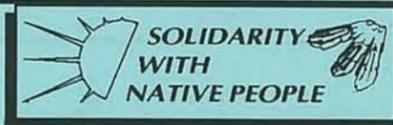
■ The Regroupement thanks all those who did the simultaneous translation for the June 7th evening, especially the members of Traducteurs sans frontières.

Thanks also to those who helped in the organisation of the evening.

READING

■ The last edition of Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec was dedicated to the Mohawks. Even if a bit costly (approx. 19.00\$) this publication gives very good background about the Mohawks Nation with a focus on Kanehsatake. Information : (514) 277-6178.

WHAT KIND OF SOLIDARITY ?



Excerpt from a speech made on behalf of the Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones on June 7th

A year has gone by since Oka. One might have hoped that a crisis of this magnitude would have prompted citizens of Quebec and Canada to ask some serious questions, not only about their relations with the First Nations, but also about the kind of society in which they themselves want to live.

Do they want a society that denies native people a right they claim for themselves — the right freely to choose their own future?

Do they want a society that is willing to send the Sûreté du Québec, the RCMP and the army to invade a territory, terrorize its inhabitants, deprive them of basic rights and block the movement of food and medical supplies — and all this to ensure the expansion of a golf course and carry out the wishes of a small local élite?

Do they want a society that gives racism free rein? A society in which people like Yvon Poitras and Gilles Proulx are seen by many as national heroes, and in which the law — administering what passes for justice — lets the stone-throwers of Ville LaSalle go free so that they can enlist in the Canadian Army?

Unfortunately, it is quite clear today that these questions have not been asked. In fact, the process of questioning has been replaced by what we might call a process of collective elimination of guilt or responsibility.

Oka is somebody else's fault

The best example of this attitude is offered by Robin Philpot's book, *Oka: Le dernier alibi du Canada anglais* (the title translates as Oka: English Canada's Ultimate Alibi). The book's thesis is easily summarized: "Thank God, Oka was an English plot. What a relief—the Mohawks weren't fighting to defend their territory and assert their sovereignty—they were fighting for bingos, casinos and cigarette smuggling. And aren't native people even worse off in the rest of

Canada?" No need to probe deeper—we can go back to being oppressed, and we like that a lot better than playing the part of the oppressor.

Worst of all, even in supposedly progressive circles, there have been people to take up these reductive "nationalist" arguments. July 11th is wiped out, let's get back to June 25th. Mud was thrown at the fleur-de-lys: never mind, it's all been washed off.

The reverse and equally feeble argument is to be found in English Canada. Oka is the sole responsibility of Quebec society; Oka proves that the only "distinct" feature of this society is the way it treats—or rather mistreats—native people.

Forget the Indian Act that inspired the structures of apartheid in South Africa. Forget the dogs set, last fall, on native demonstrators as they blocked roads in British Columbia. Forget how Peigan activist Milton Born With a Tooth of the Lonefighters' Society was jailed last fall for daring to oppose a hydroelectric project on the Oldman River in Alberta. Forget the manner in which the Canadian government has always dealt with native peoples' claims, including at Kanehsatake. Forget the government's attitude throughout the Oka crisis itself.

On both sides of the Ottawa River, we are now demonstrating that we are only capable of perceiving native people's reality through the prism of our own national concerns—whether Québécois or Canadian—and our idea of what we call progress.

In this perspective, native people are simply obstacles: obstacles to our future as a nation, obstacles to economic development, obstacles to job creation. The QFL recently offered one of the most telling illustrations of this attitude when it joined the Conseil du patronat and the Association des manufacturiers in pressing the Quebec government to go ahead with the Grande-Baleine project, even claiming that this project would benefit native people and the environment!

Street solidarity

Fortunately, some individuals and groups reached a different understanding of the events of Kanehsatake and Kahnawake. The Regroupement de solidarité avec les autochtones is one such group. Since its creation on July 12th, the day after the invasion of Kanehsatake, the group has used its modest resources to try and gain wider support for the First Nations' struggles and claims, and especially for the affirmation of their national sovereignty.

The Regroupement chose to express this solidarity in the streets because we believed—we still believe—that it is necessary to confront directly, and in the most disturbing way possible, governments that claim to be acting on our behalf as they attempt to crush native people.

In carrying out this work, the Regroupement is actuated not by charity, guilt, a troubled conscience or faddishness, but by solidarity. We have a lot to learn from the First Nations, and in many cases, our interests coincide with theirs. It's in our interest to oppose the destruction of earth, air and water. It's in our interest to defend the national freedoms of all nations. It's in our interest to modify our economy so that instead of being completely subservient to the profits of a privileged minority and focusing on destructive megaprojects like the James Bay complex, it might answer basic needs for decent incomes, housing, health and education. It's in our interest to institute radical change in our society.

To develop this solidarity, we ask you to join the Regroupement, to support it financially, and to be an active participant in its undertakings.

Since last summer, the Regroupement has focused on developing solidarity with Mohawk political prisoners, for we believe that the only crime committed by Mohawk Warriors, and others who were arrested on September 26th, is to have defended their rights, their

Kelly's Mountain : The Mi'kmaq Oka

During the events of the Native crisis last summer, 200 or so Mi'kmaq made the journey to Oka to give support to their Mohawk brothers and sisters. Two of them stayed in the treatment centre until the final day. This summer, the Mi'kmaq are involved in a conflict on their home turf that, like many other trouble spots in the First Nations communities across the country, could lead to direct confrontation.

For the Mi'kmaq of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Kelly's Mountain, the site of the current conflict, is sacred ground. According to legend, a cave on Kelly's Mountain is the final resting place of the Mi'kmaq deity GLOOSCAP. Prophecy has it that it is from this site that he will one day return. The Mi'kmaq also use the mountain and surrounding area to harvest fish, flora, fauna and other wildlife.

Kelly Rock Limited, a mining company, has other plans for the mountain. They propose to construct and operate a granite quarry which would extract approximately 5.4 million tons of rock per year for a period of 20 to 40 years. The proposal includes the quarry, production facilities, storage and administration facilities and a marine shipping terminal to transport the product to market.

The Mi'kmaq, in clear opposition to the project, state that the granite quarry would destroy the land. In order to determine the validity of the claims made by each party, the Nova Scotia and federal governments announced the creation of a federal-provincial environmental review panel last March. The panel will examine, comment and report on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the proposed

granite quarry.

The Union of Nova Scotia Indians, in a written submission to the panel, claims that the Kelly's Mountain area not only holds spiritual interest and practical use for the Mi'kmaq, but represents existing aboriginal land rights. They also believe that construction of a granite quarry on Kelly's Mountain would have a negative impact on aboriginal fisheries on the nearby Bras d'Or Lakes. Four Mi'kmaq communities — Bakasoni, Whycomomagh, Wagmatcook and Chapel Island — are based on the shores of the Bras d'Or Lakes.

Activist Sulian Herney, a Mi'kmaq traditionalist who made the trek to Oka last summer, also addressed the panel. He warned that his group of Mi'kmaq traditionalists are ready to occupy and defend the site from development if the project cannot otherwise be stopped. Herney said he does not look forward to an outright occupation of the site, but feels that the mountain represents what little is left of Mi'kmaq culture and therefore must be preserved at all costs.

As the environmental review hearings take place across Cape Breton Island, the Mi'kmaq are critical of the absence of native participation on the panel and believe they have not had enough input into guidelines identifying community concerns and sensitivities.

In the meantime, many wonder if Sulian Herney and the Mi'kmaq traditionalists will not put into practice what they saw in Oka last summer, and if this summer it will be the Mi'kmaq who will require the support of their fellow natives and other concerned citizens.

territory and their sovereignty. We are also convinced that through these legal proceedings, the State is seeking to put the entire Mohawk nation and all other native peoples on trial.

Solidarity with native peoples must become a basic element of Quebec reality. We are far, very far, from this goal. Yet we must work to advance it, here and now.

Support the solidarity movement with the Natives! Become a member of the Regroupement.

Name : _____

Address : _____

City : _____ Postal Code : _____

Tel. (home) : _____ Tel. (work) : _____

I am available for : _____

- Contribution :
- Individual membership \$5.00
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- Language :
- Français
 - English

Mail this slip with your payment to : Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, 1265, rue Berri, # 290, Montréal, Québec, H2L 4X4.

Ce bulletin est aussi disponible en français.

PLEBISCITE IN KANEHSATAKE

A CLEAR EXPRESSION OF THE MOHAWKS' WILLS?

Barely 547 of the 1221 Mohawks entitled to vote in the May 31 plebiscite held in Kanehsatake, have availed themselves of their right to determine the method of appointment of the governing Band Council. Hence, a participatory rate of 44.7%.

Deborah Etienne, a traditionalist who has refused to engage in this exercise dictated by the Ministry of Indian Affairs, believes the real rate of participation to be even lower. Indeed, a fourth only of the ballots are said to have been cast in Kanehsatake itself, the remainder originating from elsewhere in Québec and, in some cases, even from the United States: any person with acknowledged Mohawk status was eligible to vote who could prove her family to be native of Kanehsatake.

Relying on the fact that 526 persons have voted in favor of the election by universal suffrage of the Band Council and only 21 opposed it, the federal government has seen fit to

interpret this plebiscite as a *clear expression of the people's will!* (sic)

The way seems clear, therefore, for the election, as chief of the Band Council, of Gerry Peltier, leader of the Mohawk Coalition. All the more so given the support Peltier enjoys from the Ministry of Indian Affairs and the MP for Argenteuil, Lise Bourgault. Indeed, he has been recognized by this very same Ministry as the person authorized to settle with the federal negotiator, Bernard Roy, the transfer of the land purchased at a high price from the municipality of Oka.

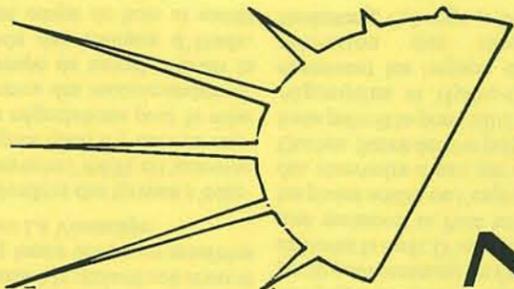
For her part, Deborah Etienne believes that, once elected, Peltier will not enjoy the trust of the people and will find himself without authority. Like the current chief of the Band Council, Georges Martin, he has been blamed for jumping ship and taking refuge in a Dorval hotel when Kanehsatake was being invaded by the police last July. "They both belong to the Dorval reserve", says Ms Etienne, who adds that the other

leaders of the Mohawk Coalition are former chiefs thrown out of office.

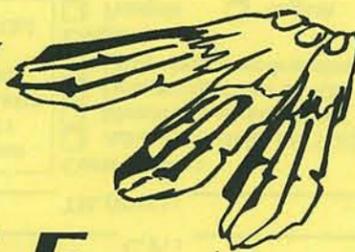
The traditionalists intend to abstain once again from voting in the upcoming June 27 elections. Deborah Etienne expects many members of the community to bestow on the Longhouse the guiding role it has played all along last summer.

The traditionalists and other members of the community do not want the reserve status for Kanehsatake that the Ministry of Indian Affairs is trying to impose on them, under the cloak of an election. According to Deborah Etienne, this policy will create further animosity and divisions within the community.

Once again, the Government is attempting to treat the Mohawks as inveterate minors. The government has mastered in the art of fanning the flames of discontent and, should the situation turn sour, one can safely bet that the Mohawks will be made to bear the blame.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 5 August 1991

SUPPORTING THE OKA DEFENDANTS!

For a number of individuals and organizations, the Mohawk's struggle at Kanehsatake and Kahnawake during the summer of 1990 triggered reflection, and in some cases action, in support of native people's rights. As the trials of the 44 persons arrested on September 26 are about to begin, we notice that this sympathy has not led to direct support for the people who were at the heart of the Mohawk struggle. These people will now pay dearly for that fact, if the Canadian judiciary system gets its way.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars are still needed to ensure a full defence for these political prisoners and for dozens of others arrested on Mohawk land since July 11, 1990.

After a year-long ideological bombardment by governments, police forces and the media, it is necessary to re-emphasize what was really at stake at Kanehsatake and Kahnawake, and what is at stake today as Mohawks stand in the prisoner's dock.

The issue at Oka was not bingo, casinos or cigarettes, but land. It was the defence of Mohawk territory, of which a large part was threatened by golf course expansion and real estate development projects advocated by a handful of speculators and shady business

operators connected with the local town hall. It was not a matter of denying Quebec's national rights. The Mohawks simply asserted their own sovereignty as a full-fledged nation that has never renounced its right to make its own choices freely, without outside interference.

The presence of weapons was a response to the Sûreté du Québec's aggression. The Mohawks knew that the police attack had been planned for months and that its purpose was to crush them, just as the unarmed Micmacs had been crushed nine years ago at Restigouche, where they were brutalized, beaten and arrested by the SQ. Can the Mohawks be blamed for having sought means to avoid a replay?

The SQ's attack also explains how a barricade, which had been in place for four months on a small dirt road, led to a 78-day siege of two communities by the SQ, the RCMP and the army. The siege's inconvenient effects on the neighbouring population are well known. The Mohawks of Kanehsatake and Kahnawake, however, suffered the worst consequences, at the time, as they do today.

But doesn't financial support for the political prisoners imply support of one Mohawk faction at the expense of others, who may have different visions and strategies? In

our opinion, support for the Oka defendants means support for all Mohawks and their sympathizers, who beyond differences of opinion, have united to work towards a single objective: the defence of Kanehsatake and Mohawk sovereignty.

To support these prisoners is also to show concrete solidarity with those who have risked their lives in this struggle, and who are now threatened with jail or heavy fines.

The Canadian government has always tried to confine the struggle of native peoples to a mechanism of claims and negotiations. Through the trials of the Kanehsatake and Kahnawake prisoners, it is trying to destroy any possibility, for Mohawks and all other native peoples of Canada, of breaking out of this stale process.

A matter of urgency

Solidarity with aboriginal nations requires us to support Mohawk political detainees. The Regroupement de Solidarité intends to do its part.

We urge all our members to participate without delay by sending donations, however small, but also by enlisting the financial support of their unions, popular organizations, students' associations, etc.

Contrary to what was written in the May issue of the bulletin, two funds are currently channeling financial support to the political detainees. The Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones endorses them both.

Created in April 1991, the Akweks (eagle in the Mohawk language) Fund is coordinated by accused from 3 Mohawk communities. It has taken charge of the legal expenses of some of the people arrested as they were leaving the Treatment Center, as well as those of tens of other Mohawks arrested for defending their territory.

Your cheques and money orders should be sent to **The Akweks Fund c/o The Canadian Federation of Rights and Liberties, 323 Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7Z2.** If you require receipts for income tax purposes, donations should be sent instead to: **The M & O Conference of the United Church of Canada** (do not forget to indicate that your donation is meant for the Akweks Fund), **691 Smythe Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 1N7.**

Moreover, the **Liberation of the Mohawk Nation Legal Defense Fund** has been in existence since the summer of 1990 and is now coordinated by another accused, Kahn Tineta-Horn. This fund pays the legal costs of other persons arrested on September 26, as well as many Mohawks arrested while defending their territory. These defendants are represented by lawyer Owen Young.

Your cheques and money orders must be sent to the **Liberation of the Mohawks Nation Legal Defense Fund, Caisse populaire's account number #80186, P.O. Box 1987, Kahnawake, Québec, J0L 1B0**

Legal Chronicle

The trials of 44 natives accused of criminal acts following the events at Oka in 1990 took place this summer at the St Jerome Courthouse. Judge Tannenbaum continued examining motions presented by the defense lawyer Owen Young. This was largely ignored by the press. Meanwhile, Ronald Cross made headlines over a fist fight.

Several motions

One of the first motions, that of the language to be used at the hearings, was the subject of contradictory judgements by judges Tannenbaum and Greenberg. These judgements were brought before the Court of Appeal which, on July 2, ruled in favour of Tannenbaum's judgement. The hearings would be in English, the language of the accused.

On June 26, Judge Tannenbaum decided that the accused could swear their oaths according to their spiritual traditions. On September 4, 5 and 6 Judge Greenberg will examine the debates on this motion. Moreover, on July 3 he rejected the defense lawyers' arguments with respect to the motion of "direct indictment", which, if they had won, would have enabled them to restart Cross and Lazore's judicial proceedings.

Finally, Judge Tannenbaum examined the motion concerning the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war, to determine if it applied to the cases at hand, and its implications for the outcome of the trials. He will render his judgement on September 12.

The Cross Affair

While the Cross affair has had wide coverage in the media, there are some issues worth underlining. There was an altercation on May 12 between a number of people and Peacekeepers on the reserve. A complaint was filed against Ronald Cross at the Longueuil Court, accusing him of assault and participating in a riot. The trial will be held

next November. Moreover, he faces another trial in St Jerome, for breaking the condition of his release on bail, in connection with these events. Finally, he has a third trial for failure to appear in court on July 5. For the last two trials, he appeared before three judges.

On June 12 the prosecutors requested a warrant for his arrest, which was denied by Judge Tannenbaum. They tried once more, by invoking another article of the law. This time Judge Greenberg was sitting, who pressures everyone to save time, while himself delaying the entire process with his penchant for splitting hairs. **On this single issue there were hearings June 14, 18, 19, 26, 27, and 28!**

Two months later

The judge was to render his judgement July 5, but Ronald Cross didn't appear. A warrant for his arrest was issued. The accused, meanwhile, came to court on July 9. He was arrested on the spot.

The judgement for the condition of his release was rendered July 11. It ordered his release, with a mandatory stay at a reserve in Ontario, and set bail at \$50 000, which went beyond the means of the accused.

He was freed on August 2 by another judge, because following his first release in March 1991, the judge at the time forgot to order his presence in court when necessary. What is striking is the length of the whole process and the prosecutors' relentlessness.

Trials to come

September 25 is the beginning of the trial before Judge Tannenbaum of 41 of the accused. The jury will be selected from among 500 to 2 000 people.

On October 2, the Cross-Lazore trial will continue before Judge Greenberg with a jury selected from among 300 people.

THE ALGONQUINS REACH AN AGREEMENT

The Algonquin people of Barrier Lake have succeeded in negotiating an agreement with both the provincial and federal governments after their long and determined battle to protect and manage the ecosystem of La Verendrye Park. Last June, a three party agreement in principle was reached to initiate a series of environmental impact studies over the 10,000 square kilometers of territory inhabited by the Algonquins, representing roughly half of La Verendrye Provincial Park.

During the same process, representatives from the Algonquin people and the provincial government will supervise a task force. It will to determine steps for improving the relationship between the cutting operations of forest companies in the region and the traditional activities of the Algonquin community at Barrier Lake. The working committee will also oversee the short and long term protection of fragile areas in La Verendrye Park.

The work calendar will start this summer and proceed until the fall of 1994. After which, a new round of negotiations will begin in order to implement the recommendations of the committee. During this study period, there will be no tree cutting nor any spraying of

chemical products on the territory used by the Algonquins.

For the 450 Algonquins of Barrier Lake, the agreement is the result of intense negotiations started years ago. One of their spokespeople, Veronique Thusky, believes that her people have won, among other gains, a recognition of the Algonquin community inhabiting La Verendrye Park, and their right to exist.

According to her, this recognition is fragile but will permit the Algonquins to achieve a real participation in the management of the Park's resources.

The survival of the Algonquin people as well as the ecosystem of the Park have been threatened for years by the clear cutting activities and the spraying of chemical products by forest companies, authorized by the government of Québec to exploit the forests of the La Verendrye Provincial Park. Acid rain and the exploitation of water reservoirs by Hydro Québec also pose a serious threat. On this last point, part of the negotiated agreement will foresee the possible investigation by the Algonquins and Hydro Québec concerning the environmental impact of using the Baskatong, Cabonga and Dozois water reservoirs.

SUPPORT THE CREES DEMONSTRATION

SAVE GREAT-WHALE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th '91
PHILLIPS SQUARE (métro McGill)

7:30 pm

Become a member of the Regroupement

Name : _____

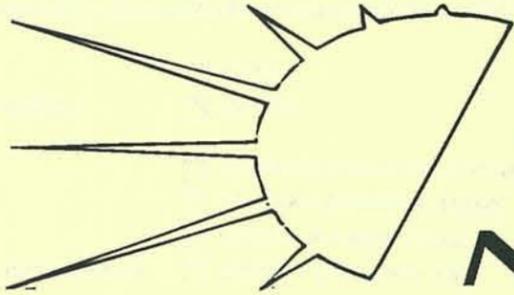
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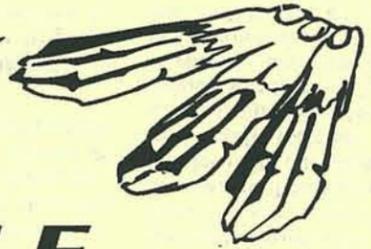
Tel. (home): _____ Tel. (work): _____

Mail this slip with your payment to :
REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES,
1265, rue Berri, #290,
Montréal, Québec, H2L 4X4

Contribution :
 Individual membership \$5.00
 Support membership \$25.00
 Group/organization \$25.00
 Support group/organization \$50.00
Language :
 Français English



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 6 September 1991

An interview with Matthew Mukash

THE GREAT WHALE PROJECT : THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Matthew Mukash, community liaison officer for the Cree community of Whapmagoostui and spokesperson for the Grand Council of the Crees of Québec, was in Montréal on September 11 to speak at a rally organized by the *regroupement*. The land that the Cree and Inuit depend on for their sustenance is being threatened by the 12.6 billion dollar Great Whale hydro electric development project. "The land to us, Mukash told 300 supporters, is like a mother. If it wasn't for the land, I wouldn't be here today. Watching it being destroyed is like watching your mother being destroyed in front of your eyes and not being able to do anything about it". If completed the project will flood an estimated 4,400 km² of wildlife habitat, cause considerable mercury contamination and further impose on the people's way of life.

involving us in the process as well as avoiding their responsibilities under the agreement (...) What we want is for the review process to be established the way it was meant to

I'm sure we would have lost".

In early September, the provincial government announced its decision to delay construction of the Great Whale project by one year. Bourassa



Photo: André Quarry

300 supporters at the rally organized by the Regroupement.

James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement

On September 10, however, federal court judge Paul Rouleau ordered a full and immediate review of the Great Whale project under environmental guidelines defined by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. This constitutionally binding accord was signed by both the federal and provincial governments, the Cree and Inuit in 1975. Mukash says that if the environmental assessment process respects the agreement's guidelines, "then the Cree will assist and get involved in the review process (...) According to the James Bay Agreement, he adds, our role is very important and the provincial and federal governments have been trying to avoid

be, to make sure that all the impacts of hydro development are carefully assessed: the economic and environmental impacts, the impacts on Native people, the land ... If we can do that, the Great Whale and NBR projects will not stand against those assessments (...) I think we can persuade people during the public hearings that the projects are no good to anyone, not the people of Québec, not the Native people, let alone the wildlife or the land".

Pressure on the government

Mukash feels that the public awareness campaign has played a major role in the way the courts have ruled on the issue of James Bay. "It's been very important for us to try and create a lot of pressure on the government, he says, and to get public opinion to work in favour of our fight. If we were going to do this alone, quietly in the court rooms,

said the decision had nothing to do with the Cree or environmentalists who were opposed to the project. It resulted, he said, from a drop in demand for electricity from the New York Power Authority. Despite the fact New York governor Mario Cuomo expressed environmental concerns (sic.) over the project, Mukash believes that the provincial government sensed a potential problem in regards to this recent court decision and any further court challenges. "It goes to show why Bourassa was so eager to get the project started without going through any valid environmental review process. He just wanted to get his foot dug into the North. He's got no choice now but to step back and take a look at what's happening (...) He knew all along that if this ended up in court it could mean a lot of problems for his government."

More time

Under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, the federal government can, upon completion of a full environmental review, authorize, modify or reject any major development in the north. Lawyers for the Cree believe that as signatories of the agreement, the Cree also have this decision making power. This latest court decision puts into question Hydro-Québec's own environmental assessments, and could delay the Great Whale project by at least three years. Mukash believes that this "could lead to alternatives we need to develop in order to live in harmony with each other and the land. [Mega-development] is just going to create friction between Native and non-native people in the future (...) and we need to avoid that. This latest court decision is going to help us in our fight. We'll have more time to plan strategy, gather more support and make the people of Québec aware of what's at stake, what their role is, how they're going to be affected. I think this could be the beginning of the end of the Great Whale project". The provincial government is expected to appeal the federal court ruling.

Kahnawake : TWELVE MONTHS LATER

From his office at the Mohawk Nation Office, Andrew Delisle Jr. grimly surveys the situation at Kahnawake some twelve months after the lifting of the summer 1990 barricades.

ment that keep tensions running high.

Next generation

Worse yet, the wounds of last summer have not yet healed, especially among young people — the "next generation". "Communication with young people is a serious problem. More resources would be needed to go into schools and talk about the crisis, which is a taboo subject right now. Children are left alone trying to interpret it. We have to learn to deal with the problem directly, in the Longhouse tradition."

The future

Andrew Delisle Jr. says he is nonetheless optimistic about the future of the Mohawk community of Kahnawake — "providing governments agree to cooperate," as he hastens to add. "The basic problem is that neither the federal nor the provincial government is willing to recognize native people's jurisdiction over their territory. (...) The federal government persists in trying to keep the country together at all costs, while refusing to recognize the existence of independent nations sharing a common law."

Harassment

Mohawk sentries still watching entry points into Kahnawake to prevent the Sureté du Québec and the RCMP from intervening, because "there would be violence and that's not what we want." Although members of these police forces are less numerous than they were a few months ago on roads entering Kahnawake, they continue to make their presence felt and to indulge, especially around the sentry boxes, in acts of provocation and harass-

CELEBRATION OF FRIENDSHIP

The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal is organizing the 10th annual native cultural festival, on October 5 and 6, 1991, at the Westmount High School, 4350

Pow Wow, with dances and drums. The audience are invited to join in.

A full range of services

The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal was started in 1974. Ad-

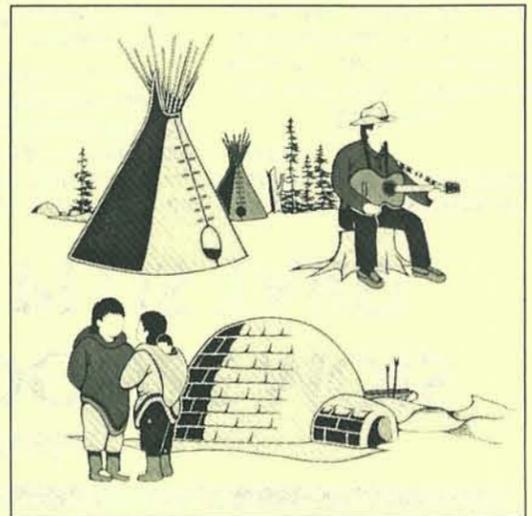
Ste-Catherine St W. Entry is from \$7.00 or \$4.00 depending on age and status. The coordinators of the festival are Ken Williams and Raymond Gabriel. Information : 937-5338. This year's theme is 'Celebration of Friendship'. The eleven native nations of Quebec will be represented.

Singers, musicians, dancers, painters, photographers, sculptors will participate as well as many Quebec craftsmen, and others from North America. A theater group will also be present.

Traditional Pow Wow

This will be a unique occasion to taste native foods. The festival will end on October 6, by a traditional

dress : 3730 Côte-des-Neiges. It is affiliated with similar centres in the main cities of Canada. It is a meeting place for the over 5,000 natives of Montreal and offers a full range of services from daily meals, clothing, the reception on behalf of native people for their social aid cheque for the first two months of their arrival in Montreal. Conferences, an information program on AIDS and courses for adults are also available.



**Support the solidarity
movement with the Natives!
Become a member of the
Regroupement.**

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City : _____ Postal Code : _____

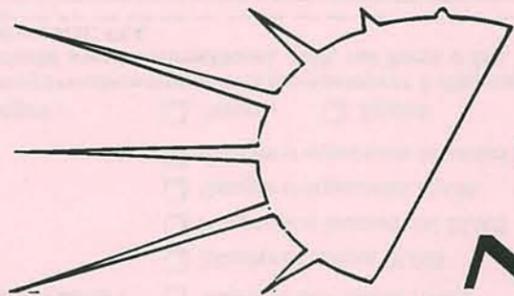
Tel. (home) : _____ Tel. (work) : _____

I am available for : _____

Contribution : Individual membership \$5.00
 Support membership \$25.00
 Group and organisation \$25.00
 Support Group and organisation \$50.00

Language : Français
 English

Mail this slip with your payment to : Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, 1265, rue Berri, # 290, Montréal, Québec, H2L 4X4.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 7 October 1991

CONSTITUTION

FIRST NATIONS TAKE A STAND

The Assembly of First Nations has put together a committee which, over the next few months, will travel to roughly sixty native communities throughout Canada and Quebec to assess their concerns about the constitution. The committee, called the First Nations Circle on the Constitution, will be presided by Konrad Sioui, who, to execute the task, has resigned as the Assemblies' regional chief for Quebec and Labrador.

A response

The First Nations' Circle on the Constitution will prepare a response to the recent propositions put forward by the Mulroney Government. These propositions do not recognize the inherent right of the native people for self-determination, rather they refer in vague terms to "the right to self government" which would take ten years before being implemented and the final resolution would be resolved by the judicial process. The Algonquin people of Barrier Lake eloquently demonstrated their response to these offers by promptly burning the document in front of the parliament buildings the next day.

The Assembly of First Nations also rejected the proposition by Joe Clark, the Minister on Constitutional Affairs, who wanted to limit the participation of the First Nations to that of a consultants position to the special Castonguay-Dobbie commission for a renewed Canada, without even inviting them to be part of the commission.

The Assembly prefers a parallel process, run and directed by the native people themselves. In this manner, their demands will not become reduced, lost or assimilated within the eventual Castonguay-Dobbie Report. On the contrary, and within a delay of six months, they should be able to construct the foundation for the First Nations' position on the Constitution.

For the people

During a meeting with support groups in Quebec held in Montreal, on October 10th, Konrad Sioui explained that the report prepared by the committee of which he is presiding "will be addressed first and foremost to the people of Canada, then to the federal and provincial governments, starting with Quebec, as well as to the interna-

tional community". He added that it was not by accident that the First Nations' Circle will begin its work in Quebec, at Maniwaki to be precise, on the 21st of October to demonstrate that what the native people want is to defend their rights and not to oppose the rights of the Québécois.

Time to speak out

The sixty public audiences will be open to all natives but also to any other group who so desires to voice their opinion. In addition to these public meetings, the Circle will form four constituents assemblies to deal specifically with the issues concerning the women, the youth, the elders, and native people living in urban settings.

If the Mulroney Government thinks it has learned something from the failure of Meech Lake, that the First Nations can be silenced by formally recognizing their existence and their rights within a constitutional package, it will once again be proven wrong. The Native people will not be silenced in this manner, something Quebec nationalists would be better off to remember as well.

THE REGROUPEMENT'S PRIORITIES

The second general assembly of le Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones (Solidarity with Native People), to which all members were invited, took place October 8th. The 30 members present agreed on the importance of consolidating relationships with native organizations and with groups that support their struggle. After the report of the organizing committee the general assembly confirmed four major areas of concern for le Regroupement. Continuing support for the Mohawk Nation, and, specifically, mobilization around the trials of the 41, giving the first priority, along with the or-

ganization of a benefit concert whose proceeds will go towards the legal fees of the accused.

Great Whale

With regard to Grande-Baleine (Great Whale), le Regroupement will continue to support the Cree in their opposition to this mega-project. We should take advantage of the respite of the coming months to increase public awareness of the impact of the hydro-electric project at Grande-Baleine and of Hydro-Québec's other projects, particularly those in Montagnais territory. Le Regroupement will be working jointly with CIDMAA (Centre d'information et de documentation

sur le Mozambique et l'Afrique australe) on a publication focussing on the economic interests behind these projects.

Constitution & Coalition 92

Although not yet pronounced in favor of any of the constitutional options currently being debated in Québec and Canada, le Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones will continue to support the First Nations make their point of view in this debate known, the Bulletin being instrumental in this endeavor.

Finally, numerous activities are being organized throughout the Americas to denounce the so-called discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. Le Regroupement is a member of Coalition 92, which coordinates activities in Montréal, and will collaborate in the organization of mobilization activities.

Strengthen the organization

In addition to working on the above priorities, le Regroupement will also strengthen its own organization by involving a greater number of people in its regular duties and its coordinating committee. The finances of le Regroupement need to be improved. In light of this, a resolution was adopted to raise individual membership from \$5 to \$10 per year. The publication of the Bulletin will continue, and we will work to increase the recruitment of new members.

Following an announcement by M. Serge Bouchereau, one of the coordinators of Haitian resistance in Québec, the general assembly of le Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones passed a resolution to support the Haitian people.

LEGAL JOURNAL

Last month was marked by intense activity at the St-Jérôme Courthouse. One motion after another was heard and the selection of jurors at the trial of Ronald Cross and the Lazore brothers proceeded.

Geneva Convention

Judge Tannenbaum rejected the motion concerning the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war on the grounds of time constraint. Canada is a signatory to the Convention but as its term came into effect in Canada subsequent to the Oka Crisis, it enabled him to evade consideration of the central issue in question, namely the possibility of amnesty for the defendants. Moreover judge Tannenbaum decided to postpone the trial of the 41 accused to February 2, 1992. This trial will take place in Montreal.

The Crown and the Defense attorney agreed that the accused should take their oath according to their own tradition and judge Greenberg ratified this agreement. Moreover he rejected the motion for a separate

trail for Roger Lazore who faces charges that are less serious than those of the two other defendants on the ground that Roger Lazore's offense nevertheless was committed at the same event. If the rejection of a separate trial for one of the defendants is based on the fact that his offense was committed at the same event as were the others it should logically follow that all 44 defendants should be tried simultaneously.

Coroner's inquest

On September 23, a motion on the coroner's inquest was introduced at the same time by the Crown's prosecutors and the Defense attorneys, the former against publishing of proceedings and the latter for the postponement of the inquest until the end of the trial. Both prosecution and defense attorneys agreed that this inquest could impair the rights of the accused to a fair trial. On October 1st, judge Greenberg ordered that the Coroner's inquest be postponed.

BENEFIT

TO SUPPORT MOHAWK DEFENDANTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1ST 91
CAFÉ CAMPUS

3315 Chemin de la Reine Marie

Native, Latino & Haitian Performers

Information : 499-0314

Organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones

EVENTS & PUBLICATIONS

Liberty to the Indians

The Québec magazine *Liberté* is devoting an interesting double issue to the native writers Georges and Eleonore Sioui, Virginia Bordeleau, Bernard Assiwini, Charles Coocoo, Yves Sioui-Durand, Charlie Adams, Michèle Vigeant and Kashtin. 255 pages. \$9.50. In French.

People of the Pines

THE WARRIORS AND THE LEGACY OF OKA

The most complete book to date on the events of summer 1990, written by two of the journalists who spent the most time behind the barricades at Kanehsatake: Loreen Pindera of the CBC and Geoffrey York, author of the acclaimed *The Dispossessed* on the situation of native peoples in Canada. It is based on hundreds of interviews, and well documented research on the history of the Mohawks of Kanehsatake and Kahnawake and the origins and development of the Warrior Societies. 429 pages. \$29.95. In English.

Blue Tiger and Promised Land

Conference given by Eduardo Galeano for the 500 year anniversary of the "discovery" of the Americas. It is a remarkable contribution to the understanding of the profound reasons for the conquest, and perspectives on it 500 years

later. Published by the Coalition Montréal '92, (514) 843-5092. \$3.00. In English, French and Spanish.

Forum

NATIVE STRUGGLES AND MEGAPROJECTS

Guest: Mr. Rojas Birry, representative of the Organización nacional indígena de Colombia (ONIC) and member of the Constituent Assembly of Columbia. Mr. Birry is an important native leader in Columbia, involved in the struggle to protect the tropical forest and fight the Columbian government's megaprojects. He is also one of the principle initiators in the continental campaign on 500 years of Indian and popular resistance. Initiated by CUSO and CEQ, and organised by Coalition Montréal '92. Between December 5 and 9. Date and place to be confirmed. Information: (514) 843-5092.

Haiti

For all information concerning activities by the Haitian community (vigils, marches, public meetings) calling for the return of President Aristide to Haiti, contact: Haitian Consulate at 871-8993 or 871-8994 or the Coordination of Haitian Resistance Québec-Montréal at 725-9508 or 271-1952.

**Support the solidarity movement with the Natives!
Become a member of the Regroupement.**

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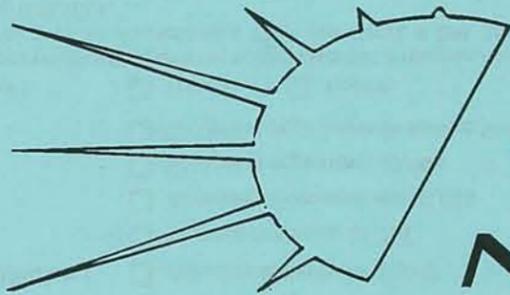
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 8 November 1991

An Interview with Ellen Gabriel

NOTHING IS SETTLED IN KANEHSATAKE

"When we take part in public assemblies across Canada, Natives often come to tell us how much our struggle has made them advance. Here in Kanehsatake, however, the situation is, in many respects, worse than it was before the crisis. The actions of the Band Council, the way it perpetuates the ideology of Indian Affairs, are endangering the land. And it isn't only the land, there are the social problems as well... the children who have had to live with the helicopters hovering over their heads. It will take a long time before our society totally comes to grips with itself".

Main spokeswoman for the Mohawks of Kanehsatake during the summer of 1990, Ellen Gabriel considers that nothing has been settled since the removal of the barricades. On the contrary, the new Band Council, elected with a rate of participation of barely 45%, has recently reintroduced the project of land reunification rejected by a great majority of the Mohawk people in 1989. This project, put forward by the federal government, provides for the purchase by Ottawa of part of the lands owned by non-natives living in Kanehsatake and its conversion into a *bonafide* reserve. The Mohawk people, however, would have to abandon a great amount of land, including the Pinegrove, and see their territorial claims considerably reduced.

The big lie

Given the circumstances, it is no surprise that the negotiation aimed at transferring to the Mohawks the land acquired by the federal government during the crisis (and we now know that it bought the wrong lands!) is at a standstill, even though Bernard Roy, a personal friend of Brian Mulroney, has been paid \$200,000 to carry it to its conclusion. "What we have here is the biggest lie prof-

ferred by the government during the summer of 1990".

Ellen Gabriel and the Longhouse of Kanehsatake hold no punches when it comes to Gerry Peltier's Band Council who even recently failed to attract more than forty people to a public assembly over the reunification project. "As far as we



Ellen Gabriel

are concerned, the Band Council is an illegal government. It has no right to negotiate our land. It is merely a subsidiary of the Ministry of Indian Affairs. It is the representative of Indian Affairs in Kanehsatake".

Project on Hold

On the other hand, the real estate development projects that were menacing Mohawk lands have been put on ice. Although 80% of the trees will be cut from the land disputed during the summer of 1990 because they are considered diseased, it will remain as a green space. For the time being, the building of condominiums is out of the question. And so are the development of a golf course and the construction of motels in Paul-Sauvé Park. The Mohawks are remaining vigilant,

however, and are waiting to see what will happen after the November 3rd election in Oka.

With regard to the trial of the 44 persons accused of participating in the struggle of the summer of 1990, Ellen Gabriel does not hide her misgivings: "I don't believe that justice for our people will be served by a Canadian tribunal. It is to the advantage of the governments to criminalize the whole affair, especially in a context where the Natives find themselves in the middle of jurisdictional quarrels between the governments of Canada and Québec".

In Disagreement With Mercredi

Furthermore, Ellen Gabriel does not share the views expressed on the constitutional crisis by the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi, during his visit to Québec last October, and she hopes that the Longhouse will be allowed to defend its point of view in front of the Circle of the First Nations on the Constitution formed by the AFN. "We do not want our rights to be entrenched in the Canadian constitution. It is not our nation. Our rights are already entrenched in a constitution*. The problem is that it is continually being violated. As a first step, they should abide by the treaties that were signed, nation to nation, with the Mohawks be it by Great-Britain or Canada. We ask for nothing more".

Ellen Gabriel does not trust Ottawa to protect the rights of the First Nations should Québec accede to independence. "It fails to see how we could trust the federal government after what happened here in the summer of 1990. It doesn't respect the treaties, it doesn't respect our will for self-government and it doesn't even respect us as persons unless we behave as good, properly assimilated, Indians. If Mr. Mercredi considers himself a Canadian, it is not the case with us".

Nor does Ellen Gabriel consider herself a Quebecker. She points out that, even though they form eleven quite distinct nations that do not necessarily share the same views on all matters, the aboriginal peoples have rights to more than 3/4 of the territory. The Mohawks, for their part, have claims as well over territories located in Ontario and in certain American states.

The aboriginal nations intend to defend their rights and have them recognized regardless of the constitutional future of Québec. "I hope that Jacques Parizeau is not representative of the people of Québec".

* The Iroquois constitution — editor's note.

LEGAL JOURNAL

The trial of Ronald Cross, Roger Lazore, and Gordon Lazore will probably be drawn out for another three months, involving two lawyers and convening five days a week. Yet many people are not aware that the trial began in March of 1991. This will cost our Mohawk friends a fortune. Hence the importance of aiding them financially with the means available to us.

Moral support

The Mohawk people would also appreciate receiving moral support... your presence at the trial would be welcome. We invite all those who are free during the week to be present... it should prove to be interesting. The two modes of trans-

portation with which one can reach the courthouse in St-Jérôme are by car and by bus. If one is travelling by car, one takes the first exit for St-Jérôme. The court is situated on Rue Laviolette. The hearings begin at 9:30 and end around 4:30. If you have room for passengers, contact Fernande Benoit at 935-7076. For those who will be taking the bus, here are the schedules and necessary information: La Compagnie Limocar: 435-8899. Leaving the Laval terminus at metro Henri-Bourassa from Quai no. 3. Monday to Friday. Departures: 6:10, 6:40, 7:10, 7:40am. After that, buses leave every hour, 25 minutes to the hour. Returns: Every hour, 25 minutes after the hour.

EVENTS

Native Friendship Center

The Montréal Native Friendship Center will be (putting up for sale) sellings arts, handcrafts and pastries on December 7th and 8th, 1991 from 11am to 5pm at the Center, located at 3730 Côte-des-Neiges across the street from the Montréal General Hospital (Metro Pell, bus 107). Artists and Craftspeople from Kahnawake, Kanehsatake and Montréal will be present. Proceeds will pay for the kid's Christmas party organized by the Center on December 13th, 91.

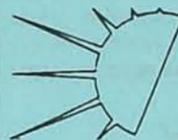
Lights Out

The James-Bay II protest group "Lights Out" is organizing a workshop on *How to present information to others about Great-Whale and J-B II projects*.

The workshop will be held Wednesday November 20th at 6:30 pm, at Université de Montréal's Jean Brillant Pavillon.

Please register in advance at: (514) 345-5706.

The workshop will be conducted in French.



BENEFIT PARTY

TO SUPPORT MOHAWK

DEFENDANTS

SUNDAY DECEMBER 1ST' 91

CAFÉ CAMPUS
3315 Queen Mary
(métro Côte-des-Neiges)

8 pm

Voluntary Contribution : \$10.00

*Willie Dunn, Pepe Mendoza
and other Native performers*

*Roro d'Haiti,
Marco Jeanty et Julien Reiber Umojha*

Sol de America

With **ANDREW DELISLE AND ELLEN GABRIEL**

Information and tickets : 499-0314

Organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones

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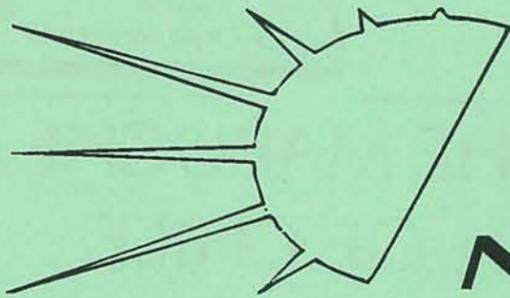
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 9-10 January 1992

Interview with Lawyer Owen Young

A POLITICAL PROBLEM THAT MUST BE RESOLVED POLITICALLY

This interview with Owen Young, the lawyer representing Mohawk defendants Ronald Cross, Roger Lazore and Gordon Lazore took place towards the end of December 1991. At that time, the court appearances of witnesses for the Crown were drawing to a close at the Palais de justice de Saint-Jérôme. The lawyers representing the defendants had not yet finalized their decision to not have their own witnesses appear, although Young and his colleague were already seriously considering the idea.

Since then, the pace of events has quickened. However, even if the jury has already rendered its verdict on the 49 charges still pending by the time this interview is published, it will still remain wholly relevant. This interview allows one to understand the strategy adopted by the lawyers for the defence and to better interpret the verdict, whatever it may be.

In the summer of '90, Owen Young played the role of legal adviser behind the barricades at Kahnawake. Since then, his involvement in the defence of the 44 persons arrested at Kanhsatake at the end of the crisis has been more than full-time.

The example of the Morgentaler Case

Throughout this interview Owen Young will argue that the courts are not the proper place for dealing with the problems exposed by the Oka crisis. "When confronted by social change, political authorities have a choice: dealing with it politically or dealing with it in court. Usually, they opt for the latter because it's easier, more black and white and more convenient."

"However, it can happen that a jury acquits defendants even though on legal grounds it should not. The Morgentaler case is the best exam-

ple. The jury acquitted him even though technically he had done something illegal. However, the members of the jury knew that what he had done was morally justified and they sent a clear message to the government. The message was that the law had to be changed, that it was not a criminal matter, but rather it was a political problem that had to be solved politically."

Although he has no illusions with respect to the probable conclusion of the present trial, Owen Young believes that the same thing could eventually happen in the case of the Mohawks, but only after further struggle. One thing is sure, Young judges that the trial of Cross and the two Lazores will send a message and will have important repercussions, and not just on the trial of the 41 other defendants slated to begin next March in Montreal. "If they are all convicted that will be one message. On the other hand, if they are acquitted on all charges or on some of the major charges, it will be another message altogether."

A fair trial ?

Is he happy with the way in which the trial has proceeded? "In five years, chances are that questions will still be asked concerning the fairness of this trial. If one considers what the system has to offer, it's a perfectly fair trial. The big question is what kind of justice the system is able to provide to Mohawks after the Oka crisis."

That said, Young is critical of the Crown's attitude. The latter had chosen to hush up information that it in fact possessed. Furthermore, it only revealed other pieces of information after its hand was forced by the defence. As a result of this approach, adopted by prosecutor François Brière, judge Benjamin Greenberg was obliged to drop two major charges, participation in a riot

and obstructing the army, as the relevant information was not furnished within a reasonable period of time.

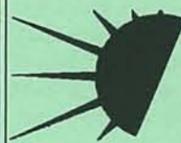
That decision changed the nature of the trial. This, plus the weakness of the Crown's witnesses, was what finally led to the decision of the defence to not have their own witnesses testify. "The charges now deal with facts that are more specific. The nature of the trial has become more criminal and less political and that affected the strategy that we had planned to use. We had seriously considered using a total approach in our defence in which we would explain the political ramifications of the actions taken by the Mohawks. The charge of participation in a riot lent itself perfectly to this approach."

A bad choice

According to Owen Young, the fundamental problem is to have put the Mohawk defendants on trial as if it was a matter of an ordinary criminal case with a local prosecutor. He recalls that in September of 1990 that he, along with others, had proposed an altogether different manner of proceeding that would have involved a special prosecutor seconded by experts on the constitution and on Mohawk law.

"Instead of the present controversy over which legal system should apply, the Canadian one or the Mohawk one, we could have examined the events in the light of both systems and compared the results."

"Furthermore, having embarked on the criminal trial process, the jury's composition should have been reexamined. The jury that we have is quite good, it's as impartial as possible, but it doesn't have a single native member. It's as if the trial dealt with questions that concerned women only and the jury was entirely male."



Lottery of a painting by Ellen Gabriel



Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

TO SUPPORT MOHAWK DEFENDANTS

- 2nd prize Book "Les enfants d'Aatentsic, Histoire du peuple Huron" by Bruce Trigger
- 3rd prize Book "People of the Pines" by Loreen Pindera and Geoffrey York
- 4th prize Annual Subscription to the Solidarity with Native people newsletter

Draw on March 20, 1992

All proceeds will go to the Akweks Fund

The tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00

To buy tickets, call us at

**REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES
(514) 499-0314**

BENEFIT SHOW : SUCCESS



Pepe Mendoza



Marco Jeanty



Willie Dunn

More than 350 people participated in the benefit show organized by the regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones last december 1st. After paying administrative costs, \$ 3,000.00 went directly to the Akweks Fund and to Liberation of the Mohawk Nation Defense Fund.. We wish to thank the artists who contributed to this success, including Willie Dunn, Pepe Mendoza, Roro d'Haïti, Marco Jeanty, Julien Reiher Umojha and the group Sol de America.

Montreal Coalition 92

500 years of Native and popular resistance

The Montreal Coalition 92 is preparing a calendar of activities alternative to the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the so-called discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus. All groups organizing activities are invited to communicate with the coalition at (514) 843-5092 or send the information by fax to (514) 982-2408.

Remember that the Montreal Coalition 92 is made up of organizations involved in international solidarity and organizations working the Natives, such as Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones. The Coalition's objective is to create an alternative to the celebrations of the 500th anniversary, and its activities are part of the continental campaign of 500 years of Native and popular resistance.

1992 : A TIME FOR REFLECTION, NOT CELEBRATION

Colonialism didn't start with Columbus, but he nevertheless ushered in an era in which it took unprecedented proportions. European expansion led to the domination of most of the world by these powers, but their impact was probably greatest in the Americas. It has been called the biggest real estate theft in human history and was truly catastrophic for the original inhabitants. Great numbers lost their lives due to armed action and diseases, which sometimes were spread deliberately by the colonizers. Natives had agreed to share the land with the newcomers only to be pushed onto tiny reservations, often on barren lands nobody wanted at the time. They had their right to govern themselves taken away. In this country this means that the infamous Indian Act vests almost all decision making powers over their lives in the federal government. It is a law which greatly inspired the architects of Apartheid and its main purpose from the beginning was the assimilation of native peoples, or cultural genocide.

Churches and government worked together in the attempt to destroy native cultures. In the residential schools Indian children were forced to attend, they were often cruelly punished for speaking their language. The federal government invented "the band" and imposed the band council as form of government. In any case, it was the Indian Agent who wielded real power until not so long ago. When Indian communities sought redress in Canadian courts the government passed a law making it illegal for them to hire a lawyer. These are just some examples.

In spite of it all some people want to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the event which set into motion this collision of cultures. Values have changed and our age pretends to have a greater respect for human

rights, particularly the right of a people to self-determination. The collision between European and native societies of the Americas is a story of conquest, plunder, broken treaties and the extinction of many peoples : there is nothing to celebrate.

Moreover, most Natives live with the consequences of these 500 years of colonialism. Those wrongs are not something that happened in the distant past about which we can't do anything. Natives are eight times over-represented in prisons. Average age at death is 25 years younger for Indian men (28 years for women) compared to non-Indians. Housing conditions are often like third world

this 500th anniversary. It should instead be an occasion for reflection and action to rectify past wrongs. A good beginning in that direction would be to support natives peoples in their efforts to reacquire the right to govern themselves, a right they have never given up voluntarily. Sovereignty relates to everything of importance to a people : language, education, political structures, economic development, relations with others, indeed the entire way of life of a people. Natives won't just disappear and many of the problems these communities are confronted with would be resolved if they governed their own affairs.

Human rights and a respect for the



1992 : It should instead be an occasion for reflection and action to rectify past wrongs.

countries. The consequences of past actions are compounded by present day policies such as the flooding of native land for power projects, clearcutting of forests, pollution of rivers, exploitation of natural resources on native lands without their permission or payment, even the construction of golf courses on lands native communities claim as their own.

There is nothing to celebrate about

law are not just things to be worried about in far away places like South Africa or the Peoples Republic of China. Such respect ought to begin right here in Canada and Quebec. There is a chance for a better and happier future for all nations living here and to work towards that is a much more appropriate focus for 1992 than any misplaced celebrations.

THE MAPUCHE OF CHILE

Hereafter is an excerpt of the speech delivered by Elisa Avendano Curaqueo, national vice-president of the Ad Mapu organization of Chile. Mrs. Curaqueo was among the speakers at the solidarity evening held on December 1st. Her organization, founded in 1978, was the first Mapuche organization created during the military dictatorship in Chile.

... We, the Mapuche people, we «the people of the land», are with the other aborigines of the continent, the first inhabitants of America... To understand the struggle our ancestors have fought against the invaders, it must be recalled that, as a people, we had our own economic, social, political, cultural and religious way of life. It must be known that we once possessed a vast territory of 31 million hectares stretching from Copiapo to the gulf of Reloncavi, and a population estimated at about 2 million inhabitants.

Nowadays, we, the Mapuche, find ourselves confined to the south of the rio Bio Bio, over small tracts of land eroded by agricultural overexploitation and landlocked between the Pacific coast-line and the first escarpments of the Andean cordillera. With a present population estimated at about 1 200 000 people, we represent 10% of the total population of the country. Yet, we occupy scarcely 250 000 hectares of land.

... As you know, our country has just emerged from a long period of dictatorship during which the whole country was subjected to an authoritarian system... While experiencing this whole situation head-on, our people has had to do so within the context specific to our region of Araucania: high percentage of rural population, important Mapuche communities, strong immigration towards the cities. (It is estimated that between 200 000 and 250 000 Mapuche are

now living in Santiago.) The human rights violations perpetrated against our people were more pronounced and vicious as a result of the flagrant racism practiced not only by the military, but also by the civilians.

... We believe that, with the approaching anniversary of the «500 years» of our continent's invasion, an interesting political conjuncture has come about. It is a political conjuncture that now allows us to mount a campaign to reclaim our culture and the autonomy of our people. Since we are a national minority oppressed and colonized by the Chilean nation-state, our campaign will focus on the defense of the Mapuche territory. Today this struggle finds a concrete expression through two remarkable conflicts, that of Quinquen and that of the Bio Bio Highlands.

In the Alto Bio Bio, our Mapuche Pewenche brothers are threatened with dispossession of, and displacement from, the lands they have inhabited for centuries, by the projects of Endessa (Chilean electric company, the now privatized Chilean counterpart of Hydro-Québec) to build several dams in the high region of the Bio Bio rio. Already at Pangué, they are about to start construction of the first reservoir.

In Quienquen, we find a similar scenario since 400 Mapuche families are threatened to be expelled from their ancestral lands by a private transnational corporation (the Galletué lumber company) which, during the military dictatorship, received lands belonging to Mapuche families. Now this corporation claims 3 billion pesos for these 30 000 hectares of land. The communities living on these lands maintain that they never sold nor rented these lands and should not, therefore, have to buy them back.

Hence, we can clearly see how, every day, the rights of our people are being trampled...

Support a solidarity movement with Native People!
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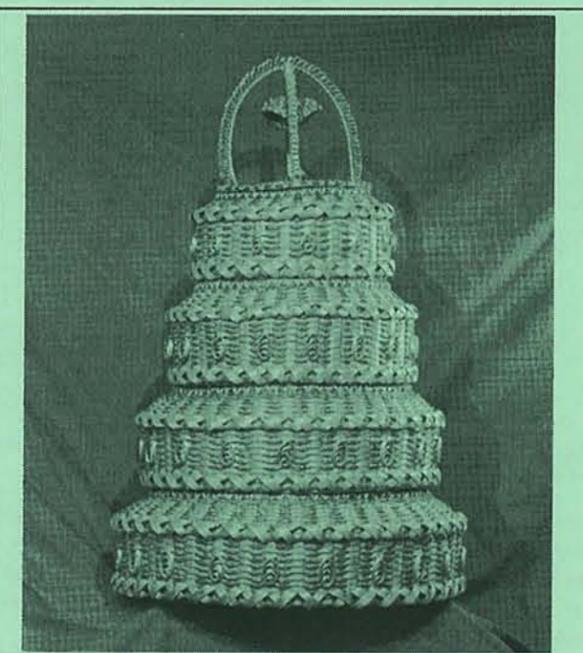
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 Group and organisation \$25.00
 Support Group and organisation \$50.00

Language : Français English

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Ce bulletin est aussi disponible en français.

ART MOHAWK 92 «OUR PEOPLE, OUR ART»



«Wedding Basket», MARY ADAMS

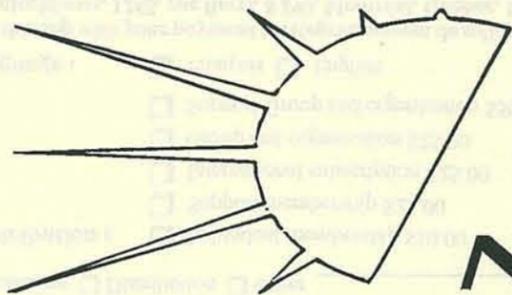
January 9th to 31st the Strathean Center, 3680 Jeanne-Mance St., holds and exhibition of artwork from 60 Mohawks from three communities.

Altogether there are 210 works, including : paintings, sculptures, jewellery and wickerwork.

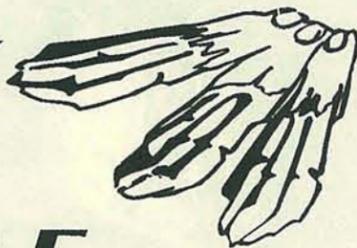
Entrance is free.

Opening hours : Noon to 8 pm Tuesday to Friday; Noon to 5 pm Saturday and Sunday.

For more information : (514) 872-9808



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 11 February 1992

Cross and Lazore

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Though of his opening speech was profuse with understanding for the First Nations, Judge Benjamin Greenberg rendered a harsh sentence against the Mohawks Ronald Cross and Gordon Lazore at the courthouse in St-Jérôme on the 19th of February. Greenberg recognized that there had been injustices committed against the First Nations and the Mohawks of Kanehsatake, but insisted that the Mohawk resistance of 1990 was unjustified. Cross was sentenced to 52 months, added to the 15 he has already spent in custody, and Lazore will be forced to spend 23 months of his life in prison, in addition to the 13 he has already spent. In total, Cross's sentence is five-and-a-half years, and Lazore's is three years. The other accused, Roger Lazore, was already acquitted by the jury.

There will undoubtedly be those who will say that it wasn't enough, that Cross and Lazore deserved even harsher sentences, even though the jury acquitted them on all counts of pillaging houses and of all charges, save one, of uttering threats. It hardly seems to matter that the Crown was incapable of demonstrating their guilt, or that the witnesses showed themselves to have little credibility because, for some, Cross and Lazore could not be anything but guilty and deserving of even heavier penalties... because they are Mohawk, because they were warriors and because it was they that the media made notorious in the summer of 1990.

Political Conflict

We of Solidarity With Native People cannot but condemn the judgement rendered against the two Mohawks, and not only because of the sentences imposed on them. One day in prison would already be too much — for the simple reason that

this trial should never have taken place! The crisis of Oka-Kanehsatake was a political conflict between nations which should have been treated as such.

It was for Mohawk justice to decide if reprehensible acts had been committed by Mohawks, particularly since it concerned other members of their nation. The case could also have been brought before an international tribunal, or, as lawyer Owen Young proposed, before a special tribunal composed of representatives of the nations concerned and based on both Mohawk and Canadian law.

The Canadian state made another choice, the worst under these circumstances. It treated the Oka-Kanehsatake crisis as a simple criminal affair, relevant only to Canadian law and Canadian courts. And yet not the entire crisis was criminalized by the state... only the resistance of the Mohawk.

Racist Justice

With one small exception, that of three of the rock throwers at the Mercier Bridge who in the end escaped without a criminal record (so as not to harm the chances for a future military career for one of them!), no criminal charges have been laid concerning the innumerable cases of physical and verbal violence, and violations of human rights committed against the Mohawk population. In fact, in clear view of the so-called forces of order, respectable citizens of Quebec were allowed, for weeks, to play at dispensing justice with impunity, particularly at the entrances to Kahnawake... and this without even mentioning the deeds of the police and soldiers themselves.

How can we not speak of racist justice, especially when it is delib-

erated by a jury without a single member from the First Nations... as if native people were the only ones who could not maintain complete impartiality in the face of a conflict at the center of a media circus that polarized public opinion for 78 days?

More Solidarity

For all these reasons, Solidarity With Native People considers Ronald Cross and Gordon Lazore political prisoners and we urge their immediate liberation. And we sincerely believe that all organizations concerned with justice and respect for human rights will do the same.

The condemnation of Cross and Lazore should convince us to express our solidarity with the other 39 accused whose trial will begin in March at the Palais de justice in Montréal. The defendants at St-Jérôme were far from receiving all the support they needed. This situation should not be allowed to recur, particularly since the charges laid this time are more clearly political and deal with the question which was at the heart of the struggle of the Mohawk of Kanehsatake and Kahnawake, namely the defense of the integrity of their ancestral territory.

During the summer of '90 thousands of citizens of Québec took to the streets to support this struggle and to shout their disapproval of the actions of the Canadian and Québec governments that aimed at resolving the struggle through the use of force.

This solidarity should make itself heard again now that the battle has moved before the courts. Solidarity With Native People will organize protest actions during the trial: public assemblies, picket lines, and demonstrations. We invite you to participate as much as possible.

TOM PAUL, OKA DEFENDANT DEAD

On February 4th warrior Tom Paul, also known as "The General", died of a massive coronary attack. The General was involved in the armed standoff at Oka (Kanehsatake), where Mohawk warriors kept the Sureté du Québec and the Canadian army at bay for seventy-eight days. The Regroupement in Solidarity with Native People wish to give a final salute to Tom Paul.

The General, Mestapaghtaasit Kitpu (Spotted Eagle), of the Snake Clan, was of the Micmac Nation of Nova Scotia, and was longtime political and social activist for his people. He was present at Wounded Knee. He spent many years studying with elders the traditional ways of his people, and composed many poems inspired by what he had experienced and learned about the plight of his people.

As well, he was a teacher of Indian music and ceremonies and performed healing rituals. He spoke the Micmac language, and travelled extensively in the United States, Canada and Europe lecturing on the culture and ways of the North American Indian peoples. His poetry, short stories and legends about native people appear in the recently published book entitled "Where the Eagle Flies". He used humour and gentle commentary to educate people on cross cultural issues.

Tom Paul was a friend of the Regroupement. We can see him distributing the Regroupement's bulletin during the World Indigenous People Council conference about the 500 years anniversary last November in Ottawa.



Tom Paul

SOLIDARITY EVENING WITH THE MOHAWK

Speeches from Oka Crisis Defendants followed by a Party with Native Musicians

Raffle of an Ellen Gabriel painting

Friday, March 20, 7:30pm

Centre St-Pierre
1212 Panet, Montréal
Métro Beaudry

Free admission

Beer 2,00\$

ACTIVITIES

Native Rights

The 1992 McGill Native Rights Lecture Series is designed to raise general awareness of aboriginal issues at this critical juncture in Canadian history.

The following is a list of topics and dates:

March 5 1992, **Quebec, the Constitution and Aboriginal Rights;**

March 18 1992, **Aboriginal-EuroCanadian relations, past and present;**

27 mars 1992, **Constitutional position of Aboriginal Peoples.**

Information: Department of Political Science, McGill University: (514) 398-4800.

DinnerBenefit

On Thursday March 5, '92 will take place a Benefit for the Native Women's shelter of Montreal. Featuring: Buffet Dinner of traditional foods, drumming and dancing and other entertainment.

Cost: \$8.00 (\$10.00 at door), children under 12 free. At McGill University, Leacock Bldg, Room 232, 18h00.

Information: (514) 284-7600.

PUBLICATIONS

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry

The Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was created in 1988 following the shooting of Native leader J.J. Harper. It lasted three years, heard from about 1,000 witnesses and the report is over 1,000 pages long. Much of it is relevant for all of Canada, not just Manitoba.

Its major recommendation, a separate justice system for Natives, was rejected by the provincial government after five months of silence.

The report is available from Queen's Printer, 200 Vaughan Street, Win-

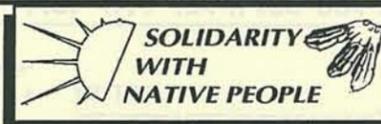
nipeg, Manitoba, R3C 1T5. Telephone: (204) 945-3101, Fax: (204) 945-7172. Cost \$20.00.

The Eastern Door

The first issue of The Eastern Door was published in Kahnawake on January 31st. It is primarily concerned with issues of importance to the Houdenosaunee, but there are also articles of a more general interest to Natives and their supporters.

It is published bi-weekly and a one year subscription by mail costs \$39.00. Send your payment to: Box 326 Kahnawake, Mohawk Territory, J0L 1B0.

SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE FIRST NATIONS



Following are large extracts from the presentation made by the Regroupement in Solidarity with the Native People in Montreal on February 6th at the Circle of First Nations on the Constitution, chaired by Conrad Sioui. This position, elaborated by the Coordinating Committee of the Regroupement, is more pertinent than ever in light of the controversy surrounding the declarations made by the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi, at the Constitutional Conference in Toronto and before the the National Assembly in Quebec.

The RSA has more than 300 members in Quebec. Our members come from francophone, anglophone and other ethnic backgrounds and do not all share the same opinions concerning the Constitution nor our constitutional options, some of us are for the independence of Québec while others are against it. Some do not hold firm positions on the subject and many of us simply do not care. What unites us is our active solidarity with the Native peoples.

The RSA recognizes that the Native peoples constitute their own entire Nations unto themselves and that these Nations have an inherent right to self-determination. Even after 500 years of forced genocide, they have never lost nor abandoned these rights to their own sovereignty.

The RSA believes there should be no limits to the right to exercise this sovereignty. To restrict the rights of the First Nations to act and make their own decisions freely for themselves, whether it be for the sake of the integrity of the territories of Quebec and of Canada or the necessity to respect the boundaries of a Canadian or Québécois legal framework, is for us, quite frankly, a hypocrisy, a fraud, and a negation of these same rights.

It is for the people of the First Nations and for them alone to decide if they wish to be part of the Canadian Constitution and, if such will be the case, to negotiate as equal partners the ties which they intend to maintain with the central government and the provinces.

It is also up to the First Nations to decide if they prefer not to become a partner of Canada and would rather make agreements with this country on a Nation to Nation basis, as in the spirit of the two row Wampum which, since 1650, has guided the Iroquois nations in their dealings with people of European origins:

each group maintaining their own customs and laws and neither group interfering in the others affairs. We know today just how much how this agreement has been systematically violated by the Canadian government which refuses the right of these Nations to abide by their own Constitution, form their own government, live by their own laws and be judged in their own tribunals. This interference must stop.

In any case, the Canadian government must recognize the territorial rights of the First Nations and engage itself in serious negotiations on the basis of this recognition.

On the Independence of Quebec

What holds true for the confederation of Canada also holds for any eventual arrangement for Quebec's independence. The RSA recognizes that the Québécois form a Nation unto themselves and have the right to decide freely about their own future, which includes the separation from Canada, if the majority of the population wish to do so.

Nevertheless, the exercise of this right must not in any way be implemented at the expense of the First Nations. For this reason, the RSA demands that if Quebec ever begins a process for acquiring independence, it must recognize the right to self-determination for all of the First Nations and arrange a clear framework for engaging in territorial negotiations with these Nations as soon as is possible and on an equal to equal basis. It goes without saying that the eventual independence of Quebec should in no way signify the loss of any rights that these Nations have maintained with the Canadian government, whether they be treaties or otherwise.

Furthermore, it is up to the First Nations alone to choose if they do or do not want to become partners in an independent Quebec.

Keeping an Open Mind

We are well aware of the difficulties presented in our position. They demand serious reflection and political imagination. We will have to break from established political conceptions which our society too often considers unchangeable, such as the idea of the Nation-State, and find new formulas which would permit the coexistence of sovereign Nations. This process demands frank dialogue with the Native peoples and most importantly, we must keep an open mind.

Therefore, the RSA can only abhor the threat of use of armed intervention brandished by certain Canadian and Québécois politicians for solving constitutional problems with Native people. It does not matter if this force comes from the RCMP, the Canadian army, the Quebec Provincial Police or some day the possible (we hope impossible) Quebec army.

The example of Oka is still too fresh in our minds as to permit us to exclude this possibility. We all have a lot to lose by this kind of intervention, as we have already lost much by the invasion of the QPP in Kanehsatake. Yet it is the First Nations who would be once again the most injured, and their fundamental rights the most abused.

This said, we recognize the absolute right of Native people to defend against any aggression or destruction of their territory

The Need for Equality.

The Regroupement in Solidarity with the Native People would also like to express our solidarity with the pre-occupations that have been expressed during this constitutional debate by the Association of Native Women of Canada and of Quebec. In your nations, as in ours (and we have no lesson to teach anyone in this area), a real struggle must be made to establish equality. We must combat the scourge of violence against women. An end must be made to male domination which, as stated quite correctly by the Association of Native Women, was in a good part imposed on your communities, often by force, by a foreign society, ours.

We are convinced that, rather than weaken or divide your communities, such equality could only help to advance your struggle...

COLONIALISM AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Every society has rules of conduct and ways of dealing with those who do not respect them. In the European legal system criminal behavior is an offence against the State. The offender, if found guilty, "pays his debt to society" by going to jail or some other kind of punishment. Usually little attention is given to the victim. The underlying philosophy among the aboriginal inhabitants of North America is the resolution of disputes and the healing of wounds. Atonement and the restoration of social harmony are the goals - not punishment. Most aboriginal languages do not even have words for "guilty" or "not guilty".

To consolidate control of a newly acquired territory the colonizing power imposes its own legal system upon the colonized. The prime instrument in Canada was the Indian Act, a law so odious it hardly deserves to be called a law. It even went so far as to define a "person" as an individual other than an Indian and that until 1951! It regulated (and still does to quite some extent) every aspect of the natives' way of life and is the government's major weapon to destroy it. Among other things it outlawed spiritual ceremonies and made it illegal to sell livestock or produce outside the reserve of origin or to raise money for legal fees. It imposed the "pass system", which means the permission of the Indian Agent, before somebody could leave the reserve, had to be obtained, it forced the residential school system upon natives and even imposed punishment to a maximum of 30 days imprisonment for frequenting a pool room if this displeased the Indian Agent. It gave the government "the right" to decide who was Indian and who was not.

Legal means were also used to "justify" previous wrongs. The treaties are one example as they were often made after the natives' land had already been encroached upon. Another instance is the St. Peter's Settlement near Winnipeg. There were legal disputes between natives and non-natives over who owned certain portions of the land, prime agricultural land. A Royal Commission headed by Chief

Justice Howell of the Manitoba Court of Appeal was appointed to investigate in 1908. Rather than investigate Howell saw the solution in moving the natives, who were cheated out of the land through rigged meetings and illegal voting. So much was concluded by a provincial Royal Commission in 1912. Instead of intervening the federal government confirmed the allocation of the new reserve (now called Peguis) and passed the St. Peter's Reserve Act in 1916 to validate legal titles to land on the old reserve. This is not a unique case; in Manitoba alone 25 bands contend that they never received their full land allotment promised in their treaties.

The justice system more generally has not only completely failed natives, but has indeed victimized them. Overt and systemic racism have led to a vast overrepresentation of natives in prisons. Natives account for less than three percent of the total population but constitute 25 percent of inmates. Other than as prisoners they are rarely involved in the justice system and law enforcement. Family law was used to send thousands of native children for adoption to white families in Canada, the USA and even Europe. It came to be known as the "Sixties Scoop" and some natives called it kidnapping.

As Chief Louis Stevenson of Peguis put it: "We feel that we are victims of an alien system in law that has been imposed on us as Indian people, and that the devastating and tragic results are borne out in the negative statistics of our people involved in a Canadian system today." Putting it another way he also said: "The offender is not born in the Indian - the Indian is born into a system which offends."

"Aboriginal people want a judicial system that recognizes the native way of life, our own values and beliefs, and not the white man's way of life," said Elijah Harper. Natives don't only want a judicial system that reflects their own values, they want to take back control over their entire way of life. This right to self-determination precedes colonization and has never been voluntarily surrendered.

Support a solidarity movement with Native People!
Become a member of the Regroupement

Name : _____

Address : _____

City : _____ Postal Code : _____

Tel. (home) : _____ Tel. (work) : _____

I am available for : Phone Writing Translation
 Postering Distribution Other _____

Contribution : Individual membership \$10.00
 Support membership \$25.00
 International subscription \$25.00
 Group and organisation \$25.00
 Support Group and organisation \$50.00

Language : Français English

Mail this slip with your payment to : Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, 1265, rue Berri, #290, Montréal, Québec, H2L 4X4.

Ce bulletin est aussi disponible en français.

Raffle of a painting by Ellen Gabriel

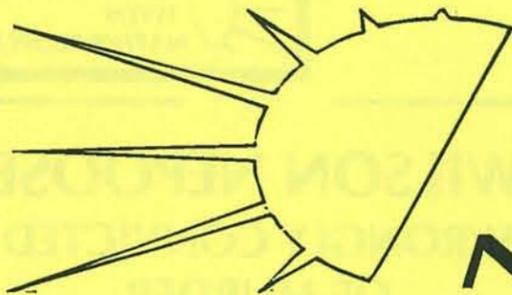
TO SUPPORT
MOHAWK
DEFENDANTS

Draw on March 20, at 7:30pm
During the Solidarity Evening
1212 rue Panet, Montréal (métro Beaudry)

All proceeds will go
to the Akweks Fund
Each ticket 2,00\$ or 3 for 5,00\$
Other prizes to be won!

To buy your tickets, contact the
REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ
AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES
(514) 499-0314





SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 12-13 April 1992

Interview with Michèle Rouleau

PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF NATIVE WOMEN

Michèle Rouleau is a young woman of about 30. Her freshness and enthusiasm are not dampened by the responsibilities and daily experiences she faces as President of the Quebec Native Women Association. She emanates a quiet force in her desire to achieve the objectives she and the members of her organization have set for themselves. The certainty of being on the right path as a human being and as a contemporary woman, are at the root of such quietude.

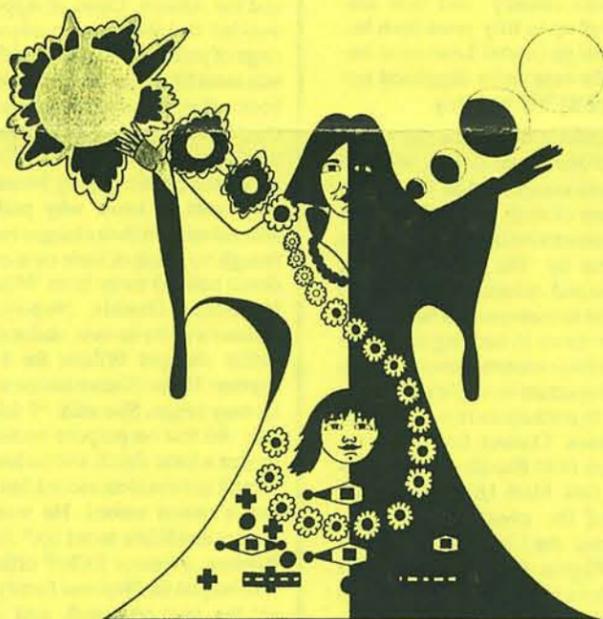
The goals of the native women are few and simple. The association was born of what was to remain its principal mission for many years: the abolition of article 12.1(b) of the Indian Act preventing a native woman married to a non-native to obtain her status as an Indian. Its present 'political' objective is to achieve the integration of women within the project for native autonomy. Such an integration would lay the foundations for a greater communication between men and women of different cultures, united, by force of circumstances, in the same mission. The Native Women have asked for a seat at the next reunion of the Assembly of First Nations to be held in Québec City.

However, they find themselves in a paradoxical situation: though they fully support the long-awaited project for autonomy, they want the Charter of rights and liberties or some equivalent protective scheme to be part of the Constitution of an Indian government.

The questions they are asking are these: "Would a native charter have any judicial basis? How would it apply? We are told that a native charter will have to be the product of our traditions and cultures. Have we all the same traditions and cultures? Will the native charter apply to all nations? Will there be several charters of aboriginal rights? Will there be a process of popular consultation? Who will ultimately reach a decision on the final content? Will such an aboriginal charter be in conformity with the international convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination directed at women as well as the convention on civil and political rights?"¹

Since women represent 52% of the population, it stands to reason that the arguments put forward by the majority of the members of a society ought to be incorporated within any constitutional project. According to Michèle Rouleau, "...an indian government... will have to adopt guiding principles insuring the protection of its citizens against abuses of power".¹

For the time being, there is no document that proposes the rights of citizens within an eventual indian government. The Native Women would like, at least, to be consulted on this matter by the authorities presently being put in place.



The other objectives are part of a broader social perspective. "It is not only the protection of rights that concerns us, we are also worried by the fact that social questions have not received the attention they deserve in the debate. And yet violence, alcohol and drug abuse as well as poverty, are realities that cannot be ignored. We believe that true autonomy cannot be achieved without such problems being put on the agenda."¹

Thus, the most exacting thing Michèle Rouleau has had to do has been to denounce the enormous problem represented by the violence pervading native families living on the reserves. It was difficult because, at first sight, such an action appears

to be a betrayal of her community. Nevertheless, in view of the increasing gravity and complexity of the situation, she has found herself compelled to act as she has. All Michèle Rouleau is demanding, is a simple evaluation of the administrative problems related to the basic protection of the victims of family violence. What is involved is a review of the procedures in order to arrive, as soon as possible, at a practical solution.

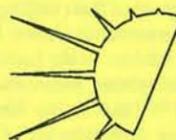
¹ Rouleau, Michèle, Présentation aux audiences du cercle des premières Nations sur la Constitution, Montréal, February 6, 1992, Native Women of Québec Inc.

DOWN WITH RACIST JUSTICE

PROTEST AGAINST THE TRIAL
OF OKA CRISIS DEFENDANTS

**DEMONSTRATION
SATURDAY
APRIL 25, 1992**

MEET AT CARRÉ ST-LOUIS
Métro Sherbrooke
2:00 p.m.



**REGROUPEMENT
DE SOLIDARITÉ
AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES
(514) 499-0314**

ELDERS DECLARE THEIR SUPPORT

At the Ninth Annual Elders and Traditional Peoples Gathering in mid-February, a resolution was presented in support of the defence of Mohawk Territory in 1990.

The following are the important points in the resolution adopted unanimously by the participants:

- to support those who held up the barricades in 1990;
- to demand that the Government of Canada deal with the issue on the basis of negotiation between Nation and Nation and not in the criminalization of individuals;
- to recognize the fact that the

Europeans took claim to this land by criminal means and by the use of genocide throughout the continent;

- to endorse the Akwek Defense Committee;

- to reaffirm that the defense of territory cannot be considered a criminal act.

This show of support, among hundreds that the Mohawks have received, is specifically important in that it was made by Native leaders from throughout North America and makes clear, once more, the political nature of their actions and the vast support that they receive.

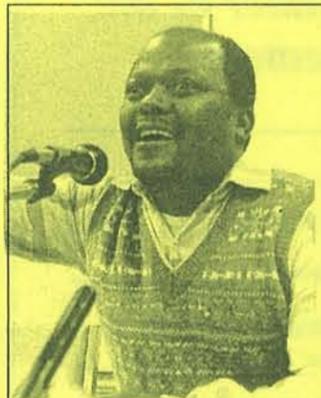
SOLIDARITY EVENING WITH THE MOHAWK \$2,700 raised for the Akweks Fund



Joe Deom



Joe David



Tex Molobe

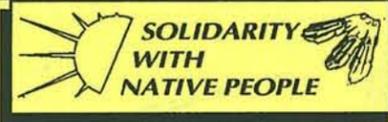


Ellen Gabriel

Photos: Sébastien Bouchard

On March 20, nearly 300 people united at the Centre St-Pierre in Montreal to show their solidarity with the accused from Oka-Kanehsatake who are presently on trial. Joe Deom of Kahnawak and Joe David of Kanehsatake, two of the three coordinators of the Akweks Fund and for the defense of the accused, spoke. A strong show of support was made by Tex Molobe who is part of a delegation of three South Africans who are currently visiting Native communities throughout Quebec. Ellen Gabriel who had generously donated one of her paintings in order to raise money for the Akweks Fund addressed the gathering. Ms. Gabriel also officiated over the raffle. The four winners were: May Chiu (the Ellen Gabriel painting), Beverly Nelson (the book, "People of the Pines" by Loreen Pindera and Geoffrey York), Maurice Bernier (the book, "The Children of Aatensic, A History of the Huron Nation" by Bruce Trigger), and Françoise Miquet (one year membership and a T-shirt of the Regroupement de Solidarité avec les Autochtones). \$2,700 were raised in the raffle and we thank all those who participated.

Genocide now : The Lubicon Struggle



The Lubicon Lake Cree Nation has no means of survival left. Like any country completely ravished by war, the Lubicon cannot feed themselves, because foreign invaders made sure that there would be no game left for the Lubicon, a hunting and trapping people, to survive on. Moose, the staple of the Lubicon Cree diet, has been reduced by the activities of the invaders (primarily by the cutting of numerous habitat destroying roads through the country of the Lubicon) to the extent that the community that once lived well on 400 kills a year, has lately not been able to take more than 20 moose per year.

Financial revenues from trapping enabled the people to complete their survival needs with an average of 5,000\$ a year before the illegal road construction began through the unceded territory in 1979. By 1984 the game had been depleted to the point that average income from trapping was a mere 400\$. The foreign invaders instituted a form of financial slavery in which the Lubicon would be given enough money to survive, but just barely. By 1984, 95% of the Lubicon were made dependent on this form of serfdom, called welfare, to survive, and despair has led to suicide and health problems including tuberculosis, present in a third of the community and active in one in ten.

The foreign invaders call "Canadians" and pretend to have the right to take oil and gas from the country of the Lubicon Lake Cree nation. These Canadians, adding insult to genocide, claim that the Lubicon are not a nation, not a country, and have no right to the land that they have inhabited for ages.

In order to further humiliate the Lubicon Cree people, who never signed any treaties with foreign powers, and strengthen the occupation of their country, the Department of Indian Affairs created the "Woodland Cree Band" in August of 1989 from among desperate individuals from the Lubicon and neighbouring Nations. The federal government offered each individual from the new "band" 50\$ to vote to accept a settlement that Lubicon Chief Bernard Ominayak rejected as insulting, promising 1,000\$ per family to those that did. Of course, those that did sign were then told that the 1,000\$ would be arriving in the form of their regular welfare cheques!

Daishowa Company

Seeing more money to be made by taking what does not belong to them, greedy Canadians organized as the "Alberta government" leased the Lubicon country to a Japanese forestry company called Daishowa in November of 1988 so that they could clear-cut the living trees.

Daishowa originally pledged that they would wait until the dispute was settled when Daishowa Vice President Koichi Kitigawa gave his word to chief Ominayak in front of witnesses on March 7, 1988. Daishowa has since repudiated this contract of honor, only delaying the commencement of their cutting operations from season to season. Fred Lennarson, advisor to the Lubicon, said in a telephone interview on March 10, 1992 that he has discovered that the governments of Alberta and Canada have advised Daishowa to be patient until the financial resources of the Lubicon people are exhausted in a trial The

Lubicon are being subjected to.

After repeatedly notifying logging and oil companies that they must get proper authorization from the Lubicon people to continue their activities in the Lubicon Lake Cree Nation country, and having companies like Petro-Canada close down 20 wells in response, logging equipment of the illegally-operating Buchanan Logging Company (a subsidiary of Daishowa) was burnt on November 24, 1990. Alarmed at this revolt Canadians moved to re-establish their illegal possession of the Lubicon Lake Cree Nation country by sending in RCMP forces who used police state tactics, including threats and physical abuse, to obtain information. Thirteen Lubicon Lake Cree were arrested in their own country and face sentences of up to fifty years each before foreign courts! Lennarson expects the case to be dismissed because of RCMP brutality.

The Lubicon demand a fair settlement of their land claims, with appropriate compensation for the destruction of their life-style and the means to survive in the world forced on them by the governments of Canada and Alberta. They demand the right to manage their forests in a manner more in keeping with their love of their ancestral country. This is an important struggle and one is urged to participate in a boycott of Daishowa. Contact friends of the Lubicon (484 Ridelle Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M6B 1K16) for the details of the events which have prompted the United Nations Human Rights Committee to find Canada in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in May of 1990.

WILSON NEPOOSE WRONGLY CONVICTED OF MURDER

On March 9, 1992, Wilson Nepoose, a 46 year old Cree Indian from Alberta was released from prison after serving more than five years of a sentence of life imprisonment without parole. Nepoose was convicted of strangling an Alberta woman, a crime he always insisted he did not commit.

After a key witness came forward to admit that she had lied at the trial, the federal government ordered a judicial review of his case and the Alberta Court of Appeal decided that there was a miscarriage of justice, or at least that this was most likely so. A new trial has been ordered but the Crown says that its case is so weak now that it won't go ahead. Nepoose's family want a public inquiry because they want to know why police pressed on with their charges even though so much of their own evidence pointed away from Wilson Nepoose. Debbie Nepoose, Wilson's sister-in-law, maintains police charged Wilson for two reasons: He is a Native and he was an easy target. She said: "I think they did that on purpose because he was a local drunk and he had a record; not a violent record, but he had a prison record. He was a perfect candidate to set up." Jack Ramsey, a former RCMP officer who helped the Nepoose family to get the case reopened, said authorities wanted a conviction at any cost.

In its decision the court said that the RCMP investigation was flawed and that the police had hidden crucial evidence from the Crown and the accused. For instance, at least four statements from the key witness that might have influenced the jury were withheld. The inquiry heard charges of police coercion and the chief investigating officer even lied to the inquiry,

The whole affair smacks of the Donald Marshall case in Nova Scotia: A crime is committed, a Native goes to jail and years later his conviction is shown to be unjust.

The Manitoba government created the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (AJI) in 1988 following the shooting of J.J. Harper, a Native activist, by a Winnipeg policeman. Its relevance is not limited to Manitoba; many of its findings apply to all of Canada with respect to the treatment Natives receive in the Canadian justice system.

Systemic discrimination

Discrimination and racism take many forms. They may, or may not be embodied in official government policy and, in the words of the AJI report, Canada has "a long and tragic history" in that respect and "Aboriginal peoples have experienced the most entrenched racial discrimination of any group in Canada." On a somewhat different level, racism arises from people's opinions about other groups and no doubt this form makes itself felt in the justice system too. But another manifestation of discrimination is not as readily perceived. It is "systemic discrimination" and is the result of many factors without any real in-

tent as such to discriminate. These factors include the "economic disadvantages that Aboriginal people experience, the impact of the poor quality of the educational service provided to Aboriginal people, cultural differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in their approach to the law, the lack of Aboriginal people employed in the justice system, and the level of service that the justice system provides to Aboriginal people."

A report done for the Department of Indian Affairs in 1967, "Indians and the Law" also found the presence of systemic discrimination in the justice system. Last November an Alberta judge, Mr. Cawsey, issued a report about the situation in that province and came in many ways to the same conclusions as the AJI.

A public inquiry

Report after report, inquiry after inquiry, and nothing seems to change. Apparently they don't even produce a greater sensitivity among the people responsible for it. Thus within hours after the verdict of the Alberta Court of Appeals was announced, Ken Rostad, Alberta's Attorney General stated: "I don't think there is any indication that because Mr. Nepoose happens to be a Native he has suffered any abuse through this system." This was his way of denying the need for a public inquiry as demanded by the Nepoose Family. If the speed with which he came to this conclusion is surprising, one should remember that he heads the very department which prosecuted Wilson. Of course he has every interest in attempting to cover up and hide the truth. His lack of concern for innocent victims like Wilson Nepoose and his family is nevertheless appalling.

The Nepoose family is hoping that a public inquiry would clear Wilson's name, because technically he is still charged with murder and, of course, there is also the question of compensation for all these years in prison. On March 17th it was announced that charges were stayed against Wilson Nepoose and the Solicitor General of Alberta said the RCMP will investigate how the original investigation was done. In other words the RCMP will investigate the RCMP.

The Donald Marshals, Leonard Peltiers and Wilson Nepooses are just the tip of the iceberg; most of the suffering inflicted on natives by a system that claims to be one of justice is not visible to most people. The preceding doesn't even touch on the important question of whether Canadian courts should have jurisdiction over Natives or not; it is just an attempt to show that where the courts do assert it, fairness, let alone justice, does not exist.

Please write to Alberta's Attorney General (Legislature Building, Room 423, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2B6) to demand a public inquiry of Wilson's wrongful imprisonment and send a copy to Wilson at: c/o Bob Sacks, 10 424 - 123 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5N 1N7.



Native Friendship Centre of Montreal

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featuring the Montagnais Group «Kashkun»

Wednesday, April 8, 1992

8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

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No alcohol or drugs will be tolerated

Information: 937-5338

Organized by Native Friendship Centre of Montreal in conjunction with the First Quebec Native AIDS Conference

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Ce bulletin est aussi disponible en français.

Land In Sight Event 1992

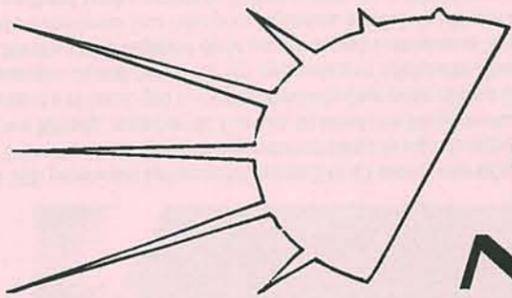
NATIVE FILM FESTIVAL IN MONTREAL

Saturday April 18th : Action Painting at 2 pm. Raffle at 7pm. At Café Campus 3315 Queen Mary Road. entry free.

Sunday April 19th : White and Red Blues with Richard Desjardins, Florent Vollant of "Kashin", Alanis O'Obomsawin. At Café Campus. Entry \$22.50

April 20, 21, 22 : Screening of films at the NFB Cinema, 200 René-Levesque West, at the Cinéma-thèque Québécoise, 335 de Maisonneuve East, and at Cinéma Festival, 35 Milton.

Information : 289-1990, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., monday to friday.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 14 May 1992

POINT OF VIEW

The cancellation of the 17 billion dollars' contract

A VICTORY, BUT ...

by Marc Bonhomme
Special collaboration

The Grand Council of the Crees and the, mainly American, environmentalist movement have been catalysts in bringing about a major defeat of the Quebecois establishment. The Cree nation have retaliated victoriously to the bulldozing of the James Bay I of 20 years ago. Needless to say that the James Bay Convention of 1975 was, in its time, the best unequal treaty ever signed in Canada. It remains an agreement imposed by fear and force, one that has profoundly enslaved and humiliated our Cree neighbours, with the partial exception of a handful of opportunist apprentices among them.

Such a victory, of course, was won only because the campaign against Great Whale was able to arouse the interest of both those of American isolationist sentiments and those lobby groups - preoccupied by energy efficiency and natural gas turbines rather than coal and nuclear energy production - that the deep recession afflicting the American north-east has hungered. By skillfully raising public awareness, the Crees and the ecologists have made it possible for this alliance between the ultra-conservative and progressive sectors of the American capitalist class, to further its own interests by draping itself in a green mantle and taking advantage of the "Dances with Wolves" syndrome. Is this a reason to treat the Grand Council as a fool duped into the trap of a smear campaign? Since when should the oppressed, in the name of ideological purity, refrain from exploiting the contradictions within the enemy camp? To abstain from doing so would be to condemn oneself to eternal marginality and an unending string of defeats.

The distorting prism of the constitutional debate....

This being said, it remains that no major political event in Québec can be fully grasped without due consideration being paid to the constitutional debate. And it is here that

things go sour. The Canadian decision-makers, whose ranks the First Nations' leadership has joined, have driven Québec into a corner. To this strategy of isolation, the liberal and PQ leaders, expectedly, have retorted by a wait-and-see attitude and a surly contemptuous stance towards the indigenous people.

Our political leaders' counter-strategy, assuming a similar policy and vile debasement to be worthy of such a name, has been sanctioned by the labour moguls' disdain of the consensus. This policy of partnership has created so much confusion among the people of Québec that perhaps the majority of us, while not endorsing the liberal government undertaking to build Great Whale, nevertheless sympathize with the "setbacks" experienced by poor Hydro-Québec.

.... and American interventionism

No doubt, as well, that this whole affair has whetted the appetite of the butcher of Salvador and Irak. The weakness of Québec will encourage the American states to try and reduce the unitary cost of their imports of electricity, while Washington will escalate its offensive against Norsk-Hydro's magnesium exports. It is even possible that Standard and Poor as well as Moody's will take advantage of the situation to eventually degrade the credit rating of Québec.

Hence, the defeat of Hydro-Québec appears rife with dangers. All the more so, given that the only serious passage out of the current economic crisis being offered to the working class by our "made in Québec" elite, is precisely by way of hydro-electric development. In the end, however, the dogged struggle of the Crees will have saved Québec from a terrible nightmare that would have precipitated us blindfolded into the vicious circle of a dependent capitalism brazilian style. Better to undergo a shock therapy now even though the festering wound of unemployment and misery continues to cloud our minds.

In order to avoid a Pyrrhic victory

Like a starving dog biting into its last bone, the Québec bourgeoisie is clinging desperately to the Energy of the North. If she is to be believed and the Crees manage to escape the brunt of the failure of Great Whale, then the Inuit of the Churchill, thanks to the government of Newfoundland, should not expect similar luck nor should those living around the Ste-Marguerite, or the Attikameks on the Haute St-Maurice or even the Anishnabé (Algonquins) on the Haute Gatineau. More than ever the unity of the nations living wholly or in part on the territory of Québec is necessary to resist the assaults of the raging beasts sitting in Ottawa and Québec and, hidden behind them, the mainly American and European monopolies of the "electricity club".

It is imperative that the union leaders realize in what a strategic dead-end they have engaged themselves. It is up to us to shake their cage by working in close relation with the union and popular grass roots movement, a task made easier now by the escalation of the popular struggles unleashed by the "savage" cuts to the social programs.

Let us hope that in the meantime, the leadership of the Grand Council of the Crees understands the necessity of a political campaign rooted in Québec as dynamic as the one launched in the United States. The discourse put forward by the Crees, with its emphasis on racism rather than the critical assessment of the electro-mechanic and electro-metallurgic multinationals dissimulating themselves behind Hydro-Québec, needlessly envenoms the relations between Crees and Québécois. As for the American environmentalists, perhaps they should fight more aggressively the devils in their own backyard?

After all, is the White House's plan to double, by 2030, the production of nuclear energy in the United States, really more ecological than the tapping of the energy of the North?

LEGAL COLUMN

After 32 days of jury selection, The Mohawks of the "T.C. 39", on the last day, have chosen a jury. Contrary to speculation by the press, the Mohawks and their native allies refused to file a motion to dismiss the trial on the grounds that it is impossible to seat an impartial jury. Rather than allow the issues to be "swept under the rug", the Mohawks preferred that the unjustified accusations brought against them by the foreign justice system be challenged and refuted. It is not enough that these charges be dismissed on a technicality. The time and effort which brought them to this point must not be wasted or forgotten.

This short press release, which was made on April 27 by the Akweks Legal Defense Coordination Committee, made up of defendants Joe Deom, Lorne Oaks, and Joe David, explains the turn of events that took place at the Palais de Justice of Montreal.

The long chapter on jury selection had just been closed and the Mohawk defendants made it very clear that they wanted to face the political implications of the trial that had been imposed on them.

A difficult task

The jury selection process began on March 2nd. In all, 2,500 potential jurors were screened. After the hearings for exemption requests, 624 possible candidates remained, of which 12 jurors were to be chosen.

As of April 28, only four jurors had been chosen and 36 others were on "stand-by". These were asked to show up again at court on the 29th. The fate of the trial would be decided then. On the 29th, to everyone's surprise, the other eight jurors were selected among the remaining 36 people.

Support needed

Except for the last day, jury selection took place in front of an empty courtroom. Hopefully, more supporters of the accused will be present during the rest of the trial. The defendants who have to endure such unjust court proceedings need our support - attending the trial would be a show solidarity with the defendants, who on several occasions have expressed the desire for greater public support. And this travesty of justice continues... Witness examination will begin on May 11. We ask all those who can to attend the hearings.

Support the Innus of Nitassinan in their march from Malietenam to Montréal against the hydro-electric projects on their Territory

Come and walk the last kilometre with the Marchers

Saturday, May 30th, at 1:00 PM

at Carré St-Louis (Metro Sherbrooke) to be followed by a

Gathering in Solidarity

3:00 PM

with Innu and Cree representatives in room JA-050, Pavillon Hubert-Aquin, Université du Québec à Montréal

This activity is being organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones
Information : 499-0314

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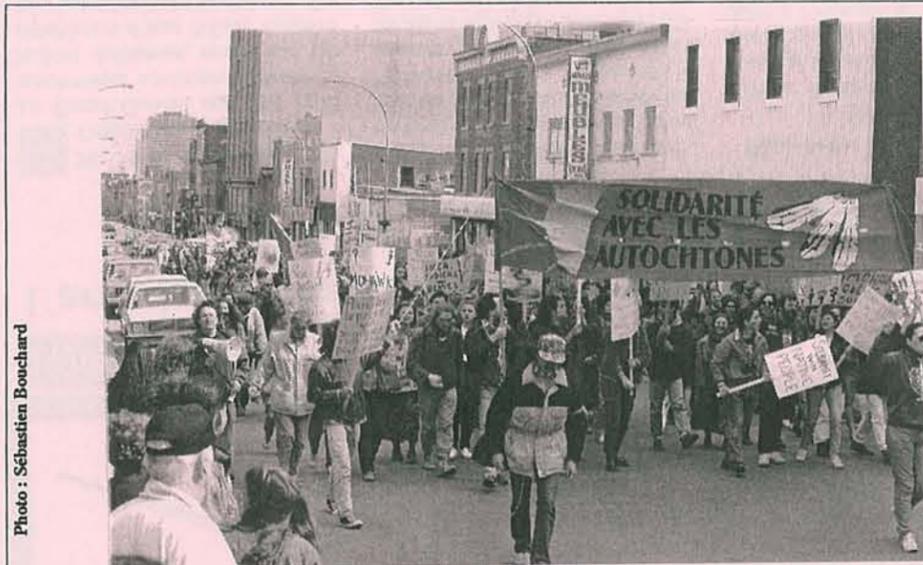
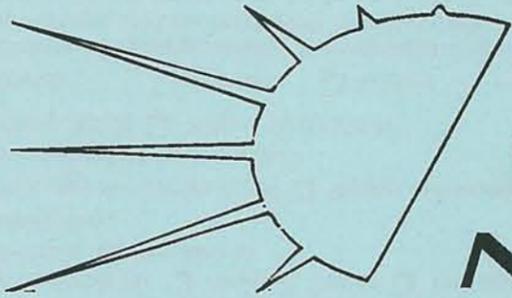


Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

Almost 300 people marched on Saturday, April 25, to show their support for the accused of the Oka Crisis. Both Joe Deom and Joe David spoke to the gathering. Billy Two Rivers, a member of the Band Council of Kahnawake, also spoke and denounced the trials against the Mohawks saying that the real criminals were the Mayor of Oka, Jean Ouellette, and the SQ. Jeanne-Mance Sharliche, an Innu of Pointe-Bleue, Marie-Célie Agnant, of the Haitian community, and Tex Molobé of South Africa, all encouraged the Mohawks to continue their struggle for justice. In her speech, Madeleine Parent, a longtime feminist and militant unionist, emphasized the reality of police repression against both Blacks in South-West Montreal and Natives.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 15-16 June-July 1992

HYDRO-QUÉBEC IS CONQUERING NITASSINAN

Nitassinan is a vast territory inhabited by 10,000 people of the Innu (Montagnais) Nation situated on the Lower North Shore of the St. Lawrence and includes the Québec-Labrador Peninsula. In the Innu language — Innumun — the word "Nitassinan" means "our land". For over 9,000 years the inhabitants of this territory have been able to survive from generation to generation, developing their language, their culture, their way of life — in short, their existence.

Their vision of the world begins with their land and arises from their interaction with her. Their presence in Nitassinan for millennia is witness to their tenacity and their wealth as a nation.

NATO hunter-bombers

Since the beginning of this century the People inhabiting this region of the Americas have had to endure, along with their brothers and sisters of other nations, the consequences of railroads, highways, fences, communication and high tension lines that slice and partition their land. The Innu have seen their territory plundered by mines, the massive cutting of forests, and hydro-electric exploitation.

And, for over ten years, the Innu that inhabit the northern portion of the ancestral territory have also had to face the militarization of Nitassinan. Every year, from April to October, more than 8,000 flights are committed by NATO hunter-bombers that cleave the sky 30 m from the ground, over camps, and hunting and fishing territories of the Innu people, over the lakes, rivers and valleys of Nitassinan.

The Churchill River

In 1974, after the completion of the projects at Churchill Falls in Nitassinan, 6 700 Km² of territory were submerged by the rising waters of the reservoir named Smallwood. This billion-dollar project was, at the time, the most important hydro-electric complex in North America. It pierced the heart of Nitassinan. Nakashan Antane, young Innu hunter of Sheshatshit: "Many of our elders as well as their children were upset by the inundation of Lake Michikamau (1974)... they lost all their hunting places. But, even worse, can you imagine how our grandparents felt when they found out that the graves of our ancestors were submerged? Joey Smallwood, the Prime Minister of Newfoundland at the time, was completely unaware... that there was, under the water in the reservoir bearing his name, the tombs of our people, our relatives".

Since 1974 the lion's share of the 5,428 megawatts of the Churchill Falls project has been accorded to Hydro-Québec at a ridiculously low price in effect until 2041. Hydro-Québec was directly involved in this project as partner of the Bechtel multi-national of San Francisco. Hydro-Québec continues to export

Nitassinan energy to the United States and the profits of this energy sale financed much of the work for the first phase of James Bay.

Two new hydro-electric projects have been proposed for the lower course of the Churchill River between now and the year 2000. A first phase would begin in 1994 and would require the construction of two new powerhouses with a generating power of 3,088 megawatts.

A second phase, which is ostensibly separate from the first, would augment the capacity of the Smallwood Reservoir and would affect a hydrographic basin of 7,070 km². A 650 km corridor of high tension lines is envisioned to transport the electricity to Newfoundland, and the government hopes to attract an aluminum smelter to the region, along with as many mining companies as possible.

Hydro-Québec, in its role as creditor in Nitassinan, will benefit from more than two thirds of the hydro-electric production from the proposed projects for the lower course of the Churchill River. These projects can not be realized without Hydro-Québec's support or involvement.

The March of Nitassinan

On the 3rd of May, 1992, representatives of Innu communities on the Lower North Shore left the region of Sept-Iles on foot, heading for Montréal. The Innu walked 900 Km to demonstrate their disapproval of the hydro-electric projects planned for Nitassinan and to propose economic and cultural alternatives to the butchering of a territory which has never been ceded via treaty or otherwise.

On the same day thousands of people organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Sept-Iles, the Association of Manufacturers of Québec (head by Richard Le Hir) and several native "leaders" swayed to the cause of "mega-progress" demonstrated to show their support of Hydro-Québec and the S.M. 3 project on the Sainte Marguerite River.

The hydro-electric restructuring of this river situated between Port Cartier and Sept-Iles on the Lower North Shore is the second project after Grande-Baleine on the books for Hydro-Québec. This 3 billion-dollar complex includes the diverting of two tributaries of the Moisie River, the Rivers Pékans and Carheil, in order to increase the flow of the Sainte Marguerite River.

It will be in the reservoir of the more northerly Carheil where the presence of mercury will increase the most, surpassing levels recorded at James Bay. Additionally, the Moisie River, renowned for the size of the 12,000 to 32,000 salmon that return to spawn each year, will be reduced 13,5 to 42%, depending on the specific area.

In summer 1992

This complex will consist of the construction of a 50 km road in the Fermont region as well as an underground powerhouse of 846 megawatts 90 km from the mouth of the Sainte Marguerite River. The project will require nine years to complete and the plan calls for the complex to be on-line in 2001. At the beginning of January 1992, Hydro-Québec stopped engineering work as the project is not yet approved by the Québec Environment Ministry. If Hydro-Québec's responses on environmental topics is deemed satisfactory and the pressure exerted by management (and company) is sufficient, the summer of 1992 is a plausible date for the issuing of a certificate of conformity, and the work will resume in Nitassinan.

Long term vision

According to communiqué issued by the Innu: "The March for Nitassinan denounces the strictly economic ambitions of the Government of Québec on Nitassinan. We want to sensitize all Quebecers to the necessity of accentuating environmental concerns in the formulation of energy policy and this in spite of an economic and political context which lends itself poorly these days to supporters of collective welfare and social peace. In this light we warn the Government of Québec against the implementation of development plans whose economic benefits are short term yet include major impacts on the environment."

Aside from projects planned for the lower course of the Churchill River and project S.M.3 on the Sainte Marguerite River, Hydro-Québec is planning, in the future, to harness La Romaine River and Robertson Lake on the Lower North Shore, as well as the Péribonka and Ashuapmushuan Rivers in Lac St. Jean, also in Innu territory.

MOHAWK NATION ON TRIAL

Despite the lack of support manifested in or around the court room, our spirits remain very strong. That's probably due to the incredibly weak case the Crown has presented: the lack and fabrication of evidence, lies and inconsistencies. Now we will present ourselves as a Nation which was attacked, not just during the Oka crisis of 1990, but since contact with the first European colonists.

Joe David,
Mohawk trial Defendant,
Montréal, May 26, 1992

June 10th, 1992. After four weeks and 12 days in court, Crown prosecutors concluded their presentation of evidence against 39 Native defendants charged, following the Oka/Kanehsatake crisis of 1990, with possession of weapons, rioting, and interfering with "peace officers" (sic). The Crown presented eight witnesses, most of them officers of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and members of the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) SWAT team. They testified as to their version of events beginning with the SQ attack against the Mohawk Nation on July 11th, 1990, up until September 26 of the same year when the Mohawks and their Native allies decided to leave the Treatment Center (TC) in Kanehsatake completely unarmed.

The Crown supplemented eye witness accounts of the events surrounding the 78 day siege of Kanehsatake with video footage, army charts and an impressive arsenal of weapons said to represent those destroyed by the Mohawks before leaving the TC. But during cross-examination by defence lawyers Julio Peris and Richard Corriveau, a number of contradictions and inconsistencies were made apparent in the Crown's evidence. A number of witnesses had a hard time identifying the defendants or remembering the exact sequence of events they were involved in. During the Crown's presentation of evidence, a number of soldiers and police clearly admitted the defen-

sive nature of Mohawk barricades and installations, and of not knowing anything about the history of the Mohawk Nation or of the land issue in Kanehsatake which dates back some 400 years. All were merely following orders and doing their jobs...

In all, 1500 heavily armed soldiers of the CAF and an undisclosed number of SQ para-military forces were deployed in a 30 km radius surrounding the TC. Sixty Native men, women and children resisted the illegal occupation of their ancestral homeland in the TC during the summer of 1990 and faced the military's human rights abuses, tactics of intimidation and psychological warfare.

Video images repeatedly showed Mohawk women and elders diffusing potentially explosive situations and the army's exaggerated and offensive use of Armed Personnel Carriers, surveillance towers, military manoeuvres, helicopters and C-6 "multi-purpose" machine guns capable of firing 800 rounds a minute. Evidence also revealed that a number of military units across Canada were on alert throughout the crisis and ready to intervene at a moments notice, including paratroopers stationed at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, in Ontario.

The Defence began presenting its version of events and history as of June 10. On the same day, 5 of the defendants represented by Julio Peris and Owen Young were acquitted for lack of proof. The remaining 34 defendants will continue the trial in the spirit of resistance and defiance which carried them through the summer 1990. The defence's case is expected to last at least one week before final arguments are heard. The jury's verdict will then follow an unspecified period of deliberation. Daily summaries of the trial are being published once a week by the *Regroupement* in order to document the case and to keep Native media, organizations and supporters informed. So keep in touch and contribute financially if you can!

MARCH FOR NITASSINAN



Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

More than 300 people marched the last kilometer of the great Innu March from Malitotenam to Montréal to the music of the Innu band Kashtin.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

One Weapon in the Government's Arsenal to Destroy Indian Cultures

Until the early 19th century, government policy in Canada with respect to the original inhabitants of the land was dictated primarily by military concerns. Its goal was relatively straightforward: to maintain the various nations as military allies. With the decline in international tensions ushered in by the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, the traditional role of Indians as military allies changed. From the 1830s on, prevalent attitudes can be summarized under two headings: paternalism and the goal of solving "the Indian Problem" by eliminating them as peoples.

To send Indian children to residential schools was one of the means the Canadian government used in the attempt to destroy native cultures. The schools' purpose was to separate aboriginal children from their families, often from the young age of three years, sometimes until they were eighteen, in order to eradicate their culture, i.e. to turn them into apples, red on the outside, white inside. In many cases the children were in effect kidnapped, taken forcefully from their families by Indian Agents.

From the 1960s, on residential schools were being phased out; the last two closed in 1988 and it would appear that in later years the abuse had somewhat diminished. So why write about it now, you may ask. It is important for several reasons not to forget this part of our history. For one, those who were subjected to this cruel experience are still among us. Their wounds may never completely heal. Ruby Dunstan, chief of the Lytton band, voiced the sentiments of many when she said: "It was horrible. It was the worst five years of my life. They treated us like animals and they expected us to come out a happy person. As far as I know, nobody has ever come out of there happy." Jane Willis, a Cree from the James Bay region, attended an Anglican residential school in the 1940s and 1950s: "For twelve years I was told to love my neighbor — especially if he was white — but to hate myself. I was made to feel untrustworthy, inferior, incapable, and immoral. The barbarian in me, I was told, had to be destroyed if I was to be saved. I was told to feel nothing but shame for my pagan savage ancestors ... When I had been stripped of all pride, self-respect, and self-confidence, I was told to make something of myself."

More generally, this experience is part of every Indian's consciousness, whether he or she was sent to these schools or not. In that way it influences present day relations. In

the words of the Public Inquiry into the Administration of Justice and Aboriginal People, "Canadian people are only beginning in the 1990s to comprehend how harsh, how demeaning, how exploitive" these schools were. For most natives, residential schools remain one of the saddest chapters in their history. Anybody who is sincerely interested in better relations between the first nations living in this part of the world and non-natives should have an awareness of what they have been in the past.

Children were subjected to often cruel physical punishment -like sewing needles being driven through their tongues- simply for speaking their own language. On arrival they usually spoke nothing but their own language and yet only English was allowed. The schools were operated for the government by Churches. The children's spiritual names were replaced by European ones as soon as they got there. Their hair was cut, in most cases for the first time in their life. The humiliation of children in front of the others was one of the preferred tools of the "educators". All too often there was sexual abuse. These are undisputed facts and the Churches have apologized for it, though only very recently.

Until there is not a single Indian

The efforts to stamp out all vestiges of native culture were a deliberate attempt at cultural genocide, which remained at the heart of federal government policy in the 20th century. The Indian Affairs Department's deputy minister, Duncan Campbell Scott, put it succinctly: "Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department."

The Indian Act provided for the compulsory attendance of residential schools from 1894 on and it stated that parents "who fail, refuse or neglect to cause such children to attend school" were to be punished "by fine, or imprisonment, or both." Voluntary attendance at school had been minimal and through these amendments the government sought to "educate" Indian children without either their consent or their parents'. In the province of Manitoba, for example, schooling was not compulsory for non-Indians until 1916, 22 years later.

Not everybody went to residential schools. By the 1940s about 8,000 Indian children were enrolled in 76 of these institutions across Canada. That meant that approximately half the Indian children were attending school; the others went to federal day school. From the 1960s on the government adopted the new policy of sending Indian children to regular provincial schools, which might appear to be a much better approach but in fact was plagued by its own problems. That will be discussed in an upcoming article.

The government almost succeeded in its attempts to destroy native cultures. Among many nations only a handful of Elders can still speak their language and communication with younger members is only possible in English. In fact, fifty of Canada's fifty-three native languages are considered to be in danger of extinction. Thirteen of them are in extreme danger because they are spoken by fewer than a hundred people. Some pessimists feel that only Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut have an excellent chance of survival.

Continued in the next issue as "Fighting Back: The Struggle for Control of Native Education".

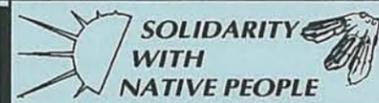
Blockade in Saskatchewan

On May 13, a blockade was erected near Canoe Lake in Northern Saskatchewan. The blockade encampment is comprised of native elders and families from communities in the region who have taken the name Protectors of Mother Earth (POME).

They are protesting Companies like Millar-Western who are clear-cutting trees for pulp and selling it to companies in the U.S. A major client is Scott, who use the pulp to make paper towel and toilet paper.

POME want to be part of long-term planning for sustainable forest management, to maintain traditional land use and create new jobs needed for northern residents that do not destroy the environment. Recent negotiations between POME, members of the tribal council, the government and the logging companies have broken down.

The camp needs food, money and physical and moral support. Contact Ruth Iron (306) 829-4518 or (306) 829-4320, FAX (306) 829-4424. Donations by check : c/o Butch Irons, General Delivery, Canoe Narrows, Sask. SOM 0K0.



TONY RIOS A BLATANT INJUSTICE

By Lois Cape
Special collaboration

Last July 30, Tony Rios, a 14-year-old Lakota boy, was bullied and forced into a fight by a 34-year-old white man in Rapid City, South Dakota, U.S. The boy used a knife in an attempt to get away from his attacker. As a result of shallow stab wounds, the man died. Thus began a long series of violations of human and civil rights toward both Tony and his mother.

Within hours Tony was arrested and the case was splashed all over the local press, including details of his family. Thelma Rios, Tony's mother, a Wounded Knee veteran, has been an activist for many years, fighting for the rights of her people. Her most recent campaign, in May 1991, was against the juvenile justice system in South Dakota and the treatment of young Native offenders.

Adult court for a child

At first Tony was held in the Juvenile Detention centre, in maximum isolation for seven months. He was denied all psychological and traditional spiritual help. After repeated suicide attempts he was transferred to Pennington County Jail, an adult facility.

His case was transferred into adult court, over all objections, where he faced a maximum life sentence instead of the seven years maximum in juvenile court.

It was evident throughout that Tony

is merely being used as a pawn in order for the system to hit back at his mother. They would purposely keep knowledge from her. Even some hearings were carried on without her knowledge.

Guilty

The trial itself was full of discrepancies and conflicting testimony. Tony was found guilty of first degree manslaughter. He was also tried for an unrelated assault charge, "aggravated assault with a dangerous weapon" (again a knife) when he had been cornered and harassed by older teens. Again he was found guilty.

On March 20, he was sentenced to 8 years for the assault charge and 20 years suspended (parole) for the manslaughter. He was taken from the courtroom to another facility 400 miles across the state — no time to get his things from his cell, make a phone call, or even say goodbye to his mother.

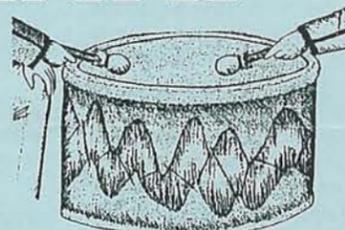
Taken to the hard-core Sioux Falls pen, he was again beaten by other inmates. Eventually he was sent to Springfield where there is a strong Native council and his fellow-prisoners are looking out for him. He desperately needs contact, especially with other kids, support letters, just to know he is not forgotten.

Send letter to Tony or money for legal costs to: Thelma Rios, 2429 Gnugnuska Dr., Rapid City, S.D. 57701, USA. Tel : (605) 341-5468.

POW WOW

AT KANEHSATAKE AND KAHNAWAKE JULY 11-12

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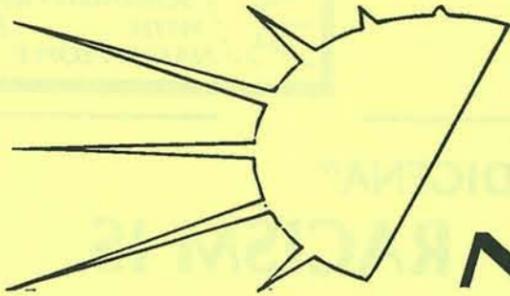
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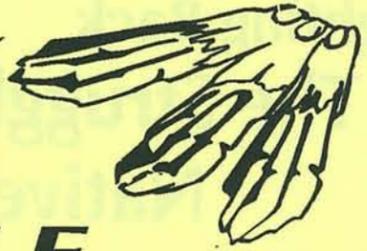


Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

Early in the morning last May 4th, more than 80 people came to the Montreal Palais de Justice to be with the Mohawk accused and their allies, on the first day of the trial.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 17-18 August-September 1992

A VICTORY STILL INCOMPLETE

The media who, until then, had ignored the trial of the Mohawks and the other Natives indicted for their involvement in the struggle of Kanehsatake during the summer of 1990, have commented extensively since July 3rd, the acquittal, at the Palais de Justice of Montréal, of the last thirty-four accused.

Some have cried injustice and were scandalized that the ransack of some Oka homes and the death of Corporal Marcel Lemay «had remained unpunished», even though charges of vandalism were never laid during this trial, and the coroner's inquest into the death of the policeman has yet to take place! Others have been content to minimize the impact of the verdict, emptying it of all political content while explaining it as the result of a simple lack of evidence.

A political defence

Although it is difficult to know with certainty the motives behind the verdict rendered - in the Canadian judicial system, the jury is

enlarge its golf course while allowing a housing development on the ancestral land of the Mohawks, a territory that «the Mohawk women never alienated»⁽¹⁾.

On July 11, 1990, the Sureté du Québec violently attacked the persons who had been occupying for three months a narrow, seldom used, dirt road set back from route 344. Afterwards, the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake was encircled for seventy-eight days and deprived of food, clothing and medicine. No less than fifty-five cases of human rights violations have been reported.

During that time, the Canadian and Québécois governments refused to negotiate in good faith and even withdrew from the negotiations once the Mercier bridge had been reopened, thus giving the signal for the army to enter Kanehsatake. Far from acting with the neutrality it was claiming for itself, the army constantly resorted to intimidating tactics and psychological warfare ma-

having, its own beliefs. It is impossible to evaluate to what extent this unambiguous assertion of identity has influenced the jury. However, by acquitting the accused, the jury has implicitly recognized that the dispute over the territory of Kanehsatake, was not simply a criminal affair and has remanded it on the political level.

It is an important victory for the Mohawks and for all Native nations. But it is only a temporary victory and one that does not solve the underlying problem. While the governments have failed partly in their attempt to criminalize the struggle of the Mohawk people... they have not, for all that, accepted to negotiate nation to nation with it.

The sovereignty and the territorial rights of the Mohawks have yet to be acknowledged and the municipal authorities of Oka are far from having given up their plans for the Pinegrove. At the beginning of August, the Sureté du Québec has reinforced its

The Algonquins RETURN TO SQUARE ONE

Last August 17, the Algonquin people of Barrier Lake told logging company employees to stop their work and to leave the area. "They didn't threaten us. They just told us to leave and we went", commented one of the workers. This followed several disputes between the Algonquins and businessman forester, Claude Bérard, who had obtained a permit to log a sector of La Vérendrye Park from, the Ministère québécois des forêts, (The Quebec Forestry Ministry). According to the Algonquins, logging in this sector breaks a trilateral agreement that they signed with the two levels of Government, Provincial and Federal, under a year ago.

Sacred Territories Threatened

The agreement provided for environmental studies on 10,000km² of Algonquin territory. The Algonquins and the Governments had agreed that until the study was completed, there would be no logging or chemical spraying in the "sensitive zones" of the territory. According to the Barrier Lake spokesman Michel Thusky, things have been going badly since last October. "First the Quebec Government had decided to spare the sensitive zones, but permitted clear cutting in all surrounding areas, without respecting a buffer zone" he said. Later, the Ministère des forêts allowed a logging company to cut in the sensitive zone. "The Quebec Government decides for itself which are the sensitive zones", said Michel Thusky. "We don't want to stop all logging, but we do want to protect the territories by prohibiting logging in our sacred areas and also to regulate the cutting



Michel Thusky at a public event organized by the Regroupement.

methods."

At the beginning of August, the Algonquins accepted the appointment by the Quebec Government of Judge Réjean Paul, to act as a mediator in the dispute. He will meet with all concerned parties (Algonquins, Québec Government and logging companies), to hear their grievances and comments on the interpretation of the trilateral agreement. "We will have to renegotiate with the Government based on the report by Judge Paul", lamented Michel Thusky. They risk compromising the conclusive trilateral agreement, that assured not only protection of the environment in Algonquin Territory, but also development of a durable strategy for a selective logging practice, which would replace destructive clear cutting methods.

It is surprising that the Algonquins do not receive more support from the Quebec Government and population. Once we have razed La Vérendrye Park, what will happen? The logging industry workers will be out of a job, and Quebec will have lost an ecologically important area. We can no longer afford to go after the "quick buck", but must seriously consider our future....



Some of the accused. From left to right: Joe David, Leroy Gabriel, Bradley Laroque, Robert Skidders, Susan Oak and Mike Mayo.

not required to justify its decisions -, we can assert with confidence that it did not remain impervious to the way the trial unfolded. While the evidence presented by the Crown was weak and little credible, the testimonies on behalf of the defence have conveyed convincingly the Mohawks' version of the events of 1990.

The accused, among whom thirty-three were represented by Counsel Richard Corriveau, far from limiting their pleas to strictly criminal matters, never denied their alleged presence on the scene or having been in possession of firearms. The defence, however, has successfully shaken the accusations brought against them: participation in a riot, hampering the work of peace officers, illegal carrying of firearms with the purpose of endangering the public peace, during the period from September 1 to 27, 1990.

The defence has shown that the Mohawk nation never attacked or hindered anyone but that it, rather, had been the victim of a series of aggressions. These began long before the crisis and increased in intensity with the decision of the municipality of Oka to

noeuvres against the Mohawks.

Furthermore, the witnesses for the defence have explained, invoking their traditions and the Grand Law of the Peace, that the Mohawks had armed themselves only to defend their Land and their lives, that they were only carrying out their role of Rotsikenrekehth («those who bear the burden of peace on their shoulders», in the Mohawk language). Never have the Mohawks and their allies from other Native nations, while entrenched within the confines of the Kanehsatake treatment center, ever opened fire. And, according to the testimonies heard, they would have done so only «if the soldiers had fired on the Mohawk women and children». All along, during the twenty-five days spent in the treatment center, the women, the elders and some Oneida spiritual counsellors have worked to diffuse the situations liable to degenerate into violence.

One round won, but...

During their trial, the Mohawks have unfalteringly presented themselves as a sovereign Nation, a nation with its own constitution, its own laws, its own way of be-

presence in Kanehsatake where it continues to want to enforce its jurisdiction as in Kahnawake and Akwesasne. By mid-summer, the SQ had even leaked some plans, dating back to the period prior to the crisis, for an invasion of Kahnawake... as if it wanted to test the ground in view of eventual actions in that direction. As for the media campaign against the Mohawks, it has increased one notch since the acquittal of the thirty-nine accused. Other trials have still to be held, like the appeal presented by Ronald Cross and Roger Lazore, convicted earlier this year to jail sentences and those of about twenty Mohawks arrested during incidents that occurred in Kanehsatake before and after the crisis.

In short, nothing is settled and the support for the Mohawk nation must not cease or vigilance be loosened because a first round has been won. Others, perhaps even more decisive ones, are still to come...

⁽¹⁾ In its testimony, Deborah Etienne, a Mohawk of Kanehsatake, has explained that, in the Mohawk society, it is the women who are «the guardians and curators of the land ».

Kanehsatake

Public event

September 26, at 19:30

at Centre St-Pierre

1205 Visitation (Beaudry metro)

Montréal

A mohawk representative will come and update the situation at Kanehsatake

Book issuing

«Non coupable»

A number of the accused will take part in the celebration following the public launching of this new book about the trial of the "39".

Fighting Back The Struggle for Control of Native Education

Part II

If the government saw residential schools as a means to destroy native culture, aboriginal leaders had a very different vision of the education they wanted their children to enjoy. In the treaty negotiations in the 1870s and later, natives had sought and obtained promises from the government that schools would be provided on their reserves. Indian leaders recognized the need to adapt to the European cultural milieu. They realized the importance of mastering the white man's magic art of writing, "the talking paper". They did not want lessons in Christianity and wished to maintain control of the values that were being communicated to their children.

A cultural renewal is taking place among first nations. This has brought about a renewed sense of pride in their cultures and the number of people able to speak native languages is rising. Canadians often ask what native self-government means. While it means different things for different communities, it does - in a general sense - mean control over their lives. That means, among other things, control over education, "social services", justice and economic development. In the early 1970s the fight for self-government focussed on the struggle for the control of education.



Bob Skidders comforting a young boy at the Kanehsatake Pow Wow

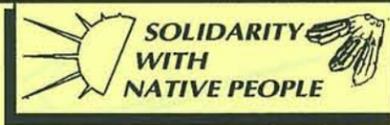
Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

Indians had never stopped fighting back. In 1911, a Cree chief asked the governor general to replace residential schools with day schools. The League of Indians of Western Canada passed a resolution to the same effect. The government stayed on its course until the 1960s. After a sit-in at the Blue Quills residential school lasting several weeks a group of Indians from the Saddle Lake reserve in Alberta became the first native community to gain control of their school. That was in September 1970. In 1973, the chiefs of the four bands of Sabaskong Bay in northwestern Ontario asked the Department of Indian Affairs for permission to set up their own

schools because the children were unhappy at Father Moss School, the provincial school they had to attend. The department refused and in November the Ojibways began a school boycott. In defiance of the government they set up their own school in an old building on the reserve. Today there are around 250 band-controlled schools in Canada, accounting for about one third of Indian elementary and high school students. Results in terms of lower dropout rates and higher marks in native controlled schools attest to their superiority. But much remains to be done. Only 10 percent of native students finish high school and only one percent go on to university. If one considers that two thirds of Canada's 750,000 natives live in cities one can see the disadvantages this implies.

David Blacksmith, a Cree living in Winnipeg, remembers the brick walls natives ran into when they tried to organise a native high school there. It took three years of negotiations with the Winnipeg authorities to achieve the goal. In September 1991 the "Children of the Earth High School" - a name chosen by the students themselves - opened its doors for over 200 aboriginal students. It's controlled by the Thunder Eagle Society, the group which took the initiative to organise the school and now acts as its "school board". The curriculum was developed from an aboriginal perspective and includes the teaching of native languages, history from an aboriginal point of view and other aboriginal knowledge. Eric Robinson, president of the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, summed it up this way: It is "a school that believes in teaching a little bit about some of the things we may have lost over the years. For example, our languages and our traditional way of believing in certain things. ... What we are trying to restore here with our young people ... is some sense of progress ... some sense of pride that those things are beautiful." Bill Sanderson, president of the Thunder Eagle Society, said that by "taking control of our education and not leaving it up to somebody else to tell us what we should learn or how we should learn it, I think this time, as aboriginal people, we'll be getting a real education. ... We're going to grow; this is just the beginning."

There is also an Ojibway pre-school program at the Abenuchi Centre in Winnipeg and it has been found that parents, who don't speak Ojibway, learn from their children.



"INDIGENA" RACISM IS STILL ALIVE

by Yves Robillard
Special collaboration

"Euro-American society is fundamentally racist towards Native people. If this spirit of domination continues, it is certain that conflict will escalate."

This mildly phrased warning is only one of many such statements, most of them far more violent, heard at the Indigena conference.

"Indigena: The Native Perspective Five Hundred Years later" is a series of events intended to examine the consequences for American Indians of Columbus' so-called discovery; these events were inaugurated on April 16 at the Museum of Civilization in Hull and will continue until October 12.

The organizer, Gerald McMaster, a Cree painter in charge of native art at the Museum, made the following introductory remarks: "For us, 1492 marked the start of 500 years of the same religious, cultural, social, economic and political intolerance which still pervades all levels of society today.... Since 1492, Native peoples have been assigned inferior rank in the official history of the country. What do we have to celebrate this year if not, perhaps, the moment when consciousness of the history and survival of Native peoples will begin to be known by large numbers of people all over the world!" (...) "But do not make the common mistake of thinking that it is a particular people that we resent. It must be made clear that what we are fighting are systems and processes, and that changes in these systems can only be brought about by persons able to conceive intelligent and non-threatening alternative solutions!"

We are alive

What exactly are the systems in question? Most of all, the paternalistic attitude of Western civilization! "Today, we recognize the brutality of the conquerors, but not the fact that the Natives were not savages", says Lance Bélanger, a New-Brunswick Malecite. Alfred Young Man, professor at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, adds: "The so-called 'universality' of Western civilization has been contested by many White thinkers. Victorian ideas on human evolution, such as those of Taylor and Morgan, are still commonly held, although anthropologists have rejected them... Why do Native people feel that Western scientific and artistic establishments are the ones responsible for isolating and confining American Indians by fitting them into narrow stereotypes intended for universal consumption? We are alive and have the right to evolve as we wish!"

"The Berlin wall has fallen",

says Jim Logan, a Yukon Cree Indian. "People from the Eastern countries of Europe will leave their native lands. There will be many immigrants. Are we ready for this?"

Many American Indians are afraid that their voice will once again be silenced by a largely immigrant society "wishing to perpetuate the illusion of European-American culture!" "Minority cultures can demand their rights. But for Natives it is not the same: it is as if people want to forget them, to erase them", says Bob Boyer, Director of the Art History Department of the Saskatchewan Indian Federal College of the University of Regina.

"Oka is being buried"

Joe David is an Oka artist, prosecuted like a number of others in his community. "Why discuss cultural differences? he asks. "It is obvious: they are in open conflict! They are subtle as well! One thing is certain: Canadians don't want to review their history. Contradictions are buried just like Oka is being buried now. In Guatemala, landowners who are now engaged in battle say that they inherited their rights from the conquistadors. The same thing is happening in Oka! The major difference is the way people view the land. Many people say, 'Oka has nothing to do with me!' I expect people to take responsibility for their own culture."

Autonomy

According to Rick Rivet of British Columbia, "the major goal of the colonizers was to stimulate the development of capitalism!"

"The laws of the White Man dictate what the Indian can and cannot do on the reservation", says Luke Simon, Chief of the Mic-Mac Nation of New Brunswick. "In the Maritimes there was never any conquest of the Indians and treaties with the English were never respected. Canada is now looking at the prospect of a new confederation in which Native peoples must be given their place. It is essential for us to be self-sufficient. Therefore, we will have to obtain major concessions or financial compensation!"

The Elders

According to custom, the conference started and ended with traditional ceremonies presided over by two Elders or Wise Men, Ernie Benedict from Akwesasne and William Commanda from Maniwaki. "The Elders must be brought into the universities", says George Longfish, a Seneca-Tuscorora from Bradford who teaches at the University of California. "Carleton University in Ottawa has given an honorary doctorate to an Elder."

Which Québec university will be the first to follow suit?

11TH NATIVE CULTURAL FESTIVAL OF MONTRÉAL

Organised by the Native Friendship Center
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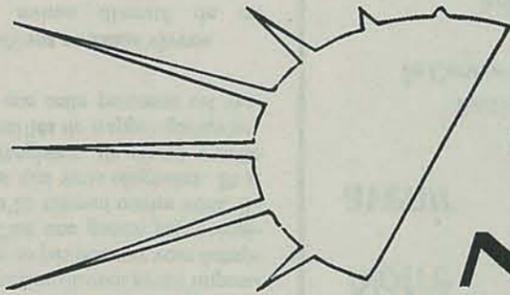
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 19 September 1992

Interview with Deborah Etienne

POLICE HARASSMENT AT KANEHSATAKE

Deborah Etienne is a Mohawk woman from Kanehsatake. In the following interview, made on August 22nd 1992, she describes the many ways in which police harassment is imposing work (dealing with stress, arrests, attacks) on all community members, as well as the work they are doing organising self-defence.

"One person that was beaten from here was arrested, they claimed, because he uttered a death threat to them. While he was in their custody, one officer had each of his legs while a third officer was kicking him in the groin area. And, to his recollection, it lasted approximately 15 minutes. When his mother tried to see him once they have brought him to St-Eustache, she was not allowed to see him, neither was a doctor. We tried to get a doctor in to record his injuries. He could not move his arm, and his ribs were fractured. Then they moved him to Parthenais. His conditions of bail are that he's not allowed in Kanehsatake. Where is he supposed to go, if he cannot come home?

The harassment usually starts at 11 o'clock at night, midnight. If there is a car, any car, on the road, they chase you. It is a high speed chase, they come up right behind you. A couple of weeks ago they ran my cousin's car off the road to the ditch - a foot away and he would have ran into the Pines fence. The SQ put in the paper that they inadvertently bumped his car, which we photographed that night. They stated that he was behind them, yet there is no damage to the front of his car, all the damage is to the back of his vehicle.

We had some young boys here that worked for the Band Council on a summer project, cutting all the tall weeds along the side of the road. Two squad cars, which we witnessed, pulled alongside them. One officer said to a 14-year-old boy: "Do you have a problem?" The boy said: "No." The officer said: "Do you want a problem?", and at that time he loaded his shotgun. At that point, my husband and I had come behind the squad cars and they took off.

You don't know what they are up to. You don't feel safe going out. My husband and I were leaving the community with our truck and they stopped us. They couldn't find anything on us, so they gave my husband a "48 hours" because there was one letter on his permit that they said was not visible enough, so we had to get a new permit. And, on the way back, that night, we got stopped again in the village.

We want a "normal" life

We sat around, many community members, discussing why are they coming up - 15 patrol cars, 4 officers each, geared up for riots. The only thing we can figure is that they are really upset because we won our court case which stemmed from the incidents of 1990. They are trying to set up a confrontational atmosphere to justify something that they have planned. To make it seem that the Mohawks are dangerous. Look at the Photo-Police articles that came out. First it was against Black people, now it's against the Mohawks. Now the harassment starts, when



Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

Deborah Etienne

these two articles come out. There is something that ties in which we don't know about. We don't know if it has something to do with Claude Ryan and the constitutional talks. We don't know what is happening at higher levels within the government system. But it is affecting people and it's dangerous. These officers are riding around with riot gear in their trunks. We want to live, we want to shop, and conduct our lives. And we are forced again into a situation where they are trying to create a mirror image of 1990. And nobody wants to go through that again. That was an unfortunate incident, and once again, in that situation the cops came in, against the conditions of the injunction. The SQ seems to have no accountability to anybody. We have made calls, we have tried to find out who are they getting their orders from. It seems like its nobody. It's a police state, where the SQ runs the country.

Always a witness with me

"Nobody travels alone anymore. If I want to go down and pick up a bag of milk, I have a witness with me in the car. We don't go out at night, we try to take care of all our business during the day. During the day, we don't really venture out of town; the minute you leave that's when they get you. A lot of people have radios, walkie-talkies, and they monitor what is going on so that nobody gets verbally harassed or followed. Children are not allowed on the road. If they have to go to a neighbour's, we drive them. The SQ have proven themselves with their harassment against the boys who were working. Basically, we are watching each others backs to make sure that there is a witness or so that the presence of people will ensure that the SQ will not conduct more harassment. When you are standing against armed, angry authority figures who have the

permission to shoot at will, what else can you do? You have to be polite, you have to keep quiet. They harass you, you don't react. A lot of people, unfortunately have to take it and suffer the financial burden of the harassment, for example, extremely high tickets. They can stop you and give you a \$300 ticket, during a period of five minutes. The safety and security is the priority among the community members, nobody wants to see a relative get hurt. With the SQ's actions, a community watch has proven to be a definite necessity. Around here, it's not like in a city where the neighbours are one beside another. We have large fields in between, we have wooded areas and that seems to be where the SQ do their deeds. As long as there is a community watch, people driving around making sure that everyone is safely going about their business or going home, people sleep better at night. The SQ come up with three or four cars at a time, they stop in front of your home, they watch you, they videotape you, they photograph you. Emotionally, that's a hardship, emotionally, you are put in such a victimised situation, in such a vacuum, that you feel that there is no escape. This is a psychological game that they play with you, they want you to react. That way, when you do react, they can say they were justified in clubbing somebody, saying the person shows violent tendencies."

If there is anything non Natives can do? "I think the only thing that works is media blitz, lobbying your governmental representatives to tell them to live up to their responsibilities and stop the game, stop this assimilation process that Indian Affairs has been built on."

Interview : Claude Boucher

Our
History...
Our
Future



Native Festival organised by
the Native Friendship Center of Montreal
October 3 and 4 1992
Information (514) 937-5338

Book issuing Le Procès des Mohawks



1990 - September 26th - 1992
2 years after Oka
Public event

with:

Susan Oak, Mohawk from Kanehsatake
Kenneth Deer, editor of Eastern Door newspaper
Lorn Oak, from Akwasasne, coordinator of Akweks Found
and a Cree representative from Saskatchewan

Music : the quichua group Obraje

Saturday, September 26 th 1992
7:30pm

1205, Visitation Street, Beaudry metro, free entrance

Concerning this book...

Because of the depth of its historical meaning and its hardly reversible consequences, and because it concerns people who beginning in the 17th century chose to walk along with us for a while, the case of Kanehsatake will remain for a long time to come as the most embarrassing example of the kind of relationship we established with the first peoples of this country. Beneath the veil of an alliance which was indispensable to us, seigniors priests engineered the most legal of swindles. But who will even speak of this congenital flaw during this, Montreal's 350th anniversary?

We must congratulate those persons responsible for this publication. Thanks to them, we will finally have access to what actually happened and what was said during the trial which resulted in the acquittal of a few dozen members of the Mohawk Nation during the summer of 1992. This work will also help compensate for the generally biased way the media dealt with the Oka-Kanehsatake crisis of 1990.

For many it will be an opportunity to discover that the cause of the people of Kanehsatake is inherently just and they defended it with exceptional dignity.

Rémi Savard

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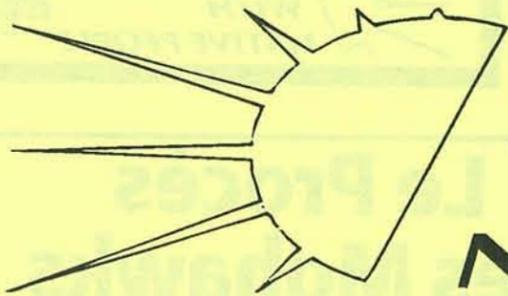
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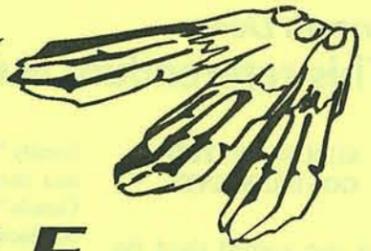
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 20-21 October 1992

THE CHARLOTTETOWN AGREEMENT

GAIN FOR THE NATIVES?

Does the Charlottetown Constitutional Agreement, on which there will be a Referendum next October 26th, represent a gain or some progress for the First Nations? It does so according to the speakers of the four Native Organizations that participated in its negotiations with the Prime Minister of Canada and the provincial Premiers. Others among the First Nations expressed serious doubts. The Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones has interviewed three of them: Michèle Rouleau, President of the Native Women Association of Québec, Kenneth Deer, Chief Editor of the Mohawk newspaper "The Eastern Door", and Gilbert Pilot an Innu from Maliotenam, and member of the Nitassinan Coalition.

It will be recalled that the Agreement recognizes the "Inherent Right to Governmental Autonomy for the Native Nations". However this Right will not come before the Tribunals for interpretation for a delay of 5 years. Furthermore the Agreement does not create new Basic Rights, and its application must not be "incompatible with essential laws related to peacekeeping, order and good governing in Canada".

In the Agreement, Native Governments are recognized as one of three orders of Government in Canada. The recognition of the Rights of Native People is also considered as one of the seven "fundamental characteristics" of Canada and it is under its guidance that we must from now on interpret the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Kenneth Deer

"This referendum is not ours"

The Mohawks will not participate in the October 26th Referendum. Kenneth Deer, Chief Editor of the bi-monthly Eastern Door of Kahnawake, explains it this way: "The referendum is not our referendum. We do not look at the Canadian Constitution as being ours. It is really a non-issue for us. We are not going to vote in it. It is an internal matter among the people of Canada to decide."



Kenneth Deer: "The Mohawks will not participate"

Deer, who during the summer acted as the Representative of the Mohawk Nation in a working committee of the United Nations on aboriginal people, believes that there were certain gains for the Native People in the Charlottetown Agreement. On the side of the gains, he has listed the recognition by the government of Canada of the crimes it has committed against the First Nations. He also believes that the Inherent Right to Governmental Autonomy can give certain supplementary powers to the Native People.

But the Agreement remains, according to him, at 100 leagues from the two-way relationship that the Mohawk Nation established with the nations originating from Europe right from the start, where each one co-existed side by side with the other in mutual respect and without intervention by either one in the affairs of the other.

The Agreement denies the Native People their Self-Determination Right which is a recognized right, fundamental to all nations in the world except, it appears, to the Aboriginal Nations. This right cannot be assigned. "It is not the Assembly of First Nations or other groups that participated in the negotiations to bargain our Right to Self-Determination", affirms Deer.

Furthermore there is nothing specific on the rights of the Natives living in cities. Kenneth Deer further adds: "We feel the indigenous people have rights everywhere and not just on the reserves".

Back page...

Michèle Rouleau

The people will not be protect

"The Charlottetown Agreement" limits the power of the Native Governments but gives them absolute power over their own people."

It is with a firm "NO" that Michèle Rouleau, President of the Association of Native Women of Québec, opposes the Constitutional Agreement of August 28th. She does so, however, in her personal name as her Association has decided not to take an official position, not wanting that women members in general be automatically identified as partisans of the "no", in communities where everyone knows each other and where they could be easily pointed at.

Michèle Rouleau read a draft of the Legal Text on the Rights of Native People. Although she is not a legal expert, she did not find it more reassuring than the actual text of the Agreement. In her opinion, the recognition of Native Rights is weaker than in the actual Constitution. The Inherent Right to Governmental Autonomy is limited by the clauses specifying that it does not create any new Territorial Rights and these same must be achieved in conformity "with the laws essential to the peacekeeping, the order and the good governing of Canada".

The President of the Association for Native Women is particularly worried with the reach of the latter clause, which refers equally to the Provincial as well as Federal laws, and which is so open that it would give more power to the provinces, such as intervening in all sorts of jurisdiction including social and economic.

Furthermore Michèle Rouleau does not accept that the Right of Equality recognized in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms be subordinated to the Inherent Right to Governmental Autonomy, and that the Native Governments could have recourse to the "Not Withstanding" clause to get away from it.

Back page...



Michèle Rouleau, in her personal name, says no

Gilbert Pilot

"We have been sacrificed"

Gilbert Pilot is the Representative Speaker for the Coalition for Nitassinan which, last spring, organized the march of the Innu from Sept Îles to Montréal to oppose the Hydro Québec project on their territory. According to him the Constitutional Agreement "sacrifices the interests of the Native People of Canada and more specifically of Québec, to bring Québec and Robert Bourassa back in the Canadian Constitution."



Gilbert Pilot: "We have been sacrificed"

Pilot thinks that the Québec Premier has endorsed the Agreement because he has obtained guarantees from the Premiers and possibly even from other Native Leaders to the effect that the territorial integrity of Québec will be preserved. The Agreement is arranged so that Governmental Autonomy will take place within the limits of the actual reserves, which could place the Native People of Québec in a disadvantaged position.

"The Natives in the West of Canada who are under treaties, have access to much larger territories than what we know in Québec, where we never signed any treaties. They can exercise their autonomy in a larger structure with a certain access to the natural resources. With respect to Québec, however, it is as if we just extinguished the rights of the majority of Native People. By recognizing the Government of Québec's territorial claims we are just telling the Native People to stay in their small reserves." According to Pilot, such a situation can only divide the Native People of Canada.

The Innu spokesman also estimates that the restrictions carried by the Constitutional Agreement will be reflected in the territorial negotiations undertaken by the Attikamekw Montagnais Council and also in the offer the Québec government is about to make to them. "Which form will Governmental Autonomy take following those negotiations? Maybe some co-management of certain zones of controlled exploitation,

Back page...

Kenneth Deer
"This referendum is not ours"

SUBORDINATED GOVERNMENTS

He is also worried about the wording of the Agreement, which indicates that the Native Governments be considered as a third order of government. It clearly shows that they will be subordinated, and forced to submit to the federal and provincial governments. "By asking us to vote for it, we are supposed to go in willingly. And that is unacceptable. It is ridiculous to ask us to go willingly into a third order of government."

He also opposes the fact that the exercising of governmental autonomy would be held in con-

formity "with the law, the order and the good governing of Canada." According to him the provinces will apply this clause as if the only laws, order and acceptable good governments were theirs. "It could be used to undermine even our traditional social structures or values or justice systems".

For Kenneth Deer it is not a matter of protecting the status quo or to say that it is better than the Agreement. "What we are saying is that the relationship being offered to be entrenched into the Canadian Constitution is less than what is rightfully ours and therefore it is unacceptable."

Michèle Rouleau
The people will not be protect

It is precisely the utilization to this article of the Charter that permitted the Native Women to have the Law on Indians which deprived them and their children of their Rights as soon as they married a non-Indian, amended. Many Band Chiefs then fiercely opposed this modification and Michèle Rouleau fears that they will have absolute power over their people once the minimum protection offered by the Charter is weakened.

The attitude of certain Native

Leaders, amongst them Ovide Mercredi, nourish those fears, although she admits having noticed a more open posture from the Chiefs in Québec. Not only are the women's preoccupations ignored, according to her, but the whole of the Native population is left behind. "The people of the Communities find that everything moves too quickly. They cannot follow and no one takes the time to explain to them what is happening."

Gilbert Pilot
"We have been sacrificed"

jurisdictions in the interior of the reserves... Resulting in the fact that we still cannot affirm ourselves as a Nation nor base ourselves on what we call real traditional values."

MORE DEPENDENCE

Given that the Coalition for Nitassinan has a well identified position in favor of the national recognition of the Innu and their rights in Nitassinan, the Agreement, according to Gilbert Pilot, only offers a "third order of Government that comes after the federal and the provincial, but

before the municipal governments." For him it is merely a smoke screen. The dependence of the Native People on other levels of governments will only be maintained and reinforced, particularly through the very tight control they will have on the finances of the so-called Governmental Autonomy. And frustrated he adds: "The Agreement gives you five years to put yourself in agreement with the manner in which the government will restrain you, on the type of shackles or leash it will use against you."

Extracts from the presentation made by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones at the Circle of First Nations on the Constitution on February 6th 1992.

The RSA recognizes that the Native peoples constitute their own entire Nations unto themselves and that these Nations have an inherent right to self-determination. Even after 500 years of forced genocide, they have never lost nor abandoned these rights to their own sovereignty.

The RSA believes there should be no limits to the right to exercise this sovereignty. To restrict the rights of the First Nations to act and make their own decisions freely for themselves, whether it be for the sake of the integrity of the territories of Québec and of Canada or the necessity to respect the boundaries of a Canadian or Québécois legal framework, is for us, quite frankly, a hypocrisy, a fraud, and a negation of these same rights.

ACTS OF DEFIANCE

The NFB film "Acts of Defiance" is now available on video cassette at the Nation Office Bookstore in Kanahwake and Kanehsatake. The film documents some of the events that occurred in Kanahwake during the summer of 1990. Price: \$34.95. Information: (514) 638-4016

Le Procès des Mohawks

NON COUPABLE



The English version will be out by the end of November

The Story of a Trial

On September 26, 1990, when women, men and children walked out of the Treatment Centre at Kanehsatake, a seventy-eight day siege finally ended. But it was only the beginning of a lengthy legal process in which over 50 people were arrested and charged. The trial of the "T.C. Forty", began on February 2nd, 1991, and ended in an acquittal by jury on July 3, 1992. Members of the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones were present throughout the trials, and wrote the detailed accounts of courtroom proceedings that appear in "Not Guilty".

We must congratulate those persons responsible for this publication. Thanks to them, we will finally have access to what actually happened and what was said during the trial which resulted in the acquittal of a few dozen members of the Mohawk Nation during the summer of 1992. (...) For many it will be an opportunity to discover that the cause of the people of Kanehsatake is inherently just and they defended it with exceptional dignity.

Rémi Savard

The book is available at the office of the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, and costs \$6.00. Mail orders should include your name and address, and \$8.00. (\$6.00 + \$2.00 postal charge). Information: (514) 982-6066. "Not Guilty" is also available in several bookstores!

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Le Bulletin est disponible en français.

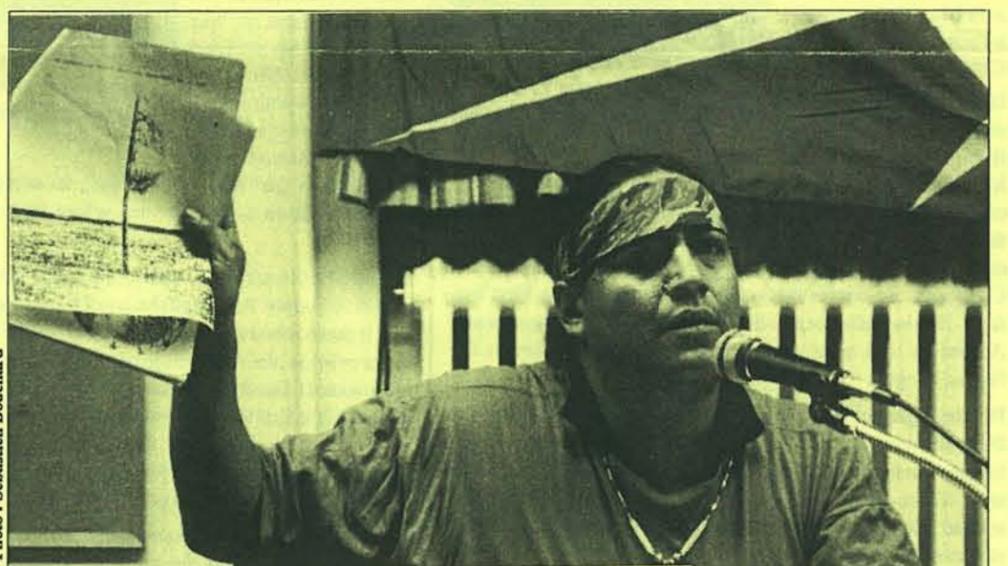
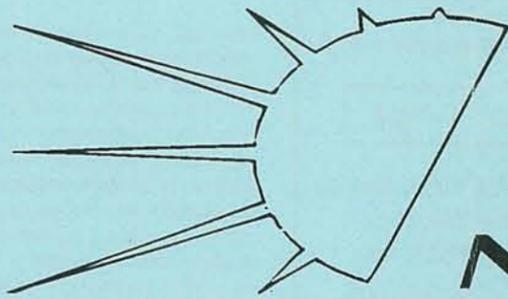


Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

A representative of the Cree Nation (see photo) spoke about the alarming situation faced by native people in northern Saskatchewan, during an evening organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, last September 26. He explained how a group of Cree Elders and other community members from the region of Canoe Narrows have maintained blockades on logging roads and route 903 since last May, in an effort to stop the destruction of their territory by logging companies. The blockaders are now preparing to spend the winter defending the land. The 150 people who attended the talk, showed their support of the blockaders by donating \$200.00 and several boxes of warm clothing. Susan Oak, one of the Mohawk defendants acquitted last July 3rd, and Kenneth Deer of Kanahwake, also spoke during the evening. The Regroupement extends our thanks to the Quechua music and dance group OBRAJE, for closing the event with a colorful and moving performance.



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 22 December 1992

RADIO-KANEHSATAKE NEEDS HELP

A big benefit concert will be held in Montreal on December 4, with proceeds going to CKHQ, the community radio station in Kanehsatake. The Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones is enthusiastically supporting the activity, because CKHQ plays such an important role in the Kanehsatake community, and needs material and financial help to continue its work. The following article was written by three of the volunteers at CKHQ, and presents the history of the community station and its current activities.

Kanehsatake radio, C.K.H.Q., 101.7 FM, is a Mohawk community radio station now in operation. It was established by volunteers to fulfill a need to preserve the culture and language of the Mohawk people of Kanehsatake.

The community of Kanehsatake, of which Oka, Quebec is part, has existed for centuries and is now home to more than 1000 Mohawk people. Over the years, the influence of the encroaching non-native population had almost destroyed the identity of the Mohawk culture.

For this reason, the idea of a radio station was conceived as the best means to provide a forum for the culture, language, history, and traditions of the Mohawk people of Kanehsatake with a strong arts, information and entertainment format.

A group of concerned volunteers formed in 1984 and worked towards this goal by first forming an independent non-profit corporation which was called *The Kanehsatake Communications Society Inc.* With the assistance of the Rotary Club of Montreal, the Quebec Minister of Communications, strong local support of fundraising events and many long hours of voluntary work, C.K.H.Q.-FM first hit the airwaves in July of 1987.

In the late 1988, the staff of C.K.H.Q. began a two-year ground breaking training program in which students studied right in the community instead of leaving the territory to attend a CEGEP. Because of this, the radio station was able to continue its operation uninterrupted.

Programming includes a multi-music formula from gospel and country & western to rock and pop. C.K.H.Q. has in the past offered Mohawk Language lessons, radio plays, interviews and most recently a daily news hour featuring plenty of native music.

During the 78-day standoff that occurred in the summer of 1990, beginning only days after the stations training program ended, C.K.H.Q. and its staff played a major role in keeping not only Kanehsatake informed but also the rest of the world. In addition to providing up to date reports of negotiations between the Mohawk Nation and the federal and provincial governments of Canada, the deejays (DJs) also had to entertain the community. Spirits were kept up with music, jokes and by reading the letters of encouragement that poured in from many different countries.



The Voice of the Community

Once the Canadian army moved in and the community was sectioned off, two staff members of C.K.H.Q.-FM stayed at the station on air 24 hours a day for 26 days in order to maintain the link between the people stranded in their homes, at the foodbank, and at the treatment center. The two women did this despite the stress of having tanks going up and down the road and an army camp directly in front of the station.

After the standoff ended, C.K.H.Q. suffered and continues to suffer serious financial problems, as well as, employee burnout. Equipment that is broken cannot be repaired or replaced and dwindling numbers of volunteers means the station has had to cut hours.

Still C.K.H.Q.-FM, assists the community and its organizations by pro-

viding a medium for messages and announcements. These services include free classified ads, job listings, public service announcements and advertising for local businesses.

Events sponsored by the station include the annual Kanehsatake Spiritual Gathering. Some profits from this gathering have gone towards a trip to Arizona for some of the kids who lived behind the barricades and also towards aiding the local lacrosse team.

C.K.H.Q.-FM would like to be able to one day pay its employees and provide a training ground for native broadcasters. Improvement of our broadcast range is also part of our future plans.

Marie David
Susan Oke,
Ellen Gabriel

BENEFIT CONCERT
FOR RADIO-KANEHSATAKE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th 1992
7:30 PM
AT L'UNION FRANÇAISE
429, VIGER EAST, MONTRÉAL (BERRI METRO)

Invited Artists :
Karen Young
Alanis O'Bomsawin
Rhythm Activism
The Bagg Street
Klezmer Band
Shingi & the Rap Poet

Ticket : 7,00 \$

Also
Book launching
"Not Guilty,
The Mohawk
Trial"
(English Version)

Organised by The Friends of CKHQ and the
Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones

THE INNU OF MANI-UTENAM OPT FOR AUTONOMY

In a referendum held on October 10, the Innu of Mani-Utenam (Maliotenam) voted 263 to 204 in favour of political independence for the community of Uashat (Sept-Iles).

It was an important victory for the Nitassinan Coalition, who had taken a leadership role in this struggle for political independence. On September 20, the Innu of Mani-Utenam erected a blockade on the road leading into Uashat. After threats of physical aggression were made by the supporters of the Band Council Chief, Elie-Jacques Jourdain, the demonstrators barricaded themselves in a school gymnasium for three days, without food, and then asked for political asylum and protection in Mingan, another Innu community.

Arduous negotiations between the demonstrators and the Band Council resulted in the calling of the referendum. According to Gilbert Pilot of the Nitassinan Coalition, Chief Jourdain posed the referendum question in the most negative light possible. The wording was "Are you in favour of the separation of Uashat from Mani-Utenam?". The Coalition would have preferred to pose the question "Are you in favour of the political and administrative autonomy of Mani-Utenam?".

Discrimination

The population of Mani-Utenam was not fooled by Jourdain's ploys.

They have been complaining for years about his dictatorial administration, and corruption in the Band Council, including rampant nepotism and the flagrant lack of social services in Uashat, especially in the education system and in employment opportunities.

At the beginning of last year, the three elected council members of Mani-Utenam quit their posts after the Band Council decided in favour of the Ste-Marguerite 3 hydro electric Project. At the same time, the Nitassinan Coalition organized a march from Mani-Utenam to Montreal to protest this same hydro project.

After the referendum, the people of Mani-Utenam were invited to a public assembly, where they decided to create their own political and administrative body, independent of the present Band Council. It is this political body that will apply the referendum results and take charge of the education dossier and will represent the community on territorial issues.

The hottest issue right now is that of the Ste-Marguerite river and proposed hydro electric development. Another issue of concern is the growing opposition by the community to the Band Council's decision to replace the Native police force on the Territory with Sûreté du Québec officers. According to Pilot, "If this happens, more active resistance measures can be expected".



No hydro-electric project in Nitassinan

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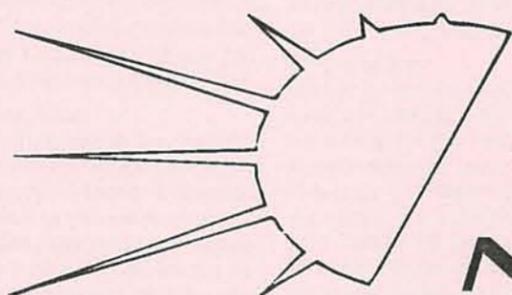
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 23 January 1993

NEWS FROM THE SASKATCHEWAN BLOCKADE

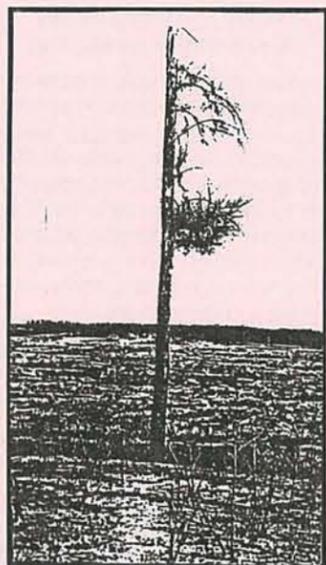
PROTEST CLEARCUTTING

A protest brigade in north-west Saskatchewan is now in its seventh month. It was set up last May 13th on a logging road near Wiggins Bay by the group Protectors of Mother Earth (POME), a coalition of Cree, Dene and Métis residents from nearby communities. They are protesting clearcutting on their land, a result of the Forest Management Licence Agreement (FMLA), a document signed in 1988 between the then Conservative provincial government and corporate logging concerns. The FMLA gives these companies, who have united to form Mistik Management, exclusive licence to log 3.3 million acres on treaty Indian and Métis territory.

Traditional Land

A year ago clearcut logging began in the region, with no former environmental assessment taking place. Most of the Aboriginal people of this region, situated about 600 km northwest of Saskatoon, depend at least in part on traditional land use for their survival. This includes hunting and fishing for food, harvesting wild rice in the lakes, trapping, picking berries and medicines plants in the forest and using the trees for fuel and building materials. Blockader and Elder Leon Iron has stated that he never had to rely on welfare, and always survived in the traditional way, as his ancestors before him.

Two sawmills, owned and operated by the Indian and Métis bands in the region, have traditionally provided employment for residents, as have small-scale logging activities. The logging was done in such a way as to harvest only mature trees, with long-term forest survival as an objective.



This all changed last February when one day, with no warning to land users, mechanical harvesters appeared and began clearcutting. The harvesters, which cut down acres of forest leaving not one tree standing, are followed by "mulching machines". These uproot all the underbrush and overturn the fragile, northern topsoil leaving sand — a literal desert. This sand blows away, causing silt buildup in rivers and lakes. Nothing can ever grow back

in these areas.

In response to this destruction, the concerned land users, represented by POME, attempted repeatedly to make their concerns known to the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC), Mistik Management and the government, inviting to meet with them on several occasions and presenting documents that clearly stated their position. They demanded an immediate halt to clearcutting, compensation for loss of livelihood, and a public inquiry into the effects of this activity on both the environment and the community.

POME's entreaties were ignored by all concerned, so the blockade was set-up to halt the clearcutting and to bring public awareness to the issue. The blockade has received wide support in the province, from those concerned with the environment and Aboriginal rights, and those angered by irresponsible government practices.

Good on paper, but...

When the NDP government came to power in 1991, the new Environment Minister ordered an Environmental Assessment of Mistik's 20-year forestry management plan. This looks good on paper, but it means that the Assessment will not be submitted until 1994, and by then up to 120,000 acres of aboriginal land will already have been irreparably destroyed by clearcutting and mulching. Under provincial legislation, an environmental assessment is carried-out exclusively by the government and the logging companies.

A public inquiry, on the other hand, is an environmental assessment open to the public, with full participation of community members, traditional land users, environmental scientists, etc. Echoes of this situation can be seen in Quebec, where the same "closed door" policies have been used to assess the environmental impact of the James Bay Hydro development project, the logging at Barrier Lake and indeed of similar megaprojects throughout Canada.

On the night of June 30, the government sent in a SWAT team of over 100 heavily armed RCMP officers to dismantle the blockade. "The biggest RCMP operation in Saskatchewan's history" resulted in the arrest of 14 blockaders, including elders and two pregnant women, most of whom returned to the blockade. In October, the charges were put off in court until further evidence could be provided to convict them.

The same month, the Minister of Mines and Resources took out a court action ordering POME to dismantle the blockade, claiming that they were illegally building "per-



manent improvements" on Crown Land. The blockade, consisting of a few log cabins and tents and a generator, is in fact occupying aboriginal lands that legally belong to the Cree Nation under Treaty 10. Realizing this, the government has not yet taken "appropriate proceedings" to remove the blockade as threatened.

Court Action

In December, POME filed a complaint with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission against the Saskatchewan Minister of Natural Resources, Eldon Lautermilch, and his predecessors, charging them with racial discrimination in their approval of logging in the area and in their dealings with aboriginal people staging a peaceful protest against that logging. They claim that the FMLA ignores their constitutional aboriginal rights and their legally issued licences to trap, hunt and fish for food, and to harvest wild rice on their treaty lands.

The use of the RCMP and expensive lawsuits against the Natives also constitutes racial discrimination and a violation of human rights. The investigation is now under way. POME has also launched a joint court action with the Saskatchewan Action Foundation for the Environment (SAFE) against the Provincial Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment, to force the provincial government to halt all clearcutting until an environmental impact assessment and public inquiry have been completed.

Despite freezing temperatures including a recent cold snap of -40 degrees, POME continues to occupy the Wiggins Bay logging road. They have had up to 200 supporters on the blockade, including delegations from across Canada, the U.S. and overseas. In December, a truckload of donated supplies arrived from the Mohawk Nation, including 12 large boxes of warm clothing and blankets donated by supporters here in Montreal. POME needs financial help to offset legal costs. For more information on where to send a donation, or letters of support, please contact Saskatoon Indigenous Coalition, c/o POM, 824 Broadway ave, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 1B6, Phone (306) 664-1992, FAX (306) 933-4346.

The Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples:

No more paternalism!

"The International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, 1993, must not be merely celebrations or paternalistic declarations..." This message was part of a statement made by representatives of the Indigenous Nations and Peoples in New York last December 9th, at the inauguration of the United Nations sponsored Year.

The statement is unambiguous in its affirmation of indigenous peoples' rights to self determination, and to exercise full control of "all matters relating to our political, economic, social, spiritual and cultural affairs". The declaration condemns member states of the U.N. from around the world who have denied indigenous peoples their basic human rights to their own cultures, identities, religions and languages, imposing "repression, genocide and misery" while continuing to "desecrate and appropriate religious and sacred places and objects, depriving indigenous nations around the world of their basic spiritual ways of life".

The statement goes on to demand that the U.N. and its member nations begin immediate implementation of a series of concrete actions. *The Statement of Indigenous Nations, Peoples and Organizations* calls for the recognition and reinstatement of aboriginal territories. It also demands that "all treaties, pacts, accords and other formal agreements concluded with the indigenous peoples of the world", be respected and documented under international law. This includes recognition of traditional indigenous forms of government.

The day following the inauguration, Chief Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Haudenosaunee (the Iroquois Six Nations Confederacy), addressed the UN general assembly, declaring: "I stand before you as a manifestation of the spirit of our peoples and our will to survive. Beside me stands my spiritual brother the Wolf, we are alike in the western mind. Hated, admired and still a mystery to you, yet we are not defeated."



Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

Karen Young was one of the artists at the Benefit

\$1,200 raised at Benefit Concert for Radio CKHQ

On December 4th, 300 people purchased tickets to show their solidarity with the Mohawk people involved at the community radio station in Kanehsatake. The benefit, which was organised by the friends of CKHQ and the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, was a great success. \$1,200 was donated to CKHQ-Radio.

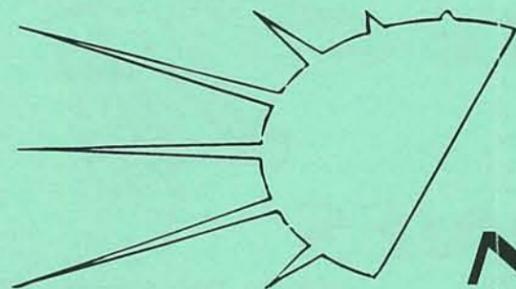
Material and financial help is needed for the radio station to continue its work. We thank all those who participated; particularly the invited artists: Karen Young, Alanis O'Bomsawin, Rhythm Activism, The Bagg Street Klezmer Band, Shingi & the Rap Poet, Mai Jing, Mother Sun and Jamie Nelson.

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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 24 February 1993

The Coalition for Nitassinan

A DISTURBING GROUP OF PEOPLE

On January 28th, during the first in a series of public meetings organized by the Regroupement, Gilbert Pilot, member and spokesperson for the Coalition for Nitassinan, came from Mani-Utenam to speak with about fifty of our members. He spoke of the Coalition's origins and of its campaign against a hydro-electric project known as SM-3; a campaign which is greatly disturbing the economic and political interests of those he refers to as the "Establishment" in the Sept-Iles region.

It's in January of 1992 that the Coalition was founded, bringing together a number of individuals of the Innu Nation living in a settlement known as Mani-Utenam, near Sept-Iles, on the Lower North shore of the St-Laurent river. The Coalition organized itself in a self-reliant manner, wishing to free itself from the cumbersome structures of the local Band Council which supports the SM-3 project. And this, despite a number of public hearings and polls taken in the community which clearly indicate that 80 % of the local population rejects the project. For the members of the Coalition, the Innu are a "people with their own rights", inalienable rights which have consistently been violated ever since the first Chamber of Commerce set foot on the North Shore with its projects for "economic development".

For a harmonious form of development

While affirming the Innu people's right to exist as a distinct Nation, the members of the Coalition are also willing to recognize the Québécois'



Gilbert Pilot

and Canadians' right to exist as nations, as well as their needs in terms of resources and development. But, Mr. Pilot says, this recognition will only take place within the framework of a new relationship between Native and non-native people, a relationship that will, this time, be defined mutually on a nation to nation level, and be based in social and environmental respect.

Destructive development

Hydro-Québec's SM-3 project is yet another step in a long history of intrusion and interference in Nitassinan. It represents the fourteenth hydro project on land that has never been surrendered or signed away by the Innu Nation.

The Coalition's 800 members who have steadfastly opposed this kind of destructive development on their land, point out that this 3 billion dollar project will flood their ancestors' burial grounds as well as lands that have been used for hunting,

fishing and the gathering of medicinal plants for over 9000 years.

The SM-3 complex includes the construction of a 50 km road leading north to Fermont from the North Shore, between Port Cartier and Sept-Iles. It also includes re-directing two important rivers which flow into the Moisie river, toward the Ste-Marguerite river. 846 megawatts of electricity will be generated from an underground power house located 90 km upstream from the mouth of the Ste-Marguerite river. In the Carheil reservoir, further north, the quantity of methylmercury will attain levels which surpass those which already exist in the James Bay area¹. Furthermore, the flow of the Moisie river will be reduced from 42 to 13,5 % depending on the area, affecting the annual migration of at least 12,000 to 32,000 salmon².

A big project

SM-3 was (before a campaign of opposition that is well known) Hydro-Québec's number two project, after Great Whale, in its "global development scheme" slated for the next ten years. Gilbert Pilot asks himself just "how much this project is going to cost from a social and environmental perspective", while pointing out that there are already 485 hydro dams in Québec.

He would also like us, as non-native people, to ask questions and to, at the very least, demand that there be an overall assessment on social and environmental grounds of Hydro's 62 billion dollar development plan.

According to Mr. Pilot, both non-native and Native people have some serious choices to make as to the

kind of society we want. As far as the Coalition is concerned, he says that its members have opted for a more harmonious form of development, on a more sustainable scale, in order to insure some kind of future for both the Innu and Québécois nations. The members of the Coalition for Nitassinan are struggling for their rights. They'd like to break the isolation between the different Innu settlements in order that they may work together on the kind of society they want. They would finally like to have a say on their collective future, to speak about what concerns them and act according to their wishes.

Harassment

Despite the Coalition for Nitassinan's peaceful struggle, its members had to face a white mob and its baseball bats on January 17th. This potentially violent mob came to Mani-Utenam to expel Buddhist monks who had walked from New York state to support the Coalition's campaign against SM-3. The mob of 300 was mobilised thanks to the initiative of a commercial radio station in Sept-Iles and was welcomed in Mani-Utenam by the Band Council, also eager to get rid of these "undesirables"...

Because he has questioned the vested interests of a few and he has presented alternatives to mega forms of development, Gilbert Pilot has received death threats and gun fire in his home. The Uashat/Mani-Utenam Band Council and its chief administrator, Elie-Jacques Jourdain, despite his constituency's opposition, continues to support SM-3. He was able to obtain a permanent court

injunction outlawing any form of public demonstration by the Coalition's members in Mani-Utenam.

This injunction has been used in order to lay some 70 criminal charges against these "radical Indians" and "terrorists" who walk, sing, demonstrate and ask too many questions... According to Mr. Pilot, the Coalition is disturbing and all means will be used against it in order to quell its movement and silence its voice of dissent. But Mr. Pilot says that the movement is going forward and that support for it is growing on the local, national and international levels.

Jail and fines

On February 2th, in Sept-Iles, Québec superior court judge Ross Goodwin sentenced 4 members of the Coalition to jail and fines for having defied the Band Council's injunction and erected a peaceful road block near Mani-Utenam on December 12th, 1992. The judge denounced the actions of the accused "who in the least contributed to a climate of uncertainty and worry among the population of an entire region, Native or not". And while "BAPE" environmental hearings took place in Sept-Iles from February 2th to 12th to "evaluate" the impacts of SM-3, Gilbert Pilot, one of the projects most vocal opponents is fasting in a Baie Comeau jail.

Our work in solidarity with the Coalition for Nitassinan will broaden in the weeks and months to come. Stay in touch and be ready to act.

1. *La Presse* 08.03.91
2. *Ibid*
3. *Journal de Montréal* 03.02.93

Coroner's inquest

A repeat of the T.C. 39 trial ?

In the days preceding the coroner's inquest into the death of the Sureté du Québec officer Marcel Lemay, certain articles in the Quebec press made it clear that to them, the results of the inquest were already obvious: Whoever shot Lemay on July 11th, 1990 in the Kanehsatake Pines was clearly a Mohawk.

The media reinforced this accusation by publishing excerpts of a so-called secret SQ document, stating that 20 % of Kanehsatake's population are "criminals", involved with cigarette contraband activities. This came out in the news on January 20th, the opening day of the inquest. With no supporting evidence, the names of several people were given as the "principle traffickers".

Proof? What proof?

For the first time since the standoff began, SQ lawyer Mario Bilodeau admitted that the police shot fire-

arms on July 11th. According to Bilodeau, the fatal gun shot was made from the north of the Pines where the Mohawks were. He also tried to prove that the calibre of the bullet that killed Lemay is not used by the SQ, even though they do have arms that use them. His own witnesses were not able to prove in any way that the Mohawks had these types of weapons.

In a moving testimony, Debbie Etienne, a Kanehsatake Mohawk, accused the SQ or the Army of having destroyed incriminating evidence once they took over the Pines in September 1990. Photographs from July supported her statement. They showed bullet holes in the trees and the Lacrosse field boards, that were later cut down and removed. This evidence could have been used to prove that the police were shooting from both the north and the south sides of the Pines, as some witnesses attested.

A revealing note: The Journal de Montréal, who had been covering the inquest on a daily basis, was totally silent when it came to Debbie Etienne's testimony which lasted for 3 days.

On February 4th, during testimony by the Kanehsatake Band Council's lawyer Peter Hutchins, coroner Gilbert wondered how the civic administration of Oka could be so sure of it's right to call in the SQ, since the conflict over territorial ownership has been going on for years with the Mohawks. These are the difficult questions that Jean Ouellette, Mayor of Oka will have to answer at the inquest on February 9th.

The coroner's inquest will continue for several more weeks, and 160 witnesses will be heard. The hearings are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Montreal courthouse, *palais de Justice*, Room 5:15.

March against racism

Sunday, March 21th

at 1:30 p.m.

1, Place Ville-Marie

Corner René-Lévesque and University)
(métro McGill)



Meeting place under the banner of
Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones

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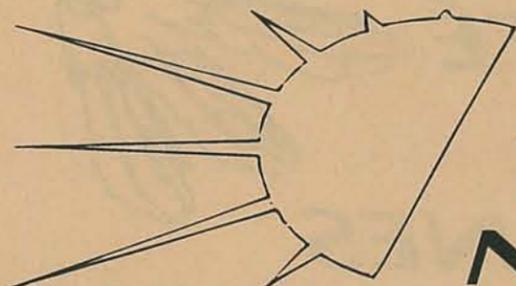
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 25 April 1993

THE ALGONQUINS OF LAC BARRIÈRE

WHEN PATIENCE DOESN'T PAY...

Chief Jean Maurice Matchewan of the Algonquins of lac Barrière has rejected the Québec government's decision to unilaterally suspend a trilateral agreement between the governments of Canada, Québec and the Algonquin Nation.

The Agreement was signed in 1991 to prepare a sustainable development plan in the la Vérendrye Wildlife Reserve, and to harmonize forestry practices with the traditional activities of the Native community. It was signed after many years of Algonquin protest to protect their land and way of life.

It was a bluff?

The Agreement provides for interim protection of "sensitive zones" such as sacred sites, critical wildlife habitats and Algonquin harvesting areas until the sustainable development plan is agreed upon.

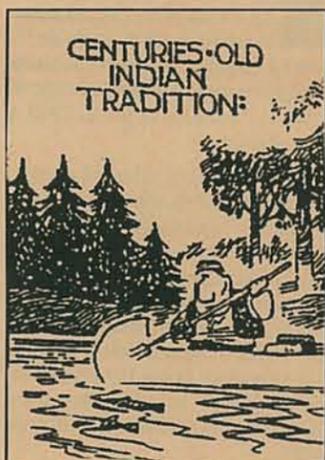
It also establishes funds, provided by the federal and provincial governments, for three "special representatives" to monitor forestry practices in la Vérendrye, and identify sensitive zones that would be off limits to cutting within the 10,000 sq. km region. Each of the three parties chooses one special representative.

Despite these recommendations, Albert Côté, Québec Minister of Forests, issued cutting permits to Scierie Mont-Laurier of Gatineau. The permits were subject to Québec forestry regulations and did not respect the guidelines to protect sensitive zones outlined in the Agreement. During the months of August and September of 1992, the Algonquins had no choice but to block the construction of a logging access road that threatened a sacred site and a moose calving area.

The Algonquin Nation were also subjected to racist statements by the president of Scierie Mont-Laurier, Mr. André Bérard. The entrepreneur stated on an Outaouais radio station that the "Indians are ruining the country", and filed for Contempt of Court charges to be laid against lac Barrière leaders for blocking the construction of the access road.

From bad to worse

Following this conflict, a Mediation Report by Québec Superior Judge Réjean Paul concluded that the Trilateral Agreement has the status of a treaty and thus cannot be unilaterally suspended and takes precedence over Québec Forestry regulations. He also recommended that the Special Representatives be given the funds and powers to be able to carry out their work towards the realization of the Agreement. The Algonquins of lac Barrière accepted the recommendations of the Report.



The situation of the Algonquin then went from bad to worse. Both the federal and Québec governments cut the funding for the Special Representatives. A logging company began clear-cutting in January of this year with a provincial issues licence and without having harmonize its activities with the needs of the Algonquin Nation community. The Algonquins had prepared guidelines to protect water bodies located within the cutting zone, and were forced to monitor cutting to ensure that their rights were respected.

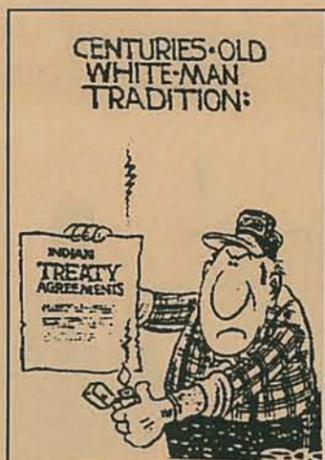
While this was happening, the Québec Native Affairs Minister, Mr. John Caccia, announced in a meeting with the Algonquins on February 12th, that he was recommending to the provincial cabinet that Québec unilaterally suspend the Agreement. The Algonquin have always adhered to the provisions of the Trilateral Agreement and the recommendations of the Mediation report.

The Algonquin are permitting cutting at this site as long as the guidelines of the Agreement are adhered to. The dispute at one particular site, is the size of the buffer zone around lake Kondiaronk. The Algonquins want a 60 meter buffer zone around water bodies while Québec forestry guidelines permit cutting up to 20 meters from lakes.

The subcontractor for a Canadian Pacific Forestry Products pulp mill has recently brought in "security guards" at the cutting site. The Algonquins fear that they are there to prevent their from intervening if the company goes ahead and cuts close the lake. The Native community is also concerned of another possible conflict with Claude Bérard, who has had a Québec permit to cut in a zone within la Verendrye since February 1st.

They are seeking solidarity...

Chief Matchewan maintains that Québec has no legal or moral right to suspend the Agreement and urged the provincial government to reconsider their decision. He has repeatedly stated that the Algonquins will not permit that their land be destroyed by clear-cutting. The First



Nation wants to preserve their traditional activities and spiritual practices in the forests for future generations. The Algonquin Nation is seeking solidarity from among the Québec population.

What you can do?

Write Christos Sirros and ask the Québec Government to adhere to the Trilateral Agreement, fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities for the Special Representatives, and negotiate in good faith with the Algonquin of lac Barrière. Christos Sirros, Minister responsible for Native Affairs, 875 Grande-Allée est, Québec, Qc, G1R 4Y8.

A collaboration by Daniel Berman from the Aboriginal Rights Coalition, Ottawa

FROM THE MAYOR'S KITCHEN... TO THE OKA CRISIS

Throughout the month of February, coroner Guy Gilbert continued his inquiry into the events leading up to the death of SQ corporal Marcel Lemay in Kanehsatake on July 11, 1990.

Gilbert had to over rule repeated objections by the lawyers for the Sûreté du Québec and the Association of Provincial Police who insisted that the inquest was deviating from the circumstances of the death and the recommendations that can be made to ensure that police are no longer shot at. They also warned of the danger of becoming bogged down if we discuss territorial land claims.

Ouellette is reckless

Jean Ouellette, the mayor of Oka, was obliged to explain what reasoning brought him to call in the SQ to break up the Mohawk's vigil that had been maintained for four months on a dirt road in the Pines. Ouellette was unable to recognize that his actions could be at least partly responsible for the events that followed, and often found himself in hot water during his cross examination. Some of the questions put to him were so embarrassing, that the lawyers representing the municipality of Oka and the SQ found it necessary to answer on his behalf.

From the cross-examination, it was learned that the decision to write a letter calling for the intervention of the SQ was not made by the mayor

in a council meeting as is the understood procedure for such things, but in a meeting held on July 9, 1990, at the mayor's own kitchen table! Ouellette couldn't even remember if minutes were taken at this momentous culinary gathering, the results of which plunged the whole country into crisis.

Coroner Gilbert expressed surprise that the letter in question made no mention of rumours that armed Mohawks lurked in the Pines, even though Ouellette said that it was their supposed presence that urged him to request police intervention.

"I understand the Mohawks frustration"

Not much new light was cast on the case by the testimonies of Oka residents, most of them members of the *Regroupement des citoyens* who oppose Mohawk land claims. Suzanne Thouin made a revealing statement when describing her exasperation with the governments' behaviour since the Crisis, adding that she could "understand the Mohawks' frustration".

The inquest was suspended on February 19, right in the middle of testimony by Pierre Lepage of the Quebec Human Rights Commission.

The inquest will reconvene on March 9th, in room 5.15 at the Montreal court house (Palais de Justice). Hearings are from Tuesday to Thursday.

PICKET LINE AT LISE BACON'S RESIDENCE



Photo: La Presse

On March 13th, 50 members of the *Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones* demonstrated at the home of Quebec Energy Minister Lise Bacon, in support of the Innu organization Coalition for Nitassinan, and delivered to her a brief prepared by the Coalition.

This brief outlines 258 reasons for abandoning the SM3 hydroelectric project on the North shore, and contains a joint declaration on the rights of people, which the Coalition wants to be adopted prior to any negotiations with the governments. The declaration clearly states the national and territorial rights of the Innu nation as a nation in its own right. To get a copy of the the Coalition for Nitassinan's document, contact the *Regroupement*.

LOW LEVEL FLIGHTS

Conference with Innu speaker Jean-Pierre Ashini from Sheshatshit (Labrador)

Friday, April 2nd, 1993, 7:30 p.m.

At Concordia University, Hall Building. (In English, with possibility of French translation)

Information: (514) 844-0484

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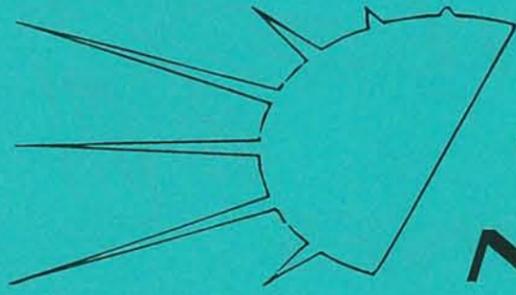
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 26 May 1993

HYDRO-QUÉBEC ILL HEALTH AND FAILING CREDIBILITY

For a number of years, Native and non-Native groups and individuals have created a resistance and stimulated an awareness which barely existed 20 years ago in Québec with regards to mega-development and the environment.

At least two recent events demonstrate to what extent Hydro-Québec's credibility has been unquestionably affected. Today, Hydro-Québec is attempting to remake its public image, tarnished by more than 20 years of major flooding, astronomical debt, miscalculations, such as methyl-mercury and cadmium poisoning, methane and carbon dioxide leaks into the atmosphere from flooded forests, etc.

A threatened cathedral

As the debate revolving around hydro-electric development in the North is increasingly being heard on various levels, nationally and internationally, Hydro-Québec created its own police force in December 1992. Called "Sûreté d'Hydro-Québec", this new security force can count on 200 trained officers and an initial budget of 26 million dollars, as well as a legal right to arrest, raid and investigate whom it chooses while being able to call upon the expertise of other police forces and intelligence agencies located elsewhere in North America.

Against who or what is Hydro-Québec pointing this new offensive and provocative weapon? According to CBC-TV, this new security force will be focusing a good part of its attention on two particular groups in Québec and abroad. The first is composed of Native people labelled as "radicals" and the other is environmental "extremists".

These are a mere pretext and their main threat is not "terrorism" but their non-equivocal No! to hydro-electric mega-development. A response which goes well beyond the acceptable bounds which govern the debate on energy policies in Québec.

The show must go on...

From the stick to more acceptable methods directed toward average energy consumers — who have had to deal with bill increases totalling 24.84% in twelve months from 1990 to 1991, and a further possible increase of 2.3% asked for by Hydro-Québec for 1993 —, an environmental think-tank known as GRAME (*Groupe de recherche appliquée en macroécologie*) offers a report entitled "Rehabilitating hydro-electric power and denouncing lies". GRAME was founded in 1989 by Luc Gagnon, employed for the last year by Hydro-Québec's environmental services. GRAME has received 20 000 dollars from Hydro-Québec in order to "improve its analytic and comparative models which make hydro-electric power the champion of sustainable development."

GRAME presented its 67 page document before a parliamentary commission on energy on March 16



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

Who is afraid of Native people labelled as "radicals" and the environmental "extremists"?

in Québec. It served as an introduction to the "new Union for Sustainable Development" made up of, among others, Pierre Bourke, creator of Montréal's Biodôme, Jacques Prescott, curator of the Québec City Zoo and Pierre Dansereau, professor at the University of Québec at Montréal (UQAM). Since February 1990, an environmental chair at UQAM has been financed by Hydro-Québec to the tune of 2 million dollars over five years.

Also part of this new Union is Francis Cabot, "an American businessman" who spoke before the parliamentary commission on March 16 of the "environmental fascism" of opponents to the Great Whale project, borrowing from the libellous if not insane remarks of Richard Le Hir, vice-president and director general of the Québec Association of Manufacturers and principal instigator of a pro-Great-Whale coalition who labelled, in 1992, all opposition to mega-progress as "eco-fascism".

Ecology Inc. and Conquest

As far as the "Native question" is concerned, the authors of GRAME's report, Jean-Pierre Drapeau and Yves Guérard, in the name of "specialized environmentalists", propose the "creation of large parks or Biosphere reserves and the creation of hundreds of jobs [for the Indians] who could work as stewards of Nature. This would lead", according to the report, "to the satisfactory internalisation of social, cultural and environmental costs incurred by hydro-electric development (one of the forms of development which externalises in the least its effects by geographically confining its impacts)" (p.8).

In other words, Hydro-Québec can solve the problem caused by Native people's annoying presence in the North by integrating them, on a seasonal basis, to the market economy. They can work as clerks in parks created and managed by the State and located in "New-Québec" on the shores of their flooded lands where, according to the authors, the devastating effects of their mega-projects will be confined.

Public Relations and crisis control

This new Union for Sustainable Development, composed of "sin-

cere, experienced and informed" environmentalists, wants Québec to dig into its public purse in order to finance its "scientific" and "rational" work. Against the onslaught of demagogy and lies emanating, according to them, from English Canada and the United States and directed toward hydro-electric power and Hydro-Québec, these "experts" wish to put the debate around mega-development back on the right track...

GRAME's report states: "we cannot let organizations which use lies in lieu of arguments establish the terms of reference for such important matters" (p.2). Generous subsidies from the government would allow these experts to go anywhere abroad where Hydro-Québec is being criticized, while right here in Québec...

Lies and demagogy made in Québec

Since 1971 and Robert Bourassa's announcement of the project of the century and the lie-ridden promise of 100,000 new jobs, followed by secret contracts which will entail a loss for Québécois of 2.9 billion dollars by the year 2010, the cracks in the walls of Québec's hydro-electric monopoly are increasingly evident. Hydro must be held accountable for its debt of 33 billion dollars which will increase to 38 billion dollars by 1995 (Peru's "global" debt is 22 billion dollars).

But despite all this, the Sûreté d'Hydro Québec, GRAME and the Union for Sustainable Development, and others, are attempting to maintain Hydro-Québec's hold on a debate on energy policies which is all but absent outside the "terms of reference" deemed acceptable by the experts and initiated in Québec. On the international level, Hydro-Québec is working with the largest public relations firm in the world in order to improve its public image.

According to Greenpeace, the American firm Burson-Marsteller has in the past worked with "Nicolai Ceausescu's regime, the military junta in Argentina (1976), the owners of the Exxon Valdez and Union Carbide after the catastrophe in Bophal, India." This clearly indicates Hydro-Québec's ill health and failing credibility...

CORONER'S INQUEST

"THIS PROCESS FEELS LIKE A TRIAL"

ELLEN GABRIEL

It is clear from the testimony of all Mohawk witnesses that their intention was not to use firearms but to protect the territory (using non-violent means). Nobody expected the events of July 11th, 1990 to unfold as they did. As Ellen Gabriel put it: "We didn't expect a SWAT team". Indeed, only days before the SQ attack a group of Mohawks visited the SQ detachment in St. Eustache and were told by Sgt. Dépatie that it was not the SQ's intention to enforce a civil injunction. According to him their role was one of peacekeepers. When the attack did happen people at the Pines tried frantically to prevent a fire. An audio tape Allan Gabriel recorded from his radio scanner makes this clear. "Hold your fire!", "Remain calm, don't shoot back!" These are examples of instructions women gave using portable radios.

The case of Ellen Gabriel

On April 21, Ellen Gabriel was cited for contempt of Court by Coroner Gilbert for refusing to give the names of people present in the Pines on July 11, 1990. She had made it clear several times before that she could not do such a thing partly because her constitution, her laws and her beliefs did not allow it. She was ordered to appear before the Coroner on May 6 to give her reasons for her refusal. The maximum penalty is \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to one year.

SQ Lawyers

Throughout the inquest SQ lawyers made numerous objections to the events being placed in their proper context of Mohawk traditions and the injustices suffered by them and other native peoples. They would have preferred to investigate only

the immediate circumstances of Lemay's death.

Otherwise they are obsessed with trying to establish, again and again, that there was a military style line of command among the people defending the Pines and/or that the outcome happened mainly because of "outsiders". In spite of all the testimony by Mohawk people they are unable to grasp that they are dealing with a nation, and this is not how natives make decisions. They hear but cannot listen.

It Is Time To Back Down

Ciaccia's evidence shed even further light on Oka Mayor Ouellette's irresponsibility and duplicity. The two met on May 8, 1990 and Ouellette told Ciaccia that there was no peaceful way to realize the golf expansion and it was time to back down. Ciaccia offered to convince Siddon to buy the land if the expansion was postponed indefinitely, including compensation for lost taxes etc. Ouellette wanted 2 million dollars for land the municipality had paid \$70,000 for.

Ciaccia met Siddon May 10, 1990 and the next day he was told that the federal government was ready to negotiate the purchase. He contacted Ouellette on the same day to tell him, but the Mayor "seemed to want to back out" of their earlier agreement. Three days later the town council passed a resolution to proceed with the expansion. On July 9th Ciaccia asked Ouellette to assure him that he wouldn't call in the SQ on this day. Ouellette told him that as long as there were discussions the town wouldn't call the police. According to the Mayor's own testimony the decision to call in the SQ was made that very same day at a meeting in his kitchen.

CLEARCUTTING PROTEST

The barricade north of Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, is still standing (1 year). We send greetings and solidarity to the Protectors of Mother Earth (POME).

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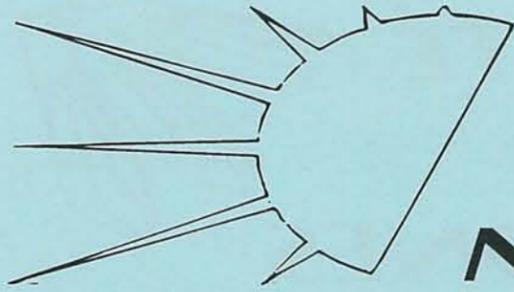
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 27 June 1993

CORONER'S INQUEST

WHO IS IN CONTEMPT?

By refusing to name the people she was with in the Pines in Kanehsatake on the morning of July 11, 1990, Ellen Gabriel was simply exercising and standing up for her rights according to the Haudenosaunee constitution and the laws of the Kanienkeha:ka Nation. But following her refusal on April 21st, she was cited by Coroner Guy Gilbert for contempt and told to present herself before the inquest on May 6th so that she may think about her decision and consider the possible 5,000 dollar fine and/or year in jail such a decision could lead to, according to Québec law.

April 22nd

The next day, while continuing her testimony, Ellen Gabriel again refused to collaborate with the inquest looking into the death of Marcel Lemay, a corporal with the SQ SWAT team who was fatally wounded during the shooting which followed the SQ's armed attack against the Mohawk Nation in 1990. According to her, the public inquest is increasingly taking on the appearance of a criminal trial rather than a useful exercise designed to clear up the events which lead to Lemay's death and the Oka crisis.

The Regroupement made its presence known on April 22nd when 15 or so of our members temporarily disrupted the proceedings by standing up with a three meter long banner which demanded the respect of Mohawk sovereignty.

May 6th

On the morning of May 6th, about one hundred of our members and supporters gathered outside the Palais de justice on St. Antoine Street to denounce the contempt charges put forward by the coroner and still pending against Ellen Gabriel. We were also there to demand that the Mohawk Nation, its people and sovereignty be respected, and that an international and independent inquiry take place to look into all of the events surrounding the Oka crisis of 1990 so that such a crisis never happen again and that those responsible be known and their interests made public.

Also present outside the court house with us were a number of women from Kanehsatake and Kahnawake including the Director of CKHQ Radio Kanehsatake, Denise David Tolley, who spoke and expressed her appreciation for the support shown that day by those taking part in the demonstration.

A room with an uproar

After a brief gathering, the majority of those present outside went to the inquest to hear Ellen Gabriel speak to the coroner and tell him that she categorically refused to take part in



Denise David Tolley: "Your support gives us strength and the convictions we stand for carry on. July 11th must never happen again. Let there be Justice!"

the inquest, that she would no longer answer any more questions. She spoke twice that day and twice the proceedings were interrupted by resounding and supportive applause. Never in the last year of trials and inquest has the *Regroupement* been able to get so many people into the court room to support defendants or spokespeople, and the difference it made that day was clear.

Following Ellen Gabriel's first intervention, the representatives of the SQ walked out and, at the end, the coroner, stumbling about, refused to charge her with contempt, preferring to put his decision off to June 16th.

We are very pleased to be able to print Katsi'tsakwas' (Ellen Gabriel's) words to Coroner Guy Gilbert, spoken on May 6th:

"I wish to say something to you Mr. Coroner... During the crisis and the months that passed during the crisis everyone was, I think, sad that a policeman lost his life. However, we also asked for an independent international inquiry because the people from the higher-ups of your government are not here to answer questions. This inquiry violates the Two Row Wampum treaty designed to help our two Nations peacefully coexist. Since the first contact with Europeans, jurisdiction and sovereignty have never been surrendered by the Kanienkeha:ka or the Iroquois Confederacy.

"I have been advised by my Chief that a proper inquiry would include the participation of the Iroquois Confederacy, Great Britain and Canada, and those people are not present today. You have stated yourself sir, that Mr. Lemay's death is a homicide and to me that means that you are not here to seek the truth, but instead are collecting evidence for the racist police force

of Québec to find a Mohawk scapegoat.

"I have explained to you the protocol of my people. For that reason it would be treasonous for me to submit the names to you when this [inquiry] is not being conducted in the proper manner it should be, according to the Two Row Wampum. In international law, this is also a violation since we have not surrendered our sovereignty to you. This was a conflict between two Nations instigated by your governments. The manipulation of evidence by the Sûreté du Québec and the Canadian army will forever cast doubt upon any findings of this inquiry.

"I am therefore refusing to answer any further questions and I can no longer participate in this farce (...) I have stated my position and reasons. I am within my legal right in my own law to tell you that this is a stance that I will take (...) I have made a statement to the effect that I don't think this is a fair inquiry. You don't have Mr. Elkas here, you don't have Robert Bourassa, Tom Siddon, you don't have the culprits behind the problem, some of whom are dead. This problem is over two hundred years old.

"The beatings and the human rights abuses of my people during the summer of 1990 have never been reconciled. None of the SQ have ever been charged. They are still in my community and they are still harassing our people. It is for their safety also.

So I will not change my position (...) I am here to defend myself today and I do not understand why you will not take the decision whether or not you are going to charge me. I think I have laid it out on the line for you as to what my feelings are, my reasons (...) My position will remain the same."

UPDATE ON THE TONY RIOS CASE

by Lois Cape (special collaboration)

Tony Rios, you may recall, is the young Lakota boy sentenced to 8 years in prison in South Dakota on a clear case of self-defense. Now 16, he has been imprisoned in the adult system for a year and a half.

In January, the authorities transferred him back to the hard-core prison at Sioux Falls as they had been threatening for months. Tony is again being beaten by the same gang as before, and as a punishment for fighting (although he didn't cause it) he has been put in "the hole".

Again he has attempted suicide. He is in despair. In a recent letter, he stated: "There are very few people, besides my mom, who care about me and my well-being. It's been a nightmare since my first incarceration. When I get letters from caring people... it helps."

Four hundred miles away from him, without transportation, not even a phone to communicate with her son, or even enough money to keep herself fed, Thelma Rios works ceaselessly for her son's release. But her situation is also desperate.

Tony's main supporters in Canada are in the Montréal area, but they are trying to spread the information as far as possible. An important aspect of the campaign is letter-writing. Letters to President Clinton, his wife, and the U.S. Attorney General in support of Tony would be appreciated.

Fund-raising at the moment is limited to the sale of support buttons and T-shirts bearing Tony's support logo. The Kahnawake Survival School recently raised nearly 300 dollars by raffling a blanket donated by a student. Their effort is

greatly appreciated.

Letters to Tony can be sent to South Dakota State Penitentiary, P.O. Box 911, Sioux Falls, S.D. 57117; and to Thelma Rios, 2429 Gnugnuska, Rapid City, S.D. 57701.

More information, as well as T-shirts and buttons, can be obtained from Lois Cape and Gordon Dedam, Box 435, Oka, Qué., J0N 1E0 or by calling (514) 479-8777. Donations can also be channelled through this source.



Support Ellen Gabriel!

On Wednesday June 16th, Ellen Gabriel must once again appear before coroner Guy Gilbert to answer to possible contempt charges which are still pending against her. The Regroupement invites you to the hearing in room 5.15 of the Montréal court house (1 Notre Dame St.) at 9:30 a.m.

POW WOW Kanehsatake and Kahnawake July 10th and 11th, 1993

For more information: :
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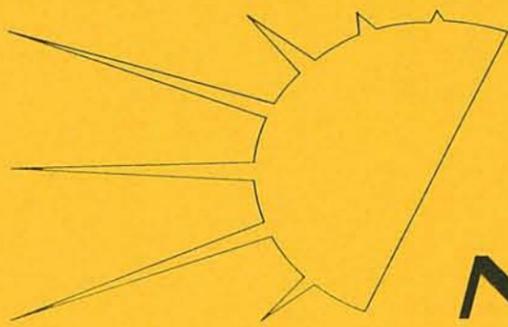
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 28-29 July-August 1993

LE REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ

THREE YEARS AFTER OKA

Elijah Harper's "No" to the Meech Lake Agreement and, especially, the Mohawk resistance during the summer of 1990 brought Native issues to the forefront of the Canadian and Quebec political scenes. At the same time, however, incomprehension, intolerance and even racism towards First Nations have risen dramatically, a phenomenon the media has fed and magnified daily with an inexhaustible smear campaign.

In such a context, it is encouraging, to say the least, that the current of sympathy that was given voice – by a minority, true, but an active one – in the summer of 1990 has never failed since.

There had been solidarity with First Nations before 1990. Throughout the '70s and '80s, support was expressed for the Mohawk traditionalists of Akwesasne, for Inuit dissenters from the James Bay Agreement, for the Micmacs of Restigouche, for the Innu of Labrador, for the Cree of Lubicon Lake, for Leonard Peltier and other Native political prisoners.

But it was the courageous struggle of the Mohawks that led to a widening and diversification of this solidarity movement. This is the context in which the Regroupement was built. Born spontaneously on

July 12, 1990, to protest against the Sûreté du Québec's intervention at Kanehsatake, the Regroupement is now entering its fourth year of existence and can count on the involvement and mobilization of several dozen and occasionally several hundred people.

A constant participation

Just in the course of this last year, the members of the Regroupement have been associated with the victory of the defendants from the Kanehsatake Treatment Centre, participated in a fund raising event for CKHQ, the Kanehsatake community radio, protested against hydro-electric development on Innu land, sent clothing and money to support a Cree barricade at Meadow Lake, accompanied Ellen Gabriel at her hearing for contempt of court before Coroner Gilbert, and participated in meetings to exchange views on Native realities.

This constant participation of its members is certainly the Regroupement's principal strength, as is the diversity of its membership which – above and beyond differences of national origin, of culture or of political orientation – is united by its concrete and active support of First Nations.

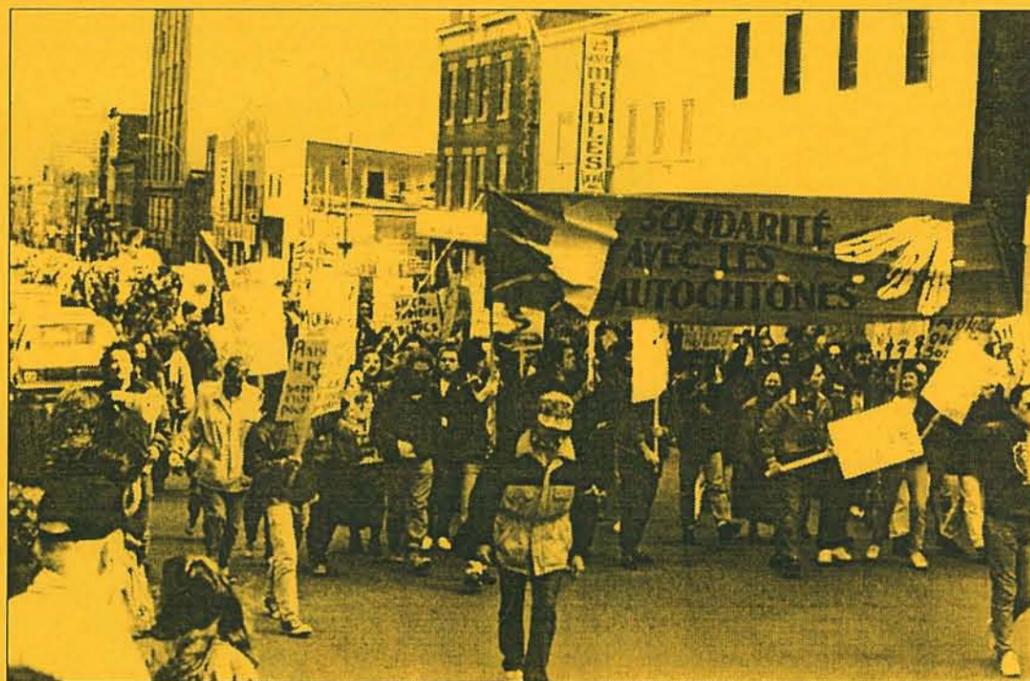


Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

In order to make information on Native issues more widely available, the Regroupement publishes a monthly newsletter, and has published brochures on the Mohawk trial and hydro-electric mega-development.

Unconditional support

It is through actions rather than declarations of principle that the Regroupement has sought to develop. Nonetheless, certain important tendencies have emerged and can be found throughout its various activities. At the heart of these tendencies stands the recognition of the territorial and national rights of Aboriginal peoples, including their inalienable right to self-determination, as well

as the need to negotiate nation-to-nation on the basis of these rights.

In its three years of existence, the Regroupement has had to make certain, sometimes difficult, decisions, concerning issues that are a source of division among Native people, such as the presence of weapons behind the barricades at Kanehsatake and Kahnawake, the defence strategy chosen by some Mohawks on trial on political charges in 1992, or the decision of the Innu of Mani-Utenam to oppose the SM 3 project and to exercise their political autonomy, against the will of their Band Council.

In these conflicts, the Regroupement has endeavoured not to feed the divisions but rather to support those Native people who seemed to be defending the rights of their

nation in the most consistent manner – and most independently of governments; but the Regroupement will never decide for Native people what their future, their positions or their means of subsistence and struggle ought to be, or how they should deal with internal divisions.

Hard challenges

In spite of what has been accomplished over the months and years, the Regroupement still has much to do if it wishes to have a real influence on Quebec society.

First of all, consolidate and enlarge its membership and its capacity for mobilization. A few hundred people demonstrating their support for Native people are not without a certain weight in the present context, but for some issues a much greater mobilization would be required. In the same perspective, the Regroupement must push certain social, community, labor and religious groups that have stated their desire for "dialogue" with and/or to support Aboriginal Nations, but have so far done nothing in practical terms.

The Regroupement will also have to develop its educational activities aimed at a wider audience, in order to inform and enlighten a greater number of Quebecers, particularly among young people, on matters of Native rights, struggles, and everyday life.

Finally, the Regroupement will have to play a greater part in certain debates which could lead to tension with First Nations in the future. Racism is on the rise, and there's the unemployment crisis, particularly in certain regions of Quebec, which increases the pressures in favour of mega-projects like Sainte-Marguerite or Great Whale. The recent demonstration involving thousands in Sept-Îles in favour of the SM 3 project is a disquieting taste of things to come.

To deal with these challenges, the Regroupement needs your support. If you are not already a member, become one. And if you wish to become more involved, contact us. There is still much to be done.

CORONER'S INQUEST

On June 16, H. Laddy Schnaiberg, the lawyer representing Ellen Gabriel, was granted more time to study the Iroquois constitution before defending his client against charges of Contempt of Court, stemming from her refusal to give the names of persons present in the Pines on July 11, 1990. Gabriel's hearing was rescheduled from June 16 to September 14, 1993.

In the last few weeks, the inquest, in an effort to piece together exactly what happened in the hours and moments preceding and during the shoot out, has heard from members of the Sûreté du Québec's 18-man SWAT team who took part in the raid.

The inquest learned that the SQ operation was intended to be an observation and negotiating mission. SQ officer Arthur said that he had been at the Pines "observing" for five days, and that on the morning of July 11 they were awaiting the arrival of negotiation specialists. During this waiting period, the SQ threw several volleys of tear gas canisters and concussion grenades into the crowd of unarmed women, men and children occupying the clearing behind the

main barricade. Richard Corriveau, the lawyer representing the Mohawk community asked Arthur whether this was the usual way that the SQ carries out negotiations.

Some officers claim to have seen a masked warrior carrying a gun pointed at the ground, walk behind the crowd of Mohawks into the Pines, and some officers have no recollection of seeing him. Similarly, not all could remember seeing a gun barrel within a fenced-in area behind the barricade, called "The Bunker" by the police. Video footage from television of the moments preceding and during the raid was shown in the courtroom; neither the masked, armed man nor the gun barrel are evident – however, many unarmed civilians, including children, are.

The SQ lawyers attempted to prove that what sounds like two gunshots on the soundtrack from this footage were fired by Mohawks, and precipitated the police shooting. They said they were meant as "warning shots", were fired about twenty feet above the ground and that the bullets hit trees over the heads of SQ officers. The trees in question were removed by the army or the SQ in August 1990 and are

the only evidence that can establish from which direction the shots were fired. So far this evidence has not been offered up by either police or army.

Corporal Denis Morin, Commander of the SWAT operation that day, did not hear the alleged shots, nor did several other officers who testified. Morin said that he received a phone call from SQ headquarters at 8:00 a.m. ordering the raid. Both Morin and Corporal Gervais Canuel said they had no idea why the initial mission was cancelled so quickly, before the negotiations had a chance to take place. Neither had seen this happen in their many years on the Force. Morin ordered the men to move in at 8:00. Officer Luc Pothier said he was unaware of the command to fire, yet he fired anyway. In general, the SQ are authorized to carry and use their weapons at their own discretion. Some say they heard the alleged two warning shots, some didn't. Some saw an armed man, some heard about him, and some heard and saw nothing. All were afraid, many "froze", hit the ground, and all seemed concerned about covering the officer closest to him. Each story is different, there is no

solid evidence of any of the allegations, yet we know shots were fired – over fifty bullets flew from the police side.

The question now remains as to who exactly ordered the raid and why. Morin stated that "the people at headquarters should have analyzed the situation" and "they never should have authorized the intervention".

Coroner Guy Gilbert pointed out that the police officers were only one or two feet away from one another during the shooting. "Surely it would be possible for them to shoot one another by accident? Has this not happened in the past?" This is especially significant, as some of them used automatic weapons. A twelve-year SQ veteran Gaëtan Castilloux (himself responsible for forty shots from the SQ side) explained, automatic weapons spew bullets indiscriminately, making precise aim impossible. So far, no officer claims to have seen Marcel Lemay get hit by the fatal shot.

The inquest hearings were suspended for the summer and will resume in September.

SM 3: NON MERCI!

From February 2nd to March 29th, 1993, Québec's environmental review board known as BAPE collected and studied 153 briefs presented in Sept-Iles and Québec City on the pros and cons of the SM 3 hydro-electric project slated for the Ste. Marguerite river in Nitassinan. On June 14th, BAPE, a consultative branch of the Québec Ministry of the Environment, decided that the SM 3 project, as conceived and promoted by Hydro-Québec, is deficient. According to BAPE the project, which has cost over 70 million dollars in research is neither economically viable nor environmentally sustainable.

Keeping the show on the road...

BAPE's 450 page report to the Minister of the Environment questions SM 3's "justifications" as presented by Hydro-Québec and recommends that the Carheil and Pekans rivers be conserved in their natural state. According to Hydro's plans, these main tributaries of the Moisie river were to be diverted and directed toward the Ste. Marguerite river in order to increase its flow. The state monopoly has essentially been sent back to its drawing board and, having failed the test, told to do its homework on the subject of energy demand forecasts.

BAPE has recommended that Lise Bacon, Québec's Minister of Energy and Resources, have "experts who are not only independent but also representative of various fields such as demand management, efficiency and alternative energies" verify Hydro-Québec's energy forecasts. BAPE also recommended that Lise Bacon also "take the appropriate steps to ensure a public debate on Québec's energy policies", a proposition that the Minister and the liberal government have resisted since 1985.

That's enough of that...

On June 15th, Lise Bacon in Québec's National Assembly, seething and mounted on her high electric horse, called BAPE to order, minimised the importance and breadth of its recommendations and flatly stated that it befalls the Council of Ministers of the Bourassa government to decide on matters of mega-development in Québec. Period. In Montréal, obviously, Hydro-Québec "lamented the attention accorded by BAPE to the criticisms and doubts of opponents" of the SM 3 project.

Among others who were "stunned" by BAPE's report are, of course, Richard Le Hir of the Québec Manufacturers' Association who, according to *La Presse*, believes

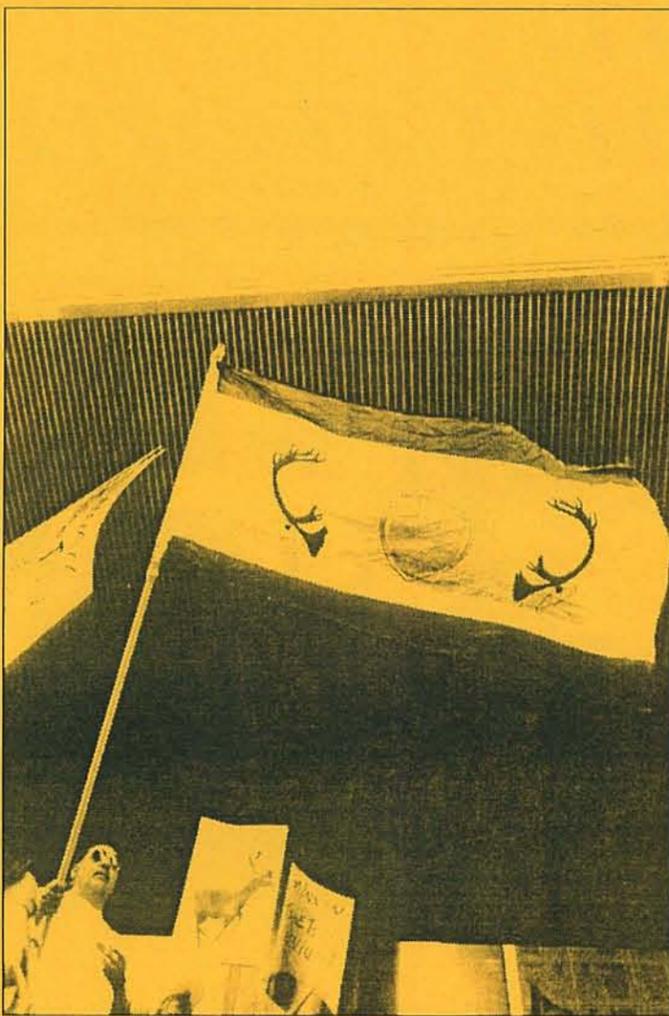


Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

that "the people of Sept-Iles are well worth the salmon of the Moisie river". For his part, Clément Godbout, secretary general of the FTQ, claimed that BAPE – and not Hydro-Québec with its colossal debt burden or mega-projects – "is proposing under-development as a development model..." Finally, Jean-Marc Dion, the mayor of Sept-Iles can't understand "how BAPE could possibly come out against a project which was supported by 90% of the participants in Sept-Iles during the public hearings" – the main reason these "public consultations" were to take place exclusively in Sept-Iles in the first place.

A History of facts...

But there are also some undeniable facts we need to look at. First and foremost, it is important to remember that the Innu people have never ceded their ancestral homeland to either the Canadian or Québec governments by way of treaty or otherwise. The land known as Nitassinan is therefore illegally occupied. More than 40 years of resource extraction in this territory constitutes theft and the Innu Nation has been subjected in a coercive and fraudulent manner to the colonial dictates of a society whose

primary motivating force is short term profit.

As far as Mani-Utenam is concerned, the federal government maintains its hold economically and politically on this Innu community through the Band Council and the Indian Act. Along with the government of Québec, Ottawa also finances by the millions the Atikamekw-Montagnais Council (CAM), an organisation which is supposed to represent these two Nations but which is increasingly contested by the people it speaks for.

Strangely, CAM has been negotiating for over 10 years for land that has always belonged to its Native constituents. Negotiations with both the federal and provincial governments continue to take place away from the communities and without the participation of the Innu people who live in the area of Nitassinan also known as Labrador. As negotiations continue, CAM allows clear-cut logging to take place, the flooding of land and the construction of power line corridors wherever Hydro-Québec, aluminum companies and the forest industry deem appropriate. It is highly probable that once "negotiations" have ended, that Nitassinan will have been devastated and that

CAM will cease to exist because of cuts in government funding.

As well as rendering billions of dollars worth of raw materials accessible to the "market", governments are also looking for a "Native" signature on an agreement which would once and for all legitimise their abusive if not criminal acts in Nitassinan. CAM is negotiating such an agreement and has accepted the terms of reference defined by the government's comprehensive land claims policy and its pre-conditions. In the name of the Atikamekw and Innu Nations, for the present and future generations, CAM has accepted, in exchange for compensation, the extinguishment of these Nation's ancestral and territorial rights forever, or *ad vitam æternam*, as the Jesuits would say. Today, the negotiations continue as the pillage of Innu land goes on with impunity.

The price of resistance.

In the Innu community of Mani-Utenam there are people who oppose the Band Council, CAM territorial negotiations and Hydro-Québec's projects. These people are using all peaceful means at their disposal to demand their rightful place and to make clear that their ancestors' and children's voices will not vanish.

According to a public consultation and a subsequent survey, 80% of the people of Mani-Utenam are opposed to SM 3, a project which, until recently, was supported by the Band Council.

For a number of years now, a number of people in the community have been demonstrating against SM 3 and the Band Council by putting up road blocks, marching and disrupting "business as usual" meetings of a local government considered by many as illegitimate and out-moded. On May 4th, 1992, Yves Rock, Jules Bacon and Antoine Fontaine resigned from the Band Council in Mani-Utenam in protest of Chief Élie-Jacques Jourdain's abuse of power and "totalitarian ways" since May 1991 when he took over.

During proceedings for the nomination of three new councillors about a month later on June 6, 1992, the procedures were peacefully interrupted, postponed to the 14th and then disrupted once again by members of the community. Criminal charges were laid against 41 people and a trial date was set for May 25, 1993. Four elders were acquitted, but 37 people were fined from 10 to 700 dollars or 2 days to 2 months in jail. Each person found guilty of disturbing the peace also had to respect a one-year probation, but on June 10th of this year, no one

presented themselves to sign the court's conditions.

In December 1992, the Band Council applied for and obtained a court injunction forbidding all demonstrations in Uashat and Mani-Utenam. Since then criminal charges have been laid against more than 70 individuals who either oppose the Band Council or are members of the Coalition for Nitassinan.

A recent demonstration in favour of the SM 3 project was organised after BAPE's report by the Sept-Iles Chamber of Commerce and City Hall. Supporters of the project gathered at the Galeries Montagnaises located in Uashat. The Band Council did nothing to prevent or impede the event in favour of a project that 80% of the inhabitants of Mani-Utenam disagree with. But then again, according to the Indian Act, Band Council governments were never conceived to defend the rights of Native Nations. Their primary role has always been to represent the colonial power at the very heart of Native people's daily lives.

The "Chief" in Mani-Utenam, Élie-Jacques Jourdain, is now in office for a second term since elections in March 1993 when 64% of all eligible voters refused to take part in the vote. For having raised their voices against the Council and in support of the results of a referendum held on October 10th, 1992, which shows that 56% of people in Mani-Utenam favour political autonomy for their community, Sylvestre Roch, Evelyne St-Onge, Sylvain Vollant and Jules Bacon spent eight days in jail.

For those who are struggling for social justice, ancestral and territorial rights in Mani-Utenam, court imposed fines are increasing, criminal records are getting longer and prison terms are getting more severe. Other trials in relation to Mani-Utenam's political autonomy will take place in September and January 1994. The Band Council expects to permanently replace the community's Native police force by the Sûreté du Québec in the upcoming weeks and the dam builders and decision makers in Québec expect to begin work on SM 3 in September despite BAPE's report and the illegality of such a hydro project in Nitassinan.

The Coalition for Nitassinan is organising a walk from Mani-Utenam to New York which could begin this fall with the participation of a number of Native Nations, including the Hopi Nation from Arizona. The Regroupement will do its best to support such initiatives and will keep you informed on the matter.

Come join us for the 9th edition
of the Native Music Festival
INNU NIKAMU
August 6, 7 & 8, 1993
Mani-Utenam, Nitassinan
(20 km east of Sept-Iles
along autoroute 138)
For more information:
Sylvain Vollant Danielle Descent
(418) 927-2985

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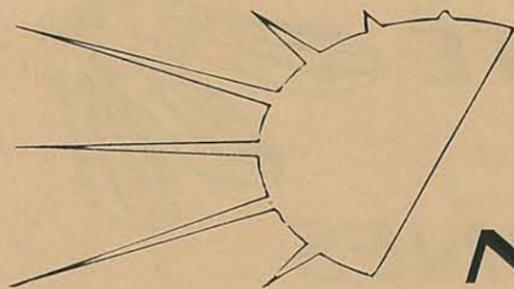
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 30 September 1993

Leonard Peltier

THE INJUSTICE CONTINUES

"I appeal to the conscience of the whole world to free Leonard Peltier, a symbol of all Indian political prisoners."

— Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel prize winner, speaking in Montréal, November, 1992

"I really don't feel like a symbol. I don't feel important. My main concern has always been and will continue to be freedom and dignity for our Indian nations."

— Leonard Peltier, from Leavenworth prison, September 1991



On July 7, 1993, three justices of the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in the United States rejected the most recent petition for the release of Leonard Peltier, a Chippewa-Sioux Indian first imprisoned more than 17 years ago for the deaths of two FBI agents. The judges thus wrote the latest episode in a long series of injustices that will apparently only end with the final release of Peltier.

From Wounded Knee to Oglala

In 1973, while participating in the occupation of Wounded Knee, on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Reserve) in South Dakota, Peltier was already on the hit list that the FBI had prepared as part of its activity under the Cointelpro program to "put American Indian Movement (AIM) leaders under close scrutiny and arrest them on every possible charge until they can no longer make bail."

At the end of the 71-day siege of Wounded Knee by the American army, Peltier was a man marked out for revenge. The occasion arose two years later when he and other AIM members returned to the Pine Ridge Reserve for a spiritual encampment at Oglala. At that time the Reserve was under a reign of terror by Dick Wilson, president of the tribal council. Denounced during the 1973 occupation, Wilson had since provided himself with a death squad, baptized GOON ("Guardians of the Oglala Nation"), which in three years had been responsible for the deaths of 63 people, mainly traditionalists who sympathized with AIM.

On June 26, 1975, two FBI special agents, Jack Coler and Ron Williams, swept into the encampment, supposedly to arrest a youth suspected of stealing a pair of cowboy boots. A shootout erupted in which 150 police officers participated. When it was over, the bodies of the two agents and of one Indian were found. Not surprisingly, the latter's death was never investigated. Only later it became evident that this police intervention had been merely a diversion; that same day Wilson's tribal council had transferred one-eighth of the entire Reserve to the federal government, to be leased in the future to Union Carbide for uranium mining.

A Prisoner of the Uranium War

On February 6, 1976, Peltier was arrested in Canada for the first-degree murder of the two FBI agents. He was extradited 10 months later on the basis of false declarations made under oath by one Myrtle

Poor Bear. In the meantime two other defendants had been acquitted on the grounds of legitimate defence. The accusations against a third had been dropped, according to the FBI, so that "the full prosecutive weight of the federal government could be directed against Leonard Peltier."

The trial of Leonard Peltier, which ended on April 18, 1977 with two sentences of life imprisonment, was tainted with irregularities: harassment and intimidation of witnesses, doctoring of evidence, false testimony. Judge Benson even had the jury leave the courtroom while Myrtle Poor Bear admitted that she had been under threat by FBI agents when she signed the documents leading to Peltier's extradition.

Peltier's conviction was then followed by too many long years of imprisonment under shocking conditions, of mockery made of legal recourse, of appeals made to international public opinion.

Irrefutable Arguments, But ...

The liberation of Leonard Peltier never seemed more likely than at the beginning of his last appeal in November 1992. Never before had his cause been so visible to the public eye. Among other reasons this was because of the publication of the book, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, by Peter Matthiessen (after an eight-year ban), and because of the release of the film *Incident at Oglala*, produced by Robert Redford. And above all, his appeal rested on irrefutable legal arguments.

But all this was not enough. The justices deliberately chose to ignore the flagrant and repeated admission by the American government prosecutor, Lynn Crooks, that she had no evidence, no witnesses, and no facts of substance to prove that Peltier was guilty of first-degree murder. She even admitted that Peltier may have been only "an aider and abettor" and that "we do not know who shot the agents."

The justices also closed their eyes to new evidence pointing to illegal conduct by the FBI. They refused to take into consideration the testimony of an ex-GOON asserting that the FBI had been implicated in the terror that had reigned at Pine Ridge, as it was they who encouraged, armed, and illegally trained the vigilantes loyal to Dick Wilson.

After a judgment of this nature, it is difficult not to believe the assertion that the three justices had a secret meeting with the FBI during their

deliberations.

The above history will certainly lead to new legal proceedings. But the liberation of Leonard Peltier remains in the first place a political struggle -- and one which is also taking place on Canadian soil. In 1989 the Supreme Court of Canada condemned the fraudulent process used by the United States government to extradite Peltier, but left the responsibility to correct this injustice to the Canadian political authorities. This the Canadian federal parliament has refused to do. It is necessary to force it to do so.

As Leonard Peltier said in a recent interview, "This case is going to have to continue in the political arena. My freedom will come from the people."

For further information or to make donations, please contact the Canadian Leonard Peltier Defence Committee, 43 Chandler Drive, Scarborough, Ontario M1G 1Z1, telephone 416-439-1893.



Kanehsatake, July 10, 1993

For the third consecutive year, over 200 Native and non-native people marched together from Kanehsatake to the town of Oka in order to commemorate the events of July 11, 1990. Led by elders of the Mohawk Nation and of the Iroquois Confederacy and four traditional signers, the walk this year left highway 344 and followed the entrance of the Oka Golf Club. Walkers then paused briefly in front of the Mohawk cemetery threatened in 1990 by the expansion of an adjacent Golf Club parking lot. The walk then headed back toward Kanehsatake... over the third fairway, under the attentive if not worried eyes of Oka's elite perched snugly in the shade of their clubhouse. The little red flag on the third green was raised high under a radiant summer sun by a veteran of the "Oka crisis", turned upside down and then stuck into the green to the amazement and joyful applause of all who took part. See ya next year!

Benefit Concert for Nitassinan Coalition

AGAINST SM-3

Friday, October 8th 1993
8:30 PM

with

Uashau Stone

(Innu group from Mani-Utenam),

Assar Santana,

Los Improvisados de Otavalo,

and more ...

Ticket : \$6 in advance • \$8 at the door
at l'Union française, 429 Viger est, Montréal
(Berri metro)

Organised by Regroupement de solidarité
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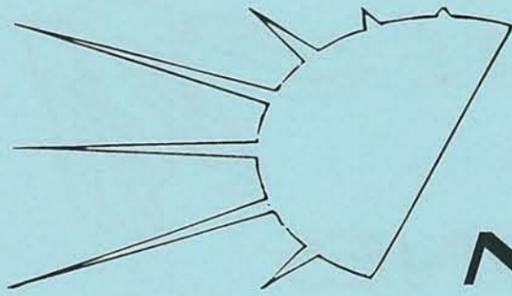
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 31 October 1993

SM-3

The straw that broke the caribou's back!

Between now and October 6th, the liberal government's Council of Ministers is expected to approve the SM-3 hydro development project slated for the North shore. SM-3 would be the 14th such project in Nitassinan, a 700 000 km² territory that has never been ceded nor surrendered by the Innu Nation.

Last June, the Québec's Public Environmental Hearings Board, known as BAPE concluded, in a 450 page report, that SM-3 "should not presently be authorized according to the concept presented by Hydro-Québec". BAPE, a branch of Québec's environment ministry, noted a number of important shortcomings in Hydro-Québec's environmental impact study of the project. Amongst other things, it questions Hydro-Québec's energy demand forecasts and recommends that Lise Bacon, Minister of Energy and Resources, have these forecasts substantiated by "a group of independent experts representing diversified fields of interest". BAPE also recommends that a public debate take place on the matter of energy policies in Québec.

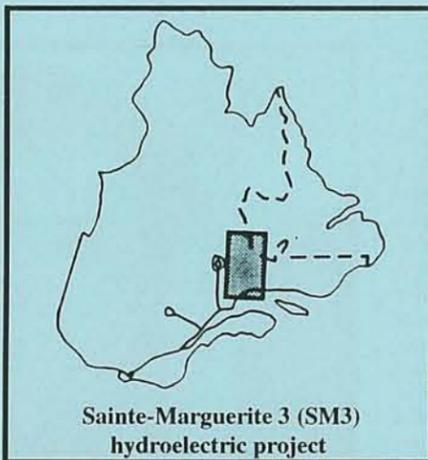
From 1993 to the year 2010, the \$3.5 billion SM-3 hydro mega-project will maintain 600 jobs, six months a year, for the regional work force estimated, in 1992, at 50 600 people. 350 jobs will be created for workers from other areas. Following an intensive 10 year construction period, SM-3 will have created «twenty permanent jobs»...

The rivers

SM-3 will be the third hydro dam to be built on the Sainte-Marguerite river, which runs 300 km in length before reaching the St. Lawrence, about fifteen km west of Sept-Îles. If the project goes through, 30 to 40 km of river down-stream from the dam will be dried up for a 40 month period. Following the project's completion, a 10 km stretch of river will be permanently dried up. In practical terms, this means that the river will effectively be cut off from its estuary and the waters of the St. Lawrence.

The project also calls for the diversion of the Carheil and aux Pekans rivers, two important tributaries of the Moisie river. In its report, BAPE notes that the Moisie river is the last important river on the North shore which has yet to be altered and dammed, that it is one of Québec's most important salmon rivers and that it is internationally renowned. For BAPE, "the option of redirecting waters in the Moisie river basin is... unacceptable."

Following the projects completion, the methylmercury content in the Carheil reservoir will surpass those observed in the James Bay area. Hydro-Québec maintains that the methylmercury contamination and the subsequent poisoning of the food chain will tend to diminish with time, but BAPE questions the



Sainte-Marguerite 3 (SM3)
hydroelectric project

accuracy of Hydro's 30 year time-scale. "Should it take 50 years, the problem would persist for a period equal to the dam's economic life span."

Meanwhile, the Innu "would become objects of observation for the advancement of technological controls on methylmercury's effects on human beings, and the experimental subjects for medical follow-ups." In fact, the phenomenon related to methylmercury contamination, which happens to be 10 times more toxic than mercury in its metallic state, is not completely understood. During the hearings it was observed that after 36 years of existence, contamination levels in the SM-2 reservoir have yet to return to normal.

The road towards genocide

SM-3 also calls for the construction of a 50 km long access road. Hydro-Québec will clear-cut 1 million m³ of forest which would otherwise be submerged beneath the reservoirs. The "harvested" forest will be sent to a pulp mill to be turned into pulp and paper. The new road will access about 250 km² of previously inaccessible territory. According to the Ministry of Forests, the access road to SM-3 will open a watershed "[...] which would allow an access to 400 000 m³ of coniferous trees a year."

Hydro-Québec's impact study on the project admits that "an increase in mining, forestry and hydroelectric exploitation made possible by the access road will encroach on lands hitherto inaccessible and disturb the environment. The [Innu people's] activities in the forest, which have been very important within the community for generations, will be, by this very fact, disrupted."

In its report, BAPE notes that for the Native people concerned, the cumulative effects of an increasing number of hydro projects

"lead to a continued and permanent degradation of their living conditions, to a disintegration of local economies, to individual resignation before government decisions, to a withdrawal of interest in the traditional way of life and the growing marginalisation of Native communities with regards to local and regional populations."

The resistance...

Since January 1992, 800 men and women from a number of Innu communities have banded together for change and renewal. This traditionalist movement is known as the Coalition for Nitassinan.

In an open letter to the newspaper *Le Devoir* on September 2nd, the Coalition stated that it "refuses to pay its electricity bills, not wanting to participate in its self-destruction nor condone the destruction of Innu land [...] For the members of the Coalition for Nitassinan, SM-3 is another dam, one too many. We intend to fight Hydro-Québec and are willing to give up our lives in the process, if necessary."

The Coalition for Nitassinan's attitude is diametrically opposed to that of Élie-Jacques Jourdain, "Chief" of the Mani-Utenam and Uashat Band Council who was re-elected on March 22nd 1993 for his second mandate. 64% of eligible voters refused to vote in that election.

According to a Radio-Canada news report in the region on September 9th, Jourdain said he was willing to sign an agreement in favour of SM-3 in exchange for monetary compensation, free access to whatever land is not flooded or subsequently destroyed by "development", and a predominant role on a salmon supervision committee which would judge, after the fact, if Hydro-Québec was right or not in its predictions...

... from Mani-Utenam to Montréal

SM-3 will once again violate Native peoples' rights and once again our active solidarity will be directed toward the members of the Coalition for Nitassinan.

SM-3 is yet another white elephant which will increase Hydro-Québec's \$33 billion debt burden. Our collective future is being mortgaged for the benefit of mega-corporations that pay less for their electricity than what it costs to produce it in the first place. SM-3 must be stopped. Join the resistance movement now. Support Coalition for Nitassinan.

**DEMO IN SUPPORT
OF COALITION FOR
NITASSINAN
OCT. 12, 7: 30 AM
HYDRO-QUÉBEC
HEAD OFFICE**

**NON-VIOLENCE
TRAINING
OCT. 3 1: 00 PM
2035 ST-LAURENT
(3rd FLOOR)
INFO : 525-0765**

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



On September 14th, Ellen Gabriel had to appear for a third time at the Montreal Court House to face contempt of court charges. A number of activists with the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones were there waiting to show their support when she arrived. Ellen Gabriel thanked them warmly and said that such support helps the struggle continue. Back in April, Gabriel refused to reveal the names of peoples she was with in the Pines on the morning of July 11th, 1990, to the Coroner investigating corporal Lemay's death. At the time, she demanded that an independent international inquiry take place to shed light on all of the events concerning the "Oka crisis" of 1990. She was once again told by the Coroner to appear at a later date to which she replied that she would not be returning to the inquest.

AGAINST SM-3

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR NITASSINAN COALITION

Friday, October 8th 1993
8:30 pm

Ticket : \$6 in advance • \$8 at the door
at l'Union française, 429 Viger east,
Montréal (métro Berri-UQAM)

Tickets
for the
raffle on
sale on
October
8th

Draw for Raffle on December 1st, 1993

1st prize	2nd prize	3rd prize
Andian	Mocasin	T-Shirt, book and membership of Regroupement
Blanket		

Ticket \$1 • to support Nitassinan Coalition

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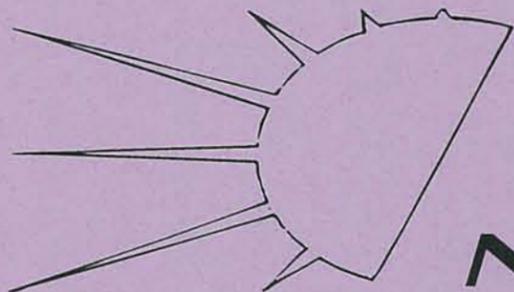
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 32 November 1993

Mani-Utenam

SUSPENSION OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

The Takuaihan Innu Band Council «A political body set up in accordance with the laws of the Indian Act, with its head office in Sept-Iles» has, for the last year, tried to ban all public demonstrations, rallies or any sort of organized opposition within the Innu community of Mani-Utenam. By imposing an injunction obtained this year from Québec's Superior Court, The Council and its chief Elie-Jacques Jourdain have attempted, in effect to permanently criminate all popular opposition on the reserve.

Defying the Injunction

In defiance of such provocation and the Band Council's shameless contempt for the most fundamental of freedom, many members of the community, including the Coalition for Nitassinan, have defied the injunction, denounced the Council, refused to recognize provincial jurisdiction in their community and continue to demonstrate openly against Hydro Quebec.

In fact, Hydro Quebec stands to gain the most from a Band Council which supports its projects and silences the local population through law and order. Presently the Council is asking for 80 million \$ in compensation in their negotiations with Hydro Quebec for the SM-3 project...

Meanwhile, the population of Mani-Utenam are demanding justice in the recognition of the results of a referendum held on October 10, 1992. At the time, 56% of the population voted in favour of political autonomy from the neighbouring community of Uashat who's affairs are also administered by the Innu Innu Takuaihan Council. After a series of occupations, a hunger strike and negotiations in September, 1992, the Innu Takuaihan Council formally committed itself to «respect the people's will and to engage in a separation process if there is a positive response by the majority (...) in one or the other of the two communities».

Hydro's Game

The Regroupement received a letter on October 27th from a resident of Mani-Utenam explaining that «The Band Council has never wanted to follow up on the referendum because if in October, 1992, they had done so, Mani-Utenam would have officially become an autonomous band. Hydro Quebec would have had to take into account the fact that the population of Mani-Utenam is against SM-3. This would have really messed things up for Hydro Quebec. This is why today we must push very hard for separation... As soon as Mani-Utenam is recognized as autonomous, the injunction will no longer hold and we will be able to say NO! to SM-3 without being thrown in jail.»

But for now, the injunction is still in effect and the Innu Takuaihan Council is using it to gag and punish all opposition. Last October 15, the

women of the Coalition for Nitassinan sent us a message that explains the consequences of their resistance. The message is signed by Constance Vollant, Sonia Jean-Pierre, Christiane Vollant, Carmen Picard St-Onge, Delisca St-Onge-Jourdain and Therese St-Onge.

Letter from Innu Women

« This morning, before going to prison, we want you to know (...) that they're taking our fingerprints, our photos and are opening up files on us as if we were criminals. That they are stripping us of our clothes, obliging us to remain completely naked while they search and frisk us before sending us to our cells. This is a great shame for us, Innu women.

We want to publically denounce the Innu Takuaihan Council of Sept-Iles for wasting public funds which they use to pay for lawyers and judicial procedures against the people of Mani-Utenam. Yesterday, three more men from Mani-Utenam, Sylvain Vollant, Omer St-Onge and Leo St-Onge were sent to jail for the same reasons as us. (They will remain there until November 20th). The Innu Takuaihan Council should use this money to help the children instead of sending their parents to jail. We also denounce the Council for the violence exercised against the women. It is our opinion that these useless judicial proceedings are just another form of violence practised against Innu women who have already put up with more than their share in the past.

We have participated in peaceful demonstrations to demand that the Innu Takuaihan Council keep its promise and respect the democratic referendum of October, 1992, in

which a majority of the population of Mani-Utenam pronounced itself in favour of a separation from the Sept-Iles Band [Uashat].

Since this time, not only has the Innu Takuaihan Council maintained its oppression toward us by an injunction which forbids us to demonstrate, but it publically declares in the media that it does not favour the separation and will take no proceedings in this direction.

In conclusion, the Innu Takuaihan Council can continue to throw us in jail, we, the mothers and the grandmothers of the Innu Nation. This will not silence us nor will it change our beliefs, for we demand RESPECT for our families and children.»

Signed in Mani-Utenam, Nitassinan, October 15, 1993.

BENEFIT RAFFLE AND BOOK LAUNCHING FOR COALITION POUR NITASSINAN

Wednesday, December 1st, at 8:00pm **Free Entrance** with special guests

at Centre Strathearn, 3680 Jeanne-Mance, Montréal, Métro Place-des-Arts

Raffle : Tickets \$1 • to support Coalition pour Nitassinan

1st prize Andlan Blanket
2nd prize Moccasins
3rd prize T-Shirt, Book and membership

ORGANISED BY THE REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES • INFORMATION : (514) 982-6606



Photo : Sebastien Bouchard

NO to SM-3!

Yvette Michel, Innue

With much emotion, Georgette and Yvette Michel spoke in the name of the Coalition for Nitassinan before some 200 people attending a benefit concert in their honour. They reaffirmed the will of the Innu of Mani-Utenam to keep struggling against the SM-3 hydro project and to keep defending their rights and land in the process. Never has their land been ceded. Eight hundred dollars were raised and sent to the Coalition.

On October 12, more than 60 people picketed in front of Hydro-Québec headquarters in Montréal. Many blocked René Lévesque boulevard during morning rush hour, but there were no arrests. We are organising a blockade of the same building as soon as the Council of Ministers decides to go ahead with the project. The blockade will be organised in conjunction with the Alliance for Non-Violent Action and will be in support of actions taking place in Nitassinan. As part of this support campaign, the Regroupement will be launching a booklet on the Coalition for Nitassinan on December 1st. We invite you to take part in any or all of these activities and to show your support, one way or another, to the Coalition for Nitassinan.

78 DAYS AND COUNTING

By the first week of November, the siege on the Golden Hill Paugeesukq First Nation will have exceeded both the sieges of Pine Ridge and Oka in length.

Last April the Paugeesukq Tribal Council opened a small tobacco shop on their 106 acre reservation near Colchester, Connecticut. Attorney General Robert Satti, under a request by the State Revenue and Tax Department, ordered the Smoke Shop closed down and surrounded the State-recognized sovereign territory with heavily armed State Troopers. Paugeesukq warriors were called in to defend the territory against possible invasion by the Troopers.

Under a Connecticut law passed in 1989, the Governor is obliged to enter into a «trust agreement», whereby he must negotiate on an individual basis all taxes to be collected on any trade or commerce conducted by a «willing indigenous Tribe».

However, since the Paugeesukq Tribal Council tried to open the negotiations two years ago, they have met with nothing but stonewalling and a refusal to negotiate. The Tribe then filed a lawsuit against Governor Lowell Weicker, but last August they offered to drop it if the Governor would begin immediate negotiations. The response was a warrant for the arrest of Moonface Bear, who is both Chief of the Tribal Council and War Chief.

When the Tribe voluntarily closed the Smoke Shop on August 11th, the

warrant for his arrest was not removed.

Moonface Bear was a member of the State's own Legislative Task Force on Indian Affairs, which hammered out most of Connecticut's Indian Law. He says his constitutional rights are being violated. Citing section 9 of the first article of the U.S. Constitution which provides that «no person shall be arrested, detained or punished except in cases clearly warranted by law», Moonface points out that he has broken no laws.

Federal mediators willing to work on the negotiations were rejected by the State. Instead, the State wants to jail the Chief and prefers to spend taxpayers money on maintaining up to 15 police cars on the road outside the reservation. On August 19th, New York State Police helicopters stormed over Paugeesukq territory in the middle of the night, with a 200-man SWAT team waiting nearby.

This scare tactic enraged neighbours in the quiet, residential community of Colchester, who also complain of illegal searches and harassment by police on a daily basis. In public opinion polls, 80-90% of respondents said they support the Paugeesukqs. Meanwhile, the Chief cannot leave his territory, warriors continue their vigilance and there is hope that the latest attempts to negotiate will end the standoff. The results of this struggle will set a precedent for the four other State-recognized Tribes in Connecticut.

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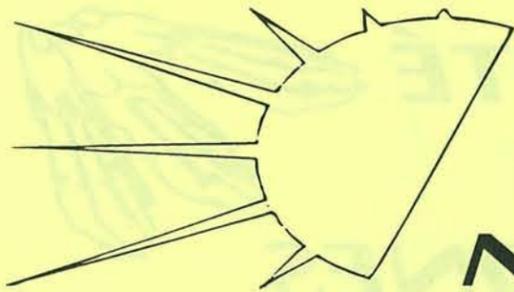
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 33 December 1993

Kanehsatake

... BEYOND THE CIGARETTES

For the past few weeks, the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake has been making headlines and been getting more than its fair share of spiteful media attention from reporters and commentators. Sitting around a table at Ed's Place in the heart of Kanehsatake, the traditionalists Walter David Sr., Susan Oke, Marie David and Valerie David, spoke frankly to the *Regroupement* of their community's situation, often punctuating the conversation with laughter and good humour.

"Street theatre"

Last October, during the federal election campaign, non-Native property owners living in Kanehsatake blocked highway 344. Presenting themselves as the "hostages of Oka", they blocked the highway in order to accelerate the purchase of their homes by the federal government.

Susan Oke was arrested by police and had to endure a lengthy trial for having defended the territory of Kanehsatake in the summer of 1990. She says the property owners "want to get out as much as we want them to go. What bugs us is the fact that they could block a main highway with the co-operation of the police, whereas we had blocked a secondary dirt road [in 1990]. They got what they wanted in 48 hours. We still haven't gotten anything..."

Marie David is not opposed to the idea of financial compensation for the non-Native home owners, since their homes were purchased a long time ago, perhaps without the understanding they were living on Native land. But, she adds, it is of no use for the federal government to be negotiating with the Band Council for the purchase of those homes or the land: "It's our land. They should just give it back."

As for the other barricade erected a few days later by a handful of Mohawks, the four burst out laughing: "Street theatre. A joke!" Susan explains that the action involved a very small number of participants. Speeches and press releases came directly from Jerry Peltier's Band Council Office. She says the action "had nothing to do with the Land, but everything to do with money. Money for health, money for peacekeeping, for policing."

Marie believes that the issue of buying back Mohawk land for re-unification illustrates well the contradictions which the Band Council represents: "They say they don't want a reserve under the Indian Act, but they're a creation of the Indian Act. Its like signing a contract, you've got to accept the whole package."

Smuggling? No,... commerce!

Making the link with the controversial issue of cigarettes, Marie adds: "Some Mohawks claim to be sovereign yet follow the Indian Act. Like the people with the cigarettes. They hear a lot of talk about sovereignty,



Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

Demonstration in the streets of Kanehsatake and during the annual traditional pow wow, July 1992

our laws, but most of them fall under the Indian Act. They're not Longhouse. Or they're just lawless. They don't follow any law, whether it's Longhouse law, what they call Mohawk Custom Law or federal or provincial laws. They use the words "sovereignty" and "laws" without knowing what they mean or imply. I can't argue with them on the issue of sovereignty, because I believe in it.

Her father, Walter David Sr., explains that it's wrong to talk about cigarette "smuggling" on Mohawk land, since the Kanien'kehaka are a sovereign Nation. For Mr. David, it's more a question of "free trade" or "commerce", and neither federal nor provincial police forces have any jurisdiction or right to intervene. He adds that the cigarette trade is a tentative response to the very real problem of under-employment in Kanehsatake and that it is the government's refusal to recognise Mohawk rights that have pushed some people toward such a response.

But the actual cigarette trade does not by any means represent a long-term or effective solution. According to Susan Oke, it places the entire community in danger while only benefiting a select minority: "I don't like it, because when the runners are moving, they've got the cops behind them. There have been shooting incidents because of cigarettes... Something that has so much effect on everyone should be decided on by everyone."

Marie thinks that the cigarette trade could be more acceptable "if it helped the community as a whole finance programs for the youth, for example, or equipment for the kids".

Susan adds that other ways of developing the local economy have to be explored: "The environment. Or tourism as long as it isn't all controlled by non-Natives down in the neighbouring village... or look like Disneyland... This land is good for farming. I could see some form of free trade with Akwasasne. They can't farm their land because it's too polluted. Kahnawake could take part as well..."

A difficult situation

Since the crisis, Susan Oke has seen the social and political situation deteriorate in Kanehsatake: "A few years ago, I felt safe to live here. I don't feel safe to live here now. There is a lot of crime, a lot of intimidation. The Band Council, which Marie David refers to as "Stupid Brother" in contrast with the government's "Big Brother", is singled out by her. "We can't even have a forum to express our opinions", she says, "you go to a political meeting and you feel intimidated."

The absence of any kind of public debate makes a large part of the population feel powerless. "People are worried. Certain people who grew up with the Church don't know the Longhouse. Others are afraid of it. They'd like to support us, but they're afraid." Referring to a Hopi prophecy, Marie thinks that Native Nations are at a cross-roads. They'll either chose tradition or dependence. In that sense, she is pleased with the evolution since 1990 of people's mentality and language. Native people are speaking less and less in terms of Band Councils and reserves, and more in terms of Nations, sovereignty and territorial rights...

Demonstration in front of MacMillan-Bloedel

Monday January 10, 1994

in support of the Clayoquot Sound 44
Meet at 9 a.m. at 2035 St-Laurent, third floor
Bring transportation if possible.
For information: 871-9473

Every people has the right to exist.

Article 1 of the Joint Declaration
on the Rights of Peoples

Roughly sixty people responded to the invitation of the *Regroupement* to attend a night of solidarity with the Coalition for Nitassinan on the first of December. Taking advantage of the launching of the recent publication on the Coalition for Nitassinan and including the Joint Declaration on the Rights of Peoples, several speakers took the liberty to comment on the actual political situation of the First nations. Voicing their support were Marie-Celie Agnant, haitian activist and writer, a representative from the Guatemala Support Committee, filmmaker Arthur Lamotte, and two uni-

versity professors, Rémi Savard and Michelle Vigeant. Denise David-Tolley, Ellen Gabriel and Walter David senior, as well as other members of the Mohawk community in Kanehsatake, also gave their support and encouragement. Furthermore, Jeanne-Mance Charlish, innue from Mashteuiatsh, and Gilbert Pilot, spokesperson for the Coalition for Nitassinan, talked about the importance of the struggle they are presently fighting on the north shore of the St-Lawrence. You can get a copy of publication on the Coalition for Nitassinan for the minimal cost of 2\$ at the *Regroupement* office.



Dessin : Kenojuak Ashevak

Lottery • Lottery • Lottery • Lottery

Due to the participation of hundreds of people, the lottery organised by the *Regroupement* was able to collect \$1,200 to be donated to the Coalition for Nitassinan. The Equatorial blanket was won by Eve Lamont. The second prize, a pair of mocassins, will be worn by Perre Goldberger, and Pat Burns is the lucky winner of the third prize: T-shirt, book and membership of the *Regroupement*.

Thanks to everyone for your support

HARASSMENT

On December 1, the *Regroupement* received a press release from Sylvestre Rock of the Coalition for Nitassinan. More arrests had taken place in Mani-Utenam and three more members of the Coalition were in jail for having defied a Band Council injunction and opposed the SM-3 hydro project. Thérère St-Onge was jailed on November 26. Sylvain Vollant, after having been jailed from October 14 to November 22 was jailed again on November 24 for three more days. Rolland St-Onge, musician with the group Ushuau Stone, was jailed on November 29 and fined \$ 1500. When the *Regroupement* phoned Sylvestre for an update, we were informed that he too had been jailed on November 24 for a month. In January, 41 members of the Coalition will be going to court and will also face fines and jail. We send along our best wishes and heart-felt solidarity.

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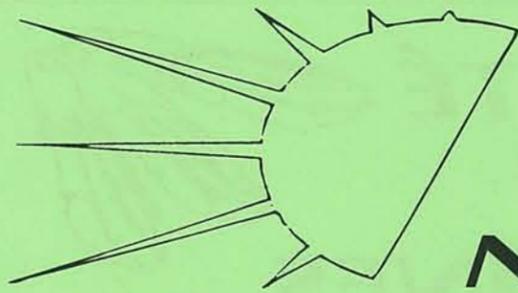
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 34 February 1994

Indigenous revolt in Chiapas

The armed insurrection in the Chiapas region of Mexico has brought Native issues back into the forefront. We are publishing here parts of an interview with Pierre Beaucage, an anthropologist at the University of Montreal who, for 30 years, has been following the indigenous people's movement in Mexico.

"Because of the large number of people involved in the armed movement in Chiapas, we can dismiss the possibility that it involved only a small group of individuals acting on a whim. The government reported a few dozen people, however independent sources have counted between a thousand and fifteen hundred people directly implicated in the Chiapas uprising. In a region where the villages are made up of hundreds, and sometimes thousands of individuals, this means that there are people from several communities who participated. This eliminates the possibility that a small group of Guatemalan guerillas had infiltrated and decided to agitate in Mexico, as the Mexican government claims. Instead of recognizing the existence of real social, cultural, and economic problems in Chiapas, they prefer to place the blame on outsiders. In reality, the Zapatistas are extremely determined people, who base themselves on the Mexican indigenous population's deep resentment toward government policies - particularly those in Chiapas."

The Land

For Pierre Beaucage, it is essentially an indigenous movement that has appeared in Chiapas. When we speak of an indigenous movement and a peasant movement in Mexico and Central America, these are two closely linked realities. "The main characteristic of peasant and indigenous movements is to emphasize the issue of the land. The struggle for the land has been at the heart of all the big movements of the peasantry, more particularly during the Mexican revolution. It was an Indian from Central Mexico, Emiliano Zapata, who rallied hundreds of thousands of indigenous people to join the revolution, and it was thanks to them that the revolution was won. The leaders of the revolution realized that if they did not make an agrarian reform and return the lands to the peasants, they would never be able to disarm them. And it was in the 1930's that 17 million hectares of land were finally distributed to the peasants, which were a large part of the good arable lands in Mexico at the time."

In 1991, an article in the constitution that protected the communal lands (called "ejidos") of the indigenous people, was modified by President Salinas, opening the door to Mexican as well as foreign investors.

"According to the new Article 27", explains Pierre Beaucage, "In order to liquidate their land properties, it suffices that the majority of an assembly of 'ejidatarios' vote to these ends; A formality that appears ri-



diculous when one knows the degree to which "ejidal democracy" is manipulated by the bureaucrats at the Ministry of Agrarian Reform. They have the power to decide when such an assembly may take place, who is in charge and even who the real members of the ejido are. In 1992, for the first time, indigenous people were recognized in the Mexican constitution. "But for the indigenous Mexicans who are inheritors of an ancient agrarian civilization", explains Pierre Beaucage, "recognition that does not include the right to the land is nonsense."

Indian consciousness

Since the 1970's, Native struggles have taken a new turn. A few selected Native people were educated in order to assume roles as intermediaries between their communities and the government, a bit like what

happened in Canada. These Native people discovered that they had rights within Mexican society that the government was blithely ignoring. And many amongst them helped in awakening the consciousness of indigenous people. In 1975, the first Indigenous Congress in Mexico took place in Chiapas. Says Pierre Beaucage: "This brought about an awareness in the rest of Mexico. In addition to the land, they were going to fight for their languages, their culture, the right to teach their children in their language, against racism. After that there appeared a whole list of claims, with a snowball effect that spread throughout the independent indigenous movement."

Violation of Human Rights

For a long time now, Mexico has been able to camouflage its many human rights violations, its detention of political prisoners of which many are indigenous, and its massacres of peasants. Pierre Beaucage feels that there has been a very conscious move by the indigenous leaders in Chiapas to make their point at this time when the cameras of the world are focussed on Mexico because of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"They pulled it off, but the government will not forgive them", affirms Pierre Beaucage. "The insurgents expected some repression but undoubtedly not an extermination campaign. While the government says it's ready to negotiate, the army has a *carte blanche* to quell the rebellion at any cost."

Leonard Peltier Walk for Justice 1994

A walk for the freedom of Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier will be crossing the United States from February 11th to July 15th.

The walk is being organised by Dennis Banks and Mary Jane Wilson, founders of the American Indian Movement. The walk will be starting from Alcatraz, an island in San Francisco Bay, where AIM launched one of its first large-scale actions on November 19th, 1969.

The walk will end in Washington DC with a demonstration and benefit concert. Walkers intend to stay

in town until President Clinton takes the appropriate steps to free Peltier, unjustly imprisoned for 17 years for the death of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge reservation.

A petition will be accompanying the walk and we ask you to support this gesture by copying and signing the enclosed petition and encouraging others to do the same.

For more information on the walk, contact Walk for Justice 1994, P.O. Box 315, Newport, KY 41071 or phone (606) 581-9456.

PRESENTATION OF KANEHSATAKE 270 YEARS OF RESISTANCE

PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR : ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

Thursday February 10, 1994
at 3680 Jeanne-Mance, fourth floor
Free ! French version, 119 min.

Alternative Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
in Montréal

SHOSHONE NATION

Last December 17th, five representatives of the Western Shoshone Nation stopped over in Montréal on their way home from a one month stay in Europe where one of them received the *Right to Livelihood Award*, commonly known as the alternative Nobel Peace prize.

The prize was awarded to Carrie Dann in Stockholm on December 9th in recognition of her family's 20 year struggle against the militarization and the brutal exploitation of Newe Sogovia, the Western Shoshone's traditional homeland. This land today includes parts of the American States we call Nevada, Idaho, Utah and southern California.

In Nevada, the federal government owns 90% of the land, and has placed this land in reserve for the US military. From the Fallon Navy base, low level military flights, bombing and other offensive war exercises are carried out. Officially, 900 nuclear tests have taken place in Nevada between 1945 and 1990.

Last December 7th, the US Department of Energy admitted that of the 252 clandestine (i.e. non-reported) nuclear tests in the US during the same period, 204 took place within government installations in the Nevada desert.

Gold and Silver

This Native territory has also been sought after for the last century and a half for its gold and silver deposits. In the Elko district of Nevada, where Carrie Dann lives with her sister Mary, the Cortez Gold Mine company and others are mining gold deposits that constitute 40% of the State's reserves, or 25% of the national total. Intense gold mining activity in this area has made the United States the world's second most important gold producer.

Gold mining also depends on the use of a sodium cyanide solution to separate the gold from the ore. According to Miqmaq journalist Gordon Dedam, this process has also been used in the Fort Belknap reservation in Montana and has led to lead poisoning, contamination of drinking water, an increase in the occurrence of cancer in the local population and still-births among

pregnant women. The Noranda company is interested in Nevada's gold resources and has begun test-drilling less than a mile from the Dann homestead.

Harrassement

Carrie Dann stated that her family continues to be harassed by the federal Bureau of Land Management and its officials.

On May 17th, 1993, the federal court condemned Clifford Dann, Carrie and Mary's brother, to 9 months imprisonment, 2 years probation and a \$5000 fine. He had threatened to immolate himself on November 18th, 1992, as armed government agents, with the support of helicopters, attempted to raid the Dann ranch and seize their livestock.

Clifford Dann doused himself with gasoline and declared: "by taking away our livelihood, you are taking away our lives". He was then "blasted with fire extinguishers, knocked to the ground and charged with assault of a federal officer." He later refused to cooperate with court proceedings during his trial and refused to recognise the court's jurisdiction so as to not compromise Shoshone sovereignty. Clifford Dann is still on probation in Nevada.

During their passage in the Montréal area, members of the Western Shoshone delegation were greeted by members and friends of the *Regroupement* at the Mirabel airport, and officially welcomed onto Mohawk land by journalists from *The Eastern Door* newspaper in Kahnawake.

The book
Nitassinan
including the **Joint Declaration on the Rights of Peoples** is available from the
Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones
\$2.00

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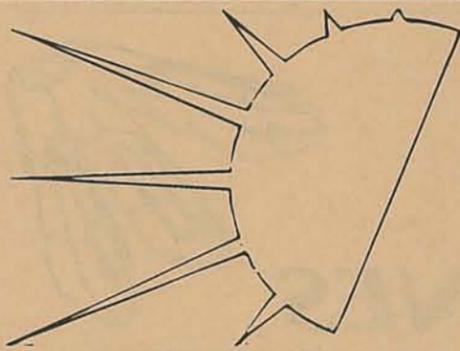
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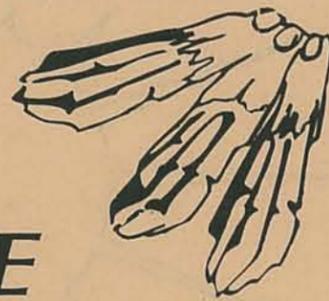
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 35 March 1994

Kahnawake in the media

"AN EXTREMELY DISTORTED PICTURE OF WHAT IS GOING ON HERE"

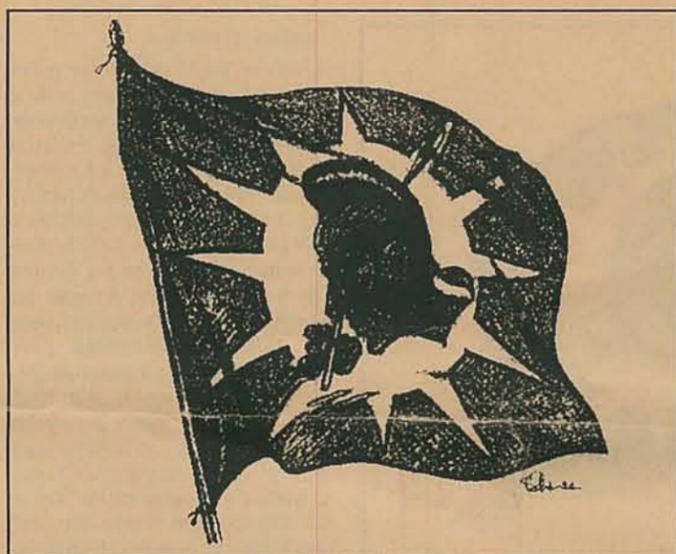
An interview with Mohawk journalist Kenneth Deer

The campaign to denigrate the Mohawk nation, which has not relented since the Oka Crisis of 1990, has in recent weeks reached alarming proportions. Kenneth Deer, editor of the Kahnawake bimonthly *The Eastern Door*, is concerned at how the overtly racist diatribe of a Gilles Proulx, radio program host at CJMS, has found a home in the mass media. *La Presse*, for example, recently published a three-part editorial by Alain Dubuc suggesting military intervention in Mohawk territory had become inevitable.

"I am very concerned that the average Québécois may feel the same way. The media are saying that we are lawless, that we are basically run by gun-toting Warriors who call the shots in the community, that we lack leadership, or that our leadership is corrupt. It is an extremely distorted picture of what is going on here. It puts pressure on the government to take action. And it will be a tragic mistake."

A community capable of self-determination

The Mohawk journalist believes the community of Kahnawake can take care of itself, and does not need outside intervention to do it. According to little credibility to the news item in *Le Soleil* claiming that



Editorial cartoons such as this one from *Le Devoir* have a big impact on the minds of both English and French Quebecers. (*The Eastern Door*, February 25, 1994)

Kahnawake is a transit point for cocaine smuggling, he is unequivocal: "This community does not support drugs. It will not shield them. If there is a drughouse here, let the RCMP tell our peacekeepers where it is, and we will shut it down. Everybody would agree. The Warriors will shut it down. The term 'Warriors' is so abused. I would like to hear the tapes the newspaper [*Le Soleil*] claims to have, because I don't think they say that the Warriors are going to shield drugs. The

Warriors didn't control cigarettes. It was out in the open, and it just exploded: everybody wanted a piece."

In particular, Deer elaborates, the cigarette question was one not of legality, but of politics and economics in Kahnawake. "Cigarettes helped economically. But they did not contribute infrastructure: the money was not put in a general fund to help with housing, roads, or education. They helped the economy

through individuals, which means that restaurants and businesses are now showing the effects of their near-total disappearance."

The editor of the *Eastern Door* points a finger at members of the community who are contributing, through sectarianism, to the negative picture painted by the Quebec press. "Propaganda that had been published by some Mohawk people was picked up by the press and used against all of us. Some people said they live in terror because of the Warriors." According to Deer, "it's simply not true."

Alluding to an episode of *The Fifth Estate* broadcast late in 1993, Deer also reproaches certain Mohawks involved in the sale of cigarettes in Akwesasne of having "created a myth" around the issue.

And the Bloc?

As for the Bloc Québécois, which has been multiplying its accusations of the Mohawks in the House of Commons, Deer interprets the situation this way: "the sovereigntist intelligentsia knows that it will be very difficult, on an international level, to rationalize an independent Quebec that does not itself recognize the indigenous peoples' right to self-government. It knows that. Some have already accepted it. Others try to show that the Mohawks and Cree are incapable of properly

exercising the right to self-government, and bring up every negative issue: cocaine, cigarettes, alcohol, jeans, perfume, even frozen chicken! It's incredibly dangerous."

Deer believes reconciliation with the Quebec people is still possible, on the condition that it is based on a relationship of nation to nation, and that Quebec "recognize that it occupies our land" and that "the money we get is not charity. We look at it as a payment of rent for the land it is occupying." For Deer, one of the short-term stakes involves enlarging the territory of Kahnawake, which "presently is the size of a postage-stamp."

A need for support

For the time being, the editor of the *Eastern Door* expects the attacks against the Mohawks to continue to mount, and worries about the isolation in which the Mohawks are finding themselves. "Three years ago, it was basically a land issue. Now it has become economic: bread and butter. It's more difficult to get the people emotionally involved."

According to Deer, this lack of solidarity has contributed to the sense of threat weighing on Kahnawake, a community already living with internal division. He is quick to add, however, that "when the time comes to defend our territory, there is no division!"

SM-3 : ORGANIZING THE RESISTANCE

On February 24, the same day Hydro-Quebec confirmed a decline in energy demand in Quebec, Daniel Johnson announced that construction of the SM-3 hydro project will begin in the spring.

The 3-billion dollar SM-3 project will be divided in two in order to give Hydro-Quebec enough time to justify the diversion of the Carheil and Pekans rivers, two important tributaries of the Moisie river.

Presented here are a few excerpts from an interview with Gilbert Pilot, spokesperson for the Coalition for Nitassinan, the main Innu organization opposed to the SM-3 project. While somewhat preoccupied by the fate of the salmon, the media have completely ignored the Coalition and its members.

"We were ready for the announcement, either way," Pilot explains. "Although disappointed at first [in Johnson's decision], people got over it. We now know that the government wants to go ahead with the project, and we'll continue to lead the struggle against SM-3 and Hydro-Quebec."

"We'll be strengthening the alliances we have established here, as well as in the United States, Japan

and elsewhere. We also think it's important to reach a common position with other Innu groups: those battling low-altitude military flights being carried out by NATO member countries; and the community of Davis Inlet, which is presently attempting to resolve a serious crisis. With this in mind, we'll be meeting in Mani-Utenam at the end of March at an international conference [of Native people from around the world]..."

Tensions on the rise

"In the past couple of years members of our community have suffered numerous human rights violations, and I think this will keep increasing. Intolerance and racism toward us are on the rise, as are tensions. We hope that our nonviolent actions will cast some light on the very complex issue of hydro development and the Native issue here in Quebec. We expect a very negative reaction to our efforts, which could even possibly be dangerous, as far as our members and the Innu in general are concerned."

"I think there's contempt in Québec for certain issues, whether it's the environment or Native people," he adds, "but we'll stay the course of action we have had since the beginning. We'll keep trying to educate non-Native people on, and make them understand, the legitimate as-

pirations of the Innu people. We want to live in peace and we are putting forward a new concept of development that will be fair not only to our people, but to Quebecers and all people. This is the approach we'll continue to pursue, but we are sure that the government of Quebec and interested parties, those who stand to gain economically from SM-3, will try everything to destroy us, whether through injunctions or violence."

Keep it peaceful

"As of today, I think that we are very far from any kind of understanding, and that we'll be seeing some pretty dark clouds before the sun shines again... I have to say that things are quite ominous at this point."

"The government is 'boosting' the Quebec population and the media are helping to fuel this sense of hysteria. The media on the North Shore have no objectivity whatsoever in their way of presenting information. You would think the pro-SM-3 media, Hydro-Quebec, the Band Council of Sept-Îles, and the Quebec government had joined forces to remove all opposition to their vested interests, to SM-3."

Gilbert Pilot concludes, "We'll maintain our plan of action and keep it peaceful, and we hope people will understand and grasp the importance of this issue to us."

SM-3 TIMES NO SM-3 TIMES NO SM-3 TIMES NO

Demonstration against the SM-3 hydroelectric project in support of the Coalition for Nitassinan

SATURDAY April 23 AT 1 pm

MEETING AT SQUARE ST-LOUIS (METRO SHERBROOKE)

Organized by Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones
Information : 982-6606

Against low-altitude flights over Nitassinan

Conference : March 24 at 7:30 pm, at the Unitarian Church, 3415 Simpson, in Montréal. With Matthew Marc, Innu from La Romaine.

Demonstration in support: March 26 at 9:30 am, gathering at 640 St-Paul St., W.

Information : Gerry Pascal (514) 844-0484

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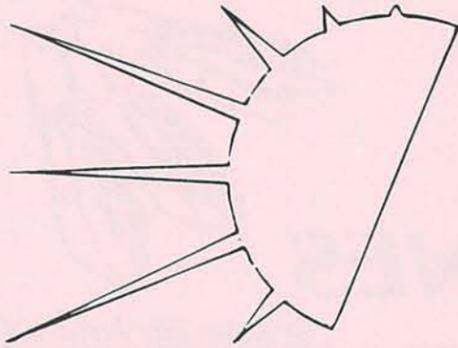
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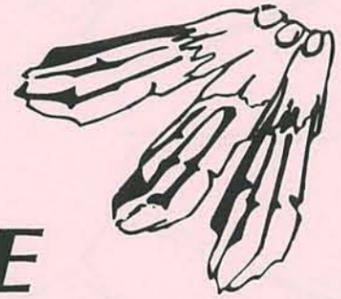
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 36 April 1994

Kahnawake

WHO IS A MOHAWK?

In mid-March, many of the media made a scandal of the supposed expulsion of 143 families from Kahnawake considered by the band Council to be non-native. It has since come out that the figure of 143 was given six months ago concerning a completely different matter, that in fact the expulsion issue concerned 13 families and furthermore that it had already been temporarily suspended when one of the families' suit against the band Council came before the Tribunal. In short, the scandal is that there was no scandal.

This has not kept the question of membership from being the subject of intense debate in Kahnawake. In June 1993, the newspaper The Eastern Door voiced an opinion very different from that expressed recently on CBC-Radio by Billy Two Rivers of the band Council, when he spoke of the need to preserve "genetic purity."

We present below the article from The Eastern Door, with the publisher's permission.



Detail from a painting of Oswald Guayasamin

The Tough Choice in Deciding Who is a Mohawk

One of the most damaging aspects of colonialism that has affected the Mohawk People is the loss of control of our own identity. With the imposition of the Indian Act in its various forms, the Canadian Government legislated who was an Indian. The requirements to be a "registered" Indian are well known. As long as the father was a registered Indian the children were Indian. And, up until recently, an Indian woman who married a non-Indian lost her status; her children never received any. In the United States, if you could prove you were at least one-eighth by blood, you could claim Indian status. One system enforced sexual inequality and the other blatant racism.

It is from the right to self-determination that we derive the power to identify who our people are. All self-determining peoples are bound by international law and international law forbids discrimination based on race. If we are to take our rightful place in the world community we cannot be promoting racial prejudice, racial segregation, or racial purity.

Citizenship to the Mohawk Nation must have the same general rules as other nations: a person born into the nation, or adopted by custom, who must live by and obey the laws set down by the People through their government.

As difficult as this is to accept by some people, the colour of one's skin is not the source of our rights or salvation of our people. A "full blooded" Indian who has no respect for our laws, language and customs can be as detrimental to our seventh generation as any racist non-Indian.

Speaking of non-Indians, the Canadian Government too must understand our right to decide who is a citizen of our Nation. They do not use blood quantum to determine who is a Canadian and they are proud of their non racial immigration policy. The Canadian Government must understand that we are not racist either.

The suggestion of blood quantum as the deciding factor of Mohawk heritage in the Mohawks of Kahnawake Membership Code needs serious scrutiny.

Blood quantum suggests that Kahnawakechroon are a race of people. We are not. We are North American Indians (for lack of a better term) by race.

A Mohawk is not a race of people but a nation of people. A nation is defined as a stable population with its own constitution, land base, language and culture. As a nation, we confer citizenship to our people not membership. And with citizenship comes responsibility. Responsibility to obey the laws of the nation, defend and protect the culture and language. If a person can live up to these responsibilities then that person has earned the right to be a Mohawk.

Blood quantum is a foreign concept designed by racist, colonial powers who do not look at us [sic.] equals but as inferiors. The less Indian blood you had the more white you were and the more acceptable. Bestowing Indian status based on blood quantum reinforces the concept that our rights are based on race and not on the basic principle of self-determination.

The book **Nitassinan** including the **Joint Declaration on the Rights of Peoples** is available from the **Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones** \$2.00

SM-3 times NO!

1 We reject SM-3 because it violates land rights of the Native population. It is the fourteenth hydroelectric development project in the part of Quebec-Labrador and the North Shore which the Innu call Nitassinan ("our land"). Hydroelectric development projects have flooded 11,000 km² of land in Nitassinan since 1953. Fishing sites, hunting and gathering grounds, burial grounds, portages, meeting places, and paths used by the Innu for thousands of years lie under water, forever destroyed.

According to its 1993 Development Plan, Hydro Quebec has short term plans for a three-dam mega-project on the Romaine River, also in Nitassinan. In the long term, eight other hydro projects are planned for the rivers of Nitassinan.

Nitassinan has never been surrendered, by treaty or otherwise. Several members of the Coalition for Nitassinan have recently been arrested and face heavy sentences for defending their territorial rights. We oppose the SM-3 project because it is the most recent violation of these rights.

2 We reject SM-3 because it serves no real energy need. SM-3 has been given the go-ahead, despite a decrease in Hydro Quebec's energy demand forecasts from 2.2% to 0.5% for 1994 and a long-term decrease in consumption. It's also going ahead despite an annual production surplus of 15% in the world aluminum market belying predictions of growth in production and the energy needed to feed it.

All told, the SM-3 project represents an investment of more than \$3 billion. 76% of this will come from loans on international money markets to Hydro Quebec, the most indebted company in the western world, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Average consumers will have to bear the burden of secret contracts, which sell energy below cost, for a total loss of at least \$2.9 billion by the year 2010. Who stands to benefit? Who will foot the bill?

We refuse to assume this financial burden, while the Quebec government continues to slash away at social services and impoverish us collectively!

3 We reject SM-3 because it will create few jobs. On February 24, Premier Daniel Johnson gave SM-3 the go-ahead, announcing that 4500 jobs would be created.

Not true. In the BAPE report on SM-3, Hydro Quebec attests that the project will create an average of 950 jobs, six months of the year, for ten years. And how many stable long-term positions, for a project with an economic life span of 50 years? 20.

Only two-thirds of the jobs will be open to the North Shore population. The other third will be occupied by specialized labour from outside the area.

We object to the manipulation of public opinion by misrepresentation of facts. If the province really has \$5 billion at its disposal, that money should be used to satisfy the real needs of the population.

Demonstration

in support of the Coalition for Nitassinan against the SM-3 Hydro project

Saturday, April 23 at 1 pm at Carré St-Louis (Sherbrooke Metro)

REGROUPEMENT DE SOLIDARITÉ AVEC LES AUTOCHTONES
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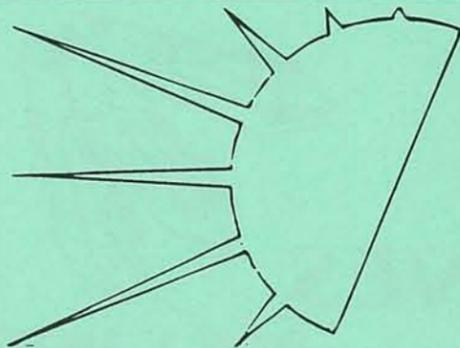
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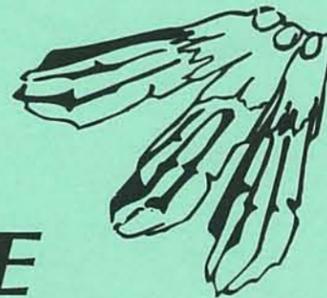
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 37 May 1994

Cheslatta T'en Nation Fights Alcan

On April 14, a delegation from the Cheslatta T'en nation of British Columbia appeared in Montreal to publicize its fight against the Kemano II hydroelectric development project.

Undertaken by Alcan to produce 540 megawatts of power exclusively for export to the United States, Kemano II will, says a Cheslatta T'en spokesperson, reduce seasonal flows of the Neckako River by as much as 94% and endanger 80% of the salmon in the Fraser River, the most important salmon river in B.C.

No Public Consultation

According to the Cheslatta T'en, about 130 native communities, with a collective population of 35,130, will be affected by Kemano II. Opponents to the project include non-native fishermen, cattle ranchers, and farmers, as well as provincial government's own scientists.

Yet, on October 12, 1990, the Mulroney government exempted Kemano II from mandatory federal environmental review. To this day, no public consultation has been held.

George Louis, a member of the Cheslatta T'en delegation, was twenty-five years old when construction began on Kemano I in 1952. At the time, he was living off hunting and fishing. On April 3, 1952, representatives of Alcan and the Ministry of Indian Affairs informed the Cheslatta T'en that their territory was going to be flooded, and that they had one week to evacuate.

Five days later, the flooding had already begun, and on April 16 the Cheslatta T'en were presented with a document to sign outlining the terms of surrender, whereby each band member would receive \$50 as compensation for being displaced 30 km to the north.

George Louis reported that the agreement was signed under duress (police had already been called into the area), and further that the terms of compensation were not honoured for each resident. Later that Spring, when the displaced Cheslatta T'en

returned south to collect the rest of their belongings, they found their village razed, burned down by Alcan contractors.

In the Name of Profit

As delegation member Wanda Edmund sees it, her people were sacrificed in the name of profit, and she holds Alcan responsible for the destruction of their territory and the erosion of their culture.

To Julie Charlie, 1952 was for many reasons the beginning of a slow, agonizing death for several members of her community. She reports that thirty percent of the Cheslatta T'en died as a direct result of their community's forcible displacement, and cites the alcoholism, drug abuse, violence, and suicide that now ravage the social fabric of her Nation as long-term effects of that single event.

How cynical of Alcan to erect a plaque — made of aluminium — in honour of the ancestors of the Cheslatta T'en nation, with the inscribed words, "This monument was erected in 1952 in the memory of the men, women, and children of the Cheslatta Indian band who lie in the cemetery of reserve #5, now underwater. MAY THEY REST IN PEACE."

Five years later, in 1957, a cemetery on the shores of Lake Cheslatta was washed away when floodgates released the Spring thaws. In the ensuing two years the bodies, bones, and coffins of ancestors would wash up along the shores, while many of the remains would be lost forever at the bottom of the lake...

Demonstration against Alcan

The Cheslatta T'en delegation brought its presentation to an end with a call for solidarity in the fight against Kemano II, and a reminder by Mike Robertson that Alcan's annual shareholders' meeting would take place at the Alcan Building on Sherbrooke St. W. in Montreal beginning on April 25.

That day, thirty people attended a lunchtime demonstration in support

of the Cheslatta T'en. The presence of Alcan's national headquarters in Montreal affords a continuing opportunity to denounce the multinational's development projects in native territory, be it in British Columbia or in Lac St-Jean.

POW WOW AT KANEHSATAKE

JULY 8, 9, 10, AND 11, 1994

The Regroupement will organise transportation to the pow wow at Kanehsatake. If you are interested to go, phone the Regroupement : (514) 982-6606.

200 People Say "No!" to SM-3

To chants of "No more hydroelectoral promises" and "SM-3, 3 times No!", a crowd of 200 walked through the streets of Montreal, April 23, to voice its opposition to the North Shore Saint Marguerite 3 hydroelectric project. The demonstration, organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, helped publicize a dissident opinion held by many of the natives affected by SM-3, which is in sharp distinction to the line held by Uashat-Mani Utenam band council chief Elie Jacques-Jourdain, often cited in the media. Jacques-Jourdain recently signed an agreement with Hydro Quebec concerning compensation for SM-3, which calls for a referendum (June 13) two months after construction will have already begun, and ignores the results of four separate referenda in which the people of Uashat-Mani Utenam rejected this development project, the fourteenth on innu territory.

In attendance at the demonstration, Gilbert Pilot of the 800-member innu Coalition for Nitassinan revealed that Jacques-Jourdain has had 12% of adults in Mani-Utenam thrown in jail, in the past eighteen months, because of their opposition to SM-3 and other dealings of the band council. The innu spokesman nonetheless reiterated the Coalition's intention to use all of the non-violent means at its disposal, including occupation, to block SM-3.

The Regroupement, will be organizing activities to support the Coalition for Nitassinan in its fight against SM-3. We'll keep you posted!



Demonstration against the Kemano II project, in front of Alcan Headquarters

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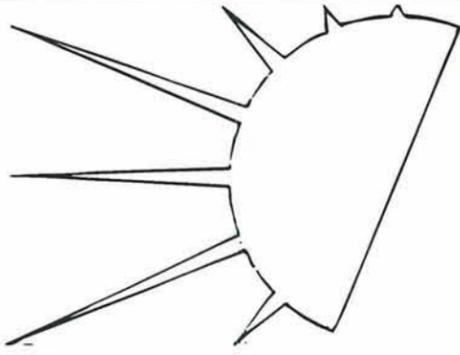
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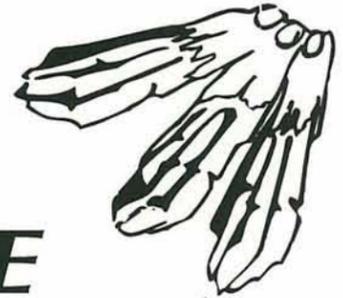
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 38-39 July-August 1994

Chronicle of a Disquieting Roadblock

On the night of May 29, about twenty Innu traditionalists boarded a small plane for Lac Brûlé, near the access road to the construction site of the Sainte-Marguerite-3 hydroelectric development project, opened April 18.

It was on kilometer 24 of that road northwest of Sept-Iles, on the trapping grounds of Innu Donald St. Onge of Mani-Utenam, that elders, women, men, and children built a barricade and set up camp, accompanied by seven Canadian and American observers.

By occupying the road that tomorrow will lead outsiders to the wealth of natural resources in Nitassinan, the Innu traditionalists asserted their inherent right to self-determination on their lands.

According to a press release originating from Mani-Utenam, dated May 29, the traditionalists intended the action to denounce "the apathy of the Canadian government in respecting its international commitments [toward native people and the environment], and a project which serves only the electoral needs of the present Quebec government and for which there is no economic need or energy demand, in either Quebec or the United States."

The Law Reacts

One week later, on June 6, with construction crews and the access road getting daily nearer the Innu blockade, Hydro Quebec obtained an (additional) injunction against the Innu who are defending their territory. The court order was granted by judge André Gervais of the Quebec Superior Court in Sept-Iles. Meanwhile, Hydro Quebec also lodged a complaint with the Sûreté du Québec (SQ), which on June 7 issued summonses to eight people behind the barricade.

Presented with the summonses, the eight refused to leave the barricade in order to appear before a judge in Sept-Iles, on June 9, on charges of mischief. Warrants were then issued for their arrest.

The same day, Hydro Quebec obtained a special order from the Superior Court summoning four people "to appear in Sept-Iles on June 16, in order to answer to charges of contempt of court for having disobeyed the [June 6] injunction."

Police Step Up Activity

On the morning of June 10, five police officers broke down the front door of the home of Mani-Utenam Innu traditionalist Roland Vollant, and proceeded with his arrest, as one of the eight charged with mischief sought by the Court since the previous day.

With Hydro Quebec threatening an injunction against a delegation of human rights monitors from the International Peace Brigades, Innu traditionalist Sophie Vollant was apprehended upon returning home in the afternoon. She was charged with mischief, detained for several hours, and questioned by the SQ about the roadblock.

On June 13, referendum day in Uashat and Mani-Utenam, the SQ arrested the elders Marianne Thomas, 68, and Philippe Thomas, 81, three American observers, and Montreal journalist Lyle Stewart, all of whom were returning from the barricade.

SQ Targets Journalists

Early the next day, after the SQ had bolstered its ranks in Sept-Iles, 40 officers from Sept-Iles, Baie Comeau, and Quebec City raided the barricade, and dismantled it. Fifteen more people were arrested, including eight-and-a-half-months-pregnant Vivianne Michel, a midwife, and a nurse.

Photographers Olivier Renard and Robert Fréchette were the first to be arrested by the SQ. Their equipment was seized, so as to prevent them from photographing the arrests and police operation.

The action was denounced by the Québec Federation of Professional Journalists and its president, Alain Saulnier, who affirmed that "it is not for the SQ to decide what can or cannot be photographed."

Temporary Release

On June 16, after a night of detention in Baie Comeau, the fifteen Innu and non-native detainees appeared before judge Jean-Paul Decoste to face a total of 40 charges. In another courtroom, Hydro Quebec was in the process of obtaining an extension of its injunction until September 1, at which time it will seek a permanent injunction against any demonstration near the SM-3 construction site. September 1 is also the day those charged June 9 with contempt of court will be appearing before the court.

The Innu defendants were released on June 16, under several conditions. The non-natives were released the following day, after a bail hearing set bail at \$500 to \$1000 per person. Their preliminary hearing will be September 8 in Sept-Iles.

Another Action in the Fight Against SM-3

The roadblock stood for two weeks. It got people talking about SM-3, and garnered both the close attention of the Quebec media and, in a remarkable gesture, the support of the Council of the Atikamekw and Montagnais chief René Simon. Denouncing Hydro Quebec's



Photo : Olivier Renard

By occupying the road, the Innu traditionalists asserted their inherent right to self-determination.

injunction against Innu traditionalists and elders, and recognizing the barricade's legitimacy, Simon declared, "the Coalition for Nitassinan is fighting for just principles."

In a June 15 editorial, Marie Caouette of *Le Soleil* called the need for SM-3 into question. "...For most Quebecers, the question remains: do we really need vast new sources of energy? Are massive hydroelectric dams, erected at a cost of billions of borrowed dollars, still the best way to fulfill a[n energy] demand whose main attribute is nonstop fluctuation?"

"In this light, Hydro Québec's constant cha-chaing, back and forth from year to year, based on predictions of alternating demand growth and surplus supply, amounts to ever greater deceit[...] At present, in the absence of any substantial reference to an increased energy demand, it seems our utility giant is thinking development, and the government, elections."

But another question remains for Quebecers: why, in 1994, are native people still being handcuffed and subjected to white courts for having occupied their land to keep it from being destroyed? SM-3 and the criminalisation of the Innu

traditionalists and their supporters are a political disgrace. While the actions of those who blocked the

access road to the SM-3 construction site merit our praise and solidarity.

Office of Rigoberta Menchu Nobel Prize Laureate

Barcelone, May 26, 1994

Innu People of the Territory of Nitassinan Québec, Canada

Innu brothers and sisters,

In 1993, The International Year of Indigenous Peoples, we observed that the theft of Indigenous Peoples' lands continues. Day after day, in the name of development that does not even reach our own communities, our territories are contaminated, destroyed and desecrated as are our ceremonial and sacred sites.

There is a major degradation of the environment and an irrational use of our natural resources, as so-called "modernity" tramples over our culture, our rights and our Mother Earth.

It was with sadness that I heard about the construction of a dam project on the Sainte-Marguerite River in the territory of Nitassinan for which Hydro-Quebec is responsible. This river, which feeds the Innu community through the traditional fishing practices, is now threatened with mercury contamination.

The legitimate struggle led by the Coalition for Nitassinan for the respect of the self-determination of the Innu People, however, brings us hope for a better future for our children. Your voice is not alone, it is joined by all who struggle for the dignity of our peoples.

Innu brothers and sisters, we will find the strength of our convictions in unity. A wound in the territory of Nitassinan is a wound in the lungs of our Mother Earth.

In unity with you all,

Rigoberta Menchu Tum Nobel Prize Laureate

Native Music Festival
at Mani-Utenam, Nitassinan
INNU NIKAMU
August 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1994
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MANI-UTENAM REJECTS SM-3

On June 13, a referendum was held in the Innu communities of Uashat and Mani-Utenam on an agreement reached April 16 between Hydro Quebec and its partner, the Innu TakuaiKAN Uashat mak Mani-

The April 16 agreement, known as the *Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Convention (1994)*, stipulates that Hydro Quebec will pay \$66-million in compensation to the Innu over the project's 50 span year life



Photo : Olivier Renard

Utenam Band Council, for compensations pertaining to the SM-3 hydro project. 65% of votes cast in Mani-Utenam rejected the agreement. At the same time, however, the overwhelmingly favorable vote from the community of Uashat, located in downtown Sept-Îles, tipped the scales in favour of the agreement by a 39 vote margin.

Of the 1073 eligible voters, 749 or 69.8% took part in the referendum. Not counting 22 spoiled ballots and the Innu on the barricade who could not vote, 52.6% of Innu voters approved of the agreement.

In contrast to four previous consultations rejecting SM-3 since 1989, the June 13 referendum was financed by Hydro Quebec, which picked up the entire \$100,000 tab. It was held two months after construction on the project had begun, and after \$10-million in contracts for work on SM-3 had been granted to two Sept-Îles-area consortiums, whose members include the Innu firms Tity Excavation Enr. and Déboisement Montagnais Inc., both closely tied to the Innu TakuaiKAN Band Council.

(equivalent to \$21-million in 1994 dollars), apportioned into three funds administered jointly by the Innu TakuaiKAN Band Council and Hydro Quebec itself. In return, the latter receives a guarantee that "the Montagnais" will not go to court against SM-3.

According to the newspaper *Le Devoir*, "Élie-Jacques Jourdain, chief of the Innu TakuaiKAN band council, says he's disappointed with the outcome of the referendum. In his opinion, there are many reasons for the weak support of the agreement, among them opposition to the band council and objection to the SM-3 project." Nonetheless, the chief believes, "the democratic process was respected, and the majority prevailed."

As for Quebec's Minister for Natural Resources and Native Affairs, Christos Sirros said he was satisfied with the result, noting that "it is clear that the community [sic.] has to resolve its internal conflicts."

But, added Sirros, "laws exist which have to be obeyed. And, morally, I believe that the majority of the community has spoken."

The Regroupement gets busy

On Friday, June 3, in the company of a good number of journalists, about thirty members and sympathisers of the *Regroupement* occupied the offices of Hydro-Québec's Vice-Presidency of the Environment. In support of the Innu traditionalists who, for five days, had been occupying the only access road to the SM-3 hydro project, they demanded that work on the project stop immediately. For three hours, the demonstrators chanted and sang their opposition to the project and their support to the Innu, accompanied by a violinist.

In the early afternoon, the Vice-President of the Environment met with the demonstrators. Visibly shaken, Daniel Dubeau made it known that the occupation was severely disturbing his employees.

After stressing the notion that "we" lived in a "democratic society" and that Hydro-Québec yearned for a "harmonious" relationship with the demonstrators, Mr. Dubeau asked that the siege be lifted and that the demonstrators leave the premises. "We" talked it over and then refused to do so. An eviction notice was then read out loud and the demonstrators were escorted out by the police.

This action guaranteed wider media coverage for the Coalition for Nitassinan and their blockade on the North-Shore. It also got us a

meeting with Hydro-Québec's upper management the following Monday.

A meeting of the third kind...

After consultation, Jeanne-Mance Charlish, in the name of the Coalition for Nitassinan, accepted to meet Hydro-Québec's upper management on Monday, June 6, along with Nathalie Gauthier and François Saillant of the *Regroupement*. At a table perched high on the stage of an auditorium sat Daniel Dubeau, Vice-President of the Environment, and Michel Therrien, Vice-President of Equipment at Hydro-Québec. Our representatives sat down in the hall among the first few rows of seats, well in sight of their hosts, security officials and other curious on-lookers, including André Laporte, Hydro's Vice-President of Indian Affairs.

Hydro-Québec's representatives said they sympathised with the Innu's "traditional instinct", but that it was impossible to stop the SM-3 project since it had been decreed by the Québec government back on February 24. As far as the referendum was concerned, the Vice-President's unanimously agreed that even a negative response would in no way affect the project's construction nor its timetable. On this last note, our representatives stood and promptly left the hall, thus putting an end to an otherwise ludicrous and condescending encounter.

Oka Two?

By : Marie David & Susan Oke

We are reprinting excerpts from an article which appeared in the June 3rd, 1994, edition of The Eastern Door newspaper from Kanahwake. The article was first published as the events surrounding the expansion of the Mohawk cemetery by Jerry Peltier's Band Council in Kanesatake were unfolding. The article was written by two residents of Kanesatake who were very much involved in defending the Pines in the summer of 1990. The title is the Regroupement's. We thank The Eastern Door for allowing us the reprint the article.

The sound of chainsaws fills the air. The Pines in Kanesatake are being threatened again. This time though it's not the municipality of Oka or its Golf Club wanting to cut down the most famous stand of Pines in the world. It's the Mohawks.

The very piece of land that was at the heart of the stand-off in 1990 is in controversy again. There are many questions and issues surrounding the dispute this time. It isn't solely a matter of jurisdiction and ownership. Some think it's a matter of respect. Respect for the Pines and the people who defended them in 1990.

The handful of people clearing the trees in the Pines appear to have some community members support. Mavis Etienne acted as a community appointed liaison during the crisis of 1990. She sees the expansion as a good thing.

"It's our land and we definitely need to expand the cemetery [...] After all they had to cut some trees down for the first cemetery and I think it's a nice area for our people. My family is buried there and one day I hope to be buried there too, but right now it's too crowded [...]"

Most people in Kanesatake are in favour of expanding the overcrowded cemetery but the timing of it, the location, and the reasons for it are another issue. Bev Nelson works as a cook at the Treatment Center in Kanesatake. Although the issue had been discussed before, she says, "I think it's disgusting. It's a horrid idea." A previous Council had an idea to purchase land specifically for the expansion so that no trees would be cut.

... and another occupation

On June 13, referendum day, the *Regroupement* decided to pay a visit to Christos Sirros, Québec's Minister of Natural Resources and Indian Affairs.

We weren't asking for a costly parliamentary commission, nor a roving national consultation or for any kind of funding. All we were asking was for the Minister to be in his riding office, like he's supposed to be on Mondays, to share a bit of his brain-power and precious time. But despite numerous calls, Mr. Sirros refused to meet with us, members of the public, young and old, who are more than interested in the issues raised by hydroelectric development projects which, like SM-3, are allowed to go ahead by the government at the expense of Native people's rights and Québec's social needs.



Photo : Sébastien Bouchard

Band Councillor Garry Carbonnell agrees the expansion was necessary, but he's fed up with the way things are handled at the Band Office. "According to Carbonnell on April 19, Jerry Peltier wrote to the President of the Oka Golf Club stating the Council's intentions of expanding the cemetery. In May the President wrote back, saying the Club only rents the land in question from the municipality of Oka. In the meantime, Peltier asked Garry Carbonnell to talk to two community members. The aim was to set up a committee. However, the plan fell through when one of them insisted that Peltier consult the community about it first. That was never done. Then... on May 19, Councillor Robert Gabriel entered the Band Office and informed those present that they were going to start clearing the graveyard.

Gary Carbonnell says that initially the only trees that were to be cut down were dead and diseased trees. It soon turned out that strong healthy trees were also being cut [...]

"It's desecrating the dead to use them to get money. Also, there was no consultation about it. The Longhouse people weren't consulted about those trees being cut down," says Serge Simon, a father of two who has lived in Kanesatake all his life. Simon, an outspoken critic of Jerry Peltier's council believes there is something more to the expansion than meets the eyes.

"It's a play to divert attention away from Jerry's other problems and it worked like a charm," Simon said, referring to the media circus over Jerry Peltier's veiled threats of another "crisis".

The popularity of the Mohawk Council Members has nose-dived in recent months due to what some community members think is a lack of openness and even intimidation on the part of some Peltier supporters.

It's common knowledge that the Mohawk Council of Kanesatake is in a financial crisis. There is a large deficit and some of the chiefs had their salaries greatly reduced in the

last few weeks [...]. This has led to speculating that the expansion of the cemetery is nothing more than Jerry Peltier attempting to pressure the federal government into handing out more money for housing and administration costs.

The people who were deeply involved in the struggle over the Pines in 1990 have found it difficult to watch the trees come down.

Arlette Van den Hende was among those arrested when Mohawks and other Native supporters left the Treatment Center in September of 1990. She and most of the others were tried and acquitted of all charges in July 1992. When asked about the expansion she shook her head: "I think it's so sad the trees are being cut when in 1990 a group of Onkwehonwe defended the land and the trees. I don't think our ancestors would agree [...]"

A band office press release dated June 1, 1994, states Mohawks will suspend tree cutting and clearing for the new cemetery at the request of Ottawa [...]

As the situation stands now, it looks like the Band Council is going to the negotiating table. But not everybody thinks they have that right.

Ellen Gabriel is a traditional Longhouse person. Like most people in Kanesatake she does not dispute that the land belongs to the Mohawks and that the SQ and governments have no jurisdiction, but Gabriel added, "neither does the Band Council. They've surrendered that right by adopting the non-native government system."

About the tree cutting, Gabriel said: "It sickens me to see our grandfathers cut down like that to be exploited for 3 million dollars, which will not benefit our community or its position. The band council has proven that their only motivation is monetary. They're dishonouring the people who stood up for the land in 1990 and throughout history."

Although all new work on the cemetery expansion has stopped, workers will continue clearing up what's left to the debris.

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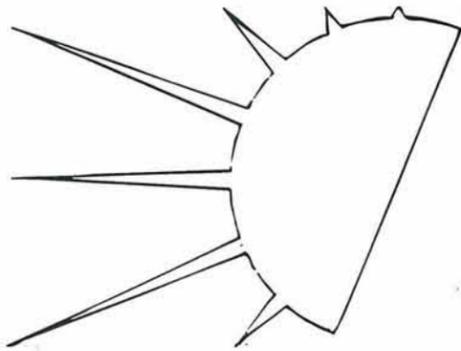
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 40 September 1994

Politically motivated conviction in Nitassinan

Chief of Innu Council of Mani-Utenam sentenced to one year in prison

On August 5, justice Danielle Blondin of the Supreme Court of Quebec in Sept Iles found Jules Bacon guilty of contempt of court and sentenced him to «one year imprisonment, firm, continuous and consecutive to all other sentences...» One has to go back to the early seventies to find a similarly severe sentence for contempt levied in Quebec (against Michel Chartrand, Pierre Vallières and three Union leaders Pépin, Laberge and Charbonneau).

Thirty-five charges were laid against Mr. Bacon and six other Innu traditionalists following an occupation of the Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council on January 16, 1994. Mr. Bacon, 48 years of age and Chief of the Innu Council of Mani-Utenam since November 14, 1992, was served the exemplary sentence in order, according to judge Blondin, «to discourage those who would be tempted to follow him or to imitate him by committing crimes or defying court orders...»

Contesting illegitimate power

The Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council manages the two Innu communities of Uashat and Mani-Utenam as well as their yearly cumulative budget of \$15 million. In September 1992, demonstrations, occupations and a hunger strike by Innu traditionalists from Mani-Utenam pressured the Band Council enough for it to hold a referendum on the issue of Mani-Utenam's political and administrative autonomy.

On October 1, 1992, Chief Élie-Jacques Jourdain signed an Innu Takuaihan Band Council resolution stipulating, among other things, that the Band Council would «respect the people's will and set into motion the process of separation should either of the two communities vote by a majority in favour of the question asked.» The referendum question on October 10, 1992 was, «Are you in favour of the separation of Uashat and Mani-Utenam?»

Results show that 56% of the people who voted in Mani-Utenam were favourable to the separation of the two communities. As of November 14, 1992, Mani-Utenam set up a provisional council, the Innu Council of Mani-Utenam, headed by Jules Bacon, to defend Mani-Utenam's specific interests. Citing the Indian Act, the provincial and federal governments would later refuse to recognize the new council.

Force of Law

Feeling its legitimacy wane, the Innu Takuaihan Band Council applied for and received a temporary injunction from the Supreme Court of Quebec two weeks later. On February 4, 1993, the injunction against public demonstration in the two communities was extended to thirty years. The injunction, which «resembles a War Measures Act», was a response to the turbulent events of September 1992 in Mani-Utenam

and that community's firm opposition to the SM-3 hydro project.

Among other things, the injunction outlaws the name *Innu Council of Mani-Utenam* and all forms of independent political organizing. Within the last year and a half, it was evoked in jailing Mr. Bacon and his councillors Évelyne St. Onge, Thérèse St. Onge, Sylvain Vollant and council relationist Sylvestre Rock. In all, 12% of the adult population of Mani-Utenam has spent time in jail since the injunction came into effect. Referring to Jules Bacon's first jail term resulting from the injunction, a reporter from *La Presse* wrote that it was «as if following a YES vote in a referendum, Chretien jailed Parizeau.»

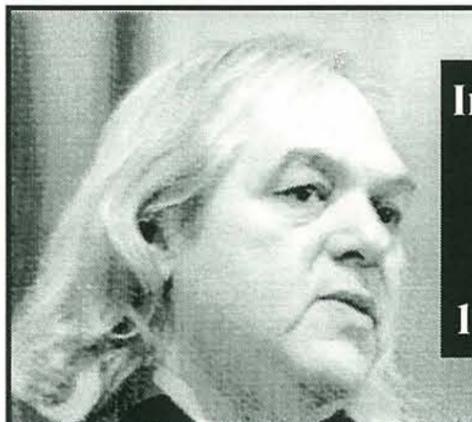
Standing up for their rights

During their January 16 occupation of the Innu Takuaihan Band Council building in Sept-Iles, the traditionalists demanded that the result of the October 12, 1992, referendum be respected, that the Band Council be dissolved and that a pub-

lic enquiry into its affairs take place. At the time, the Band Council was in charge of negotiations with Hydro-Québec concerning the SM-3 project.

Occupation participants Jules Bacon, Yvette Michel, 48 years of age, Samson Einish, 40, Jeanette Pilot, 28, Jean-Guy MacKenzie, 28, Steeve Vollant, 21, and Yannick MacKenzie, 20, were arrested. They were charged with «plotting, breaking and entering, disguised with the intention of committing a criminal act, possession of an explosive substance, and having committed an act with the intention of causing the explosion of that substance...» All were released on bail, except for Jules Bacon, who was detained for six weeks before being tried in February; at that time, the crown dropped the last two charges for lack of evidence.

The accused were all acquitted on August 5, again with the exception of M. Bacon, who is presently free pending an appeal of judge Blondin's sentence.



In memory of Lew Gurwitz 1938-1994

Lew Gurwitz, long-time defense attorney and dedicated activist for Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier, died of a massive heart attack in Edmonton, Alberta, on August 28, 1994. He was 56, a tireless advocate for indigenous struggles throughout North America for more than 25 years. His determination and generosity will continue to be a source of inspiration for many in the years to come. We wish to extend our condolences and our solidarity to his family and friends.

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LOOKING AHEAD AT THE REGROUPEMENT

The last Saturday of August, a number of the Regroupement's members met to evaluate our work, to assess some present Native issues and attempt to clarify our political perspectives for the upcoming year.

The Regroupement reaches people, mostly non-Native, who support the struggles of the First Nations. Such support often takes the form of public demonstrations, publications and fund raising.

Certain gains...

For the last year, we put much of our efforts into supporting the Coalition for Nitassinan. We attempted to find financial support for the Coalition by organizing, among other things, a benefit concert and a raffle. We published the Coalition's "Joint Declaration on the Rights of Peoples". We demonstrated in the streets of Montréal in the Fall of 1993, and in the Spring of 1994. We occupied the offices of Québec's Minister of Natural Resources and Native Affairs and Hydro-Québec's Vice-President for the Environment to protest against the construction of the SM-3 hydro project on Innu land.

Even though work on the project has not been stopped, the Regroupement's actions were able to bring media attention to the Coalition's continued resistance to the dam. Our occupations also permitted Quebecers to show not only their solidarity with the Innu, but their own interest in opposing the mega-project as well.

Throughout 1993, the Regroupement also made its presence known during the coroner's inquest into the July 11th, 1990, death of SQ Corporal Marcel Lemay in Kanehsatake. Well attended picket lines were organized twice in front of Montréal's court-house. Each year since the crisis, the Regroupement has also actively supported the traditional gathering organized by the Mohawks of Kanehsatake.

The Regroupement's monthly newsletter is appreciated and continues to be the best way for an action-oriented committee such as ours to keep in close contact with its members on a regular basis.

... and some set-backs

In Québec, few groups remain who do solidarity work consistently and actively with the First Nations. So it is much to the Regroupement's credit that it has continued to do so, now for the fifth year, certainly within the present context marked by a disquieting rise in incomprehension, intolerance and racism,

clearly directed toward Native people.

Our work, however, has not been accomplished without some difficulty. The number of our members,

for example, is barely half of what it was following the crisis of 1990 and many of our members live outside of Montréal, whereas the Regroupement concentrates its mobilizing efforts for demonstrations here in the city. Such a drop in membership has affected our ability to bring people together, as well as

the financial health of our organization, and it coincides with a reduced interest in Native struggles among progressive organisations, in general.

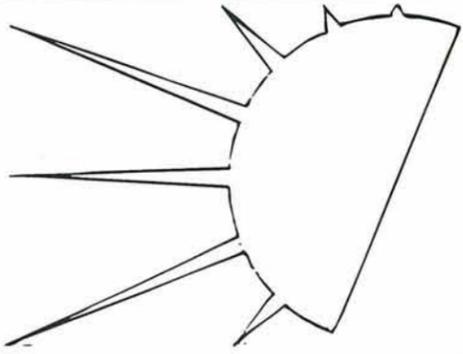
New challenges

The Regroupement must face the new political reality by elaborating long term strategies. The defense of First Nations' right to self-determination and political sovereignty is directly brought into play by the upcoming referendum on Québec's future, probably to take place in 1995. The Regroupement will have to undertake some serious reflection about the issue while continuing work at the grass-roots level, with education and popular mobilization during the entire debate.

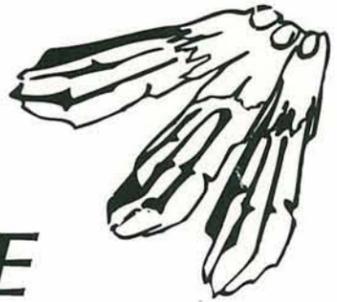
As narrow as it appears, there is a space to be occupied between those forces which have always denied Native peoples' right to self-determination and which continue to do so across Canada while upholding it hypocritically to oppose Québec sovereignty; and those forces which in the name of their own right to self-determination have come to deny that right to other Nations on the same territory. The Regroupement intends to publish a work of reflection on self-determination this Winter and then organize a conference on the same topic in the Spring of 1995 with the firm intention of involving the largest number of individuals and organisations in the process.

The Regroupement will attempt to broaden its base of activists, and we will continue to support in very practical terms the Innu Nation in their own struggle for self-determination. Finally, we will also apply more pressure on the Canadian government regarding the case of Leonard Peltier, a Native political prisoner who was fraudulently extradited from Canada 18 years ago and unjustly jailed ever since in an American prison. In order to do so, we hope to collaborate with the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee in Canada.

Detail from a tableau by Oswaldo Guayasamin



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 41 November 1994

Nitassinan

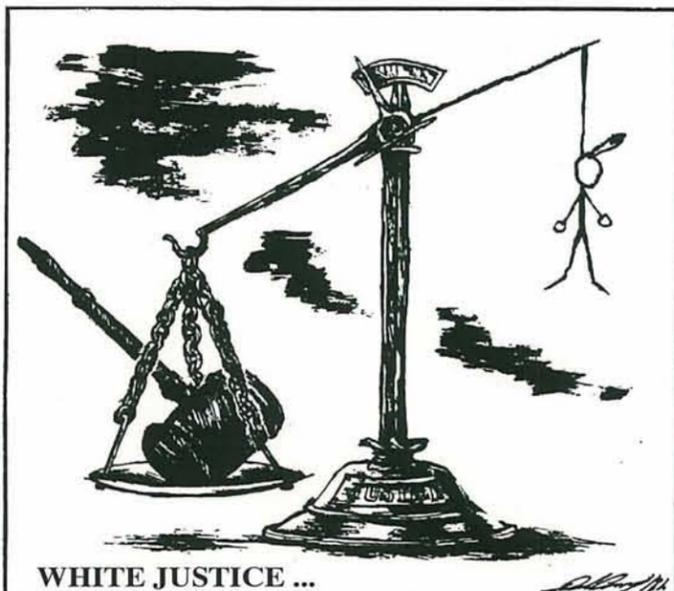
LATEST INNU OFFENSIVES

On Sunday, September 4, 1994, the RCMP closed the airspace around the Innu community of Utshimasit (Davis Inlet) and restricted access to the island settlement where 500 Innu were relocated in 1967.

In this way, the RCMP was preparing the return to Utshimasit of its officers and a Newfoundland Provincial Court judge who were all expelled from the community on December 16, 1993. The community maintains that the Court's lack of respect for the local Innu population in its application of White justice on Native land is unacceptable.

disrupted the first day of public hearings organised in Goose Bay by the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (FEARO). Men, women and children noisily interrupted the consultations looking into a second Environmental Impact Statement on low level military flights in Nitassinan.

This second study, carried out by SNC-Lavalin at a cost of \$10 million, was made public on April 19, 1994, by the Department of National Defence (DND). The firm's first \$6.3 million study was released on October 31, 1989. However, it was later judged inadmissible by



WHITE JUSTICE ...

The RCMP and Court representatives planned to return to the community in military helicopters on September 5 in order to once again enforce law and order.

Blocking the runway

"If they won't allow the public to land here, nobody is going to land here," declared Chief Simeon Tshakapesh, as members of the community scattered empty oil barrels and pieces of lumber on the village's only runway, rendering it unusable. Some 60 Innu from Sheshatshiu came to support the people of Utshimasit in case of police intervention. They, as well as reporters from the national and international media bypassed the RCMP's aerial blockade of Utshimasit by reaching the settlement in boats.

Faced with such determination, Newfoundland Justice Minister, Ed Roberts, backed down by the end of the day on September 5. The government postponed its intervention because it could not guarantee the safe passage for the Court representatives or the police. Meanwhile, the federal and provincial governments have unilaterally suspended all talks or negotiations with the Innu.

Low Level Military Flights

Two weeks later, on Monday, September 19, about one hundred Innu from seven different communities

FEARO in May 1990 because of major deficiencies which were brought to light by independent experts retained by the Innu. Last July, the people of Sheshatshiu revealed yet another thorough analysis of this latest study and found 130 weaknesses in its elaboration...

Questionable hearings

But time is of the essence and the show must go on despite these recurring technical inadequacies. In fact, by 1996 the Canadian government will have to renew the bilateral agreements which have, since 1980, allowed the air forces of the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain to practice 8,000 low level flights, seven months a year.

The government wants to increase the number of flights to 15,000 a year by calling upon Belgium or Italy, amongst others, and it wants to widen the flight training ranges by 30,000 km², for a total 130,000 km² of Innu land located on the Québec-Labrador peninsula.

According to the Innu, the hearings are merely an exercise in public relations. Innu elders who hunt in the interior of the territory every year at this time and who can testify as to the effects of low-level flight training on the land and animals will not be able to attend the hearings.

The Innu and technical experts working with them will not have the right to cross-examine DND con-



Free Leonard Peltier!

It has been eighteen years since Leonard Peltier was wrongly convicted for the deaths of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. Although he remains in prison, the fight for his freedom has recently received a boost.

On July 16, a petition signed by 730,000 people, including 1500 solicited by the Regroupement, was handed over to the U.S. government in Washington, to mark the end of a 3800-mile Walk For Justice begun five months earlier in Alcatraz, California.

Three months later, on October 24 and 25, it was the Mothers of All Colors caravan, made up of Native, Asian, African, African-American, and Chicano people, that made its way to the American capital.

If Canadian Justice Minister Allan Rock were now to follow through on his intention of reopening the books on Leonard Peltier's extradition from Canada to the United States, shown to have been obtained on the basis of fabricated

evidence, a further, major political victory would be won.

The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee is asking people to write the Canadian authorities condemning the extradition and asking the Canadian government to push American President Bill Clinton to grant executive clemency.

Letters can be sent to: the Honourable Allan Rock, Minister of Justice, Government of Canada, House of Commons, Confederacy Building, suite 448, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0A6, with copies to The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, House of Commons, Centre Building, suite 309-S, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0A6. The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (Canada) also welcomes copies, at: 43 Chandler Dr., Scarborough (Ontario) M1G 1Z1.

The Regroupement is planning a political information evening for this Fall, in Montreal, to help in the fight to free Leonard Peltier.

Sixteen months in jail... for two warning shots



Milton Born With A Tooth, a Peigan from southwest Alberta and member of the Lonefighters Society was sentenced recently to sixteen months in jail for the unlawful possession and use of a firearm. The charges stem from a September 7, 1990, incident, when 80 to 90 RCMP officers converged on Peigan territory in order to prevent the Native people from diverting the Oldman River.

The goal of the diversion was to render useless a dam which the Alberta government was building on the Oldman River, jeopardizing plant and animal life as well as 300 archaeological, 46 historic, and several sacred sites. In order to make the RCMP retreat, Milton Born With A Tooth fired two shots in the air with a hunting rifle...

sultants and, furthermore, a complete translation into Innu-aimun of the proceedings is not being provided.

Boycott of the Consultation

So, in mid-September, the Innu called for a boycott of the consultation process in order not to legitimise it, opting instead for a new public campaign against the low-level flights.

All the Innu communities have refused to host the public hearings except for Uashat, chief Elie-Jacques Jourdain's obedient domain.

REPRESSIVE MEASURES AGAINST THE COALITION FOR NITASSINAN

On October 3, judge André Gervais of the Supreme Court of Quebec at Sept Iles assessed the Coalition for Nitassinan a fine of \$25,000. He also sentenced two Coalition members to three and seven months in jail, and freelance photographer Olivier Renard to three months.

Permanent Injunction

All three defendants were found guilty of contempt of court, for having violated an injunction against demonstration near "the site of the SM-3 hydroelectric project [and] sites occupied or used by Hydro-Québec" along the Sainte Marguerite River, obtained by Hydro Quebec on June 6, 1994 and made permanent the day of the sentencing.

The Coalition members and the journalist were apprehended after refusing to leave the site of a barricade set up at the end of May on the access road to the SM-3 project site. According to Judge Gervais, the Coalition's position, that it was defending ancestral Innu territory, "may have some merit on an historical, political, or socioeconomic level, but not on a judicial one."

A double standard

Shortly thereafter, on October 11, 150 unemployed construction workers erected a barricade on the access road to the SM-3 project site, in order to denounce the hiring practices of a developer who, according to the workers, did not fulfill promises on the use of local labour. The non-Native workers were also in violation of Hydro-Québec's injunction, yet no charges were laid.

In the meantime, Hydro-Québec has been preparing to cut off power to most Mani-Utenam residents who are members of either the Innu Council of Mani-Utenam or the Coalition for Nitassinan, and who are refusing to pay their electricity bills, out of principle. The cuts are likely to fall before the 1st of November, the last day that power can be cut, before the onset of deep winter cold.

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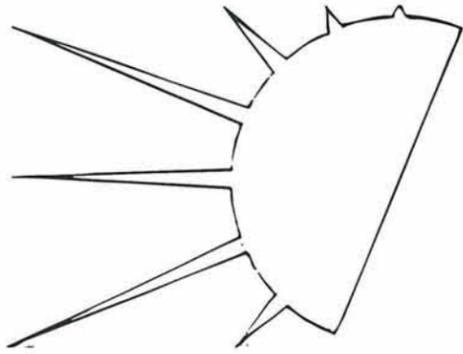
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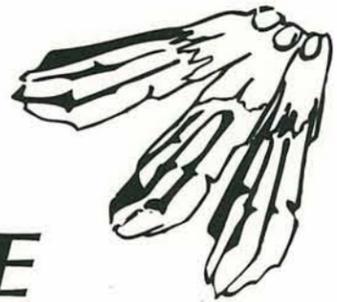
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 42 December 1994

Low-level military flights in Nitassinan

WORTHLESS EXERCISE COMES TO AN END

On October 29, after six weeks of public hearings, the Environmental Assessment Panel examining the effects of low-level military flight training in Nitassinan concluded its consultative exercise. Recommendations from the Panel, which stems from the federal ministry of the Environment, will be presented to the federal cabinet in early 1995 and will conclude an environmental assessment process which began in the spring of 1986. This process should, in practical terms, lead to an increase in the number of military flights which are presently allowed by the federal government in Nitassinan and permit the expansion of training areas.

If the bilateral agreements which today allow war games in Nitassinan are renewed before they expire in 1996, this generation of Innu will have to deal, for better or for worst, with 15,000 flights annually until the year 2011. The Chrétien government then will no doubt explain to those still interested in the issue of human rights, that the economic spin-offs from such exercises will best protect the heritage of young Native people living in Utshimassit and Sheshatshit...

Panel boycotted

At the end of September the Innu called for a boycott of the Panel's hearings because they in no way assured an impartial process (see bulletin #41). Dr. Paul Wilkinson is a biologist who resigned from the Panel on April 27, 1992, because its president and secretary, respectively David Barnes and Michel Bourgon, could not insure "a thorough, independent, and impartial review of military flight-training activities in Québec and Labrador". M. Wilkinson joined his voice of concern to that of the Innu during a meeting on September

All we ask is to be allowed to govern ourselves. Why are we, who are Innu, so badly off, when after all this is our land and we have been living here for thousands of years? Why is it so hard for us to survive in our own territory?

We only need to look at the development of Nitassinan to see what is killing the land: military testing, hydroelectric dams, logging. And the roads being built for these purposes: they too are killing the land. We demand only to be able to live on, and off, our land [...]

I know what Nitassinan was like before the military testing began, and I've seen what the practice bombing runs have done to it. I've gone twice myself to inspect the damage done, in the company of women and children [...] I am very proud that it is the women who are there to defend the land, that they are standing up to do something, and I hope that all women will stand together to continue the fight to defend the territory.

Elizabeth Penashue, Innu elder from Sheshatshit spoke at a public evening organised by the Regroupement on October 27, 1994.



30 with the federal minister of the Environment, Sheila Copps. He raised his concerns and questioned the scientific thoroughness of a second Environmental Impact Statement on low-level flights issued on April 19, 1994, by the Department of National Defence (DND). He also unsuccessfully asked the minister of the Environment that a mediator be appointed in order that Innu grievances against the environmental assessment process be addressed.

Maintaining appearances

Despite the Innu's absence and 130 deficiencies outlined in the Environmental Impact Statement, the Panel continued its work in the regions of the Québec-Labrador peninsula and the Lower North Shore. In St-Augustin, the Panel adjourned its proceedings after 15 minutes, for lack of participants. In La Romaine, the seven panel members heard the opinion of one non-Innu person, and in Natashquan only the mayor and another non-Native person addressed the Panel.

In Matimekush, two Innu people spoke to denounce low-level flights and in Uashat the Panel was greeted by Conrad Sioui, representative for the Innu Takuaihan Band Council, the mayor of Sept-Iles and three Innu people who in their own way also denounced the militarisation of Nitassinan. The Panel, of course, avoided those Innu living in the Labrador communities of Sheshatshit and Utshimassit.

Goose Bay: Prime Training Ground

Apart from its public relations value for DND, the Panel will have to formulate recommendations on mitigating the social and environmental impacts of military flights. The Innu believe that once the recommendations are made, the federal government will give the go-ahead to DND

I have noticed something about the young women of Sheshatshit, near Goose Bay: there are lots of soldiers right now in Goose Bay who want to try to have the women, but only for a short time. It's a very degrading situation for a young woman.

Some of the young Innu women have become pregnant from these soldiers; one woman was even raped. She had met some soldiers in a club, was later raped and afterward was too ashamed to tell anyone. Imagine the others who are harassed or assaulted by soldiers but who are too scared to talk about it?

Should Canada renew its permits for low-level flying in Nitassinan, what can we do to see to it that the aggressions and harassment stop? There are going to be even more soldiers, and more young women are going to be assaulted and raped. Maybe some will find themselves pregnant - and then what are they going to do?

Jeanet Gregoire, young Innu woman from Sheshatshit

"VIOLENCE HAS BEEN TURNED INWARD"

ELLEN GABRIEL

The following excerpt is taken from Ellen Gabriel's opening speech to the Quebec Native Women Association's annual meeting. Ellen Gabriel is a traditionalist Mohawk from Kanehsatake.

I have travelled to many places and have met many men and women and each and everyone talk about the violence in their community and of different ways of healing... From my perspective, as a traditional person, I see that a lot of the problems we face today are coming from our own people. Violence has been turned inward, toward one another, because the victims cannot confront our oppressor.

When I was growing up, I don't think there was one family I knew who was not touched by violence. There were kids with bruises but no one ever said anything. We all remained silent and never spoke about what was happening in our homes. And the violence isn't just physical abuse, it's also verbal and mental abuse.

When we were teenagers, we all went through rebellious stages. Today, I think the youth are rebelling against adults' inability to listen to them and to the violence, not just in the home, but in our communities as well, by turning to drugs and alcohol [...]

In my community, the Band Council is at the root of many of the social problems we face and yet they are given positions of authority that they shouldn't have. They do not have the necessary background to solve social problems and the biggest stumbling block [to our work] is that the band council is implementing a white system of government and participating in the genocidal policies of the white governments, consciously or unconsciously.

These policies are designed to take away our identity. I hear people talking about saving our language and then waiting for government funding. And what is happening is that white governments have taken over, telling us how we should save our language, save our culture through their funding and structures. A foreign government which has and which is still trying to destroy our traditional values and language, tells us now how to save ourselves. It doesn't work and it will not work [...]

The history of the white man is a violent one. They have a long history of violence against Native people and they continue, although unsuccessfully, to try and wipe us out.

Montréal November 4, 1994

and External Affairs to renegotiate, in 1995, the bilateral agreements with NATO member countries including Holland, Germany and Great Britain, which already spend some \$ 90 million annually to train in Nitassinan.

The man in Ottawa responsible for promoting the Canadian Forces Base at Goose Bay, Mr. Frank Young, is quoted in a November issue of *Jane's Defence Weekly* as saying "we are going to be marketing Goose Bay to the world's air forces". Goose Bay then will have to meet its clients' demands and specifications, imposing fewer re-

strictions on their training activities for fear of seeing them move to such places as Eillison Air Force base in Alaska or Holloman Air Force base in New Mexico.

Market forces rather than "environmental standards" will dictate whether the "allies" can use live ammunition or not during bombing exercises, or if they can break the sound barrier while taking part in dog-fight simulations during which as many as thirty jet aircraft will be flying at once. Sonic "booms" created by such manoeuvres above Innu hunting and trapping grounds will, at the very least, be astounding.

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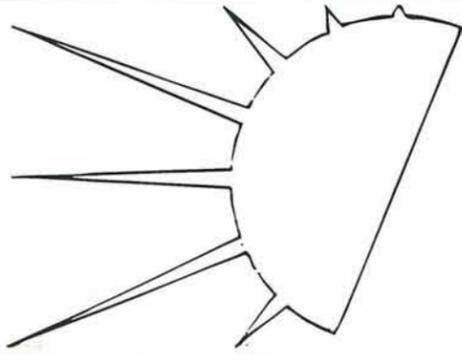
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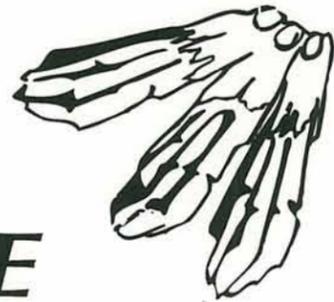
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 43 February 1995

Territorial Rights: The Number One Issue

"I would like to be recognized as a member of the First Nations. I feel hemmed in: our territory is constantly being encroached upon. Am I going to sit down at the bargaining table and say 'go ahead, take my land, but give me money? No!'"

Recognition, territory: these two words used by Innu traditionalist Evelyne Saint Onge were spoken more than once by participants at a meeting organized by Solidarity With Native People, last January 21.

Twenty natives and non-natives were invited to discuss the aboriginal right to self-government in the context of the upcoming Quebec referendum on sovereignty. The gathering was intended to help guide Solidarity in its choice of public campaigns concerning the referendum and native self-government. Activities planned include a public assembly, to be held in Montreal April 2, and the publication of a series of articles in the Solidarity newsletter.

Understandably mistrustful

Among natives present at the January 21 meeting, there is a general feeling of mistrust. Jeanne-Mance Charlish, an Innu woman from Mashteuiatsh, in Lac Saint-Jean, puts it this way: "The federal government has nothing to offer us, and neither does Quebec. Who are we to put our trust in? We cannot trust the officially recognized native bodies. We cannot trust the band councils. We cannot trust Parizeau; he doesn't even wish to recognize us. He may make little proposals here and there, acknowledge our right to a small parcel of land - but my territory is far bigger than that!"

Robert Arpin, a labour activist born of Quebecois and Mohawk parents, echoes the belief that "the number one issue is territory, the right to use the land as we always have, as our ancestors did." He understands why natives are apprehensive: "as a Quebecer and also as a native, I think that Quebec should become

independent; however, at the same time, I have tremendous misgivings. And I can understand how those who do not have the same heritage I have are totally against Quebec independence."

Jackie Kistabish, an Anishnabe

the PQ's inability to understand First Nations could prove to be its Achilles Heel. "Since the federal government will not negotiate with Quebec in the event that the referendum is approved, the PQ must appear to have at least a certain moral standing



(Algonquin) woman and president of the Quebec Native Women's Association, asks point-blank, "I can understand Quebecers if I try. But can Quebecers understand our experience?"

Anthropologist Pierre Beaucage believes that they cannot, at least as far as the sovereigntist agenda of Parizeau, Le Hir and Campeau shows. He contrasts "dominating nationalism" with a 60s-style nationalism based on specific demands, which decried inequalities within Quebec society and as such held a place for natives' own demands.

The PQ's Achilles Heel

According to feminist and longtime labour activist Madeleine Parent,

in the eyes of the United Nations. But how can the PQ demand self-government for French-speaking Quebecers when it denies that right to those who were here before us?

An activist long interested in native issues, Michel Mill instead challenges progressive Quebecers to come up with their own proposals - questioning the concept of Quebec's territorial integrity and the need for nation to nation negotiations aimed at a shared use and management of the land - instead of waiting for the PQ's.

Another need felt throughout the January 21 meeting is that of building bridges between Quebecers and natives, despite the obstacles which exist and may only get bigger in the wake of the referendum, whatever the result. After all, says Jackie Kistabish, "we will share this land forever."

Revenue Canada Sit-In Fighting the Erosion of Tax Immunity

On December 14, over twenty Natives staged a sit-in at Revenue Canada in Toronto, to protest a new federal policy, effective January 1, 1995, according to which Status Indians working off-reserve are no longer exempt from taxation. The occupation drew the support of Native and non-Native groups as varied as the Chiefs of Ontario, the National Association of Friendship Centres, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and Greenpeace, and culminated on January 14 in a march of solidarity attended by upwards of 700 people.

The controversy stems from a revised interpretation of the federal Indian Act (1927). In 1992, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Unemployment Insurance benefits earned by Status Indians as a result of work done off-reserve were taxable. The Mulroney government then moved to extend this ruling to cover all off-reserve earnings - an initiative sharply criticized by Jean Chrétien, then Leader of the Opposition, in a June 30, 1993 letter, in which he vowed that a Liberal government would not allow such an interpretation of the law.

Thousands of Natives will be adversely affected, for example truck drivers and fishermen, whose livelihood depends on travelling off-reserve, yet whose employers and homes are on-reserve.

Native leaders from across Canada have rallied against the violation of the inherent right to tax immunity, guaranteed by the Indian Act in a spirit of encouraging the development of on-reserve economies. The "poorest of the poor" refuse to allow loopholes in the law to be exploited to their disadvantage, while the wealthy find legal ways to avoid taxation.

The Draft Bill on Sovereignty: Five Little Lines That Speak Volumes

Have you read the Draft Bill on Sovereignty the Parizeau government has distributed to Quebecers? Take a look at Article 3, on the constitution of an independent Quebec. That's where the PQ deals with native rights... and how!

The right of First Nations to "govern themselves on the lands

which belong exclusively to them" is recognized. But what are those lands? Do they include the entire ancestral territory? Or are they limited to reservations, either already existing or still to be negotiated in return for the extinction of natives' rights to the rest of their territory?

So exclusively, in fact, will those lands belong to natives that the right to self-government must not infringe on "Quebec's territorial integrity". The Draft Bill points out that the same restriction applies to - of all people - English-speaking communities.

As if natives and anglophones were in the same historical and legal boat! What a way to acknowledge the First Nations, who not only are independent nations in their own right but also the original inhabitants of this land.

And PQ MNA David Cliche has the gall to call this self-determination! That's hardly the way to run a referendum...

Independence... for the First Nations Public Assembly

Sunday, April 2, 1995
1:30 pm
Centre St-Pierre

1205 Visitation (metro Beaudry)

A discussion of native self-government in the context of the upcoming referendum, involving **Native and Québécois speakers**

Organised by Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones
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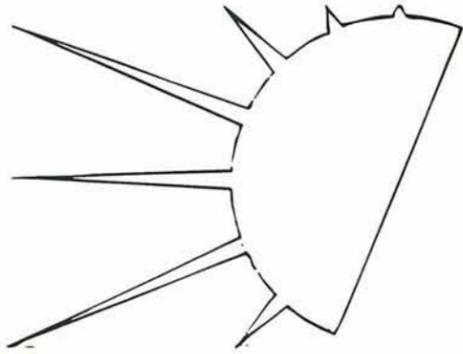
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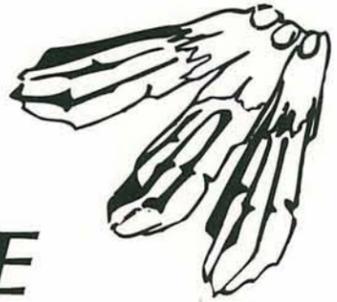
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 44 March 1995

Interview with Kenneth Deer

Toward a new Two-Row Wampum?

Kenneth Deer is a traditionalist Mohawk from Kahnawake. He is editor-in-chief of the weekly newspaper, The Eastern Door, and has represented his nation internationally. His view of the native right to self-determination goes well beyond the context of the upcoming referendum on Quebec sovereignty.

"Self-determination is a basic human right given to all peoples in the world. But there is still an exception made for indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are the only category of people who are not allowed to exercise this right. We are still fighting for the recognition of that right. We feel ourselves to have it — and, morally, we do. The battle seems to be to convince other peoples that we do."

"Many academics, international lawyers and jurists have changed from a stance of colonialism, where they feel that only Europeans have the right to self-determination, and come to the conclusion that indigenous peoples have this right too."



Kenneth Deer is editor-in-chief of The Eastern Door.

"The resistance has come from governments. They are against self-determination of indigenous peoples

because they feel that it will threaten their borders, that indigenous peoples will ask for independence (in the sense of independent countries)."

"This is not necessarily true. The high majority of indigenous peoples in Canada do not want to be independent, they do not want to establish their own states. They just want to have the choice as to which direction to go in."

Missing a date with history

Kenneth Deer believes that the PQ government "had the opportunity to really make history, to really show the world how a new relationship can work with indigenous peoples." Premier Jacques Parizeau has professed a desire for a new contract with first nations. However, Deer believes, he is letting this historic occasion go by. "He did not follow his own rhetoric. He does not really treat indigenous peoples as nations." As a recent example, Deer cites the passing of law 57, which gives Quebec jurisdiction over policing in all native communities.

Some months ago, the *Eastern Door* published an editorial on the future of Quebec, entitled "Time for a new two-row relationship?". The title refers to the Wampum that for four centuries has expressed how the Mohawk Nation sees its relationship with people of European descent.

"All our philosophy is based on a two-row relationship with Canada and the United States. If Quebec separates, we will apply the same philosophy to a separate Quebec: that there are two ships moving in parallel. That's how we see things. That's how the Mohawks and the Quebec government should be talking."

According to Deer, Parizeau's current position runs counter to the egalitarian sense of the Two-Row Wampum, according to which each nation runs its own course, in a spirit of mutual respect, without seeking hegemony over or interfering with the other.

The editor of the *Eastern Door* feels that the premier is now reaping the rewards of the anti-native propaganda that the PQ and the Bloc Quebecois have sowed since Oka, especially around the issue of cigarette trading. How else can one explain that the draft bill on sovereignty's proposals on First Nations (despite being so weak) have been greeted by Quebecers with incomprehension and even anger?

Thanks, but no thanks, Mr. Irwin

Deer is no less harsh when it comes to the federal government. Before the PQ was elected, Native Affairs minister Ron Irwin stated publicly that natives have just as much right to sovereignty as Quebecers — if not more, considering that they have been here for at least 10,000 years.

In response, the *Eastern Door* came out with an editorial entitled, "Thanks, but no thanks, Mr. Irwin". Deer explains, "Mr. Irwin recognized that the indigenous peoples

have the right to self-determination basically. He says that, but he does not treat us that way. He does not treat us as though we've been here for ten thousand years. Again, it's rhetoric. That is why I said, 'thanks, but no thanks.' If you want to say it, then do something, treat us like a nation. Otherwise, keep quiet."

Deer sees hypocrisy in Ottawa's attitude toward the proposed United Nations Declaration on Native Rights. Publicly, the Canadian government supports the declaration. Yet, behind the scenes, it has allied itself with countries like Brazil, Indonesia, China and Iraq to repress the rights the declaration recognizes, in particular the right to self-determination.

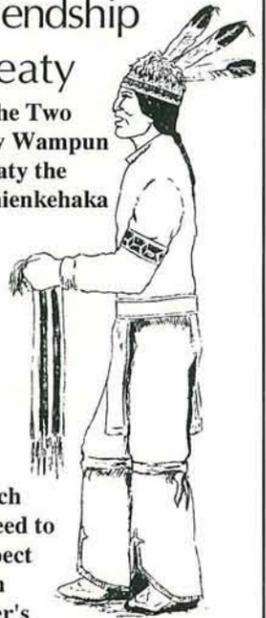
A call for prudence

Deer finds the approach of the Ottawa-based Assembly of First Nations unproductive, and calls upon Quebec first nations to act prudently when it comes to the referendum. "I caution native people not to be too anti-Quebec. If the indigenous peoples in Quebec campaign in the No camp and the referendum fails, the federal government is not going to say, 'thank you.' They are going to say the No side would have won anyway." And, on the other hand, Quebec natives would pay the price in their dealings with the Parizeau government.

"It doesn't really matter whether Quebec separates or not. We still have to deal with the Parti Quebecois government. If the native peoples complain too much about a separate Quebec, when it does separate they

Friendship Treaty

In the Two Row Wampun Treaty the Kanienkehaka



and Dutch agreed to respect each other's national boundaries, unique cultures, political systems and religious beliefs. The Kanienkehaka agreed not to interfere with the Dutch and their affairs. The Dutch agreed not to become involved in the affairs of the Kanienkehaka.

will have to deal with a hostile government. And if the referendum fails, the government will be hostile because they will blame us for the failure of the referendum!"

The Federal Government Unmasked

Despite Jean Chrétien's and Ron Irwin's beautiful declarations on Native Rights, the Canadian government is leading a ferocious campaign to reduce the impacts of several articles of the Native Declaration of Rights presently being study by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

On January 28, the *Gazette* published a very interesting article on this subject. Here are some abstracts that especially concern Ottawa.

"Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination" (Article 3)

"Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, economic, social and cultural characteristics, as well as their legal systems" (Article 4)

"Indigenous peoples have the right to own, develop, control and use the lands and territories, including the total environment of the lands, airs, waters... and other resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used" (Article 26)

"Indigenous peoples have the right to the restitution of the lands, territories and resources... which have been confiscated, occupied, uses or damaged without their free and informed consent. Where this is not possible, they have the right to just and fair compensation" (Article 27)

Independence... for the First Nations

Public Assembly

Sunday, April 2, 1995
1:30 pm
Centre St-Pierre

1205 Visitation (metro Beaudry)

A discussion of native self-government in the context of the upcoming referendum, involving

Kenneth Deer, Ellen Gabriel, Evelyne St-Onge and Pierre Vallières

Organised by Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones
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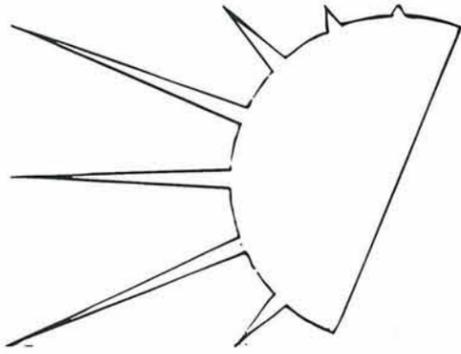
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 45 May 1995

Backtracking on Native Rights

“The UN is a private club of nation-states defending their own interests.” That’s the reaction of Kenneth Deer to the UN Human Rights Commission’s recent decision to constitute a native rights committee, which replaces and throws out eight years of efforts by the UN Working Group on Native Peoples.

Deer is editor of the Kahnawake weekly, *The Eastern Door*, and is an international representative of the Mohawk Nation – to the UN, among other organizations.

Since 1987 native representatives from all over the world have defended their concerns and their ways of seeing to the five members of the Working Group on Native Peoples.

Speaking at a conference organized by *Recherches amérindiennes*, on April 29, Deer explained that the proposed declaration on native rights, while far from perfect, incorporated many of the most important political, economic and cultural demands made by native peo-

ples, among them recognition of the right to self-determination.

Another Committee... Another Declaration

The declaration had yet to be officially adopted by the UN; among the hurdles that remained to be leapt was its scrutiny by the Human Rights Commission, a larger body made up of representatives of various governments, some of them (Brazil and Bangladesh, for example) fiercely opposed to the declaration. Forming a new committee on native rights this time directly controlled by the Human Rights Commission, was supposedly a way of skirting opposition. The committee is not obliged to continue the work that has already been done, and so native peoples may find themselves back at square one – without as much of a voice or role in the process this time around.

Is it any wonder that Canada was one of the key players in this turnabout? After all, the federal govern-

ment had already made many efforts to weaken the declaration, without openly opposing it. (See *Solidarity* bulletin #44, March 1995.)

As for the Quebec government, native affairs spokesman David Cliche, also speaking at the *Recherches amérindiennes* conference, said he understood that governments were concerned about the declaration: “not one country in the world” would voluntarily give up part of its territory. Who said that the federal government and the Parti québécois don’t see eye to eye?

Never!

At a conference entitled “A Meeting of Two Nationalisms” organized by *Recherches amérindiennes*, a spokesman of the Parizeau government, David Cliche, said he supported self-determination for aboriginal nations. In his view, however, self-determination does not imply the right to separate. “It depends on whether other countries recognize them or not,” he said. According to him, the same holds true for Québec, but Québec, however, can count on the support of France and the United States. Anthropologist Sylvie Vincent then asked him if Québec would be the first country to recognize an aboriginal nation that decided to exercise its right to self-determination. Cliche’s reply was clear: “Never!”

TWICE AS MANY LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS



What are the feelings of a child who suddenly hears an airplane flying 30 metres above its head? This was one of the questions raised by Elisabeth Penashue, an Innu woman from Sheshatshit, during a meeting with the Regroupement. “As the planes go by, they leave a trail of black smoke. They disturb nature and animals, and wreak havoc in the territory,” she added.



Every year since the early 1980s, about 8,000 low-level military flights have slashed through the sky of the Québec-Labrador peninsula, causing irreversible harm to the inhabitants of the region – who are mainly Innus – and the environment. However, the Environmental Assessment Panel that was asked to study the impact of these military flights found little valid information on the impact of low-level flights on animal species and human health. On the other hand, it did reach the conclusion that the economic consequences of halting the flights would be extremely negative for the region in the short term. Basing itself on the Commission’s favourable recommendation, the Department of National Defence has already announced its intention of doubling the number of military flights, which could increase to 15,000 a year. This decision will hardly come as a surprise to the Innus, who boycotted the federal Commission because of its lack of objectivity.

Meanwhile, the Québec government has proposed a “new configuration of exercise zones” under which flights would be kept away from inhabited areas such as Havre-Saint-Pierre, Schefferville, Natashquan and La Romaine. As for the Innus living right in the heart of the military exercise zone, Québec invites them to “participate in the research to be carried out on this topic”. Québec is asking that the number of low-level flights be maintained at the present level until 1997, at which point the Institute that will be established to study the environmental impact of these flights will be ready to publish its first report.

In other words, both the provincial and the federal governments are going ahead with low-level flights without taking time for a serious study of their impact on people and the environment. In other words, the Innus are just guinea pigs...



Sovereignty...for the First Nations

On Sunday, April 2, in Montreal, Solidarity With Native People held its first public discussion meeting on native self-determination in the context of the Québec referendum on sovereignty.

Kenneth Deer (Mohawk), editor of the Kahnawake weekly *The Eastern Door*, Jeanne-Mance Charlish (Innu) from Mashteuiatsh in Lac Saint-Jean, and Ellen Gabriel (Mohawk) from Kanehsatake presented their positions and in the process set the record straight on many counts – beginning with Gabriel officially welcoming those assembled to Mohawk territory.

Some of the more difficult issues discussed were the perception of native peoples’ role in Quebec-Canada tensions and the meaning of self-determination as distinct from self-government.

Quebec labour activist Pierre Vallières affirmed aboriginal self-determination as part of a vision of a progressive Quebec – a call echoed by many people in the audience.

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Don't miss it!

Ellen Gabriel will be exposing her paintings in Montreal with artist Patrycja Walton from May 28 until June 11 at Galerie Hors Concept, 24 Mont-Royal West, Suite 804. The vernissage will be held on May 28 at 3 p.m.

Information : 848-0070

Concert-Benefit 5th anniversary of Mohawk struggle in Kanehsatake

Still Standing

Friday 16, 1995

from 8:00 p.m.

at l'Union Française, 429 Viger West

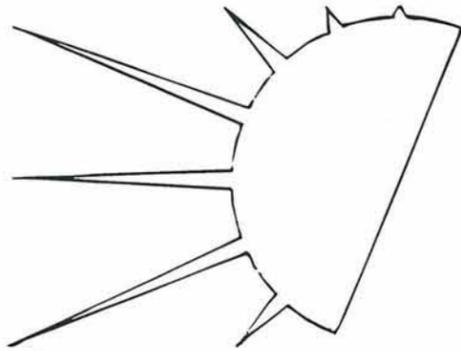
(metro Champs-de-Mars)

Native, Québécois and African Artists

Organised by Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones with the Spiritual Gathering Committee of Kanehsatake and ALTERNATIVES
Information : 982-6606

Admission : \$ 7 at advance • \$10 at the door
(Profits will be given to the Spiritual Gathering Committee of Kanehsatake)

We need some volunteers to help us.
Phone at : 982-6606



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 46-47 September 1995

Interview with Katie Rich, Chief of Utshimassit (Davis Inlet)

WOUNDED COMMUNITY

Katie Rich is Chief of the Innu of the Barrens. We interviewed her in August in her office in Utshimassit (Davis Inlet), an island settlement off the Labrador coast of some 500 people where 36% of the population is under 12 years of age and about a dozen adults are older than 45.



Katie Rich, Chief of Utshimassit (Davis Inlet)

RSAA: Katie Rich maybe we can start with your own background and how you became Chief of the Mushuau Innu.

K.R.: Our people are a nomadic people and they continued to travel the country until they were settled here by the government in 1967. So I grew up here on the island. When my parents started drinking, as the eldest in the family, I was left at home to be mother and father to my four brothers and two sisters. I also wanted to learn about other cultures, about the white people who came to the community. I learned to be a good student and at the age of thirteen, since there was no high school here, a group of us was taken to St. John's Newfoundland to further our studies. At this point, I couldn't speak a word of English and I never spoke a word in class during the three years I was in high school. From my point of view, as the only Innu in class, I don't think the others knew who I was because they always referred to me as Inuit. I was basically ignored by the other students.



Photo: Camille Fouillard

Don't ask me how I finished grade nine, but I did. I also took French and I don't know how I managed to pass, but I did (laughs). I think the determination I had to finish grades nine, ten and eleven really motivated me to go on with my studies. The other reason I wanted to go to school was to get away from my family life here. My parents were drinking every day and I just wanted to get away.

After high school I decided that I wanted to go to University. I entered Memorial University in St. John's but had a lot of problems because there was no support back then for Native people. So I ended up quitting University and came home to stay in the community. Then I fell into the cycle that my parents were in and started drinking. I came home

and worked at jobs that mostly didn't mean anything.

In 1988, I decided to apply for a job here with the Band Council and was hired on. I worked there for four years until 1992 when the chiefs' position became vacant. A lot of people in the settlement encouraged me to run so I did. I had a lot of concerns about whether the community would accept me or not as their first female chief, whether or not they would take me seriously, or how they felt about me living common-law with a non-Native person and so on. So I thought about all these things and as more people found out that I was thinking about running, the more encouragement I got. I think that the nominations had to be in on a Friday by three o'clock, so at two fifty-nine, I decided I was going to run (laughs) and I became Chief for the first time in March 1992.

RSAA: Did anything else compel you to run?

K.R.: About two years before, I had gone to the store in the winter time. It must have been -35 degrees out and there was this old couple in the store buying groceries. This old couple were pretty hard drinkers and they asked me to take their groceries home, so I did. When I entered the house I saw children, five, six, seven years old, huddled together around the stove and it was really cold in the house. Basically, they lived like that every day while the parents were out drinking. That's when I decided to get more involved in what was happening in the community and be a part of making change in the community.



Photo: Camille Fouillard

On the night of February 14, 1992, a house burned down next door from our house. Six children had been left alone and died in the fire. I was at my mother's house at the time, sit-

ting in the living room, when my mother came running out of her room and said there was a house on fire. By the time we got to the house the whole thing was in flames and there was nothing we could do. There were no fire hoses, no fire equipment. Even if we had had equipment, we had no water in the community. We didn't know if anyone was in the house or anything.



Photo: Camille Fouillard

The fire really shook the community. The children were devastated. We asked for a government inquiry but they refused and everybody knew that we had to do it ourselves, that we couldn't rely on decisions being taken in St. John's or Ottawa. We needed to change for ourselves and that's why everybody was so involved in our People's Inquiry and the *Gathering Voices*¹ report that followed.

RSAA: You were recently re-elected Chief for a second term. What have you learned since the first term and has change been taking place?

K.R.: Well, I've learned never to trust the government, that's one thing (laughs). You can't take their word and they refuse to recognize us as Innu people. We basically do not exist in the eyes of the Canadian and Newfoundland governments. We are a *municipality*. We are any other Newfoundlander in their eyes. They don't recognise that we have our own language, culture, values, traditions... our rights, it doesn't mean anything to them.

Take the school for example, English is taught as a first language. Innu is not taught or is taught as a second language while everybody in the community speaks Innu-aimun as their first language. The curriculum is not designed for Innu people, it's designed for students in Buenavista Bay or somewhere else.

Kanehsatake

Mohawk women have had enough!

Who would have thought on July 11, the fifth anniversary of the police raid on Kanehsatake, that the SQ would return to the community four weeks later... this time without any apparent opposition from the Mohawk people? In the meantime, members of the community had publicly denounced the large-scale growing of marijuana taking place there with the tacit approval of Jerry Peltier's Band Council.

Mary Jane Hannenberg is the woman who accepted to speak of the situation to Radio-Canada: "It's very difficult to talk about the marijuana growing. It's touching a lot of our families and we know they need the money because they're on welfare. You take a risk when you talk about it because it splits your family even more. But I decided that we couldn't go on like this because of the way it was affecting the children so much. And there were other issues related to the people doing the growing. They were getting more powerful and turning around and abusing and oppressing their brothers and sisters even more because of the money."

Over...

We are on a constant collision course, living a clash between two cultures. I think that's the reason why the young people are so confused today, why you see a lot of children sniffing gasoline or solvents, stealing, vandalizing buildings, threatening people and that sort of thing. In spite of all this we have to survive as Innu people.

If you had come here fifteen years ago I would have said that things in Davis Inlet were hopeless. Things are different today, but we still have a long way to go. During the last Band Council elections one other person ran against me and he used alcohol to buy votes and I won by a very narrow margin, some seven votes. Most people wanted to stay away from politics but when they saw this person buying votes with liquor then they decided they were going to get involved. It's a narrow margin but a few years ago I might have lost. We've been trying to heal the community and it's had some effect.

The social problems we face, such as gas sniffing, are still with us and that's why we need to work harder, especially for the children. We've been trying to get the parents more responsible towards their children but that's still a problem. For example, my mother and my father never had to deal with gas sniffing when we were growing up. It was unheard of back then. So how are they supposed to deal with something that they know nothing about? That's what parents are faced with. Some don't know or understand the effects of gas sniffing. One of the



Photo: Camille Fouillard

children, who is a chronic gas sniffer, was brought to a hospital for a brain scan. That's when we found out that half his brain has turned to bone. So one of the things we're trying to do is educate the people but it's a difficult task.

Davis hit rock bottom about three years ago. That's when we showed the video of children wanting to die in January 1993. Then all eyes were on Davis Inlet and Davis became a symbol of the poverty that exists among Native people across Canada. It was time for us to act because the governments had neglected us and let the situation deteriorate for too long.

¹ *Gathering Voices; finding strength to help our children*. Ed. Camille Fouillard; Douglas and McIntyre, Toronto, 1995.

The second part of this interview will be published in next newsletter and will deal with mining development in the Voisey Bay area. The discovery of a nickel deposit there is now threatening over 60 000 km² of land in Nitassinan, almost a third of Labrador.

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Kanehsatake

Mohawk Women Have Had Enough!

Suite of the first page.

Ms. Hannenberg has paid dearly for speaking out on this issue. She has received death threats, she's been told that her house will burn down and she and her daughter have had to live in fear as a consequence. But Ms. Hannenberg has turned to other women from Kanehsatake who have come together as a group to support her and deal with the problems that have been grinding away at their community.

Eleanor Montour, an elder from Kanehsatake, is among them. She also believes the time has come to act: "It has gone too far for us to keep quiet any longer," she says. "We have to speak out and defend ourselves, even if it's just the women for the moment. There aren't too many men, but we're going to get other women together and we're going to get to work."

Jerry Peltier's leadership

For many women, the marijuana issue is just the tip of the iceberg. More pressing for Ms. Hannenberg and others are the issues of intimidation and terror which weigh heavily on the community. Singling out the Band Council, she says: "Women have spoken out before and have asked questions. And what happened? They've received lawyers' letters from the Chief and been intimidated. There are actually people who stand at the back of community meetings to intimidate. We get called names and get publicly humiliated. "They say we've got democracy here and that we can speak at public meetings, but who is going to go in there and face that sort of thing all the time. I go to public meetings but no one attends because they know what's going on. So there isn't any opposition and the Band Council does what it wants."

"It really hurts me," adds Ms. Hannenberg, "because the whole process completely disregards women. They're the elders and they have an important role to play in the community. They're the mothers and grandmothers. They know the way it was and they know the values we're trying to maintain."

Ms. Montour, for her part, links the intimidation in her community and the negotiations underway with the government: "You'd have to be pretty stupid," she says, "to see that Jerry Peltier isn't working for the government. He's trying to sell our land and he'll sign and then goodbye... *arrangez-vous* with what's left."

Other women speak of conflicts of interest in which Mr. Peltier and some of his councillors may be involved in. They also speak of the ties the chief maintains with government officials in Ottawa, which would enable other less prominent individuals to protect their criminal activities... For these and other reasons, the women will be taking court action in an attempt to have the "Grand Chief" removed from office.

A complicated situation

Eleanor Montour explains the dilemma facing the group of women from Kanehsatake. "Our situation is very complicated," she explains. Everything needs to be weighed before we say anything all the time."

Most consider themselves traditionalists, all believe in the sovereignty of the Mohawk Nation. But at the same time, they can't count on any form of protection or security from within their community.

"We're trying to balance everything," says Mary Jane Hannenberg.

"We don't really want to ask people from the outside to come in, but we can't just count on ourselves because these people are armed and there's a lot of money involved."

While calling the recent SQ intervention in the marijuana fields, in the company of Minister Serge Ménard, "the lesser of two evils" in an otherwise "chaotic" situation, Ellen Gabriel is visibly uneasy with the whole thing. "They've known about it for a long time," she says. "It's funny to see how in 1990

they didn't hesitate to shoot at women and children and now they treat the criminals in the community with kidgloves... They gave them a week and then until sundown; they gave them so much time to get rid of their pot. Who's the criminal here? "It's definitely not the people the SQ and the government have tried so hard to discredit for the past five years."

Despite all the difficulties, many of the women believe that a different kind of future is possible in Kanehsatake. Eleanor Montour speaks of peace, of being able to live day and night without fear, of equality between all members of the community, and of job creation. She also speaks of reconciliation. But for her and the other women, none of this will be possible as long as Jerry Peltier remains in power and that fundamental change doesn't take place.



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

"Who's the criminal here?," asks Ellen Gabriel. "It's definitely not the people who the SQ and the government have tried so hard to discredit for the past five years."

Coroner's Report "The victims once again get the blame"

Ellen Gabriel contests the conclusions of Coroner Guy Gilbert's inquest into SQ corporal Marcel Lemay's death. While severely criticizing the way the SQ assault on Kanehsatake was decided and carried out, Gilbert nonetheless blames the Mohawk people for Lemay's death on July 11th, 1990.

"We were to blame. The victims again became the aggressors and I don't think he wanted to find the truth. I think he wanted to satisfy his government and that's exactly what he's done."

"He based his conclusions entirely on a person who wasn't even there, rather than on the testimony of the people who were. It seems that all the testimony we presented was irrelevant, even if we were of good faith in trying to find the truth... It was even shown that the police had lied in court, that evidence had been manipulated by the police and the army."

"The coroner never even considered for a moment the simple fact that the police shouldn't have been there in the first place. The incident never should have happened because the police didn't have the right to come into our territory with guns and attack the people. The whole thing was illegal to begin with. Gilbert never once acknowledged that this is our sovereign territory."



Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

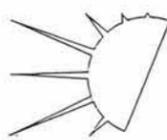


Photo: Carla Nemiroff

On July 8 and 9, the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake held its fifth annual powwow and spiritual gathering, in commemoration of the 1990 uprising at Oka.

Music, dance, history-telling and other events were attended by a record crowd. The Regroupement, for its part, marked five years of solidarity work with a monetary gift presented to the Organizing Committee.

The powwow was followed, on July 11, by a march to reaffirm Mohawk territorial rights, leaving from the Pines and passing through Oka, the Mohawk cemetery, and the golf course.



**SOLIDARITY
WITH
NATIVE PEOPLE**



Shuswap Uprising at Gustafsen Lake

Members of the Shuswap Nation in Gustafsen Lake, BC, have risen up to assert their centuries-old claim to territory, burial and dance grounds.

The protesters have gone as far as the Governor-General of Canada and the Queen of England in demanding that Native rights to the land in question be recognized, reminding them that the Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognizes aboriginal title to lands which have not been ceded. In fact, about 90% of British Columbia remains unceded aboriginal territory.

There are larger issues at stake, as well. A petition dated January 3, 1995 calls for a United Nations investigation to determine whether or not the Government of Canada has committed treason and fraud and attempted genocide against aboriginal peoples. The Indian Act, creator of the Band Council system, is a primary source of Shuswap and other Native grievances.

Reports from Gustafsen Lake have been contradictory and in some cases censored. It is not clear how much support the protesters have from the community.

Frank Bucher, of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, quoted in the Globe and Mail, says, "we understand the principles underlying this protest. We don't endorse taking up arms, but these are frustrated people, like many of our people."

Daniel Ashini, Director of Innu Rights and Environment at Sheshatshiu, for his part, explains: "The BC Premier, Attorney General and the RCMP have misrepresented the protesters as terrorists, renegades and trespassers. But their aspirations are shared by many aboriginal peoples across Canada. British Columbia, like Québec and Labrador in unceded aboriginal land [...] Rather than dealing fairly with the protesters, the authorities have chosen to respond to their legitimate concerns with police state tactics."

Information: Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with Native People, (416) 972-1573, fax (416) 972-6232.

Deadly Dealing at Ipperwash, Ontario

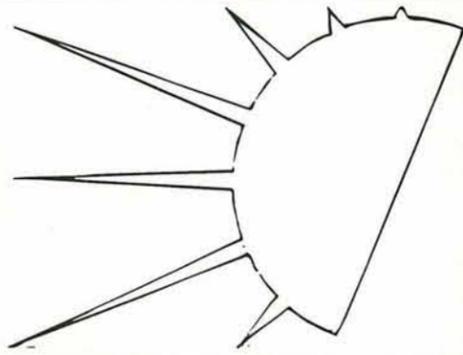
On September 6, the Ontario Provincial Police opened fire on Native individuals during a dispute at Ipperwash provincial park.

The park is located near a military base that the Canadian government built on Ojibway and Pottawatimi land during the Second World War. In July, 1995, men, women and children from the Stoney Point reserve moved in to reclaim that land after decades of illegal military occupation.

Dudley Anthony O'Brien George, 38, was killed, and Nicholas Cottrel, 16, and one other person were wounded, by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).

Ipperwash is only one of hundreds of unresolved land claims by Native communities in this country. It has taken decades for an inch of progress, in some of the claims themselves and in the mentality of the federal and provincial governments of Canada.

The number of Native people acting up to assert their inalienable rights will continue to grow. What will Canada do to make sure the death toll doesn't?



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 48-49 October 1995

Interview with Katie Rich, Chief of Utshimassit (Davis Inlet)

WOUNDED EARTH

This is the second part of an interview with Katie Rich is. We interviewed her in her office in Utshimassit (Davis Inlet), an island settlement off the Labrador coast of some 500 people.

RSAA: You were jailed in April for ten days with two other women for having evicted a provincial court judge and the RCMP from your community on December 16, 1993. Could you tell us about the incident?

K.R.: We found the conduct of the Provincial Court Judge in our community totally unprofessional and that's why I had been sitting in on some of the proceedings. I sat there for two days and witnessed all that was going on and at one point there was this young girl who doesn't speak much English and the Judge made fun of her and ridiculed what she was saying. He ridiculed and intimidated witnesses.

I saw one prisoner get three years for breaking and entering where as a man was brought to trial in Goose Bay a year before for drunken driving. He killed a girl and only got 6 months. I didn't see any justice in someone serving 6 months for killing someone while one of our young people damages material things and gets three years.

I walked out of the court room and after awhile someone poked their head out and said somebody else had just been put away, another person gone. So I said: "That's it, I've had enough of this!" So I phoned a few people up to ask for some advice. The first suggestion was to attack the judge physically (laughs). I said to him: "I have nothing against the judge personally, it's the system that I'm against." Besides I'm not the kind of person to attack anyone. So that idea was out of the question (laughs). Then I decided to write the judge a letter telling him to leave. Within minutes of having evicted the judge, a plane load of RCMP officers came in...

Erratum

In last month's bulletin it was mistakenly reported that a monetary gift had been made to the Kanehsatake Powwow Committee last July in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the events of July 1990. Rather, in honor of the Committee's work and dedication, before during and after the events of 1990, the Regroupement offered a framed leather Mayan calendar that had been made in Chiapas, Mexico.

After the eviction we filled a complaint of judicial misconduct with the Judicial Council of Newfoundland against Chief Judge Donald Luther and Robert Hyslop, the judge who was evicted. Luther had said that everyone involved in the eviction would have to pay and since the whole community was involved, he had found all of us guilty before even bringing us to trial.

Two weeks later, charges were laid against myself, Nympha Byrne and Justine Noah. The Judicial Council said it would deal with our complaint after our trial, set for March 13, 1995. We refused to appear and arrest warrants were issued. We were jailed in April and on August 4 [1995], our complaint was dismissed on the grounds that, according to the Judicial Council, there was no evidence to support our allegations against the two judges.



RSAA: Have the RCMP come back to the community?

K.R.: In September of 1994, the government tried to bring the court back on two occasions accompanied by a hundred RCMP officers in full riot gear traveling in army helicopters. We prevented them from doing so by blocking the runway. That's when we realized that the power of the people was coming together. We were having strategy sessions and doing all sorts of things like flying the Canadian flag upside down, the kids burnt the Newfoundland flag. The media came in and we were successful in getting the attention we needed.

A task force has been created by the Province to deal with justice issues here and we'd like to see things like sentencing circles in the community. Community members and elders would deal with sentences and have a say in who goes to jail.

We've signed a policing agreement and as of June the RCMP is back, but on certain conditions. About three weeks ago, some young people in police custody were being brought back here to go to court. Word got out that apparently they were going to run for it after getting to Davis. The RCMP got wind of this and shackled all six young people's feet together and handcuffed them. So there's

still a ways to go...

RSAA: You've been fighting the government since becoming Chief of the Band Council. Some people say Band Councils are part of the government in Native communities. How do you deal with that contradiction?

K.R.: The Band Councils are a creation of the federal government, but we don't have to run our communities like the federal government. One of the things I've tried to put forward is the idea of having the elders make the important decisions and have the leader or Chief act as the spokesperson for these people. The elders are used to making these decisions since the old days...

Otherwise, I feel that we are creating gaps between our elders, ourselves and the younger generation. The larger the gaps spread, the harder it is for us to be able to bridge those gaps. But we're finding ways to overcome this, one of which is asking the elders to sit as advisors during the Council meetings. But in the meantime we're losing our elders so fast. A couple of years ago, two of them past away within a week of each other and the knowledge they had is gone forever. We only have a handful left, not very many at all.

RSAA: One of those things is the Voisey Bay mineral find about 75 kilometers from here. Mining exploration companies found an important nickel deposit there last fall. Could you tell us a bit more about that.

K.R.: Our people and the Inuit have lived and hunted in the area we call Eimish for a long time. They've even staked this island here and in Sango Bay, the place we want to relocate to.

In February, the people decided they were going to protest and head toward Eimish. They took their families with them and between 100 and 150 people camped just a few kilometers from the drilling site. They gave the companies [Diamond Fields Resources and Archean Resources] eviction notices and stopped the drilling for about two weeks.

When the government found out that there were Innu people protesting, they decided to send RCMP officers in there. So they sent some sixty armed officers to guard two drills stuck in the middle of nowhere, in the barrens (laughs). When you think of what the government has been doing to us... The two drills seem more important to them than the Innu people.

As of July, over 250 000 claims have been staked all over Labrador by over 200 companies. That's 60 000 km² of Innu land, almost a third of Labrador. The way we



Katie Rich, Chief of Utshimassit (Davis Inlet)

look at it is that if all these companies get the financial backing to explore these claims, the land that our people depend on will be destroyed forever and we will cease to exist as Innu people. I take my children out on the land every chance I get and when I see those survey helicopters flying around, I get really angry.

It really angers me that the governments of Canada and Newfoundland are allowing this to happen and encouraging this. The more you think about this, the more you think of the Beothuks on the Island of Newfoundland. Are we to have the same fate?



RSAA: Is there any way to stop the project?

K.R.: One of the things we're trying to do is to get the Labrador Inuit Association on side with us, but we're having a hard time doing that because they have their own agenda, of course, with their own people looking for jobs and that sort of thing. And to fight in the courts, you need a lot of money and all these companies have all the money in the world to pay for lawyers and drag this thing out. In the meantime, the land is being destroyed.

After the February protests, we met

with Diamond Fields officials but talks fell through. We had asked the elders to speak about how much the land meant to them and this guy who said he had dealt with many Native "groups" before said: "Well, I've heard that before. It sounds interesting, but I've heard it all before." It was obvious he didn't respect the elders.

As much as I hate to talk to these people, we reached an understanding on our environmental, social and economic concerns two weeks ago. It really bothers me that we are letting these companies come in here and start exploring.

It's going so fast. At the rate they're going now, they'll be building a 20 km road from the coast to the mining site, an air strip, diesel fuel depots and three worker's camps starting in September. Twenty baseline data studies need to be completed before then, but the companies have managed to bypass environmental studies by saying all this is exploration, not development. They're also talking about a smelter...

If we are able to overcome the problems that we face today, if we do succeed in healing our people, I think the people will get stronger. And the stronger they are, the more defiant they are. We saw this when we told the judge to leave. Children were involved and women of course played an important leadership role. They're the ones who told the judge to leave.

My mother's parents are buried in Eimish and there are a lot of burial sites there. The more you think of these grave sites being destroyed, the more you think of what happened in Oka in 1990.

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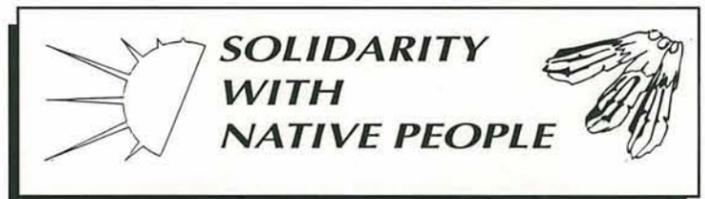
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Referendum on October 30



SOVEREIGNTY FOR FIRST NATIONS

On October 30, the population of Quebec will be called upon to pronounce itself on whether or not Quebec should accede to the status of a sovereign country, something it has the legal right to become should a majority of its population choose to do so.

However, the Nation of Quebec is not the only Nation to live on what is referred to as the territory of Quebec. Other Nations also happen to live here, Nations which have been here for thousands of years before us, Nations which, despite the attempted genocide they have suffered for hundreds of years, have never lost nor abandoned their sovereignty.

Respecting the right to self-determination

These Nations, First Nations, also have the right to decide their future freely for themselves, and their right to self-determination must be fully respected in all of its implications and consequences.

Bill 1 on the future of Quebec, presented to the National Assembly by the Parti Québécois government, claims to "recognize the right of First Nations to govern themselves on lands of their ownership", but it is quick to add that this recognition will have "to exercise itself while respecting Quebec's territorial integrity."

The Regroupement can not accept such a limitation which in its application denies the very right to self-determination. If First Nations can dispose of "lands of their ownership," as the Bill claims, then they have the right to do so as they see fit.

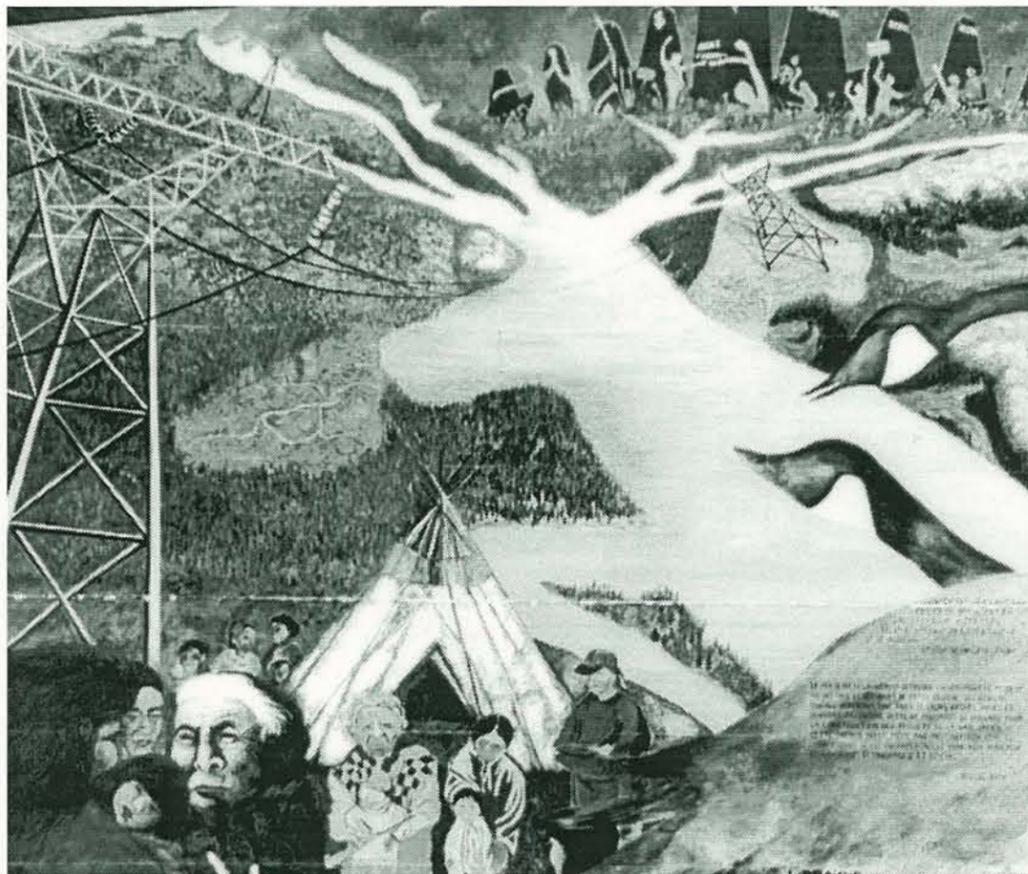


Photo: Sébastien Bouchard

It is entirely for Native Nations to decide how to go about maintaining, or whether or not to maintain ties with a sovereign Quebec. Some Native Nations may choose to build a "new alliance" with the people of Quebec, as the preamble to the Bill suggests. However, others may refuse to and their right to do so must be respected.

First Nations' right to self-determination must not simply be valid in a sovereign Quebec. While Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin has often stated that First Nations' wish to stay in Canada will be respected in case of Quebec's separation, Canada has denied their right to self-determination on an almost daily basis across the country.

What of the right to self-determination for the Innu Nation when the Canadian government imposes NATO low-level military flights over Nitassinan? How can the same government, which lets the Ontario Provincial Police murder Anthony Dudley O'Brian George of the Chippewa Nation, who was demanding that his land be respected, proclaim itself the defender of Native rights in Quebec?

Everywhere in Canada, the right to self-determination for First Nations must be forever recognized, not only during the referendum period or merely for the months leading to Quebec's possible accession to sovereignty.

Recognition of Native territories

We, at the Regroupement, are

distrustful of Bill 1 when we read that a sovereign Quebec will recognize Native lands "of their ownership". What lands are being referred to? Ancestral or hereditary lands? We can seriously doubt this when listening to sovereigntist leaders. Are they not speaking of present reserves or parcels of land negotiated for a handful of dollars and the extinguishment of Native title on the remaining territories?

If so, a sovereign Quebec would be reproducing the same federal practices which, from the creation of the reserve system to its present so-called land claims process, has systematically violated Native peoples' fundamental rights.

We can not legitimately nor have the right to ask First Nations to give up, in part or entirely, the land on which they have lived, circulated and practiced their traditional activities since time immemorial.

The Regroupement instead demands the full recognition of Native territories, whether in Canada under its actual form or in an eventual sovereign Quebec. We demand that, based on this recognition, negotiations take place on the joint use of some of these lands by other population who live there and would continue to live there. For if it is apparent to us that while First Nations are not satisfied with the minute reserves they have been confined in by the federal government, no one has in any seriousness suggested that non-Natives be expelled on a massive scale from the areas they live in.

To fully recognize the territorial rights of First Nations also means to accept that no present nor future borders be imposed on them. First Nations in Quebec also live elsewhere in Canada and, in many cases, in the United States. Therefore, no obstacles should interfere with their free circulation or the preservation and growth of economic, political, cultural or other ties which bind them to their brothers and sisters which happen to live beyond the artificial borders created by our Nation-States.

Relationships based on equality

We, at the Regroupement, believe that we must work to achieve an equal, nation to nation relationship with First Nations that is built on mutual respect.

This is how we have come to understand the Two Row Wampum which, since the seventeenth century, has determined how Nations belonging to the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) were to relate to Europeans, and vice versa. According to the Wampum which is composed of two parallel rows which neither cross nor merge, each Nation was to follow its course while conserving those customs and laws which were its own, and never suffering from interference nor hegemony from the other.

It is the same intent which guided the Innu of the Coalition for Nitassinan in their Joint Declaration on the Rights of Peoples. The declaration was made public when the Innu walked 1000 km

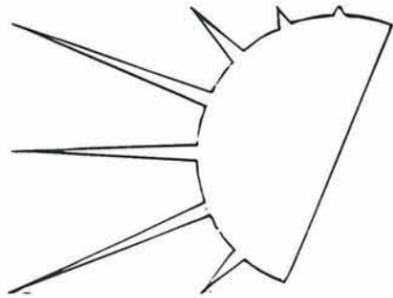
from Mani-Utenam to Montreal three years ago as part of their campaign against the SM-3 project. Unfortunately, when presented to the liberal government, the declaration fell on deaf ears.

We realize today how much this philosophy of equality is continually violated, as much by the government of Canada as those Provinces which refuse to recognize First Nations' right to their own Constitution, their own forms of government, their laws and systems of justice. If such meddling is unacceptable in Canada at present, so will it be in a sovereign Quebec.

Common struggle...
Struggle for our common interests

We are very much aware of the difficulties inherent to our position. It requires conscious reflection and a good deal of imagination. It requires that we take established political notions which our society often believes are unalterable, such as the idea of Nation-States, and reformulate them in ways which would allow for the coexistence of sovereign nations. It also requires a sincere and an open dialogue with First Nations.

These ties of equality and open dialogue are things that must be established now with First Nations in a common struggle... a struggle for our common interests. A struggle against the destruction of the earth, the air, the water. A struggle against the appropriation of wealth by a propertied minority. A struggle against racism and intolerance, and for the respect of differences...



SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 50

December 1995

Referendum Aftermath

The Issue of Native Rights Remains

Native rights were largely left off the agenda of the recent referendum on Québec sovereignty, by the yes and no camps and media alike.

The Parti Québécois government took shelter behind the safe concept of Québec's territorial integrity, in a bid to forestall discussion of Native self-determination until after a presumed yes vote. This came on the heels of failed attempts, launched even before the campaign had begun, to reach agreement with some of Québec's many aboriginal nations.

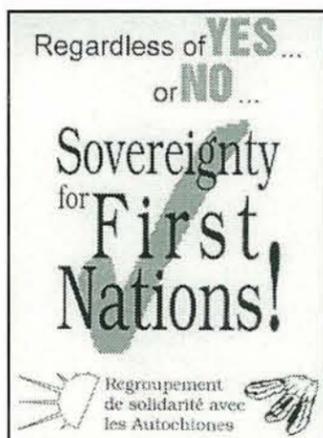
Meanwhile, the federal government, allied with the no side, could not well claim to defend First Nations interests, given its role in the Summer's events at Gustafsen Lake (British Columbia), Ipperwash Park (Ontario), and Miramichi River (New Brunswick). This too marked a retreat from relative openness to Native self-determination shown by Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin, only a few months prior.

The unease that will likely follow the no side's narrow victory may only serve to keep Native rights out of the public eye.

No constitution without Native participation

Whatever timid steps Canada may take to reopen the constitutional debate will have to cross the path of Native rights and demands, judging from recent history at Meech Lake and Charlottetown.

Moreover, Native people are increasingly challenging the authority of the Assembly of First Nations and other major organizations recognized by Ottawa, and may no longer accept concessions like those incorporated in the Charlottetown Accord, which recognizes the "inherent



right to self-government" and grants Band Councils additional powers similar to those of a municipality.

The events of the past six months provide little reassurance that the federal government will be able to hold Native demands in check at the bargaining table.

Lessons to learn

Native peoples' massive rejection of the proposed sovereignty project should also give the PQ government pause for reflection.

Three parallel referenda organized by Native nations bear the results. Inuit people voted 99% against the proposition, "Are you in favour of Québec separation?", while 96% of Cree respondents and 95% of voters from five Innu communities rejected association with an independent Québec. Voter turnout was over 70% for the three referenda.

As for the Québec government's process, Director-General of Elections Pierre Côté estimates that Native presence was higher than usual, with over 95% voting no.

In contrast, the Mohawk Nation chose not to participate. Traditionalists and Band Council representatives alike reasserted that Mohawks are neither Québécois

nor Canadians and therefore are not bound by the referendum's result, whatever that may be.

Cause for mistrust

Since 1990, the PQ and later the Bloc Québécois have been spewing anti-Native vitriol, and this certainly did not help their cause. The federal government also probably played a role in the outcome, by virtue of its status as trustee of First Nations.

Finally, Native people have long been particularly distrustful of provincial governments. In Québec's case, it is not hard to understand why, given the Sûreté du Québec's violent interventions in Restigouche and Kanehsatake, as well as numerous other struggles over policing, hydroelectric development, and hunting, fishing, and trapping rights.

But there is more to it than history. As formulated by the PQ and inscribed in Bill 1 on the future of Québec, the sovereigntist project has nothing to offer Native nations, except the knowledge that they would no more be considered Québec's equals than they are Canada's and would remain divested of the territory that they have lived on for thousands of years.

There was nothing to offset the risks, real or imagined, of seeing their territory subdivided, rights revoked (notably in terms of taxation), or environmental safeguards weakened.

Unfortunately, PQ and BQ leaders will likely overlook the opportunity to revise their policies founded on the claim of territorial integrity.

And what about progressive groups and individuals which came out in favour of the yes side while staying conspicuously silent on the issue of Native rights: will they miss the boat too, or will they begin to ask themselves how much of what they demand for themselves they are prepared to accord Native people?

No, but...

"Whether it's a YES or a NO... Sovereignty for First Nations." The slogan of the Regroupement's modest campaign is as relevant today as it was on October 30. Whether or not another referendum is soon held, one thing will not change, and that is that the right of Native people and First Nations to self-determination must be unconditionally recognized.

Massacre in Guatemala

On the fifth of October, the community of *Aurora 8 de Octubre* was preparing to celebrate the first anniversary of its return to Guatemala after more than 12 years of exile in Mexico, when soldiers were seen on the community's outskirts. Twenty-six heavily armed soldiers entered the village, located 140 km north of the capitol in the department of Alta Verapaz. More than 200 members of the community gathered to denounce this incursion.

Few minutes later, the lieutenant gave the order to open fire on the crowd. Sustained automatic weapons fire and grenade blasts lasted for 45 minutes. Eleven Native women, men, children and elders were killed and more than 30 people were wounded, including three soldiers victims of their own gun fire and explosions.

A deliberate attack?

According to the army, which categorically denied the massacre in the first place, soldiers were in the community to ask if they could take part in preparing the festivities when they were suddenly attacked by a hostile crowd. However, a preliminary investigation carried out by United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA), following the incident, indicates that the local population was unarmed.

According to MINUGUA, the soldiers' very presence in the village violates the October 1992 accords signed between the refugees and the Guatemalan government. Although those accords formally recognize "the civilian and peaceful character of the returns and returnees", the army has never abandoned its pernicious attempts to link the refugees with Guatemala's guerrilla forces.

Supported by eye witness accounts of the massacre, MINUGUA asserts that a number of wounded were executed at close range, including an 8 year old boy. Furthermore, the UN organization states that neither harsh words nor any unfortunate gesture against the soldiers could justify the order to open fire against an unarmed population.

A very well publicized resignation

The soldiers responsible for the massacre are being detained for the time being by Guatemalan military authorities. Their base commander has been replaced and on October 9, the Minister of Defence, Mario Enriquez Morales resigned.



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

Mr. Domingo Chel, Ixil representative of the Guatemalan Communities of populations in resistance (CPRs) came through Montreal on a cross-Canada tour. More than 60 members and friends of the Regroupement greeted him warmly during his public presentation on November 9.

According to Rosalina Tuyuc of the National Coordinating Committee of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA), "the Defence Minister's resignation will not make the army's policy of genocide disappear. They are simply trying to redirect the international community's attention... The massacre is not the work of a single person", she says, "but the result of a series of orders, a hierarchy, an institution."

Despite a few changes in the army's upper echelons, military structures and the army's economic power in Guatemala remain intact.

Breaking the silence

The Minister's resignation may be clever manoeuvring, but for the first time since the covert and widespread slaughters of the 1980s, the images of the victims, the pain-stricken faces and the words of the survivors have made their way around the world. Our solidarity with the Guatemalan people must break the silence which has allowed the atrocities of the past to take place so that they don't happen again in the future. In that sense, the massacre on October 5 speaks volumes of the work which still needs to be done.

In spite of army repression, the indigenous and rural movements in Guatemala maintain a course which many feel is irreversible. As far as the refugees in Mexico are concerned, their organized and collective return to Guatemala will continue as planned.

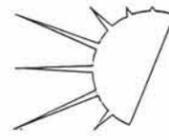
For more information, contact Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala at 840-1008.



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

On Thursday, October 12, fifty people or so gathered in Phillips Square on the lunch hour to mark Christopher Columbus' arrival in America on that date in 1492. Jeanne-Mance Charlish, shown above, from Masteiwatsh, as well as Joe David from Kanehsatake spoke in honor of 503 years of Indigenous resistance in America.

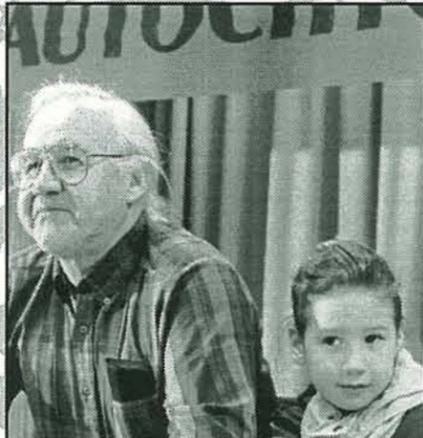
50TH BULLETIN



**SOLIDARITY
WITH
NATIVE PEOPLE**



October 27, 1994 • Elizabeth Penashue, Innu elder from Sheshatshit, at a public meeting on low-level military flights in Nitassinan.



March 20, 1992 • Joe Deom and his granddaughter, from Kahnawake, at solidarity evening with Mohawks.



July 11, 1995 • Mary David, Susan Oak, Valery David and Ellen Gabriel at the annual gathering in Kanehsatake.



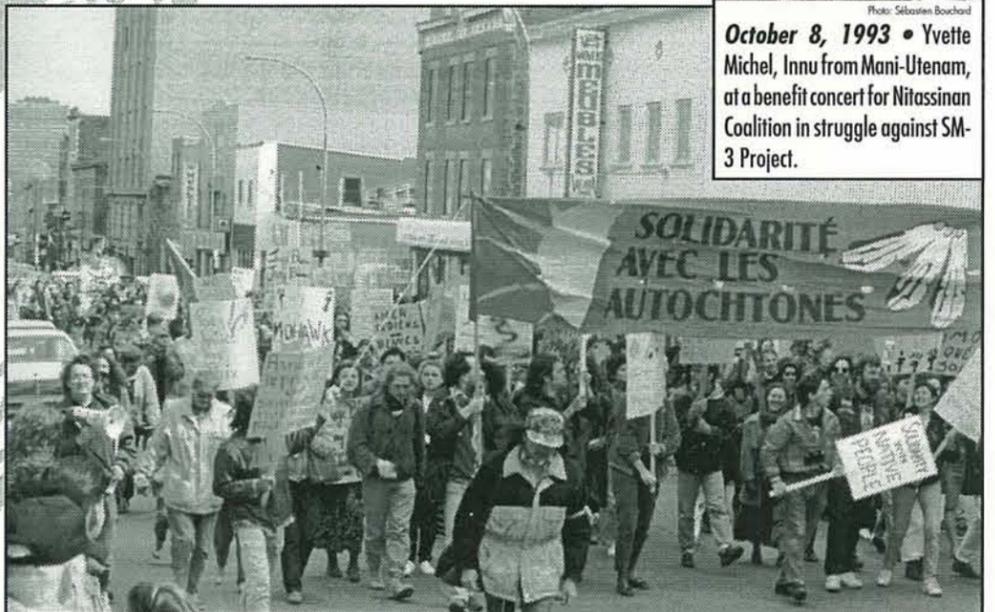
October 8, 1993 • Yvette Michel, Innu from Mani-Utenam, at a benefit concert for Nitassinan Coalition in struggle against SM-3 Project.



September 14, 1993 • Ellen Gabriel at the Montreal Court House to face contempt of court charges during the investigation by Coroner Gilbert.



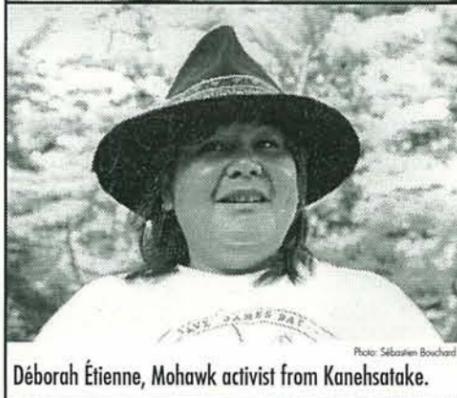
June 16, 1995 • Karen Young and Coral at the benefice concert for the 5th anniversary of Mohawk struggle in Kanehsatake.



April 25, 1992 • 300 people marched to show their support for the accused of the Oka Crisis.



July 11, 1992 • Demonstration at Kanehsatake.



Déborah Étienne, Mohawk activist from Kanehsatake.



August 1992 • Matthew Mukkash, from Whapmagoostui, spokesperson for the Crees for the campaign against the Great Whale Project.



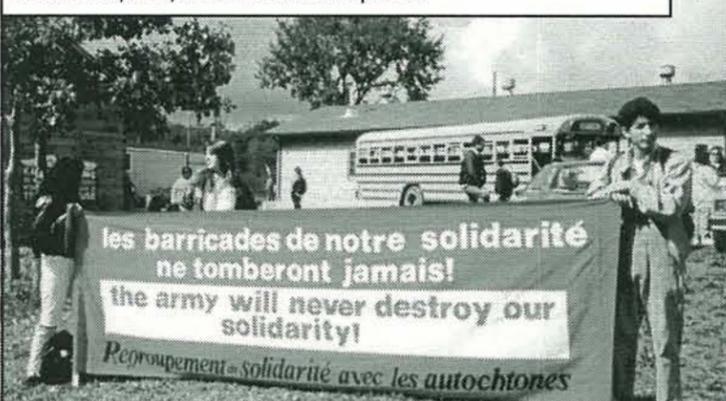
April 23, 1994 • Demonstration against SM-3 Project.



April 25, 1994 • Demonstration against the Kemano II Project, in support of Cheslatta t'en, in BC, in front of Alcan Headquarters.



July 1992 • Some of the accused after their acquittal: Joe David, Leroy Gabriel, Bradley Laroque, Robert Skidders, Susan Oak and Mike Mayo.



September 23, 1990 • Demonstration in Kahnawake.



December 1, 1991 • Willie Dunn, micmac, in the benefit show for the Mohawks.

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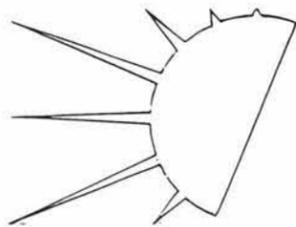
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 52

March 1996

"STAY OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE"

Kenneth Deer, editor of The Eastern Door, Kahnawake's weekly newspaper, recently wrote two editorials commenting on the hotly debated topic of the partition of Quebec following an eventual separation. We have reproduced several excerpts.

The partitioning of Quebec ¹

"It is interesting that in the debate over the partitioning of Quebec very little has been said about the Native Peoples in Quebec. If Ottawa is recognizing the partition of Quebec, they are recognizing our right to self-determination. But they are only recognizing this right because of the threat of Quebec separation.

Prior to the possibility of separation, Native Peoples efforts to self-determination were not taken seriously. The idea of partition has been taken seriously

because it provides a means to thwart separation. Partition cannot be acceptable to Ottawa without recognizing the Native Peoples' right to also part from Quebec.

What Lucien Bouchard realizes is that if the Native Peoples remain with Canada, they take their lands with them. This does not mean the postage stamp reserves that we reside on. It means the traditional territory that has never been legally ceded to any settler government.

The Native Peoples in reality have three choices. Stay with Canada, stay with Quebec or finally be independant within our respective territories. We wonder if Jean Chretien realizes all our options."

"Let Quebec and Canada fight it out" ²

"The Minister of Indian Affairs, Ron Irwin, stated that Quebec should not assume that it owns all the land that Native Peoples

are claiming and that we may stay with Canada should we choose to do so. This statement implies that Native Peoples have the right to self-determination, a concept that the government of Canada has been fighting against for years. Why all of a sudden have they changed their minds? It certainly isn't because they suddenly gained a conscience. The reason is pure politics.

Canada wants to keep Quebec in Canada by all means necessary short of force. By playing the Native card, Canada can put Quebec on the defensive. Canada is trying to embarrass the separatists both nationally and internationally. What is not being said is very interesting. Canadian officials are not saying that Native Peoples can become independant just like Quebec. [...]

Let Quebec and Canada fight it out. We should watch and wait. Statements on our rights are fine, but stay out of the line of fire."

¹The Eastern Door, 2/2/96

²The Eastern Door, 16/2/96

Mounting pressure in favor of Leonard Peltier's Release

Leonard Peltier is serving two consecutive life sentences in the United States for the killing of two FBI agents in a June 1975 shoot-out on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota.

US Prosecutors now admit not knowing who committed the crime, but Peltier remains in jail following his extradition from Canada in 1976 based on affidavits which have since been proven false and a trial strewn with fabricated evidence, coerced testimony and government misconduct.

Leonard Peltier's "crime", in the 1970s, was to oppose the sale of one eighth of the Pine Ridge reservation to private interests for the sinking of a uranium mine. The land was sold, Peltier imprisoned and the American Indian Movement he represented, decimated by violence.

Supporters of Leonard Peltier and his legal counsellors have petitioned the American Justice department for presidential clemency, but their efforts have remained unanswered by the Clinton administration for over two



years. As American legal recourses run out, support and interest in Peltier's case is growing internationally as is the pressure for his immediate and unconditional release. A national campaign of civil disobedience is now being organized in the US, with a first wave of nonviolent actions beginning March 20 in Washington, San Francisco and Minneapolis. An official visit to the American senate is being planned by Canadian supporters in May and an international vigil at the United Nations in Geneva is being organized for July.

If interested in the Washington action phone (514) 521-5276

Ten more years of military flights over Nitassinan

Last February 20 the federal government signed a new treaty with three NATO allies which will double the number of low-level military flights over Nitassinan. In light of the agreement with Britain, Germany and the Netherlands, military flights will increase from 7,000 to 15,000 over the next ten years, and the Quebec-Labrador peninsula will continue playing its dubious role of playground for Western military forces.

The rights of the Innu people have been systematically violated by more than ten years of military training on their territory, by harassment and incarceration, but Defense Minister David Collenette says these military operations constitute a boost for the regional economy. The Minister maintains that fighter jets flying thirty meters from the ground and considered unacceptable in Europe because of their deafening sound and pollution, will successfully avoid Innu campsites as well as caribou migrations.

According to the Minister, the government remains preoccupied by the environment and will consequently increase the budget allocated to "environmental control" in case of mishaps involving combat simulations, aerial bombings or the occasional airplane crash.

Last November, a dozen Innu from Sheshatshiu, including elder Elizabeth Penashue, spent two weeks in prison for having blocked the



Elizabeth Penashue

runway at the Goose Bay military airport where NATO forces are based, on September 8, 1993.

The Innu, who chose prison rather than paying a 250\$ fine, are disappointed with the increase in military flights over their territory and some are thinking, in the face of such blatant government disrespect, of reinstagating their campaign of civil disobedience.

LUBICON LAKE CREE ON THE EDGE

For more than 55 years, the Lubicon Lake Cree have been fighting for their 10,000 km² territory, located in the boreal forest east of the Peace River in Alberta. The land remains unceded, but Canadian authorities have consistently refused to recognize Native title or jurisdiction. In 1979, the province built the first all-weather road into the territory which has led to the accelerated extraction of oil, gas and forestry resources and the destruction, for all intents and purposes, of the land-based Native economy. Today, Canada and Alberta maintain before the courts that the Cree no longer practice a traditional way of life and therefore can not claim aboriginal title to the land in question...

Between 1979 and 1983, the oil and gas industry drilled more than 400 wells within a 25 km radius of the Lubicon Lake Cree community



of Little Buffalo. While wells generate \$ 500 million in annual revenues, the Crees have had to deal with successive waves of tuberculosis, respiratory and skin disease, cancers of all sorts, miscarriages, still births and birth defects. Collapsing social and economic structures have provoked alcoholism, addiction and suicide among the Cree as petroleum companies like Norcen, Nova, Husky and Unocal raked-in \$ 8 billion worth of revenues of which the government of Alberta received 20% in royalties.

Daishowa moves in

In February 1988, Alberta announced the construction of a new pulp mill about 65 km from Little Buffalo on the shores of the Peace River. In addition to \$ 9.5 million in federal subsidies to entice the Japanese multinational Daishowa, Alberta also pledged in 1989 to fork over \$ 65.2 million worth of road and rail infrastructure

deemed necessary for the mill's operation in such an isolated location. Alberta also conceded logging rights to 29,000 km² of boreal forest which include the entire 10,000 km² Lubicon claim. The new \$ 580 million mill will transform 11,000 trees a day into 1,000 metric tons of dehydrated and bleached pulp. The annual tree harvest required to feed the mill could fill a football field 72 stories high...

In July 1994, the Cree learned that California's Unocal gas company was going to build a sour gas processing plant in Cree territory, not very far from Little Buffalo. The plant removes lethal hydrogen sulfide from natural gas in order to make it commercially viable while producing just enough sulfur dioxide to cause medical problems like those already being experienced by the Lubicon Lake Cree.

In 1990, the United Nations Human Rights Committee finally ruled that not only were the Lubicon Lake Cree way of life and culture endangered, but that given the government's underhanded dealings, the Cree could probably not hope for the legal redress of their grievances before the Canadian courts. As social conditions for the Crees deteriorate, Canada has been cited year after year before the UN general assembly among countries which violate Article 27 of the International Charter of Social and Political Rights.

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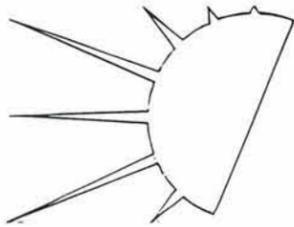
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 53

April 1996

Common Struggle For Justice

On March 22, **Reinie Jobin** of the *Lubicon elders' Council*, **Ed Bianchi** of the *Friends of the Lubicon* and **Fred Lennarson**, a consultant with the *Lubicon Lake Cree* for the last 15 years, were in Montreal to speak with members and supporters of the Regroupement. Approximately 500 people compose Lubicon Cree society today as they continue to live in northern Alberta, as they always have.

For the better part of a generation, however, their lands have been besieged by private interests bent on turning the Boreal forests into a wasteland while making the Cree way of life impossible. As judges, lawyers and politicians dizzy themselves in the revolving doors between government and industry, the State fills its pockets with oil and gas royalties, lavishes generous subsidies on oil and forestry corporations, and generally aids and abets the demise of Lubicon society.

In the last twenty years, legal challenges meant to defend Lubicon rights have been stonewalled. Agreements reached with governments have been callously denied. A grass-roots boycott was launched and then legally stifled. Honorable people have been slandered by politicians and defenders of the land criminalized... As the determination of the Lubicon and their supporters grows and as the legal and human costs of their actions become heavier, the Regroupement will have to find more ways to get involved and support them in this common struggle.

"We can't do it alone"

Reinie Jobin

Physically, psychologically, my people are being ripped apart by the European settlers in this country. (...) My people are under attack 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We are living in a very wealthy area of this country. Oil and gas companies have taken over 7 billion dollars out of our land since 1980, but kids go to bed hungry in our community. There is no need for that. As long as there is one Lubicon standing in the territory, all of us are going to continue our struggle and we want governments in this country to understand that we're not going to go away.

(...) Friends of the Lubicon here have successfully started a boycott against a foreign corporation (...) that has the nerve to

destroy our resources and then turn around and use Canadian courts to stop any opposition to their actions. You have to understand that our fight is also your fight, that these resources are being sold-out by two-bit politicians to foreign interests. We must stand on common ground and fight those corporations and governments.

(...) This has gone on long enough. I don't want to see this go on for another 57 years. We have to try and give our children a future, give them the same chance every kid gets in this country. As parents and grandparents, we have the responsibility to give them the best possible future we can. But we can't do it alone.

"Friends of the Lubicon"

Friends of the Lubicon started up in 1988 and in 1991, they answered a call from the Lubicon people to support them in their fight against two Japanese transnational pulp and paper companies. One was Mitsubishi and the other was Daishowa. In the late eighties, the Alberta government practically gave away logging rights to about 29,000 km² of northern Alberta to Daishowa.

Daishowa's Peace River mill located near Lubicon land transforms 11,000 trees a day into high-grade pulp using equipment that allows them to work 24 hours a day. (...) If you put clearcutting on top of over 15 years of intensive oil and gas extraction activity within a 25 km radius of the Lubicon community, you can imagine the impacts on the Lubicon people and their way of life.

Successful boycott

(...) What the Friends of the Lubicon did to support the Lubicon Cree was to initiate a boycott of the Daishowa Paper Manufacturing Company. (...) The objective of the boycott was to stop Daishowa from clearcutting Lubicon land. In a consumer society, unfortunately, probably the strongest voice people have is their pocket book, and so we asked people to use it and take a stand in support of the Lubicon.

Daishowa, unlike Pepsi or Coke, doesn't sell directly to the consumer. It sells paper products, like paper bags, to retailers and then retailers sell their products to the public. Companies identified as using Daishowa products were contacted and informed about the Lubicon situation and about Daishowa's forestry practices in Alberta. If, before the facts, they still persisted in doing business

with Daishowa, then we'd take the issue up with their customers. (...) Since 1991, 47 companies across Canada representing about 4300 retailers have joined the boycott. That means that they have decided to stop purchasing Daishowa products. (...) One of the positive things about the boycott is that since it started, Daishowa has not cut on Lubicon land and we think the boycott is a determining factor in keeping them out.

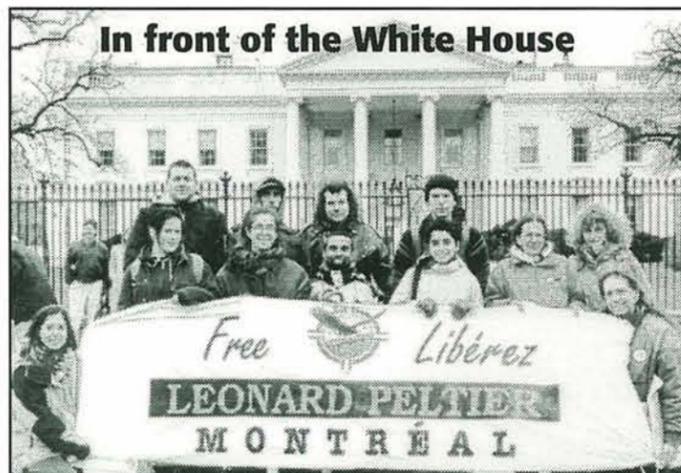
Daishowa and the law

In January 1995, Daishowa served us with legal papers claiming that we were breaking the law. Daishowa said we were conspiring to cause it economic injury, that we were using intimidating tactics in carrying out the boycott, etc. Daishowa sued us saying that

we had cost them about 8 million dollars in lost revenues...

Last year, Daishowa tried to get an injunction against us and failed. The Ontario Provincial Court ruled that the Friends of the Lubicon weren't doing anything illegal. Unfortunately, Daishowa appealed the decision and the Court of appeals in Ontario granted Daishowa an interim injunction in January of this year.

If Daishowa is successful in getting a permanent injunction, the Friends of the Lubicon will be severely restricted in the province of Ontario. But because the case was brought to trial in Ontario, the ruling only applies within that jurisdiction. If friends were to initiate a similar public education campaign outside of Ontario, it is unlikely that ruling would apply. (...) We must continue to put pressure on Daishowa to make sure it doesn't clearcut Lubicon land.



Successful fund raising activities sent a dozen Montrealers to Washington on March 20 to take part in the first non-violent civil disobedience action in 20 years of struggle to free Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. One hundred people blockaded the American Department of Justice and twenty-five were arrested. On the same day, as similar actions took place in San Francisco and Minneapolis, Leonard Peltier was denied parole. US organisers of the National Campaign for Non-violent Civil Disobedience to Free Leonard Peltier will continue their actions until Peltier is free.

"Understanding the People on the Receiving End."

Fred Lennarson

The traditional Lubicon economy was not destroyed just merely because of contact between a traditional land-based society and a modern industrial society. (...) The provincial government directed research development activity in this area, deliberately destroyed the economy, pushed people unto welfare and then went to court to argue that the Lubicon no longer owned their traditional land because they no longer support themselves by traditional means, but by welfare instead.

The deliberate and cynical destruction of the economy with awful consequences for the people. (...) A few years ago, a third of the population was infected with tuberculosis, asthma conditions are epidemic, cancer, respiratory problems, etc. But one of the most frightening aspects of this has been

the dramatic effect on human reproduction. In one period from 1985 to 1986, there were 19 still births out of 21 pregnancies. A normal childbirth today at Lubicon Lake is unusual.

(...) I think this is as brutal as anything that has happened in history. I think these people are being murdered by Canadian society. I think what is being committed up there is genocide. Lubicon society is deliberately being destroyed so that it won't be in the way of exploiting valuable resources.

Impacting the companies

(...) Every single time we have had any movement on the issue of Lubicon rights it's because we have economically impacted the companies. (...) When the companies say they're losing money, all of a sudden the governments wake

up and say: "There is a problem here and, yes, we understand".

(...) The suit against the Friends of the Lubicon is a legal club over their heads. What Daishowa and the Court are saying is simple: "If you criticize us, we'll tie you up in court for years. You're going to spend all your time dealing with lawyers and court actions. You're barely going to have enough time to do your job and make a living. You'll be having to raise money to cover court costs and in the end you may lose your home, your car and everything you own." That's the message and if we allow them to scare us off, then you may as well just turn the country and the resources over to them, and our rights as human beings...

The key to this is to use their court injunction to make what they are doing all the more controversial,

to not only talk about the threat they pose to the Lubicon but about the threat they pose to free speech. If we can do that, then the chances that the Lubicon will survive go up and the chances that the rest of our rights survive also go up. Ba-

sically, we're talking about telling Daishowa that we're not prepared to back down and unless they back off the Lubicon and stop harassing people with these legal actions, then everybody is going to boycott everything they do.

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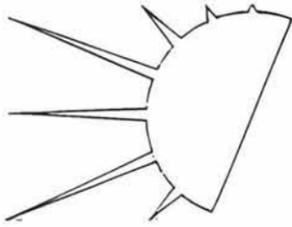
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 54-55

June-July 1996

RESISTANCE TO LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS IN NITASSINAN **Protesters Acquitted!**

◆ In early April, an Ontario court judge acquitted nine Toronto protesters charged with trespassing while peacefully occupying the British and Dutch consulates in November 1995.

The simultaneous actions of civil disobedience were sparked by the possible renewal of bilateral agreements between Canada and NATO members, like Britain and Holland, regarding low-level military flight training in Nitassinan. Despite opposition from the Innu and their supporters, however, the Canadian government in February approved an increase in the number of flights from 8,000 to 18,000 over the next ten years.

In his ruling on April 7, judge Robert Phillips was prepared "to hold that the defendants broke the letter of the law by non-compliance to prevent a greater evil, that is, to prevent the destruction of the Innu people and their basic human rights." For three days, friends and supporters packed the court house as the accused presented their witnesses: Elisabeth Penashue, Innu elder from Sheshatshiu, Labrador, Dan Heap, former NDP member of Parliament, and John Olthius, long time Native rights lawyer, amongst others. The witnesses spoke in very unflattering terms of the social and cultural consequences of the unrestrained militarization of Innu lands and of the early stages of development of the Voisey's Bay nickel deposit.

An Important Ruling

After hearing the testimony of the nine accused who explained the reasons for their actions, the Court ruled that civil disobedience in this case was justified given the grave and immediate threat weighing against the Innu. According to co-defendant Carolyn Langdon, "this is a very important ruling for the Innu and for many of us who work for justice. Here is a positive ruling that others can use in their defence, for example, when resisting in this way to the Harris government in Ontario and its harmful policies."



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

Young Innu woman denounces low-level flights in Nitassinan during support rally commemorating 503 years of Indigenous resistance throughout the Americas.

Two Dutch Members of Parliament Over-Flown While Visiting Nitassinan

Meanwhile, low-level military flights by the Dutch air force in Nitassinan and Innu resistance have sparked quite a controversy in Holland. The bilateral agreement between Canada and Holland comes to an end on December 31, 1996, and in February war games over Native land were the subject of debate in the Dutch parliament.

On May 7, the day after low-level flight training over Nitassinan resumed for another season, 14 members of the Dutch parliament went to Goose Bay and accepted to meet with the Innu in order to discuss the flights and other related issues. While 50 per cent of the Innu from

Sheshatshiu have left the community for the interior since March and April, two Dutch MPs from the Labour Party accepted to visit Elisabeth and Francis Penashue's encampment located near Minipi Lake. On May 8, the camp was over-flown by jet fighters! The camp's coordinates were well known to military officials and the over-flights blatantly contradict Department of Defense pretensions that Innu camps can be avoided.

While the government of Holland hopes to increase its share of flights over the Québec-Labrador peninsula to 4,000 annually, debate on the matter in the Dutch parliament is scheduled

to resume in the fall. For their part, Dutch opponents to the flights will intensify their actions and their information campaign in support of the Innu. If enough pressure is mounted, Holland may stop practicing for war over Innu land and training costs for other "allies" could become prohibitive enough for them to abandon the exercise. In its bid to make this military venture profitable, Canada is actively soliciting the participation of the Italian, Belgian, Portuguese and Spanish air forces, but France has already turned down the offer.

Source: International Campaign for the Innu and the Earth

Stoney Point Anishnabe in Court

◆ On May 13, 23 members of the Stoney Point First Nation appeared before an Ontario Provincial Court in Sarnia. All face criminal charges related to the September 4, 1995, occupation of the Ipperwash Provincial Park.

The criminal accusations, which carry a maximum of two years in prison, were laid by the Ontario Provincial Police on February 12, 1996, six months after the shooting death by the OPP of the young Native man Dudley George. While a pre-trial date has been set for June 27, trial proceedings against the 23 Stoney Point members are expected to begin October 21 in Sarnia and will last for at least two weeks.

Despite federal government documents released in September 1995, indicating the existence of a Native burial ground in the provincial park, thus substantiating an outstanding Native claim to the area, the Ontario government continues to treat last year's stand-off as an illegal, criminal occupation.

The people of Stoney Point are in need of funds for their legal defense. Messages of solidarity can also be sent to the following address:

Stoney Point, R.R. 2
Forest, Ontario N0N 1J0
Phone: (519) 786-4052
Fax: (519) 786-6642



Photo: Carla Nemiroff

Yvette Michel and Elizabeth Penashue during a meeting on Nitassinan organized by the Regroupement.

Statement from Elizabeth Penashue

(Innu elder from Sheshatshiu, Labrador, and long-time opponent to low-level flights over Nitassinan)

"I would like to thank everyone who has supported the Innu in the past. Hopefully, you will continue your support in the future.

I often wonder what you all are thinking, because you have not heard from us. It doesn't mean that the struggle has stopped. It just means that we are evaluating our position and how best to continue the fight.

Innu women are continuing to meet to discuss the local issues that include low-level flying, family violence and any other issue which is important to the community."

THE DEATH OF TWO INNU FISHERMEN ON THE MOISIE RIVER IN 1977

Foul Play Officially Suspected 19 Years Later

In the early hours of June 9, 1977, Achille Vollant and Moïse Régis boarded a canoe to go salmon fishing on the Moisie River, near Sept-Îles. At 8 a.m., their canoe turned up empty at the mouth of the Moisie. The bodies of the two Innu men aged 20 and 25, respectively, were found several days later.

Members of the Vollant and Régis families and the Innu community of Mani-Utenam believed then, as they do now, that Achille and Moïse did not simply drown to death. Rather, they link the tragedy to mounting tension over the salmon fishery among conservation officers of the Québec Ministry of Tourism, Hunting and Fishing, members of private clubs, and outfitters. In particular, one of the conservation officers on



The graves of Moïse Régis and Achille Vollant in Mani-Utenam, near Sept-Îles.

duty at the time of the "accident" had been involved in a heated argument with Achille Vollant and his father one week prior.

At the time, Québec's official

investigation of the incident only added to the Innu community's sense of grief and anger. The coroner first refused to carry out an investigation, then presented a report based on a few hours' worth of hearings from which key witnesses had been excluded. A September 13 document attributed the deaths to drowning "without third-party interference or misdeed."

Finally, on March 20, 1979, provincial Justice Minister for the Parti Québécois government, Marc-André Bédard, refused to grant the *Québec Civil Liberties Union's* request for a public inquiry. The decision essentially reflected the position of the Québec Provincial Police (SQ), which had carried out an internal investigation on the matter.

In 1996, nineteen years later, PQ Justice Minister Robert Perreault reopened the case, following a CBC-TV broadcast bringing new evidence to light (Enjeux, March 28). A new inquiry will be undertaken jointly by the SQ and a special prosecutor from the Québec City police force.

Unsettling Facts

Still today, many unsettling facts revealed in the past 19 years remain unexplained:

1) Witnesses who discovered the two bodies identified obvious signs of injury. Others have gone on the record as saying the bodies looked nothing like those of drowning victims they had seen in the past. The coroner failed to summon many of these witnesses during his "investigation".

2) Whereas the coroner implied that the deaths were related to alcohol consumption, blood alcohol tests did not reveal significant intoxication in

either victim and these findings were ignored during the inquest.

3) When called to identify her husband's body, the widow of Moïse Régis was shown a knife that had supposedly been found on his body. She had never seen it before. Subsequently, this important piece of "evidence" disappeared altogether.

4) The coroner dismissed the testimony of a woman who said she had heard calls for help at 5 a.m. on June 9, 1977, in favour of the conservation officers' version that nothing was heard even though they were near the victims.

5) An officer of the Native police force, which conducted its own investigation, noted collision marks on the canoe used by the conservation officers on duty the night and morning of June 8 and 9. The SQ chose not to seize the canoe. Soon after, the white boat was repainted green; yet, as identified by Native police, its aluminium and rubber rim still bore traces of red – the colour of the victims' canoe. No Native police

officer was called to testify before the coroner's inquiry.

6) Collision marks were also noted on the victims' boat, subsequently purchased by Jocelyn Turcotte, an SQ officer, and his brother. Turcotte may best be remembered for his incisive comments as President of the SQ brotherhood during the 1990 Oka Crisis.

7) On a follow-up edition of *Enjeux*, three people stated that they had heard someone brag about having killed two Native men on a river near Sept-Îles. That someone was a government infiltrator in hunting circles, charged with helping get poachers arrested.

Will the Truth Be Known?

It is hoped that the Perreault inquiry will finally reveal the truth about what happened to Moïse Régis and Achille Vollant on June 9, 1977 – and, if the truth was concealed, why? Nonetheless, the task is a formidable one: the *Civil Liberties Union* has appealed for a more public process, including open access to documents related to the case and the ability to participate in hearings.

A verdict of double homicide rather than accidental death would damage the SQ and the PQ government, as they would then be called upon to explain their stubborn refusal to hold a public inquiry. As lawyer and former Moisie River conservation officer (in 1977) Benoît Tremblay commented on *Enjeux*: "We didn't want to hold an inquiry, at any rate not a proper one. We wanted as little information to spread as possible, to shun the whole thing aside. There was nothing to be gotten from it. Two good-for-nothings get killed and we've got to charge a respected member of Québec society, a wildlife conservation officer. The investigators – all white, all francophone – would not let that happen."

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POW WOW COMMITTEE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS
NO PETS, NO DRUGS OR ALCOHOL ALLOWED!

The Regroupement is organising transportation by bus to Kanehsatake from Montreal on Saturday July 13th and Sunday July 14th. Buses will leave at 10:30 a.m. from the Palais du Commerce (1650 Berri, corner de Maisonneuve, Berri-UQAM metro)

\$10 round trip per day. Children under 12 ride for free. Leaving Kanehsatake around 6 p.m.

Information: 982-6606

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City : _____ Postal Code : _____

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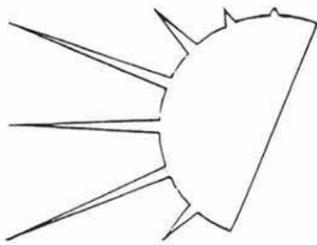
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Mail this slip with your payment to: Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, 3680 Jeanne-Mance, # 440, MtL, Qué., H2X 2K5



Mexican rebels in Chiapas globalize their resistance to neo-liberalism

BY LOUISE BOIVIN

It's difficult to describe the aguascalientes that welcomed 3,000 international delegates to a week-long conference from July 27 to August 3. As the centres of Zapatista resistance, they were carved out of the forests and jungle of Chiapas by a population which lacks the barest of essentials.

The first Intercontinental Encounter against Neo-Liberalism and for Humanity was organized by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in these five insurgent villages. Convoled by the celebrated subcommandante Marcos, the gathering called for the construction of a new International of hope beyond borders, languages, cultures, genders, and strategies of struggle and vision.

The ¡Ya Basta! ("It's enough!") of the Indians of Chiapas followed the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which for them was nothing less than a "death sentence". Life expectancy here was 45 years before the civil war that erupted Jan. 1, 1994, and with the low-intensity war that has followed, it's lower still.

The arrival of the international delegations was saluted by thousands of Indians who came down from the mountains – the men, women, and children who constitute the EZLN's support base, make decisions, feed the guerrillas, and act as militias when the situation demands. Participants from 43 countries, from as far as Australia, Japan, and the Philip-

ppines, answered the call channelled through thousands of Zapatista solidarity committees.

Wrapped in their white scarves, the arrival of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo – the mothers of the disappeared who had defied the Argentine dictatorship – affected many. "Resistance!" the women yelled to tremendous applause.

During the gathering's inauguration, EZLN major Ana Maria explained that before the EZLN rebellion, "our lives were worth less than machines, than the rocks, or the plants."

Clad in traditional woven dress and balaclava, Ana Maria told delegates the Zapatistas have "hidden our faces so as to be seen and heard; we have forgotten our names to be listened to. Behind our balaclavas are all the forgotten women, men, and children, all the persecuted homosexuals, all those who don't count, all those who are not named and have no future."

"Power must be collective"

During the conference Subcommandante Marcos toured the workshops. Gaunt from his years underground, Marcos recounted how democratic practices used by the indigenous communities transformed old habits. "When we came to create the EZLN in Chiapas 13 years ago, we took ourselves for the Marxist-Leninist *avant-garde* and we were in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat," Marcos explained. "The indigenous communities forced

us to understand their values and their way of organizing; power must be collective and communal; it's the only way to resist."

Other workshops came to similar conclusions. The innovation of the Encounter wasn't to advocate a unique and uniform social project, since each country and each oppressed community has its own vision. Rather, the encounter was about a new way of doing politics, without aiming to seize power, by creating space within civil society for people to control their own struggle, with their proper orientations.

International expansion

With the first Intercontinental Encounter against Neo-Liberalism

and for Humanity, Zapatismo is undergoing an international expansion. It's necessary in order that the struggle in Chiapas not suffocate under military pressure. It's also essential in order to hunt down the neo-liberal monster which feeds on misery and repression not only in Mexico, but around world.

Finally, the Zapatistas called for the creation of an international network of resistance to neo-liberalism; a grass-roots network without central direction, rendered effective by the use of means like the Internet.

After consulting groups internationally on the conference's declaration against neo-liberalism,

another gathering will be staged in Europe next year. •

For more information on the Zapatista struggle or on how to set up a solidarity committee in your community, contact:

Mexico Solidarity Network
C.P. 463 Succ. du Parc
Montréal (Québec)
H2W 2N9
Tel: 514-848-0414
email: m205526@er.uqam.ca

Louise Boivin attended the Intercontinental Encounter against Neo-Liberalism and for Humanity as a member of the Mexico Solidarity Network.

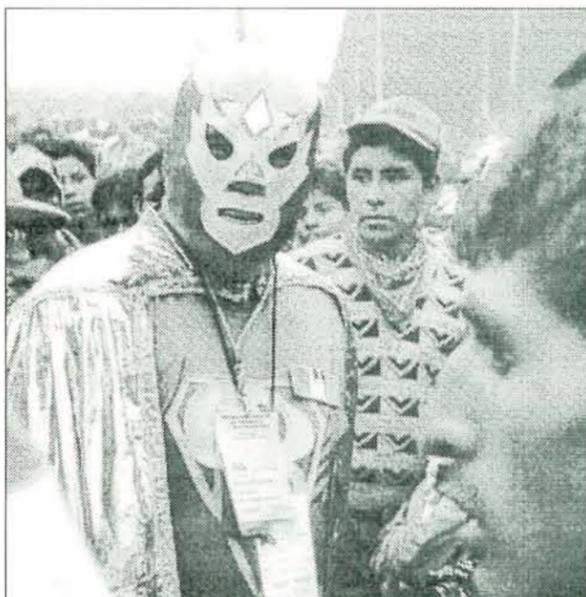


COMMENTARY

The Internal Struggle in Chiapas

BY KANATAKTA

The following article was published in the August 23rd issue of the Eastern Door. Kanatakta is one of two people sent by Kahnawake's weekly newspaper to the Intercontinental gathering that took place in Chiapas at the end of July. The article is reproduced here with the author's and the newspaper's consent.



Mexico's Superbarrio

The recent Intercontinental Encuentro for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism is beginning to fade from the memory of the general public, but the struggle being waged by the Mayan people of Mexico and all of Latin America continues [...]

Many issues were discussed over the course of the week's conference, but the most important from an Indigenous point of view, has not been heard.

Throughout the Encuentro and indeed throughout the ongoing struggle, there is an internal struggle. This is the battle of ideology versus reality. On the one hand, the influence of the left sees the fight as the classic struggle, that of the haves versus the have-nots, the down-trodden rising up to take their place in society. The reality is that over ninety-five percent of the combatants and most of the people involved in the struggle are Indigenous. To be sure, these Indigenous people are have-nots and down-trodden. This will change in time, but they will al-

ways be Indigenous. This is the most important issue that needs to be resolved

Why an internal struggle? To argue that it is an Indigenous struggle creates a situation where some have a different place in society, where five hundred years of injustice needs to be dealt with, where the issue of aboriginal rights is raised. It also raises the sticky question of identity. In order for the broader class struggle to take place, the Indigenous element must give way and be a non-issue. This situation contributes to the already serious identity problem, where many Indigenous people do not identify themselves as Indigenous.

The suppression of an Indigenous agenda appears to be working. Consider the name of the gathering, For Humanity and Against Neoliberalism. No mention of Mayans, Indigenous People, or Zapatistas. The struggle has been expanded to encompass all of mankind and the new international threat of neoliberalism. To be sure these are honorable ideals, but not at the price of co-opting the Indigenous issue. On the surface, the organizers of the Encuentro appeared willing part-

ners to the suppression.

A case in point. When pre-registering for the conference, participants were given a choice of working groups to attend. One of the choices, which was only added after much insistence, was entitled Indigenous Issues.

Between pre-registration and arrival in Chiapas, the title was changed to Muchos Mundos, Many Worlds. With the change in title, the Indigenous element was debased. It was left to the Indigenous participants within the working groups, to take up the challenge to make important points about the indigenous element to the struggle. More importantly these Indigenous delegates will be able to carry this message to their home communities.

The perception of the internal struggle is not something that is imagined. In talking to people within the hierarchy of the struggle, the internal debate about the cause being Indigenous or class has not been settled. It is very important for this internal struggle to be settled. The world must see the reality that Indigenous issues must be settled before true justice can be done. •

Chiapas Chronicle

BY EDUARDO GALEANO

The Uruguayan writer was present at the Encounter against Neo-liberalism and for Humanity organized by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico.

RAIN – "It's raining yesterday", says a local on the outskirts of San Cristobal de las Casas. Yesterday, was San Cristobalito Day and it always rains on that day, except for yesterday. Which is why today's rain is yesterday's.

On my way to the community of Oventic in the rain, the phrase echoes in my mind. In Chiapas it is raining yesterday, but not just because San Cristobalito forgot to soak us.

HOUSE – The forgotten of the earth have opened their home to us. Of course, the most generous of people had to be found among the poorest of the poor in a world of misery. We have come from as many as forty countries to gather in the Zapatista communities of the Lacandon jungle and the highlands of Chiapas.

"Come and offer your words", they invited us.

Machetes swinging, they have raised log pyramids to shelter us from the incessant rain. Huddled one against the other in the mud, among skinny dogs and shoeless children, we shared ideas, doubts, projects and sheer madness. For an entire week we waddled about, five thousand women and men who refuse to believe that the law

of the market represents the law of human nature. From Mexico's *Superbarrio* to Argentina's Mothers of the Disappeared, from landless Brazilian *campesinos*, to feminists, homosexuals, union organizers and environmentalists from all parts.

Our hosts stroll about wearing ski masks: "Behind these *pasamontañas*", they say, "we are who you are".

MIST – The jungle wears a mask of mist in order to protect her persecuted children. From the mist they emerge and to the mist they return: locals adorn majestic attire, walk as if they were floating, speak no words or very few.

These princes, condemned to slavery, were the first and are the last. Their lands were snatched away from them, their words silenced and their memory outlawed. But they knew to seek refuge in the mist, in mystery, from which they have emerged wearing masks in order to unmask those who seek to humiliate them.

The Mayas, children of daylight, are made of time: "On the ground of time", Marcos says, "we are scrawling lines we call history".

Marcos the spokesperson was an outsider. He spoke to them, but they didn't understand him. So he stepped into the mist, learned to listen and was able to speak. Today, he speaks from them, he is the voice of voices.

PLANES – Once in a while, a

plane or a helicopter flies over the five distant communities where the many international meetings, convened by the Zapatistas, are taking place. The army wants the Indians to know that its soldiers will be here long after we have left.

It happened in Guadalupe Tepeyac. It used to be a community, its now an army barrack. The first major international gathering in support of the Zapatistas happened there. Thousands came. When they left, the army invaded. In February of last year, the army took over the land, peoples' houses and things, kicked the Indians out stealing all that they had created in the jungle after a half-century of work. But since then, *zapatismo* has grown considerably. When its voice gets louder throughout the world, power's impunity diminishes.

"We can't get through this alone", say the Zapatistas. "No one can."

EXORCISM – If a community misbehaved, if men refused to work as slaves in the *haciendas*, the troops would take them away – forever. Fed up with dying from bullets or of hunger, the Indians armed themselves with many more sticks than actual guns, but they nonetheless armed themselves.

As in Guatemala, the neighboring land where other Mayas live, it wasn't the guerrillas who provoked the repression, but the repression which made the guerril-

las inevitable. Of the delegates from different communities who gathered at the First Indigenous Congress in Chiapas in 1974, few survived. In Guatemala's Quiche province, between 1976 and 1978, the government assassinated 168 leaders from the cooperatives which were flourishing in the region. Four years later, using the guerrillas as their alibi, the Guatemalan army reduced four hundred and forty indigenous communities to ashes.

On one side of the border and the other, the victims are indigenous, as are the soldiers. Indians used against other Indians, under the orders of *mestizo* officials who, in each crime they commit, undertake a fierce ritual of exorcism against half of who they are.

WORLD – As the year 1994 took its first breath, the Zapatistas interrupted the Mexican government's party as it hysterically proclaimed the freedom of money. From the mouth of guns, rang the voices of those who were tired of being ignored and who had decided to make themselves heard in this way.

But Zapatista guns aspire to uselessness. This isn't about a movement enamored of death, which feels pleasure when firing off a gun shot or even orders for that matter. Nor is it interested in taking power. This movement comes from time immemorial and the deepest recesses of the earth: it has much to denounce and also much to celebrate. In the end,

five centuries of horror have not been able to exterminate the communities, nor their ancestral way of working and living in human solidarity and in communion with nature.

The Zapatistas would like to complete their task in peace. A task which, in essence, aims to awaken human dignity's secret muscles. Against horror, they offer humour: much laughter is needed when creating a new world, says Marcos, if not the new world will end up being rather square and unable to rotate.

RAIN – Chiapas would like to be a center of resistance against infamy and stupidity, and its doing just that. And that's what we hope to be doing, those of us who have muddled through the discussions of the past few days. Here, in this community called *La Realidad* (Reality), where everything but will-power is lacking, it's raining cats and dogs. The rain's spluttering drowns the sound of voices driving home ideas or speaking speeches endlessly, and despite the thunderstorm we come to understand one another for the simple reason that the quest for justice and the luminous diversity of those gathered here make it all worthwhile. Meanwhile, as the person from San Cristobal said, whose name is perhaps Julio, the rain which falls, falls and keeps falling becomes tomorrow's rain.

July 11, 1996 – Six years after the bungled Sûreté du Québec (SQ) raid against the people of Kanehsatake which led to a 78 day siege, one hundred or so members of the Mohawk community, as well as representatives from different Native Nations, gathered to demonstrate their presence through the streets of Oka. Above, participants in the march take advantage of the beautiful weather to dance a few steps around the third green at the Oka Golf Club before heading toward the Pines where the events of 1990 all began. As with every year since the "crisis", the annual Pow Wow celebrating Native culture and resistance was well organized and well attended by the public and members of the Regroupement on July 13th and 14th.

Native Women Mourn

Mary Two-Axe Early, the Mohawk woman who pioneered the struggle for Native women's rights passed on in Kahnawake on August 22nd at the age of 84. For seventeen years, Mrs. Two-Axe Early relentlessly struggled against the discrimination which struck Native women under article 12 (1) b of Canada's Indian Act, the law that robbed Native women of their "status" when they married a non-Native man. In 1985, the struggle that she waged against both the federal government and Band Councils was successful and she was the first Native woman to have her status reinstated under the law. Her courage and persistence will not be forgotten.



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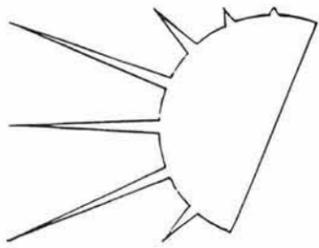
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The Atikamekw from Manawan on the move...

Since early October, the Atikamekw of the Haute-Mauricie region have been occupying land located 40 kilometers from Manawan in order to keep an eye on logging companies' abusive practices. The "occupation" is one among numerous means which will be used in the coming months in order to save and protect ancestral Atikamekw lands. On October 17, the Regroupement spoke with Marie-Louise and Pierre-Paul Niquay of Manawan, on a movement which seems to be making waves...

Marie-Louise: The movement is called Nutcimik which means "from where we come from" and in this case we're talking about of the forest and the land.

It originated when about a dozen young people from Manawan, all in their twenties, went into the interior. They quickly realized that the forests around Manawan were being destroyed by the logging companies. It's something that a lot of people have realized, but that very few have dared talk about. Today, when people get to specific areas on the land, they feel lost. There are roads everywhere and there is no way to live off the land without being disturbed.

Everything started with a small group of five people; then ten, later thirty... They decided to bring the issue up in the community, with the people of Manawan. They used the community radio station to talk about it and they hosted open-line programs and people phoned-up to talk about their experiences on the land. And that's how the movement got started.

Nutcimik's objective in Manawan is to save and protect Atikamekw ancestral lands. To do so, we've decided to raise awareness among the people of Manawan, which was easy enough, and then to raise the government's and the people of Québec's awareness.

With regards to Québec, we're asking ourselves many questions. Last March, for instance, Minister Guy Chevrette came out with a study which concluded that the Atikamekw and Montagnais had disappeared. But, in fact, we're here, we exist, we know the land and we speak our language. There's the whole issue of Québec's territorial integrity, as well... and we haven't seen too many Québécois journalists either. It seems they never have enough money to go beyond the large urban centers along the St-Lawrence River. They've never been sent any farther and they won't usually come anyway, because it's not worth it unless there's blood or fire...

So, we're also thinking about trying to gather support internationally. But we also don't want to go too fast, we don't want to get co-opted because that has happened with other Native people who have lost their autonomy within their own struggles. We want to stay in control, we know what we want and we have our own proposals.

We'll do our thing in order to apply pressure, but the Band Council is also going to have to go forward

and do its share as a political body. So that's where we're at.

On the land itself, it's gotten to the point where we can't go somewhere without bumping into someone who wants to kick us out. Most of the Québécois or others who come from elsewhere are convinced that we have sold the land in order to live in reserves, in houses. Every time an Indian goes onto the land, someone says: "What are you doin' here? You got no business bein' here, you sold the land. Now we're payin' to be here, so get lost!"

"The land was never ceded"

Pierre-Paul: They're not tolerating us on our own land when it should be the other way around. It bothers the Atikamekw considerably... The elders know very well that the land was never ceded, but younger people are not as convinced. There's a doubt... It could very well be true, they say. When you think that Minister Chevrette said that the Atikamekw don't exist anymore... Well, the elders laughed it off, but the younger people are more vulnerable and they suffered because of it. And when they tell you that you have no business being here, that the land has been sold and that "our taxes buy your houses and pay for your health care and your education"... young people get very mixed feelings and they're not sure who to believe anymore.

The Atikamekw have chosen a peaceful approach to this issue.

There was a time when young and old felt exhausted, there was a lot of anger and they wanted to resort to much stronger acts in order to assert their sovereignty on the land. It's as if they were being pushed to act in a violent manner, as if they were being provoked, because no other means were at their disposal in order to have their sovereignty and their rights recognized.

Marie-Louise: Land claim negotiations have been going on for an entire generation, they're not going anywhere and we've seen no results. In the beginning, when talks started between the government and the Native people who, at the time, had gathered in the Atikamekw Montagnais Council (CAM), our people had asked for a moratorium on all logging activities on our land for the duration of the negotiations, but the governments never accepted...

Anyway, in that sense, regardless of the actions, regardless of the venues where Native people could go to defend their rights, they've always been blocked or locked-out. On the political level and the legal level. Whenever an Indian found a way to defend the land, there was always a rule or a law that the government would whip out to block everything.

So, if we look at history, Indians have always said that this was their land, that it had always belonged to them, that it had never been ceded, nor sold. They've always talked well in that sense, but they've never been listened to. They have always been blocked everywhere. So, if the Band Council can't do anything, then it's up to the people, together, to work to save and defend our land. Maybe they'll be heard or listened to...

People get involved

Pierre-Paul: The Atikamekw have completed the studies on a project they wish to propose. A project in

which all of the natural resources on the land, like the forest, the fish, the animals, would be considered and managed in a holistic or integrated manner. There have been consultations with the elders and it's a policy that they've always had...

Marie-Louise: The Mamo Atoskewin Atikamekw Association is made up of hunters, trappers and other users of Atikamekw land. Native and non-Native people are part of this association and since 1990, they have been proposing the use of Native people's traditional knowledge of the land in the management of provincial tree farming licenses (CAFFs). The holders of such licenses are obliged to protect the forest and have responsibilities on the land, but they don't respect them.

Around lakes, for instance, they're supposed to leave a forested buffer-zone as a kind of "protected perimeter", but they don't. When you go into the forest, you see lakes with no trees around them. Along the highways, there is a row of trees along either side, but as soon as you leave the beaten path, there's nothing left...

Pierre-Paul: And that's why there is an encampment at the moment on hunting grounds that have been devastated by the logging companies, about 40 kilometers from Manawan...

"Finally, they're moving..."

Marie-Louise: Since the Nutcimik movement came about back home, many things have been set up and people feel more involved and are more interested in what is going on and in what can actually be done once we put our minds to it... For example, women have formed a group now, because for women, autonomy starts with one's self. This support group allows women to talk among themselves of the

**BOBBY SKIDDERS
(1937-1996)**



ROBERT TSI KAHENTHO SKIDDERS, well known as Mad Jap during the crisis of 1990, died of a heart attack October 19, 1996. He was in the Pines on July 11 when the SQ launched their deadly raid. From that moment, Bobby Skidders took on an important role during all the crisis.

problems which exist in the community. We've thought about it for a long time, but no one ever took the initiative to create a women's circle before the movement showed up. I know that women in Opitciwan also want to organize themselves and I think that's how we'll be able to bring change about in our community.

Our lives are linked to the land and if we're experiencing the problems that we are in the community, it's because we're living in a very confined space called a reserve and the forced settlement of our people has provoked many problems.

People are understanding more and more the importance of the land in our lives. When the elders saw the movement rising, they said: "Finally, they're moving. Finally, they're understanding and we hope you'll keep doing something for the land and our future".

Today, people in Manawan have a better understanding of the situation, a better understanding of the consequences of deforestation on our day to day lives. We also understand the consequences for our future as Atikamekw. But, deforestation isn't just happening on Atikamekw lands near Manawan, it's happening around the world...

The young people won't give up. I'm certain of it because it's about the land and I think it's going to go much farther. People are waking up, they're opening up and the young people are asking themselves many questions with regards to their future. They're saying: "If the people in power can't do anything to guarantee us a better future, then we'll take care of it ourselves".

The movement is very necessary at the present time. People need to move and protect the land, and the governments, the logging companies, the multinationals are going to have to listen and change their ways. We have a project, we have thousands of years of experience and we're going to have to start putting it into practice before it's too late. •

Aboriginal rights recognized

On October 3rd, the Supreme Court of Canada, in two landmark decisions, recognized the aboriginal fishing and hunting rights of the Algonquins of the Outaouais region and the Mohawks of south-western Québec. The Côté-Décontie and Adam decisions clearly contradict the Québec government's contention that Aboriginal rights were extinguished in the territories of New France and, by extension, in Québec today, which it considers indivisible..

For Pierre-Paul Niquay, Atikamekw from Manawan, "the Supreme Court of Canada recognizes the existence of our Aboriginal rights. The question now is to see how Native people, who have lived in Québec for thousands of years, will exercise those rights while the Québec government allows exploitation rights to third-party interests on our land, notably to logging companies which are the largest "users" in

our case? On one hand, your rights to fish and hunt are recognized, but at the same time they're destroying your environment. There's a contradiction there. The highest Court recognizes Aboriginal rights, but provincial levels of government allot tree farming licenses (CAFFs) to the companies. It will be quite an exercise indeed..." •



The land is ours, said McKenzie Family of Mani-Utenam

On October 26, the Regroupement organized a press conference in Montréal for the members of the McKenzie family of Mani-Utenam who will defend their aboriginal rights before Québec's Superior Court in order to stop mining activity which is threatening their family's hunting and fishing grounds.

According to elder Philomène McKenzie, who addressed the press in innuaimun, "selling our ancestral rights for money is completely out of the question. The land is ours, it's never been ceded and we want our rights to be recognized". Mrs. McKenzie is 65 years of age and was among the Innu who were arrested in June 1994 on the barricades that were erected against the SM-3 hydro project. "Why are we always jailed for having defended our rights and our land?", she asked.

At the end of August, following the announcement of an important discovery of copper, nickel and cobalt 65 kilometers northeast of Sept-Iles, all prospecting activity on 800 square kilometers of land was suspended by government decree. For six weeks, 200 claim-stakers and prospectors jockeyed for position on the outskirts of the find while staking some 6000 claims¹ for a dozen different mining companies. Finally, on October 9th, the minister responsible for mining, Denise Carrier-

Perrault, lifted the government ban on the highly sought-after area. Within hours, more than 500 claim-stakers covered the area in a frenzy in order to stake 4875 new claims.

Like Vietnam...

Mrs. McKenzie, was present in the interior, near Nipisso Lake, with a number of her 12 children when the ban was lifted.

Her son George, also present at the press conference, explained that "there were claim-stakers within 100 meters on all sides of our encampment. There were three to five helicopters continuously overflying the territory in formation with their surveying equipment hanging underneath. There were claim-stakers in the air, on the land and on the water in boats and canoes... It looked like Vietnam. It was impossible to hunt for fear of hitting someone and all the animals had fled."

According to George McKenzie, his family will undertake this legal battle without the consent nor the

support of the Innu Takuaihan Band Council, "on principle". The members of his family remember too well the events surrounding the struggle against the SM-3 dam project, the Band Council's actions and the permanent court injunction it obtained and which continues to hang over the people of Uashat and Mani-Utenam. According to Mr. McKenzie, "since the signature of the agreement by Élie-Jacques Jourdain's Council and Hydro-Québec in favor of the SM-3 project, and despite the money, the new grass sown and the swimming pool dug in Mani-Utenam, 23 young people have committed suicide on a population of less than 2400 people..."

Members of the McKenzie family demand that their land be respected. They want all of their rights recognized as first occupants of the land sought after by the government of Québec and the mining industry near Nipisso Lake. They will be able to count on lawyer James O'Reilly's legal assistance and they say they are willing to go all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada to have their voices heard. •

¹ Claim is a mining term which designates an option someone has on a 400 m² piece of land which will be staked, surveyed and eventually explored.

The new Klondike¹

Québec's North-Shore and Labrador will soon live the effects of a new wave of mining, logging and hydro-electric investments which will be even stronger than the one which hit the region because of iron ore exploitation in the 1950s. [...]

(Silicone Valley's mainstay) by Ressources Vogues, near Fermont; an ilmenite sands mine by Tiomin near Natashquan and a nickel mine handsomely paid for by Inco in Voisey's Bay, northern Labrador.

The revival of the North-Shore in the last three years has mainly been due to the forest, with the completed or nearly completed construction of six large saw mills in Outardes, Baie Comeau, Baie Trinité, Pentecôte and the Upper-North-Shore. A particle-board production mill is also expected to open in Labrieville. All of the forest on the North-Shore will be allotted.

At the same time, there has been a boom in mining exploration near Sept-Iles. [...] There is even speculation that the Lower-North-Shore and the Mid-North-Shore will be subjected to intensive mining exploration activity in the next three years comparable to that which hit the Abitibi region since the 1930s. [...] Such activity has never been seen before on the North-Shore. It was Inco's purchase last spring of Diamond Fields' Voisey's Bay discovery in Labrador - for the insane amount of \$4.3 billion - which sparked such renewed interest in mining here. •

As well, extraordinary new vigor is being felt because of new mining projects and feasibility studies which are being carried out for four big mines: a zirconium (a precious metal) mine by the Iron Ore Company at Brisson Lake, near Schefferville; a silicon mine

¹ Excerpt from an article by JEAN CHARTIER, published in *Le Devoir* on October 3, 1996, p. B1.

Panama Aboriginal Lands Threatened by Canadian Mine

After two years of exploration, the Canadian mining company, Panacobre Limited (Tiomin Resources Ltd. of Toronto) is getting ready to build an "open-pit" copper mine in the territory of the Ngöbe-Buglé indigenous people of Panama. Panacobre expects to extract 1.5 billion tons of mineral-rich rock from the mountain known as Cerro Colorado over a period of 15-30 years, with a projected profit of US \$120 million.

In late August, thousands of Ngöbe-Buglé and their supporters held demonstrations all over the country demanding their autonomy be recognized and the mining project stopped. In their August, 1996, communiqué the General Congress of the Ngöbe-Buglé states "The Ngöbe-Buglé, solidarity groups and environmental groups have fought against the development of mines in Cerro Colorado due to the danger that these mines could mean for the local population and the environment. It is the fourth time that our National Government has tried, through different firms, to develop mines. In each of these cases, the National government has ignored the demands of the Ngöbe-Buglé for a Comarca (Indigenous reserve that we, the Ngöbe-Buglé have inhabited for hundreds of years). Our



government continues to ignore our demands. No one has guaranteed us that they will carry out responsible environmental, social, and cultural impact studies. The future generations run the risk of inheriting soils that are contaminated and sterile..."

The General Congress is mandated to speak on behalf of the many community-based Assemblies scattered throughout the 11,000 sq. km Ngöbe-Buglé Territory, which also extends into south-western Costa Rica.

The Ngöbe-Buglé reiterate that they were never consulted on the development of mines within their autonomous territory. "To author-

ize mining concessions [...] is a violation of the fundamental principles of the Panamanian constitution, as well as a violation of convention 107, article 11 of the World Organization of Labour, which was signed by Panama. Both recognize the right of indigenous people to communal lands in the territories they have traditionally inhabited."

According the Costa Rican press, 80% of Ngöbe-Buglé lands are included in concessions for mining exploration to multi-nationals. Since the protests of last August, nothing has been done to stop the mine or

to legalize autonomy in Ngöbe-Buglé territory. On October 13th, a planned demonstration and possible hunger strike against the mine were called off when National Police entered the town of San-Felix in Ngöbe-Buglé territory and an altercation broke out in which a Police officer and at least one Ngöbe-Buglé man were killed

"We are calling on the international communities to accompany us in this fight", says the General Congress. They ask That Canadians send letters of protest to the Panamanian government and Tiomin Resources in Toronto. •

For more information, you can call in Montreal (514) 932-0785 or send a e-mail at cg_and@alcor.concordia.ca



On October 5th, fifty people, among them members of the Regroupement, gathered in Ottawa in front of the Human Rights Monument to commemorate the first anniversary of the massacre in Xaman, Guatemala. On that day in 1995, 26 soldiers of the Guatemalan army opened fire on a community of recently returned refugees, killing 11 and severely wounding 30 indigenous campesinos. Despite the fact that the trial against those responsible for the massacre remains at a standstill, the Canadian government announced on September 12 that it was renewing its bilateral aid to the government of Guatemala.

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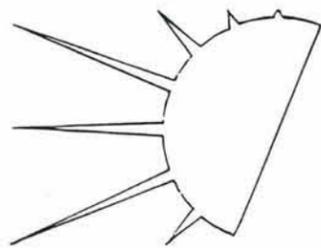
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Algonquins of Barrière Lake

When no means no!

When the government of Québec refused, at the end of the 1980s, to meet with the Algonquins of Barrière Lake in order to discuss the negative health effects on community members of herbicide spraying, the Algonquins began a series of non-violent actions that would span over almost four years. In the summer of 1991, a trilateral agreement was reached between the Algonquins and the federal and provincial governments.

This highly innovative agreement called for the application of "provisional measures" in order to protect important Algonquin cultural and harvesting areas as well as environmentally sensitive locations within the Algonquins' 10,000 km² territory. For the first time in Canada, such an agreement or settlement contained no provisions which extinguished Native or land rights. The date of September 30, 1996, would eventually be set by the parties as a deadline in order to reach a definitive Integrated Resource Management Plan for the joint-use of Algonquin land. The plan was to be implemented by December 31, 1996.

Domtar Inc.

Domtar Inc. holds the largest of the 19 Timber Supply Contracts (CAFFs) in the Algonquin territory. Through the *Société générale de financement du Québec* and the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec*, the government of Québec holds 40% of the company's common shares. From the outset, then Québec Minister of Forests, Albert Côté, resisted any reduction in cutting volumes within the

agreement area. In the fall of 1992, a Québec Superior Court judge was called-in to mediate and ruled, to no avail, that Québec should respect its commitments and that the agreement in question held treaty status. Bourassa would have to intervene directly in May 1993 in order to get negotiations going again.

Around 1994, Algonquin "dissidents", many living 150 km from the community in Maniwaki, began a series of actions to replace the customary Council which had negotiated the trilateral agreement with the federal and provincial governments. They retained the services of a number of legal advisors and in December 1995, their lawyer, Radha Curpen, sued the customary Council before a federal Court. At the time, Ms. Curpen worked for the Winnipeg law firm Thompson, Dorfman, Sweatman which, curiously enough, also had Domtar on its list of clients.

Representing the dissidents, Ms. Curpen requested that the Court replace the customary Council by her clients' "Interim Band Council". She also asked that her clients receive "all items and records necessary to act as the duly constituted government of the Algonquins of Barrière Lake, including all records... banking records, accounts and books". The order, if granted, would have enabled Domtar's lawyers to get their hands on the Algonquins' confidential records before the final negotiations of the Integrated Resource Management Plan... Even the Court, in rejecting the order, recognized the blatant conflict of interest and Ms.

On October 21st, the Algonquins of Barrière Lake blocked a logging road near highway 117 in La Vérendrye Park in north-western Québec. Since that time, some fifteen families have maintained an encampment in order to defend their rights over vast portions of the territory now coveted by the forest industry, including Domtar.



Curpen eventually withdrew from the affair.

And the governments

But, on January 23, 1996, federal Indian Affairs Minister, Ron Irwin, officially recognized the Interim Band Council in Maniwaki and abolished the customary Council. The Minister named a former Indian Affairs employee, Antonio Blouin, as Third Party Manager for the Interim Band, responsible for financial matters. Two days later, Québec recognized the new council as well as the new Algonquin representative to trilateral agreement negotiations...

Outraged by Irwin's decision, the Algonquins of Barrière Lake blocked roads to the community, occupied the school, health clinic and administration buildings. They never allowed the Interim Council and government

employees to set foot in their community. Eventually, and to this day, funds and services destined to the population, now channelled directly by Ottawa and Québec to the Interim Council in Maniwaki, were cut off: no school, no benefits, no firefighters, no mail, no electricity.

In February, Indian Affairs called on the public relations firm Hill & Knolton to instruct the Interim Council on how to deal with the media and how to present its version of events. On March 1st, 1996, in order to "protect the population", the Interim Council, obtained an injunction from a federal Court banning all forms of public demonstrations in the community and forbidding the population from even approaching the school, the clinic and administration center. Hector Jérôme, spokesperson for the Algonquins of Barrière Lake, said the community would defy the injunction. "If they want to put us in jail", he declared, "then they'll have to take the entire community [...]"

An act of resistance

On March 21, 1996, "in an act of resistance aimed at Ottawa", the Algonquins of Barrière Lake chose a well respected elder, Harry Wawatie, to represent them as their new customary Chief. The Québec and Canadian governments quickly disavowed the election and by refusing to recognize the new Council they could also refuse to honor the trilateral agreement they had signed with the previous council.

On June 30th, Indian Affairs in Ottawa ended the Interim Council's mandate and now claims to directly "administer" the Algonquin community of Barrière Lake directly through

its appointed manager, Antonio Blouin. Officially, therefore, there is no longer any Algonquin representative to negotiate the specifics of a trilateral agreement which remains in limbo...

Domtar began its logging operations in Algonquin territory in September in violation of the trilateral agreement, and the people of Barrière Lake continue to block the logging road. According to Chief Wawatie, "it seems there was collusion between Ottawa, Québec and the forest companies in an attempt to kill the trilateral agreement and open-up the area to big consumers like Domtar. We are not going to sit by and let them clear-cut any more of our land [...]. They want miles and miles of Jack Pine stands. We are not going to let this continue any longer!"

On November 13th, Québec's Minister of Natural Resources and Indian Affairs, Guy Chevrette, sent a letter to Ron Irwin stating that the Algonquin blockade is jeopardizing not only logging operations, but a Domtar sawmill in Grand Remous as well. Chevrette asked that Ottawa act quickly, because if wood supplies continue to decrease the company may have to lay-off mill employees.

By directly impacting the companies, the Algonquins may get results from governments which otherwise seem to only have an attentive ear... for very specific interests. We wish them all the best!

In the meantime, messages of solidarity and non-perishable food items can be sent to the Algonquins of Barrière Lake through Joel Lemay at (819) 827-2499. ♦

Organizing support in Québec for the Lubicon Lake Cree

More than forty people, representing twenty-five environmental, social justice and Native solidarity organizations, met on November 28 for a first organizing meeting in support of the Lubicon Lake Cree. Following the presentation of a video documentary called "A race against time" and an update of the situation facing the Cree in Alberta, the support campaign organized in Ontario by the Friends of the Lubicon, and its consequences, were presented and discussed.

In 1988, the Alberta government granted logging rights over the entire Lubicon territory to the Japanese multinational Daishowa. Having a hard time dealing with the side effects of intensive oil and gas resource development in Lubicon territory since the end of the 1970s, the Cree expressed great concern, a decade later, over the actions of a highly subsidized forest industry and its logging practices. In fact, cutting enough forest for the daily production of 1,200 metric tons of dehydrated pulp, later to be exported to Japan from Daishowa-Marubeni's Peace River mill in northern Alberta, directly threatens Lubicon Lake Cree land, their means of subsistence and social integrity.

Answering a request made by the Lubicon Lake Cree for support in their struggle, the Friends of the Lubicon

launched a campaign on November 28, 1991, with one very precise objective in mind. They asked Daishowa to make a clear public commitment not to cut trees or use any trees cut on Lubicon land, until the Cree had satisfactorily completed land negotiations with the governments of Canada and Alberta on a claim which dates back to 1939.

The company has always refused to make such a commitment and the Friends of the Lubicon decided to raise the issue with its customers by asking them to boycott Daishowa products. In Ontario, the Friends of the Lubicon managed, in three years, to rally some 60 national and international organizations in support of the Cree's cause and have convinced 47 businesses representing 4300 retailers to abandon Daishowa and its forest products. Neither Daishowa nor its sub-contractors have cut a single tree on Lubicon land since the boycott started.

In January 1995, Daishowa decided to take legal action against the Friends of the Lubicon and sued three of its members before an Ontario court, alleging, among other things, damages and losses caused by the boycott which, according to the company, now amount to more than \$ 8 million... On January 23, 1996, Daishowa obtained an injunction from the Ontario Court of Appeals against

the Friends of the Lubicon and their boycott campaign. Although the initial suit will not be heard until September 1997, anyone in Ontario working in solidarity with the Lubicon and mentioning Daishowa's name could be charged with contempt of court...

Courts are being increasingly called upon frequently these days in order to limit public participation on issues deemed too important by the public to be left in the hands of a few developers or a multinational whose interests clash with those of a given community. In the United States, Strategic Law Suits Against Public Participation, or SLAPP-suits, as they are called, have been used to such an end since the 1970s.

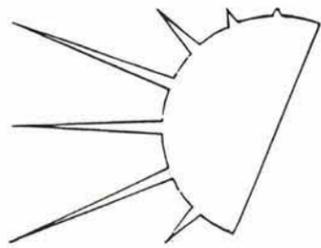
Here, a growing number of lawyer-developers, companies, Daishowa and other major logging interests, like MacMillan Bloedel Inc., use them rather whimsically in order to "siphon time, money and substantial resources" from citizens' organizations and individuals who dare take part, by their opinions and reasoning, in contentious matters open to debate in a supposedly democratic society. ♦

For those interested in taking part in a campaign to support the Lubicon Lake Cree and the Friends of the Lubicon, the next organizing meeting will be held on Thursday, December 19th at 7 p.m., at 420 St-Paul St. east.

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B A R R I È R E L A K E

Organizing support for the Algonquins

On January 21, a truck left the Mi'kmaq community of Esqasoni on the island of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, heading toward the community of Rapid Lake, where the Algonquins of Barrière Lake live. In the truck were two representatives of the First Nations Environmental Network (FNEN).

In three days, Sulian Stone Eagle Herney and Ishbel Munro drove 2 500 km through four provinces, stopping in more than half a dozen Native and non-Native communities to gather a ton and a half of food and non-perishable goods for the Algonquins of Barrière Lake.

On January 25, Algonquin representatives Michel Thusky and Rose Nottaway, as well as Mr. Herney, spoke in Ottawa at a public event organized at the Stone Angel café. The following excerpts were recorded by Joëlle Bolduc and Terna Gyuse of the Algonquins of Barrière Lake Support Group in Montreal.

Michel Thusky Preserve the Territory

"Our community is very strong in terms of trying to preserve the land and keeping their identity. We've been very vocal in terms of the environment and our rights. In 1989, we blocked the logging companies, in 1990 we blocked highway 117 during the Oka crisis and in 1991 we finally got a trilateral agreement which was signed by the provincial and federal governments along with our community.

For the first time, that agreement allowed us to have an input into how our traditional territory is to be managed and we were at the phase of writing up an Integrated Management Plan for the resources of that territory. This plan could have been a model for other Native communities involved in disputes with the governments.

[On January 23, 1996, the federal government] removed our custom band and replaced it with an Interim Council in order to disrupt and destroy the agreement we signed and that was beneficial to all community members and the users of our territory. [...] Our community was never under the Indian Act in the past. The selection of our chief was done within our customs.

[...] The Department of Indian Affairs has supported a small group of people in our community which is being manipulated by federal officials and bureaucrats. The government is then giving the public the perception that it's solely an internal matter, but it's not. [...] This is totally unacceptable. I don't know how any other Canadian or Québec citizen would accept this kind of treatment from the federal government.

[...] The public is not fully aware of what is going on in Barrière Lake. [...] The government is trying to

camouflage its role in destroying our community. We are proud Algonquins and I think we deserve the right to keep our language, but to do that we have to keep contact with the land, all our historical sites and hunting territories.

[...] The whole purpose of what we are trying to do is to preserve and have a say in the management of the territory. But the government doesn't want that, doesn't want our say, because they've given the territory to the logging companies through 25 year CAFF agreements. They have a problem with the Trilateral Agreement and to do away with it, they'll have to remove our leadership and force our community into the elective system where you elect a chief every three years [...]."

MICHEL THUSKY is a spokesperson for the Algonquins of Barrière Lake.

Rose Nottaway Like a Chess Game

"[...] We have to get our traditional chief and council back in place because that's one of the most important things in our community. On January 23, 1996, Ron Irwin broke our customs and traditions by recognizing the Interim Band Council. He is using our own people to kill our customs and traditions and I hate to see our own people fighting their customs and traditions.

[...] This thing is just like a chess game. You have ponds in the front, protecting the king, and that's what these people are like. These are my people here, defending the Minister. We should be fighting the government together, not amongst ourselves. That's one of the sad things about it, but there is nothing we want that [the Interim Band Council is] going to agree with because it's not what Indian Affairs wants. It's always the opposite anyway. [...] These people want the Indian

Act in our community and we don't.

[...] They want to kill the Trilateral Agreement, go ahead with the clearcuts and never mind being traditional and just take the money from Indian Affairs. [...] With the Trilateral Agreement we can live where we want on the 10 000 km² of territory. We don't have to stay on this 59 acre reserve. [...] They would settle for the 59 acres and if they want to extend the reserve they'll have to do it through the Indian Act, give up their rights to land for a house, etc. If they win, the Trilateral Agreement is gone and we're stuck on 59 acres, and then we're going to suffer [...]."

ROSE NOTTAWAY is a spokesperson for the Algonquins of Barrière Lake.

Sulian Stone Eagle Herney It is an Emergency!

"[...] The situation in Rapid Lake is not a crisis, it's an emergency.

[...] The Algonquins have not asked us to solve their political problems or to negotiate the environmental issues for them. They called on us to give them a hand and we have responded by bringing food and by spreading the word on the environmental issues, because that's what we do.

[...] We ask you to assist the people of Barrière Lake. If you don't have any money, an old jacket, blue jeans or a box of macaroni or something, maybe you can give support in terms of letters, a petition or even protests, it doesn't have to be a huge protest [...].

But, we have to let Ron Irwin, Minister of Indian Affairs, the Prime Minister of this country and the international community know that enough is enough, that this has got to stop."

SULIAN STONE EAGLE HERNEY is a representative of the First Nations Environmental Network.

Update



Last October, the Algonquins of Barrière Lake blocked a logging road near highway 117 in La Vérendrye Park in order to defend their rights over vast portions of their territory now coveted by the forest industry.

Frustrated by the ongoing stalemate in Rapide Lake, Judge Réjean Paul, who has acted as mediator between the opposing parties for the last eight months, resigned on January 13 after receiving a letter from the Interim Band Council asking him to put an end to his efforts.

On January 20, Harry Wawatie, Custom Chief of the Algonquins of Barrière Lake since March 1996, wrote Ron Irwin, who still refuses to recognize his Council, of his community's concerns. Mr. Wawatie says he'd like to avoid a serious crisis: "We are a patient and forgiving people", he concludes, "but we are also a resolute people with an unshakable faith in our right to live our lives freely on our ancestral territory and to decide on our own leadership. Nothing will deter us from this right. Our patience is nearing exhaustion, and we ask that you act in fairness before our patience runs out."

If solutions to the year-long problems in Rapid Lake are not found soon, the Algonquins say they are prepared to block highway 117, the main road between Montreal and the Abitibi region.

According to the Algonquins, forestry companies are not logging on their land at the moment, although tensions in the area are high. In Montreal, a group has been created in order to coordinate food donations and fund raising efforts in support of the Algonquins of Barrière Lake. All non-perishable goods are being accepted at the Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) offices at the universit  du Qu bec   Montr al, Concordia and McGill. For more information call (514) 848-0465. Support letters can also be sent to the Algonquins of Barri re Lake, care of Rose Nottaway, Community of Rapid Lake, La V rendrye Park, Qu bec, J0W 2C0.

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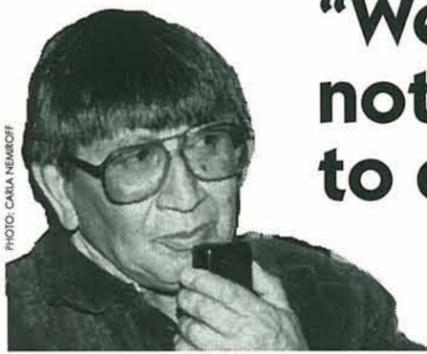
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"We are not going to quit"

Reinie Jobin, representative of the Lubicon Lake Cree Elders' Council.

"[...] So far, the Alberta government has benefited from royalties taken on the 9 billion dollars in resources extracted from Lubicon land while 95 per cent of my people are on welfare. [...] A very short time ago, my people were self-sufficient. In 1978-1979, the government of Alberta pushed a road into our land and that was the start of the destruction of my people.

In the community of Little Buffalo, where I live, we are surrounded by some 600 pump-jacks within a fifteen mile radius. [...] My people are hunters and trappers and a few years back, for one winter, it would be nothing to kill up to 200 or 250 moose. That's our staple diet. Last year, I could probably count on my hand how many moose my people got, and what I'm trying to tell you people here, is that this didn't happen a hundred years ago, or two hundred years ago. This happened during a time that all of us here can remember.

Now a multinational Japanese corporation is threatening to log and clear-cut all our timber. [...] With the destruction that Daishowa is

going to do with clear-cutting on the land we depend on for food and medicine, if we loose that, again, to me that is genocide. There is no other word for it, [...] it will be the final destruction of my people and I want everyone here to clearly understand that.

There is one thing that the governments in this country better understand: we're not going to quit. The Lubicon issue is not going to go away, especially if people like yourselves do something about it. We have got to let the governments understand, especially the Alberta government, that the Lubicon are not fighting by themselves. We have to make the federal government owe up to the Lubicon people.

We want our land back, we want to be self-sufficient again and we don't want to be a burden on society. We want that chance and I know we can do it.

[...] We need that support amongst ourselves. You support us, and in turn we'll support you."

Excerpts taken from REINIE JOBIN in Montreal on January 23, 1997.

DAISHOWA DEMONSTRATION



On January 23, some fifty members of the new *Amitié Lubicons-Québec* campaign accompanied Mr. Reinie Jobin, representative of the Lubicon Lake Cree Elders' Council, in order to hand deliver two demands to the Ville St-Laurent sales office of the Japanese multinational Daishowa.

The group demanded that Daishowa make a public commitment neither to cut nor buy trees cut on Lubicon land until a land rights agreement has been reached between the Lubicon Lake Cree and the governments of Canada and Alberta, and until the company has reached an agreement with the Cree governing its wood harvesting practices on Lubicon land. *Amitié Lubicons-Québec* also demanded that Daishowa drop the legal proceedings it began in January 1995 against the Friends of the Lubicon and their boycott campaign in Ontario.

On December 20, 1996, Daishowa announced that it was expanding its forestry operations in Alberta and its plans for a new \$ 900 million paper mill in Peace River, near the land that the Lubicon have been fighting for for almost 60 years.

To join the *Amitié Lubicons-Québec* campaign, phone (514) 844-0484.

THE CASE OF TWO INNU DEATHS ON THE MOISIE RIVER

What's holding up a full public inquiry?

On December 16, Québec Public Security Minister Robert Perrault announced that his department would not be laying criminal charges with regards to the deaths of Moïse Régis and Achille Vollant, two young Innu men from Mani-Utenam who lost their lives on the Moisie River, near Sept-Iles, on June 9, 1977. A press release from the Minister's office also mentioned that the results of a 1996 police inquiry led Perrault to believe that it would be ill-timed "to recommend a public inquiry" into the matter.

The news provoked an angry response from the Innu who maintain to this day that Régis and Vollant were murdered in a conflict over the Moisie River salmon fishery, which pitted them against provincial game-wardens as well as the members and employees of certain private fishing clubs (see bulletin 54-55). On January 21, in response to pressure from the Innu and Québec's Civil Liberties Union, Perreault announced that he would ask the Council of Ministers to reevaluate the need for a public inquiry. Not a word on the matter has been heard from the Minister since.

In the meantime, more suspicion has been cast on an already dubious case.

When the police investigates the police

Since the *Sûreté du Québec* (SQ) found itself at the centre of the controversy surrounding the Innu



deaths and the subsequent apparent cover-up of the affair, Perrault called on Québec City's police force, on March 21, 1996, to investigate new facts in the case which were brought to light in February 1996 by Radio-Canada's current affairs program *Enjeux*. The Minister was obviously looking for a neutral party. However, Normand Bergeron chief of the Québec City Police when it received the mandate from the Minister, worked for the SQ at the time the events on the Moisie River took place in 1977.

In 1978, Bergeron was the immediate superior of SQ officer Jocelyn Turcotte who, the previous year, had played a key role in the initial

investigation into the two deaths. At the time, Turcotte, who has since moved on to become head of the provincial police union, had personally acquired a major piece of evidence in this case, namely the canoe in which the two men had lost their lives and which, according to witnesses, bore the markings of a collision.

Turcotte and his brother Jean Claude, also an SQ officer, bought the boat. In 1978, the Civil Liberties Union contested the initial investigation carried out in Sept-Iles and its findings. The case was eventually reopened, but the head of the Québec

Justice Department's criminal investigation branch conferred the case to Jean-Claude Turcotte, then posted in Baie-Comeau. The SQ officer supposedly brought this apparent conflict of interest to his superiors' attention, to no avail. He was kept in charge of this subsequent investigation.

On April 15, 1996, *Enjeux* broadcast an interview during which an individual brags about "killing those Indians" in 1977. Since the airing of the program, André Magny, former Deputy Minister for the *ministère des Loisirs, chasse et pêche* has confirmed that the individual in question worked for a team of undercover agents respon-

A statement from Leonard Peltier

February 6, 1997

Greetings my Friends and Supporters,



Sometimes it is hard for me to believe that February 6 will mark the 21st anniversary of the day I was arrested in Canada. Other times, it seems as if I have served a million years in a never-ending nightmare.

That is why my heart is with you today. It keeps me strong knowing that I have friends who are willing to sacrifice their time and energy to help me regain my freedom.

Prison authorities have come down on me hard. Vindictive punitive actions have been taken for the pettiest of reasons. For example, a two minute phone call cost me thirty days phone privileges because it was decided I had been "out of bounds" when the call was made. Certain prison staff commented to me that they'd never heard of such a thing and that it appeared that someone was trying to prevent me from helping to free myself by limiting my access to the phone. I Have been assigned a factory job despite my health problems requiring only light duty work. It is all part of a collective effort to break my spirit. But my spirit will never be broken.

Thank you for helping me to remain hopeful in the face of despair. I wish you peace and health.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,

Leonard Peltier

Information: The Leonard Peltier Defence Committee (Toronto), 416-439-1893.

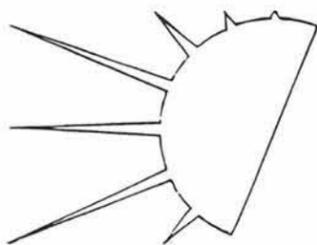
sible for infiltrating and gathering information on groups involved in poaching activities, in order to lay charges against them. The individual in question had been posted on the North Shore when the events on the Moisie River took place.

It's time for a full public inquiry

Instead of appeasing the controversy surrounding the deaths of Régis and Vollant, Perreault's December 16 decision has only exac-

erbated it. The government must immediately convene a full public inquiry which would allow for the protagonists in this matter to testify and be cross-examined, not only on what happened on the Moisie River on June 9, 1977, but on everything that has been said and done since.

But does the PQ government, which was also in power in 1977, really want the truth to see the light of day in this case? The ball now clearly lies in its court.



CELEBRATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA'S "DISCOVERY"

The Beothuks will not be on hand

A few thousand people gathered at Memorial stadium in St-John's, Newfoundland, on January first to officially launch the year long Cabot 500 celebrations which will mark the 500th anniversary of Giovanni Caboto's "discovery" of North America. For three hours, the public enjoyed bagpipe music, dancers, choirs and fireworks. Jubilant speeches from Canadian Heritage Minister Sheila Copps and Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin swayed the dizzied crowd.

Giovanni Caboto

The Italian navigator Giovanni Caboto (1450-1498), alias John Cabot, left the British port of Bristol on May 2, 1497, with 18 men backed by Henry VII, king of England, and Bristol merchants, seeking a new maritime passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific which would lead them to Asia's spices, silks and precious stones.

Historians still can't agree on where Cabot's caravel *Matthew* landed 52 days later. Some seem to think it was on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Others think it was somewhere on the island of Newfoundland or the coast of Labrador, while still others believe that he arrived somewhere in Maine. What is better known, however, is that even with the Norse (and the Irish) having made the trip more than 500 years before him, Cabot himself thought he was in China.

My Queen and a hand-full of tourists for your cod fishery

Anyway, on May 2 of this year, a replica of Cabot's vessel *Matthew* with 19 men on board will leave the port of Bristol in England and sail to Bonavista, Newfoundland. On June 24, when the ship arrives, Queen Elizabeth II will be on hand to greet the sailors and the world with her quivering voice, Canadian flags waving bravely in the breeze... Brian Tobin's government is counting on an increased flow of tourist dollars to Newfoundland this year and the support of major sponsors like British brewers Courage which will contribute \$167,000 to the transatlantic venture.

Tourist dollars are very important today in Newfoundland since the Grand Banks' cod fishery, that Cabot is also said to have "discovered", has been overfished to the point of disappearing altogether. In fact, not having found the sought after Asian treasures following his first voyage, Cabot did make known Newfoundland cod which, he reported with amazement, could be caught with mere weighted baskets so abundant was the resource.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the English, the Portuguese, the Basques and the French rushed to the fishing banks of the "New World" looking to meet Europe's strong demand for fish. In the decade of the 1550s, the Newfoundland cod fishery employed hundreds of fishing vessels and thou-



Brian Tobin's fashion statement

sands of sailors who traveled the North Atlantic every year between the western ports of Europe and the new fishing grounds.

The Beothuks

According to the Encyclopedia Canadiana, Cabot was probably the first European to have met the Native people known as the Beothuks who occupied the island of Newfoundland at the time of his arrival. Later, we are told, those who came from Europe for whales and cod were more interested in the sea than the land, and only between the spring and the fall since these northern regions weren't much more appealing to live in than the Arctic... Off the coast of Nova Scotia, for example, cod was dried and salted on board the fishing vessels. On the island of Newfoundland, however, drying facilities were eventually built in the natural harbours, in places the Beothuks went to in summer to fish.

The Beothuks were progressively pushed back toward the island's in-

terior where living conditions were more difficult. According to the Illustrated History of Canada, the Beothuks "did not look kindly upon these intruders who occupied their preferred areas of settlement and who destroyed the surrounding forests, cutting and burning recklessly". Every fall, the foreign fishermen would leave for Europe's ports with their load of dried cod. The Beothuks took advantage of their absence to push their installations back and to try and regain their living space.

The Beothuks "suffered greatly from the ensuing conflicts" and "quarrels" evolved literally into open hunting season against Beothuk men, women and children. This highly cherished activity counted a wide number of participants for close to 300 years.

In the closing years of the sixteenth century, the Basques and the Portuguese having pulled back from the fishery, England and France were left to fight over the fish, the island of Newfoundland and the last of the Beothuks.

Those among the Beothuks who did not succumb to diseases brought over by the Europeans or who hadn't died of starvation were exterminated. In the spring of 1829, Shanawdithit, the last living representative of the Beothuks to have survived the violence died of tuberculosis in St-John's, Newfoundland.

A world turned upside down

No representative of the Beothuk, therefore, will be standing beside the Queen on June 24 as she greets the *Matthew* as it comes into Bonavista.

The Federation of Newfoundland Indians has said it will not take part in the celebrations. With regards to the "discovery", their spokesperson, Brendan Sheppard, has stated that Native People were already here when Cabot arrived and that there is therefore no need to celebrate a non-event. According to him, to this day neither Native People in Newfoundland/Labrador nor their rights are being recognized by the federal or provincial governments. In that sense, Native People there are still waiting to be "discovered". Micheal Joe, traditional chief of the Coone River and Newfoundland Mi'kmaq has a hard time understanding why events provoked by Cabot's arrival in 1497 would be worth celebrating. He thinks they'd be better off forgotten...

According to Daniel Ashini, spokesperson for the Innu of Nitassinan, when Cabot arrived to the island now known as Newfoundland he planted a flag and staked a claim to those Native lands in the name of the British crown. Five hundred years later, mining companies like Diamond Fields Resources and later Inco have staked their claim to Innu lands in Labrador without even going through the trouble of planting a flag.

LAKE NIPISSO MINERAL DISCOVERY

Band Council attempts to block injunction application

On December 30, 1996, members of the McKenzie family from Mani-Utenam applied for an injunction in Québec Superior Court against ongoing mining activity near Lake Nipisso, 65 km northeast of Sept-Îles. The important copper, nickel and cobalt discovery made in August 1996 is located on land used by the McKenzie family for trapping and hunting. The area in question has been officially recognized by the government of Québec as "beaver reserve 294" and is registered in the name of Mr. Ben Alexandre McKenzie, late husband of Mrs. Philomène McKenzie, 65 years of age and principal plaintiff in this matter.

According to the injunction application, prepared for the McKenzies by lawyer James O'Reilly, the Lake Nipisso project "could have devastating impacts on the plaintiffs' way of life, wildlife and natural resources" in the area.

Protecting the land

According to George McKenzie, "family members just want to protect their land, their ancestral heritage and guarantee their cultural survival for the future". On October 9, 1996, the Québec government lifted its ban blocking prospecting activity on 800 square kilometers of land surrounding the find. As the

McKenzies watched, more than 500 claim stakers, working for about a dozen private companies, invaded the area essentially putting an end to their subsistence activities and literally trampling their ancestral land rights (see bulletin #58-59).

Last fall, the Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council and chief Élie-Jacques Jourdain, caught off guard, publicly supported the family's wish to have their rights recognized and respected, and also seemed to share the McKenzies' worries regarding the land's protection. However, two weeks after the McKenzies' Superior Court application, the Band Council, on January 14, voted a resolution to block their efforts to obtain an injunction.

Resolution contested

The Band Council, heir of a twenty year old and never-ending land claims negotiation with the federal and provincial governments, has maintained since January, 1992, a now permanent injunction against all public forms of popular dissent directed against its authority in the Innu communities of Uashat and Mani-Utenam. Strangely, the Council's January 14 resolution borrows from the conclusions of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, stating that "it is highly pref-

erable for First Nations to resolve the issue of Indian title and ancestral rights by way of negotiations rather than through the Courts."

According to the resolution, "despite real direct impacts on the land caused by claim-staking, surveying, prospecting and logging activity, it remains worthwhile to pursue negotiations for a comprehensive land claims settlement and self-government". After a generation of unbridled development on land under litigation, however, their may be little left worth "self-governing".

The people of Uashat and Mani-Utenam may never know what was really said during the January 14 Band Council meeting on the matter of the McKenzie family's injunction application and the subsequent resolution. Entire paragraphs of the meeting's minutes are missing and the Council refuses to hold a public meeting on the matter.

Councilor Rosario Pinette, for his part, has contested the resolution and is now circulating a petition against it in Uashat and Mani-Utenam. In a counter-resolution, Mr. Pinette states that "the people of Uashat and Mani-Utenam have always been kept away from the major decisions which concern them including the [previous] reso-

lution," which he calls "irrelevant and unjustified". No other councilor has dared to support Mr. Pinette nor second his resolution, which has been shelved for the moment.

Court date set for May

In February, the Innu Takuaihan Band Council filed "a declaration of intervention and a suspension of proceedings motion" before the Superior Court, as well as a related affidavit from chief Élie-Jacques Jourdain. Next May 20, this case will resume before the Québec Superior Court, at the Montreal Court House. Chief Jourdain will be called to testify and the public is

welcome to attend the proceedings.

According to *La Presse*, lawyers for the Québec Ministry of Natural Resources consider the McKenzie family injunction application as "contentious as the legal dispute which opposed the Crees and the Bourassa government on the issue of the Great Whale project".

The plaintiffs' lawyers, for their part, have not hesitated to compare the family's request to those of Native demands which, for a certain time in 1973, had managed to stop the La Grande project in the James Bay area.

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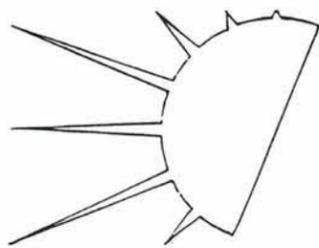
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SM-3 RESISTANCE

Legal reprisals against Coalition for Nitassinan members

This past January 15 in Sept-Iles, Québec judge Jean-Paul Decoste handed down sentences against a dozen members of the Coalition for Nitassinan. The Innu from Mani-Utenam have faced numerous charges stemming from their peaceful blockade of May 29 to June 14, 1994, which attempted to stop preliminary work on the Ste-Marguerite 3 (SM-3) project. Located north of Sept-Iles, SM-3 is the fifteenth hydro dam to be built in Nitassinan since 1953, despite being rejected by a majority of people living in Mani-Utenam.

An "exemplary" sentence

The judge handed down his decision more than two and a half years after the fact. By way of fines ranging from \$250 to \$3000 and probation periods of 12 to 36 months, the judge admittedly chose to underline the "exemplary" nature of the sentences.

It would have been interesting to hear the judge's opinion on the actions of FTQ-unionised workers who, in November 1994, closed down the SM-3 project for a week to protest a contractor's hiring practices. Hydro-Québec temporarily laid off 420 workers in a conflict which cost an estimated \$143 000 a day.

Initially, some sixty SQ officers were called in to disperse workers blocking the SM-3 access road. They later arrested twenty-seven people. Hydro-Québec had even threatened to take legal action against their union for damages and interest. But, the Courts have never had to rule on the matter. In the end, Hydro dropped the charges against the workers, met their grievances, and never began legal proceedings against the union.

Contrary to the storm of protest raised in the Sept-Iles area by the Innu barricade five months earlier, local spokespeople remained unalarmed when non-Native citizens decided to do the same thing. Marc Brouillette, President of the Sept-Iles Chamber of Commerce, confided to *Le Soleil* on November 4, 1994, that "anyway, work on the site wasn't going ahead at full steam." According to Luc Dion, head of the area's pro-SM-3 forces and son of Sept-Iles mayor Jean-Marc Dion, "at the stage we're at now, it's much more a question of fine-tuning than of real conflict."

"Quebeckers are outraged"

The Innu were not privy to such indulgence, however, following their June 1994 roadblock. In fact, in his January 15 ruling, Judge

Decoste claims that "by their actions, the accused for many days impeded Hydro-Québec from carrying out work on the Ste-Marguerite River. Hydro was then fulfilling a mandate it had received from the people of Québec through the voice of their government authorities. [...]"

"It is obviously difficult to place a precise dollar figure on the losses incurred by the delay in the execution of the work, but it is by no means negligible. [...] For some time now in Québec, such situations have too often been repeated. Each organisation, each movement or each group claiming some right or another or claiming to be the victim of an injustice, instead of raising the matter before the Courts, prefers to engage in illegal acts in order to make their opposition known. Roads are barricaded, bridges are blocked, a given activity is shut down, a service to which the people have a right is taken away, a service for which the people pay. And if the forces of law and order should ever intervene, then the six o'clock news will say it was provocation.

"Quebeckers are outraged by these situations, these incidents, and if these incidents continue or repeat themselves, their is a very high risk that one of these days outraged citizens will decide to take matters into their own hands. It would be anarchy. These people are suffering from these incidents. They are being taken hostage without ever being compensated. [...]"

"It is my humble opinion that the time has come for these Courts to take responsibility in such cases and take a strong stand to let citizens know they can maintain their respect in the law and a just society, and to dissuade those who would intend to repeat such acts."

In addition to the accusations brought against them by Hydro-Québec, many Innu - more than 12% of the adult population of Mani-Utenam - have also had to face criminal charges brought against them by the Innu Takuaiakan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council. The charges were laid by virtue of a permanent injunction, still in effect today, which prohibits all forms of autonomous political organising, demonstration or any public rally in the Innu communities of Uashat and Mani-Utenam. Since 1992, over twenty people have received jail sentences from the Québec Superior Court in Sept-Iles, ranging from 10-day to one-year terms for having opposed either SM-3 or the Band Council.

No problems for the salmon ?

On March 17, *Le Soleil* reported the findings of a committee of federal and provincial experts appointed to

look into the potential impacts of diverting two tributaries of the Moisie River in order to increase SM-3's generating capacity. Their research concluded that the diversion of the Carheil and Aux Pékans rivers would in no way harm the Moisie River salmon in terms of their genetic stock or numbers. According to the article, the report raises the possibility for Hydro-Québec to install a third set of turbines as part of the SM-3 project proposal. However, no study has been done and none is expected on the cumulative impacts of dams and reservoirs on the Innu people, their communities or way of life.

"Builders" of... legends

On April 14, the Télé-Québec network aired a documentary entitled "Uemashtan: The Grand Portage," paid for and coproduced by Hydro-Québec as part of the SM-3 project. Areas located directly up and downriver form the Grand Portage, located in the Ste-Marguerite River watershed, will be destroyed by the hydro dam.

As a remedial measure, Hydro-Québec proposed "to produce and make available an audiovisual document" on the falls down-river from the SM-3 dam, before they are dried up, and on the ancestral Grand Portage walkway, which will be flooded along with a number of important Innu burial sites. "Uemashtan: The Grand Portage" is to serve as both "collective memory and archive". It describes

the Grand Portage in the past tense and makes folklore of its use by the Innu over thousands of years. The destruction of this "historical path" by the SM-3 project is never mentioned and the viewer is left to understand that the Innu, having freely chosen the best of all worlds, have simply lost the age-old habit of using this unique ancestral route to access the interior of their lands.

Of prisons and museums

Québec society has offered the Innu who refuse to sell their land or give up their heritage for a fixed sum of money a simple choice: go to prison or head for a museum. In Québec today, Native people who attempt by every means at their disposal to protect their lands and preserve their way of life are being charged as criminals. Eventually, if nothing changes, these "historical vestiges" will only be available on video tape, stored for posterity and the exclusive pleasure of archeologists and ethnologists who, one hundred years from now, will fight over the privilege of debating and speculating on the causes of their disappearance.

In the meantime, the Innu of Mani-Utenam refuse to disappear and have taken steps toward that end in order to survive and be heard. They have attempted to take full responsibility for their actions and, in that sense, their struggle and resistance are matters which concern all of Québec society.

THE ALGONQUINS OF BARRIÈRE LAKE Recognised at last !



Carla Nemiroff

On March 20, some forty people in Montreal greeted Hector Jérôme, Gracie Ratt and Tony Wawatie, members of the Algonquin Nation from Barrière Lake in the Outaouais. On April 9, custom chief Harry Wawatie and his council were again chosen as the community's legitimate representatives during an animated public meeting held in Rapid Lake. Members of the Interim Band Council from Maniwaki, appointed by Ottawa on January 23, 1996, were also present at the proceedings. On April 17, after more than a year of procrastination, the federal Department of Indian Affairs finally recognised Mr. Wawatie and his Custom Band. On April 24, during a press conference in Ottawa, the Algonquins of Barrière Lake demanded "a public apology and full compensation from the federal government... for the hardship and misery that Ottawa created and imposed on the community since January 1996." According to the Algonquins of Barrière Lake, all logging activity will continue to be suspended in Algonquin territory until Canada and Québec respect and restore the Trilateral Agreement they signed in August 1991 in order to protect the forest, wildlife and Algonquin way of life.

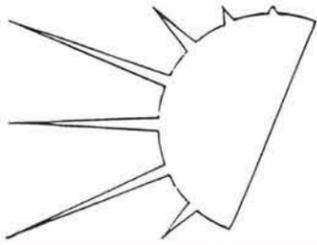
Support the McKenzie family

The public is invited to attend the McKenzie family's injunction application against the Lake Nipisso mining project, to be heard starting at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 20 in Québec Superior Court, in the Montreal Court House, 1 Notre Dame Street east. The important nickel, copper and cobalt discovery was made on the Innu family's territory in August 1996 and they intend to have their ancestral rights to that land respected. Innu Takuaiakan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council Chief, Élie-Jacques Jourdain, who opposes the McKenzies' injunction application, will also be on hand to interject with a motion to suspend the proceedings. Please confirm the courtroom number with the information desk at the courthouse on May 20.

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LAKE NIPISSO MINERAL DISCOVERY

The McKenzie family wins first round of legal battle

In the first of two rulings rendered on June 2nd, Québec Superior Court Judge Louis Tannenbaum rejected a motion by the Innu Takuaiikan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council asking the court to suspend the McKenzie family's application for an injunction against exploration activity in the Lake Nipisso area, north of Sept-Iles. Members of the McKenzie family, from Mani-Utenam, filed for a permanent injunction at the end of December 1996 in order to protect their land from any further destruction caused by intense mineral exploration near Lake Nipisso (see bulletin 63).

The selective reappropriation of collective rights

After having violated the collective rights of people living in Mani-Utenam who publicly opposed the SM-3 hydro dam and having rather summarily rejected public opinion as expressed through numerous community consultations on the dam project and on the issue of Mani-Utenam's political autonomy, the Band Council and Chief Élie Jacques Jourdain now stand before the courts to argue in favour of "the collective rights of the Innu First Nation of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam and of all its members".

Paragraph 25 of the Band Council's application to the court states that "all hydro-electric mining or logging projects or all projects seeking natural resources on traditional lands have been and are subject to

the consent not of the [McKenzie family] or their ancestors, but of the members of the Innu First Nation of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, collectively, hereby represented by the [Band Council]."

In fact, Innu Takuaiikan's motion to intervene had no other purpose but to put a stop to the McKenzie family's legal initiative and efforts seeking, with very limited means, the immediate protection of their land. According to Judge Tannenbaum, "the only conclusion in the motion to intervene presented to the court, that is "the suspension of the principal proceedings", is legally groundless. [The Band Council] is not seeking to intervene in order to authorize, assist or represent [the McKenzies], but simply to ask that their [injunction application] be suspended." To grant such a request, according to the judge, would constitute "an abusive use [of the Court's] powers".

"Neither the interest, nor the legal capacity"

In his second ruling, the Superior Court judge rejected the Solicitor General of Québec's contention that, among other things, the McKenzies, "native Indians and members of a First Nation", neither possessed "the interest, nor the legal capacity" to sue the government of Québec for damages and interest in this case and that they personally did not have "the right to seek Indian title, nor ancestral rights".

Borrowing generously from the federal Indian Act, lawyers for Québec's Solicitor General argued for dismissal and stated that "indigenous title or ancestral rights do not confer to those who benefit from them the ownership or the control of lands affected by those rights. [...] The ancestral right or Indian title, if it exists, can only belong to the people of the Innu Nation or the Indian band that [the McKenzies] are members of."

Representatives of the Québec government agreed with the Band Council when they contended that "the only entity having the jurisdiction or the interest to claim Indian title in Québec is the Band Council government which does so for all of the members it represents."

A house-wreck

Judge Tannenbaum ruled, however, that the McKenzies, as members of the Innu Nation, "have an interest in protecting the land in question against the alleged damages even if other members of the Nation do not join in [their legal action]. For example, one of two owners of a house would certainly have the right to seek an injunctive order against someone demolishing the house without the consent of the owner who is seeking the injunction."

The judge concluded his decision by saying "that the McKenzies should have their day in court [...], and to stop their present action based on this motion for dismissal would be a violation of their constitutional rights and a denial of justice."

The right to exist

Members of the McKenzie family were pleased with the court's rulings. According to George McKenzie, "we've just taken an important step toward the recognition of my family's right to exist. We hope that these rulings will benefit all of the Innu Nation, as well as our efforts to eventually have our Native title recognized and our right to speak our language, protect our culture and save our natural resources and environment. We invite other Innu people to join us and we are ready to go all the way to the Supreme Court in order to defend those rights and show our continued presence on the land before, during and after the arrival of the Europeans."

Discovery in doubt

Meanwhile, in May, Yves Harvey, president of Québec's mining crown corporation (SOQUEM), reported that the first drilling samples collected on Innu land in March, where the important discovery of nickel, cobalt and copper was made in August 1996, "did not generate the expected results". In fact, the drilling "provided no results" which



S. Sterling
Mrs. Philomène McKenzie,
principal plaintiff.

would indicate the source of the alleged "discovery".

According to the May 12th issue of *La Presse*, it's bad news for SOQUEM, but good news "for rival companies which managed to take hold of thousands of claims during last fall's prospecting frenzy." Good news because "the source of the nickel-copper-cobalt deposit [...] could very well be elsewhere in the area. [...] A number of exploration interests, including multinationals like Inco, Kennecott and Falconbridge, will be taking Sept-Iles by storm in the next few months with the precise objective of trying to find the deposit's source [...]."

TWENTY YEARS AFTER SUSPICIOUS DEATHS ON THE MOISIE RIVER

Québec announces a public inquiry

On May 21st, Public Security minister Robert Perreault and the minister responsible for Native Affairs, Guy Chevrette, finally announced the launching of a public inquiry into the deaths of Moïse Régis and Achille Volant, two Innu youths from Mani-Utenam, who died in yet unclarified circumstances on the Moisie River on June 9th, 1977.

A retired Québec Court judge, Yvon Roberge, has been appointed to lead the inquiry on his own, starting in July. His mandate will limit itself to events taking place on the eve of the tragedy and to the finding of the deceased the next day. According to *Le Soleil*, "this rather restricted mandate has raised questions among journalists since other events, in the weeks following the incident, had aroused suspicion [...]. Such was the case, notably, with what happened with the Natives' boat" which was bought and later repainted by *Sûreté du Québec* (SQ) officers.

For its part, the Québec Civil Liberties Union "which, for a long time

now, has been demanding a public inquiry covering not only the circumstances surrounding the deaths, but the possible cover-up operations undertaken by police authorities in 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1996 as well [...], hopes that the judge will interpret his mandate broadly in order to answer to principals of transparency and equity and to reassure the population, preoccupied with the very limited nature of the inquiry's mandate."

The Innu of Mani-Utenam, after having called for a "hot summer" if the Bouchard government caucus continued to deny any movement on the issue, have announced that four new Innu witnesses have asked to be heard by the inquiry. According to Marie-Marthe Fontaine, sister of Moïse Régis, "we have always maintained that not all has been said in this matter. These latest witnesses will be proof of that." Judge Roberge's final report is expected at the end of November.

SAINTE-MARGUERITE 3

Hydro-Québec looking to divert two tributaries of the Moisie River

On May 5th, Hydro-Québec sent a letter to the Innu Takuaiikan Band Council asking that negotiations take place shortly on the diversion of the Carheil and aux Pékans rivers, two important tributaries of the Moisie River, Québec's most important and best known salmon river, known for centuries as Mishta Shipu to the Innu. As expected, the diversion will feed the SM-3 hydro project.

Following the publication of a Federal/Provincial Committee report on the Moisie River salmon, Hydro-Québec announced before the relevant government bodies, on April 25, its intention of going ahead with the diversion project. According to the agreement reached in 1994 between Hydro-Québec and Innu Takuaiikan on the "complementary components of the Sainte-Marguerite project", the parties have 45 days after

"the complementary components have been authorized" to reach an agreement. The diversion was highly contested by members of the Nitassinan Coalition, anglers, environmentalists and was strongly challenged by the Québec Office for Environmental Public Hearings (BAPE) in an official report in 1993.

The diversion of the Carheil and aux Pékans rivers will reduce the annual average flow of the Moisie River - the largest river on the North Shore which has never been dammed nor altered - from 42% where it meets the aux Pékans river to 13% at its mouth. Despite such a reduction, the Federal/Provincial Committee concluded in the report it made public on April 14th, that the diversion of the aux Pékans and Carheil rivers will in no way affect the Moisie River salmon or salmon fishery.

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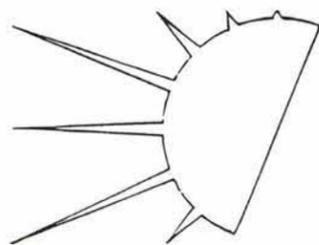
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JUSTICE FOR NATIVE PEOPLE?

An Ontario Provincial Police Officer was sentenced this summer to a 180 hours of community service after being convicted of criminal negligence causing the death of a Native man in "Ipperwash Park" in 1995.

It is difficult not to draw comparisons with Ronald Cross' fate. The Mohawk man, known as "Lasagna", is presently serving four and a half years for assaulting another Native man during the 1990 Oka crisis.

Meanwhile, William Jones Ignace was recently sentenced to four and half years in prison for possession of a fire arm during the 1995 Gustafsen Lake occupation in British Columbia. Prior to his sentence, the Shuswap man known as "Wolverine" had spent almost two years in jail just waiting for his trial to take place.

If anyone is wondering where the notion of justice fits into any of this, well, it doesn't.

Shuswap defenders get heavy sentences

Numerous criminal charges were laid against fourteen Native traditionalists and four of their non-native supporters following the month-long RCMP and Canadian army siege of Shuswap land near Ts'peten (Gustafsen Lake), British Columbia, in August 1995.

The defenders' trial began in July 1996 and eventually became the longest criminal trial in Canadian legal history. On May 20th of this year, the jury concluded eight days of deliberation by convicting fifteen defendants on charges ranging from mischief against private property to mischief endangering life and possession of a weapon dangerous to the public peace.

On July 30th, the trial finally came to a close when Judge Bruce Josephson sentenced thirteen of the fifteen defendants to prison terms. Shuswap elder William Jones Ignace was sentenced to four and half years in jail in addition to the twenty-two months he has already spent behind bars, the Court having refused to release him on bail after the standoff. Odawa/Anishnabe James Pitawanakwat, was sentenced to three years in addition to six months already served. Edward Dick received three years and Suniva Bronson received two years less a day.

Nine of the accused received sentences ranging from six to nine months. Following sentencing, all but two of the accused were taken directly to jail. Sheila Ignace and Shelagh Franklin, who have both

recently given birth, were given conditional sentences to be served in the community.

Lessons learned

The year-long trial did cast some light on what was the largest RCMP operation ever, involving the army and 400 police officers equipped with land mines, nine armoured personnel carriers, helicopters, airplanes, dog teams, and .50 calibre machine guns. During the standoff, an estimated 77,000 rounds of hollow-tipped bullets were fired by police and military authorities... at a mere 18 people.

CBC radio news in Vancouver reported in July that the RCMP plans to purchase eight of its own armoured personnel carriers. The Gustafsen Lake standoff was cited by police as proof the tanks were "necessary".

Enough fence sitting

William Jones Ignace and the other defendants have consistently called upon the international community and human rights organi-

over next page

"We feel that after British Columbia has been trespassing and oppressing us for 150 years, the 30 days or so we 'trespassed' on our own land isn't long. [...] Since 1876 we have watched the theft of our lands. The Crown doesn't want to deal with the facts or the rule of law. It says the American rancher owns the land. Where is the treaty? Where is the purchase? Show us the paper. [...] All we asked for was for an independent third party [to look into] this issue. Instead we got 400 RCMP, land mines and hollow point ammunition banned by the UN. [...]"

"This is part of 500 years of genocide. Our people were hunted down, bounties put on their heads. [...] You cannot change history. The prosecutor admits no treaty and no purchase. Who then is breaking the law?"

-Self-represented Shuswap elder William Jones Ignace, age 66, speaking to sentencing on July 25.

"You must accept the law as I explain it to you without question. This means that when you decide what the facts of this case are, you must apply the rules of law I will give you. It also means you must apply the law as I explain it to you... You are not allowed to decide this case on the basis of what you think the law is or what you think it should be if that conflicts with what I tell you about the law... You must not apply your own interpretation... because as I just stated, I am the sole interpreter of the law. You must take the law from me as I relate it to you in my instructions."

- BC Judge Bruce Josephson's instructions to the jury: May 7-12, 1997. The judge took an unprecedented four days to instruct the jury in what they should and should not consider.

Ronald Cross back in prison

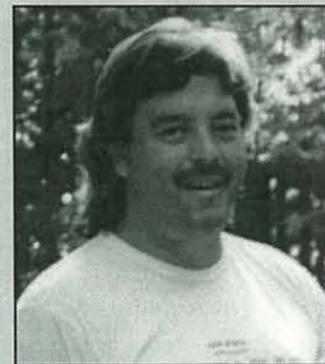
To conspicuous and widespread indifference, Ronald Cross returned to prison on May 20th to serve a four and a half year sentence for his part in the 1990 Oka crisis.

On February 19 1992, Cross, known as "Lasagna", was sentenced to a fifty-two months in jail, in addition to the fifteen months he had already spent behind bars. He had been found guilty of various charges including assault, uttering death threats and possessing a weapon.

Despite the seriousness of some of the actions that have been attributed to Cross, it is clear that the Courts wanted someone to bear responsibility for the crisis and he was sentenced accordingly.

The need for a scapegoat became more apparent following the summer 1992 acquittal of all Mohawks arrested at the end of the crisis along with all of their Native supporters.

Having exhausted all possible avenues of appeal, Cross stated a few hours before returning to jail that "it's hard to understand what the judge was thinking about when he said that I showed no remorse for crimes I committed. I can't show remorse over defending my people and my heritage,"



Ronald Cross

he said. "To me, it was a political action and will always be political."

In a letter from prison printed in the Eastern Door on July 11th of this year, Cross wrote: "I am serving four and a half years in a federal penitentiary for putting my life on the line for the Mohawk Nation. I didn't do all the right things, but I did my best to protect the people and the land. There were times when I did my worst, but that is something I will live with for the rest of my life." Cross then goes on to explain the emotional and physical hardships suffered during the long siege of Kanehsatake, as well as conflicts and tensions which ran high during the crisis.

Since February 1992, the Regroupement has considered Ronald Cross a political prisoner. And we believe he should be freed accordingly.

Guilty police officer to serve 180 hours of community service for Dudley George's death

Anthony O'Brien "Dudley" George was killed on September 6, 1995, following an Ontario Provincial Police raid against 24 Native protesters occupying "Ipperwash Provincial Park," located on ancestral land of the Stoney Point First Nation.

This past April 28th, a year and a half later, Stoney Pointers and their supporters had reason to celebrate. It was a rare verdict in the history of the Canadian judiciary: a police officer was found guilty of killing a Native person. Judge Fraser found that OPP acting sergeant Kenneth Deane had fired upon George knowing full well that he was unarmed. Furthermore, the judge stated that Deane had willingly attempted to deceive the court by claiming George had had a weapon in his possession at the time of the shooting. In the end, Deane was found guilty of criminal negligence causing death.

What had been a pleasant surprise soon turned to anger and disappointment for the Stoney Pointers, however, when on July 3rd, the judge handed Deane a two year conditional sentence. The maximum sentence for criminal negligence is life imprisonment, yet Deane will not spend a single day behind bars. At the very most, Deane will perform 180 hours of community service.

Upon hearing the sentence, Dudley George's sister Carolyn said: "This has just been a big farce all along, this whole courtroom thing. What justice has been served? It's okay to go out and kill Natives? Is that what the courts are saying? It's alright to go kill a Native because you won't end up in jail for it."

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IMPORTANT VICTORY AT VOISEY'S BAY

On August 20th, members of the Labrador Inuit Association and Innu Nation occupied the access road to the Voisey's Bay mining project in Labrador. Inuit from the community of Nain, located 35 km south of the huge nickel, cobalt and copper deposit, established an encampment and blocked bulldozers. In a matter of days, more than 250 Innu from Utshimassit (Davis Inlet), Sheshatshit, Schefferville and Mingan joined them on the site.

"Development has gone far enough. Inco is now building a road and an airstrip without Innu and Inuit consent. Without our consent there will be no project!", proclaimed Innu Nation President Katie Rich at the beginning of the protest.

Talks between Inco, the Innu and the Inuit broke down in mid-August when the multinational refused to halt construction work on the project until agreements had



"Development has gone far enough... Without Innu or Inuit consent there will be no project!", proclaimed Innu Nation President Katie Rich at the beginning of the protest.

been reached and a full environmental assessment of the project completed.

The protest effectively stopped construction work on the access road. The Financial Post reported that Inco stock had fallen .25¢ on

August 22nd, closing at \$39.65 per share, its lowest point in the last year of trading.

On August 24th, fifty RCMP officers faced off with the 300 protesters as police arrested Katie Rich, Mary Anne Nui and Erin Poker, charging them with "mischief". The CBC reported that rocks were thrown at police after the two women and youth were arrested. According to an eyewitness, "the police were forced to release their captives in order to prevent the incident from boiling over."

Late on August 26th, after six days

of occupation, the Appeals court of Newfoundland granted the Innu and the Inuit an injunction forcing the mining company to stop construction of its road, landing and wharf facilities. The injunction will remain in effect until the Court rules on other legal issues presently being appealed by the Innu and the Inuit and which should be heard by the end of September.

On August 27, Inco shares dropped further by another \$1.50 and, as reported by Radio Canada, Inco claims to be losing \$65,000 a day because of the work stoppage.

According to Katie Rich, "we have lived here for thousands of years and we plan to stay here for thousands more, but we don't want to be living in the mess they will make here by rushing ahead. By standing together with the Labrador Inuit we are saying to Inco and to Brian Tobin that we will not be bulldozed over on our own land." #

Guilty officer gets 180 hours of community service...

from previous page

Even if the Crown Prosecutor has decided to appeal Deane's sentence, public pressure in Ontario is mounting in favour of a full public inquiry into the police raid at Ipperwash.

Is Mike Harris responsible?

Notes of a strategy meeting taken hours before the deadly police raid clearly contradict what the Ontario government and Premier Mike Harris have said on the matter.

Harris claims that no political interference ever took place and that he was not involved in ordering the OPP into the park.

At a meeting the day before Dudley George was killed, however, a senior aide to Harris, Deb Hutton, stated that the Premier wanted the occupation of the park ended as quickly as possible. Minutes of that meeting indicate that "the OPP have the discretion as to how to proceed with removing the Stoney Pointers from the park."

There has been a marked change from previous governments' indifference in Ontario toward Stoney Pointers who, since 1993, have been occupying land they were evicted from in 1944 under the War Measures Act.

Mike Harris chose a hard-line approach in dealing with the matter, and Dudley George bore the cost of that decision. #

1997 POW WOW IN KANEHSATAKE



Urgent Appeal for Leonard Peltier



Leonard Peltier has been in jail for twenty-one years and his health has worsened considerably.

Since undergoing jaw surgery and other forms of treatment against his will at the Springfield Medical Centre in 1996, the Lakota political prisoner continues to suffer from severe headaches and other related ailments. His jaw cannot close properly, leaving a half-inch gap between his upper and lower teeth. For almost a year now, he has had to mash his food with his tongue in order to eat anything.

An urgent appeal campaign is underway so that Leonard can receive independent diagnosis and treatment for his jaw at the Mayo Clinic, in Minnesota. A Doctor there has accepted his case, but prison authorities at Leavenworth are stalling. Please mail or fax support letters to the following:

Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Senate Select Cttee on Indian Affairs
380, Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC, USA 20510
fax: (202) 224-1933

Ms. Kathleen Hawk, Director
Bureau of Prisons
320 First Street
Washington, DC, USA 20534
fax: (202) 514-6878

An action in support of Peltier will be taking place on October 12th, International Indigenous Peoples' Day. Supporters will march on the border separating Washington State and British Columbia to demand freedom for Leonard Peltier. The action is intended to remind the public that Peltier was extradited from Canada in 1976 based on false affidavits and fabricated evidence, and that systematic violations of Native Peoples' rights continue unabated today in the United States and Canada.

Shuswap defenders...

from previous page

sations to investigate Canada's actions against Native people. James Pitawanakwat has said that the stand at Gustafsen Lake was about "ending the cultural genocide of my people [...] and we need more people fighting for our rights than just sitting on the fence and watching."

Human rights activists and specialists such as former US Attorney-General Ramsey Clark, the European Parliament's Green Group, and Native organizations and representatives internationally have called for a comprehensive

public inquiry into the Gustafsen Lake crisis.

Even the new Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, finally cast his support for a public inquiry into the Gustafsen Lake and Ipperwash affairs, and 140 of the 600 AFN chiefs have signed a petition calling for an inquiry into "excessive force and attempted murder against the Indian people" at Gustafsen Lake. #

For more information on how to support the Ts'peten political prisoners, contact:

Free the Wolverine Campaign
CP 13-2147 Commercial Dr.,
Vancouver, BC, V5N 4B3 Canada
Spokespeople:
Splitting the Sky
Tel/fax.: (604) 543-9661
Bill Lightbown
Tel: (604) 251-4949

S.I.S.I.S. (Settlers In Support of
Indigenous Sovereignty)
P.O. Box 8673, Victoria, "B.C."
"Canada" V8X 3S2
EMAIL: <sisis@envirolink.org>
WWW: <http://kafka.uvic.ca/~vipirg/SISIS/SISmain.html>

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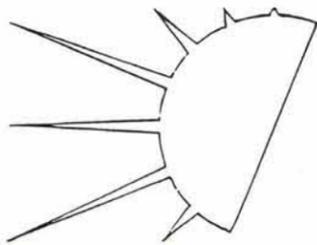
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Innu and Inuit Victory in Nitassinan

VOISEY'S BAY MINE DELAYED

On September 19, Micheal Sopko, Chairman of the Canadian multinational Inco announced, while in London attending a metals conference, that the Voisey's Bay mine project and mill facilities will be delayed for at least one year because of "technical, financial and other issues". The print media has reported that Inco is considering scaling back the \$1.6 billion mine project by as much as 50 %.

On August 26, after a week long occupation of the company's installations near Voisey's Bay by 300 Innu and Inuit, the Newfoundland Court of Appeal granted the protesters an interlocutory injunction forcing Inco to stop the construction of an access road, a landing strip and port facilities. The injunction was to remain in effect until other related issues brought before the courts by the Innu and Inuit had been settled.

On September 15, the Citizen's Mining Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, which represents 200 individuals and five non-profit organisations, applied to the Federal Court of Canada seeking a comprehensive environmental review of the smelter and refinery project that Inco is proposing for Newfoundland. The \$1 billion smelter will transform ore from Voisey's Bay and would be located on a former US military base in Argentia, about 60 km from St-John's.

Review Not Required?

Inco spokesperson in Toronto, David Allen, said that under Canadian law a full environmental review is not required because the

former air base where the smelter will be built has been designated as a maritime seaport and slated for heavy industrial use. Allen claims that "the smelter will be the best in the world with virtually zero discharges of sulfur dioxide."

The Citizen's organisation, however, has stated, based on Inco's own projections, that 10 000 tons of sulfur dioxide from the smelter will be released into the atmosphere annually, having potential negative effects on air quality and the health of St-John's 150 000 inhabitants. The Citizen's Council has also denounced the project's "fast-tracked, behind the scenes bureaucratic decision making process, as well as the lack of an independent review panel and limited opportunities for public participation."

"We mine sites throughout the world," said David Allen on September 19, "and we've never had

this type of difficulty before". Inco announced it was "reevaluating" its projects in Newfoundland and Labrador even before the courts had ruled on the environmental and other related issues raised by the Innu and the Inuit.

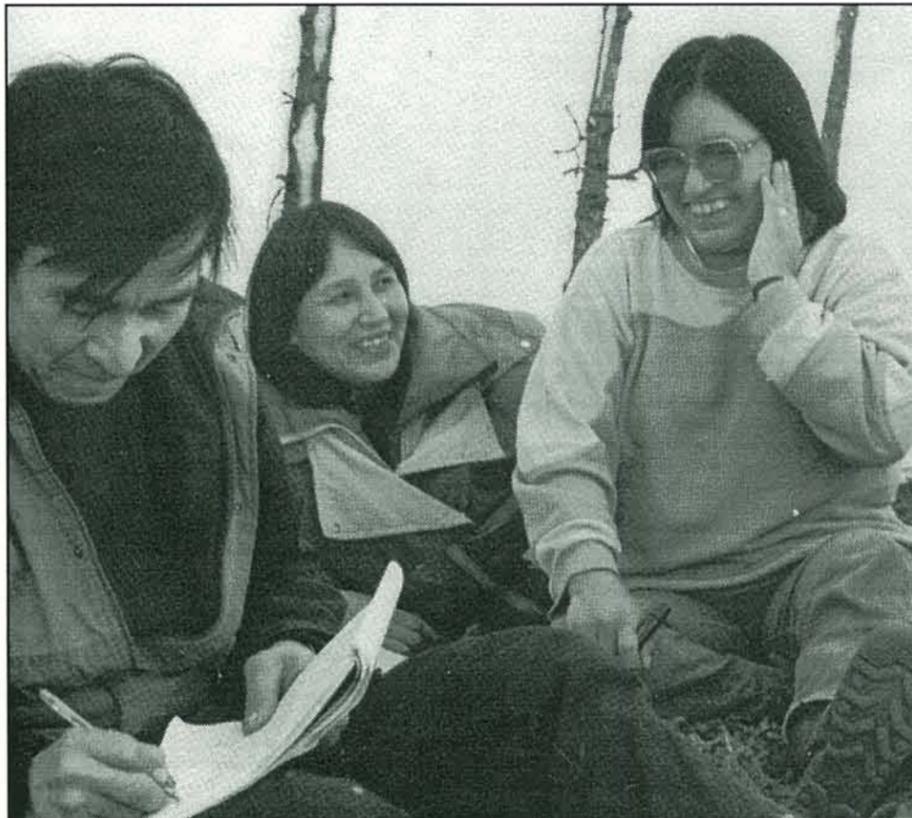
Allen denied that Inco was trying to put pressure on the governments and the Native organisations. "Whatever the court case outcome is," he said, "it cannot advance our timeline. If they say *Go ahead*, its too late." In the meantime, Inco shares traded at the Toronto Stock Exchange continued their downward spiral.

Good News

On the subject of the one year delay, Innu Nation President, Katie Rich, said: "It's really good news".

She said the Innu will take advantage of the delay in order to better understand the magnitude and scope of the Voisey's Bay mineral discovery which holds, according to various estimates, 13% of the world's nickel reserves.

Rich stated that "neither level of government took responsibility to protect the environment here, so the Aboriginal people had to do it."



According to Katie Rich, Innu Nation President, the Innu will take advantage of the delay in order to better understand the magnitude and scope of the Voisey's Bay mineral discovery which holds, according to various estimates, 13% of the world's nickel reserves.

Weapons Charges Dropped Against Native Protester in Ipperwash Park

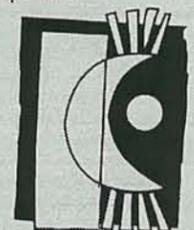
"We have witnessed the final proof that there has been a deliberate campaign of deception and cover-up regarding the tragic events that took place in Ipperwash Park on September 6, 1995," said Irvin George, Chief of the Kettle Point First Nation, on September 29th when weapons charges laid by the Ontario Provincial Police in September 1995 against Warren Anthony George were officially abandoned.

"When the Crown dropped the firearm charges, it was proven once and for all that the demonstrators, the thirty men, women and children in the park that night, were unarmed," Chief George said.

In November 1995, the government of Canada told the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions that the Native people present in the park on September 6, 1995, had fired on police and that the police had returned gun fire.

Warren Anthony George, 24, and David Abraham George, 26, both of Stoney Point, still face a number of other charges stemming from the brutal police attack in September 1995. This unexpected turn of events, however, has fueled a growing campaign in support of a full public inquiry into the death of Native protester Dudley George, killed by police at that time.

A few months ago, police officer Kenneth Deane was held criminally responsible for George's death. Premier Mike Harris has also been directly implicated in the decision to attack the park's peaceful occupants.



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Daishowa vs. Friends of the Lubicon

Despite objections from the multinational, Professor Ward Churchill takes the stand

Ward Churchill, Keetoowah Cherokee and long-time Native rights activist, is the author of sixteen books and Chair of the Ethnic Studies Department at the University of Colorado at Boulder. We interviewed him in Toronto on September 29th, following his testimony at the trial brought by the Daishowa corporation against the Friends of the Lubicon.

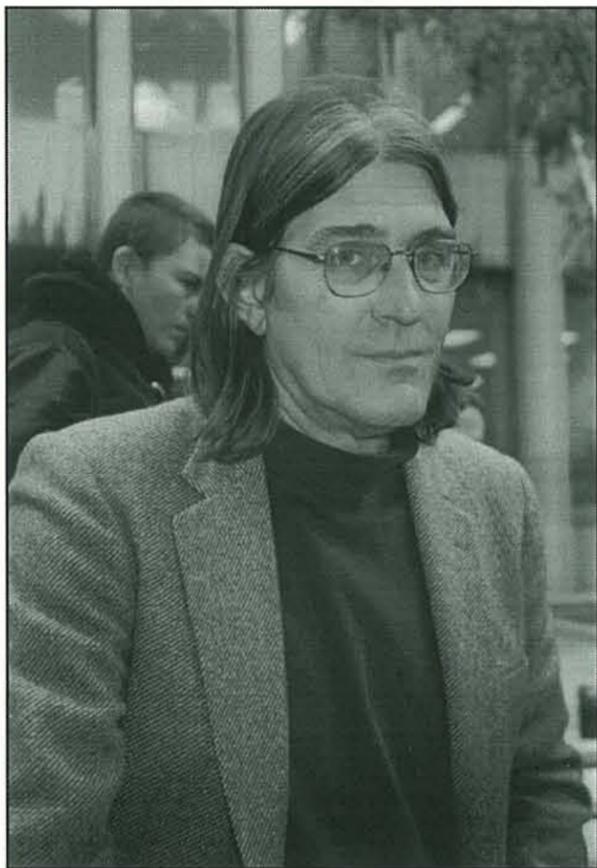


PHOTO: CONTINENT PHOTOGRAPHY

RSA: Could you summarize the substance of the testimony you brought before the Court today?

WC: I went to the legal definition of the concept of genocide and the meaning of the term in law. The crux of the question before the court was the propriety of the Friends of the Lubicon characterizing the activities of Daishowa on Lubicon land in Alberta as being genocidal or having genocidal connotations. Daishowa contends that was a defamatory characterization of its activities and obtained an injunction [in January 1996] to prevent the Friends of the Lubicon from using the word genocide in connection with descriptions of Daishowa's ongoing activities and future activities on Lubicon land. As a corollary to that, the injunction prevents picketing and other concrete activities that have occurred around the concept of the perpetration of genocide.

I addressed the issue of the actual meaning of the term, so that there could be a valid assessment of the propriety of its usage. In the event, I found myself in the position of rebutting a misconstruction of the term that was put forth by Daishowa's council to the effect that genocide had to do specifically and indeed solely with the literal physical annihilation of peoples, and that simply is not true. In my experience before courts of law over a thirty-year period of time, I have never had occasion to witness a barrister utilising a Webster's Collegiate dictionary to define points of law, particularly when there is black letter law immediately available that has been incorporated into Canadian law on this matter.

In any event, I took the Court through the meaning of the term genocide, starting with its coinage by Raphael Lemkin in 1944 in a book titled *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. Killing is not even part of the original definition. Genocide,

According to Professor Ward Churchill, a long-time Native rights activist, the Daishowa boycott has raised awareness on Native issues.

literally, at page 79 of Lemkin is defined as being, first, the suppression and dissolution of the national pattern or culture of a *targeted* group and, subsequently, the imposition of the national pattern or culture of the *targeting* group so that the original entity that existed, definable as a people, no longer exists. The individual members may all survive, but they survive in a form of compulsory incorporation into the cultural, political, national structure of the targeting group.

From there we proceeded to the drafting of the United Nations convention on Genocide. We looked at the initial draft that was composed by Lemkin in 1946 in a fairly expansive form, and then we looked at the contracted or truncated version that was ultimately endorsed by the United Nations and ratified by nation-states in 1948 under the formal title of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

We then dealt in detail with the classifications of genocidal conduct through Lemkin's conceptualisation of genocide in 1944, the initial UN draft of 1946 and the final ratified version of the Convention in 1948. In all three of those instances, the situation of the Lubicon Lake Cree and the imposition of policy by the Canadian government, the provincial government of Alberta and the participating corporations, in this particular case Daishowa, fit well within the pattern of genocide.

In the 1948 Convention in particular they would fit within two of the five classifications under Article 2. The second classification deals with the systematic imposition of physical and psychological harm upon members of a targeted group with the intent being that they will ultimately have to separate themselves from the group in order to secure their own physical well-being, thereby causing the group itself to

have to go out of existence. And this is the crux of the issue: bringing about the dissolution, the destruction or the disappearance of the identified human group.

The third classification under Article 2 of the 1948 Convention deals with creating other conditions, environmental for example, which bring about group dissolution and destruction. Clearcutting a forest, for example, would fall very well within this third classification insofar as clearcutting would disrupt or destroy the ability of the group to sustain itself economically, cultur-



ally, spiritually and otherwise, and thereby lead to its destruction and dissolution [...].

I cannot avoid the conclusion that what is happening to the Lubicon Cree constitutes a crime of genocide as legally defined internationally and in Canada as well, insofar as Canada has ratified the 1948 Genocide Convention in Canadian law. We have a systematic pattern of criminal behaviour on the part of the government of Canada, the provincial government of Alberta and

participating corporations, whether Daishowa in this case or Petro-Canada or various other energy corporations that have done business and are still doing business on Lubicon land after more than twenty years.

RSA: Daishowa's lawyers repeatedly attempted to prevent you from testifying on the grounds that only their definition of genocide would be appropriate enough for this trial...

WC: Although they found objectionable the characterization of their client's activities as being genocidal, the definition of genocide itself was not germane to consideration by the Court. They said they understood perfectly well what genocide meant, that their understanding would be the binding understanding and that the Court was stuck with what they meant, or what Webster's dictionary meant, rather than what the law actually says at the international level and at the federal level in Canada. Canadian law, therefore, is apparently not particularly relevant to the attorneys representing the Daishowa corporation.

What is relevant to them, apparently, is that they get their own way which is that regardless of what Daishowa does, the general populace or anybody who is effective in communicating within the general populace will not be allowed to call genocide by its right name [...]. Basically, no one is to say anything about the Daishowa corporation that is not acceptable to the Daishowa corporation [...]. This is a truncation of rights and freedoms of ex-

pression that I understood to be guaranteed in the Canadian Constitution.

While this particular lawsuit, devolves from an Aboriginal issue, it is not in itself an Aboriginal issue. This is a matter of civil rights and liberties for the entire population of Canada whether they are aware of it now or not. It may well be one of the five or six most important civil rights and liberties cases to come before the courts in Canada in this decade. And it seems to be getting cut short-

shrift amazingly by the so-called free press of Canada whose stock in trade it is to operate on the basis of the guarantees of these sorts of civil rights and liberties that allow them to express opinions at all. These are in jeopardy in this Court and they are paying virtually no attention.

RSA: Do you personally endorse the idea of a boycott of Daishowa products?

WC: I endorse any set of politically effective tactics that works. If a boycott works, as apparently this one did and that's why people are in Court, then by all means I would endorse it [...]. And I would endorse anything else under the principles of international law which state that a denial of self-determining rights to an identified population is to be redressed by whatever means are available to that population and its supporters. Interference with the utilisation of those means to achieve self-determination is a crime in itself. In my view and I think in a construction of international legal terms Daishowa is bordering on criminal behaviour in entering into this SLAPP suit in the first place.

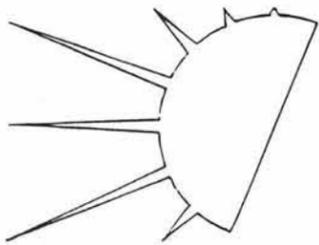
RSA: Then how would you perceive the importance of this boycott with regards to non-Native solidarity to the Lubicon Lake Cree?

WC: First, the boycott had a tangible affect on Daishowa in that it served as a disincentive to just running roughshod over a small group of people. The boycott was costing Daishowa money and in the face of the potential that it would cost them even more money to proceed with logging Lubicon land, they didn't and that is somewhat instructive in terms of political tactics.

Second, the boycott educated a wilfully ignorant populace in some respects as to the actual conditions pertaining to Indigenous peoples within its national boundaries, people who are suffering as a direct result of policies which maintain the *status quo* in Canada [...].

One thing that the Friends of the Lubicon have been instrumental in doing is presenting the case of the Lubicon Cree in such a way as to educate the public about their specific circumstances and, on a second level, in using the Lubicon Cree as a lens by which Aboriginal rights more generally could be understood.

Actual issues brought before the public can be understood in such a way that the public can make informed choices and act accordingly. They can either embrace genocide or they can oppose genocide, but they can't make a choice one way or the other if they're ignorant of the fact that genocide is occurring.



Recent Court Rulings Recognise Native Rights to Forests

A year ago, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended, among other things, that the federal government reject the doctrine of terra nullius...

In New Brunswick

On November 4th, a provincial court judge in New Brunswick upheld a lower court decision to the effect that Native people own the Crown lands and forests of New Brunswick under Dummer's treaty of 1725.

The case arose when Thomas Paul, a Miq'mac, was charged with illegally harvesting logs on land licensed to the Stone Consolidated logging company.

New Brunswick Natural Resources Minister Alan Graham said he expects the province will fight the decision all the way to the Supreme Court.

The recent court decision has implications beyond New Brunswick, however, since Dummer's treaty also applies to Nova Scotia.

If the case goes to the Supreme Court and the First Nations win, logging companies like Irving and Repap will have to compensate Native communities for what they have taken from Native land in the



past - including all natural resources and wildlife - and lost economic opportunities.

In British Columbia

A week later, on November 10th, the British Columbia Appeals Court overturned a lower court decision that had allowed the BC government to give MacMillan Bloedel, a logging multinational, exclusive rights over forests on the Queen Charlotte Islands and part of Vancouver Island...

The decision, if applicable to all licenses given out by the government, would affect about 25 percent of the province's forests.

us, this puts things back to the way they're supposed to be," said Ron Brown, spokesperson for the Haida Nation Council...

The Haida Nation has won the right to appeal a Tree Farm Licence (TFL) granted by the BC government to MacMillan Bloedel in March, 1995, within their land claim area.

In a unanimous decision, three appeal court judges said that where First Nations can prove they have aboriginal rights, they also hold a valid legal interest to both the land and its forests.

Logging industry analyst Charles Widman said the court ruling has serious implications for all 36 tree farm licences in British Columbia. "The long-term implications are very serious in terms of management of a very big chunk of our forests," he said.

The provincial government and MacMillan Bloedel have 60 days to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Grassroots victory in Kahnawake Archer Daniels Midland sent packing

On November 3rd, agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) dismantled its temporary installations in Kahnawake after Mohawk youth had organised and fueled an impressive public awareness campaign in their community.

Back in April, following the signature of an agreement in principle between ADM and the Band Council, students from the Kahnawake Survival School worked hard to alert public opinion.

Students began researching ADM, a transnational corporation with annual revenues of \$13 billion. They visited similar storage facilities in Sorel and in Québec City, bringing their video cameras with them.

The project's environmental impact study, paid for by ADM and done by its subsidiary Inspecol, has been severely critiqued. According to one independent expert, the report severely underestimates the negative effects of greater traffic near the school...

Following a lively community meeting on October 20th and a second demonstration in the streets of Kahnawake on the 23rd, community members set up a temporary encampment near the project site where construction was to begin early in November.

It is suspected that ADM is interested in the Mohawk community because of a lack of environmental, shipping and storage regulations on the reserve. For its part, the Band Council has stated that the company would have to comply with any and all laws in Kahnawake that could be enacted in the future in order to deal with such issues.

On October 31st, however, an editorial in The Eastern Door on the matter was rather skeptical. According to the editorial, "the image of an immense multinational corporation operating a huge facility on our territory and bowing to our laws somehow does not seem plausible in view of the track record of this particular corporation."

In fact, last year the American government formally accused ADM of fraud and price-fixing. In an out-of-court settlement negotiated by ADM Director and ex-Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, ADM got off with a mere \$100 million fine.

ADM has left Kahnawake for the time-being. Before pulling up the stakes, ADM representative and manager Brian Brohman mused "we have always been welcomed in communities [...] ADM does not want confrontation."



Letters of Solidarity

If you're looking for someone to write to as 1997 comes to an end, here are a few suggestions:

William Jones Ignace Political Prisoner Box 4000 Abbotsford, BC V2S 5X8

Leonard Peltier POW 89637-132 Box 1000 Leveanworth, Kansas USA 66048

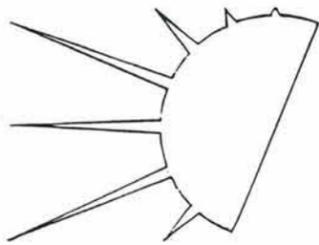
James Pitawanakwat Political Prisoner Box 4000 Abbotsford, BC V2S 5X8

Ronald Cross Political Prisoner 244 Montée Gagnon Ste-Anne-des-Plaines, Qué. JON 1H0

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Federal response to the Erasmus-Dussault report:

A SIMPLE EXERCISE IN HISTORICAL WHITEWASHING

On January 7, in response to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' lengthy November 1996 report, federal Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart expressed her "regrets" to Native survivors of 150 years of government policies of assimilation and acculturation.

Referring to the Commission's report, the minister stated that the history defined by "displacement and assimilation - a period from the early 1800s [...], when colonial governments imposed their ways on Aboriginal people", came to an end some thirty years ago. With its gesture of reconciliation, the Canadian government is now looking to embark upon a new era of "healing" and "partnership" with Native peoples.

Mere Regrets

Of the five national Native organizations present at the Minister's offering, only the Assembly of First Nations accepted the "Declaration of Reconciliation". The Native Women's Association of Canada, the Métis National Council, Inuit Taparissat of Canada and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples all thought the government's gesture did not go far enough.

According to Marilyn Buffalo of the Native Women's Association of Canada, the government's "regrets" paled in comparison with the formal apology made by Canada to Japanese-Canadians who lived through internment camps during the Second World War. She stated that the \$ 350 million announced by the Minister and that Ottawa plans to spend over the next four years in an attempt to "heal the wounds" of the past, is less than the amount spent by the liberal government when it cancelled a single contract for helicopters.

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, past Indian Affairs Minister for over six years, didn't even show-up for what his government called a historical event. In fact, the day after Ms. Stewart's declaration had been interpreted by the media as an "apology to Native People", Chrétien clarified the matter stating that "regrets", not apologies, had been expressed by his Minister!

In her declaration of reconciliation, the Minister deals in three paragraphs with the issue of the Indian Residential Schools that Native children were sent to, often after having been taken from their homes and communities, and where their languages and cultures were forbidden. "To those of you who suffered this tragedy at residential schools", she said, "we are deeply sorry".

Not much to sink one's teeth into when you consider the one hundred year history of the residential school system in Canada, and the fact the federal government to date has been named as a defendant in 420 lawsuits in connection with abuse in the schools.

Residential Schools

The Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches lead the way in the opening of residential schools in Ontario, the North-West Territories and British Columbia even before they became government policy. Since Confederation, when two schools were in operation, the system grew at a rate of about two schools a year, so that by 1931 the system had reached its high point of 80 schools, the last of which closed down in 1986. It is estimated that between 100,000 and 125,000 Native children passed through the system.

Residential schools were built in every province and territory except Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Newfoundland, where Native children were sometimes sent to orphanages. In Québec, two schools were opened before the Second World War, both in Fort George, one of which was Catholic and the other Anglican. Following the war, four more were added to the system in Amos, Pointe Bleue, Sept-Iles and La Tuque.



PHOTO: DAVID MALTEBY

By 1931 the Residential School system had reached its high point of 80 schools, the last of which closed down in 1986. It is estimated that between 100,000 and 125,000 Native children passed through the system.

For a "Non-Aboriginal, Christian" Canada

The Royal Commission dedicated some fifty pages of its final report to the Indian residential school system in Canada. As well as having searched the archives of most national churches in Canada, the Commission went through approximately 6,000 residential school files that are still in the hands of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The Commission "secured access to this documentation only after protracted and difficult negotiations" which were eventually successful, but which seriously delayed the Commission's research.

According to the Commission, the tragic legacy of the residential schools began in the late nineteenth century with a three-pronged system of education, the final objective of which was the assimilation and acculturation of Native peoples. Since Native adults had been written-off as "old unimprovable people" and an impediment to civilisation, the idea of the federal government and churches was to first remove Native children from the "degenerating influence of their home environment", by force if necessary.

Then the children were to be re-socialized in institutions that were often isolated and distant from the "evil surroundings" of their home communities. The ultimate goal of this process of salvation was "assimilation through enfranchisement" which meant the relinquishment of the status of "Indian", as defined by the Indian Act, in order

Supreme Court Ruling Now Making Waves

Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en Victory

The treaty negotiation process in British Columbia now finds itself in serious trouble, weeks after the Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en Nations won an important victory before the Supreme Court of Canada.

On December 11, 1997, the highest court essentially buried a BC court ruling and recognized the soundness of Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en arguments for the legal title of their traditional lands. The ruling is the latest in a long legal battle known as Delgamuukw.

Native Youth Movement
Denounces BC Treaty
Negotiation Process

"The government is now making treaties because it wants to end all legal challenges to its legitimacy and authority. Its aim was, and always has been, to destroy us as sovereign nations, to dismantle our societies, to kill our spiritual ways.

From genocidal wars to the Indian Act, from the Band Council system to the residential schools, from the theft of Native children to the use of military and police force against our peoples, to this - the treaty process - the government has attempted to assimilate us into a system that offers nothing to us but despair, suicide, prostitution, cocaine, poverty and hopelessness."

East-Vancouver
January 30, 1998.

A number of BC bands are now using the Supreme Court ruling to question their participation in the BC Treaty Commission negotiation process which began four years ago. The Sechelt and Tsay Keh Dene Nations have addressed the courts in order to have their land rights recognised. At a press conference on January 30, a number of chiefs representing six nations in BC denounced the negotiation process in that province, qualifying it as "illegal".

BC Treaty Commission president, Alec Robertson (ex-Daishowa Forest Products manager!) has had to admit that "the December 11 Supreme Court ruling has had a major impact on the entire treaty negotiation process."

The Delgamuukw case

On October 24, 1984, thirty-five hereditary

Over next page...

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Over next page...

A SIMPLE EXERCISE IN HISTORICAL WHITEWASHING

From previous page...

to become a Canadian citizen and prevent "retrogression", or cultural backsliding.

Dreadful Living Conditions

According to the Royal Commission report, "badly built, poorly maintained and overcrowded, the schools' deplorable conditions were a dreadful weight that pressed down on the thousands of children that attended them. For many of those children it proved to be a mortal weight." As early as 1911, it was clear to the churches and the department of Indian Affairs "that there was a crisis in the conditions and sanitation of the schools and, therefore, in the health of the children."

Those in charge could not have ignored those conditions since they had at least two reports at hand. One, by the department's chief medical officer, Dr. P.H. Bryce, was published in 1907 and clearly outlined the tragic impact of tuberculosis on the children, and another, published a year later by a department accountant, F.H. Paget, demonstrated the relationship between conditions in 21 schools in the west and the scourge of tuberculosis.

"The Charge of Manslaughter"

The Royal Commission reports that Bryce's study "became the stuff of headlines and critical editorial comment." *Saturday Night* magazine concluded that "even war seldom shows as large a percentage of fatalities as does the education system we have imposed upon our Indian wards."

In fact Bryce's work revealed a death toll of 24 per cent among the 1,537 children he surveyed in 15 different schools. According to the Royal Commission, "this figure might have risen to 42 per cent if the children had been tracked for three years after they returned to their reserves. The mortality rate varied from school to school, going as high as 47 per cent at Old Sun's on the Blackfoot reserve. Kuper Island school in British Columbia, which was not included in Bryce's sample, had a mortality rate of 40 per cent over its 25-year history".

S.H. Blake, who assisted in negotiations for the 1911 contracts between Indian Affairs and the churches, stated unequivocally that because the department had done nothing over the decades "to obviate the preventable causes of death, [it] brings itself within unpleasant nearness to the charge of manslaughter."

"Criminal Disregard"

From 1892 to 1957, the department funded the schools through a per capita grant arrangement with the churches. The Commission's report states that "overcrowding, the most critical dynamic in the spread of tuberculosis, was systemic, a predictable outcome of underfunding and of the per capita

grant arrangement that put a premium on each student taken from a community."

The report also states that the churches bore responsibility for what, in 1922, Bryce called "a national crime". Indian Affairs, however, had a special responsibility since "it had taken to itself the responsibility to set standards" by way of a decree in 1892 on school funding and contractual commitments made in 1911 with the churches. But these standards, "like so many other regulations relating to care of the children, such as those regarding clothes, food and discipline, [were] implemented carelessly by the department and ignored by many school and department officials."

In the decades which followed Bryce's report "almost nothing was done about tuberculosis in the schools". In fact, "the department did not even launch a full investigation of the system [...] and the few reports on the health of the children, which are scattered and sketchy (for the department never set up a procedure to monitor health) point to the continuation of alarmingly high rates of infection."

According to the Commission's report "the dramatic tuberculosis story" chronicles what Bryce suggested was the government's "criminal disregard" for the "welfare of the Indian wards of the nation".

Punishment as Teaching Method

According to the Royal Commission, "the basic premise of re-socializing, of the great transformation from 'savage' to 'civilized', was violent. [...] In the vision of residential education, discipline was curriculum and punishment an essential pedagogical technique." And abuse there was, identified as such by those inside the system, both in the churches and the department. Head office, regional, school and church files, according to the report, are replete, from early in the system's history, with incidents that violated even the norms of the day.

The Commission states that "when the trail was followed back to the school from which an injured or dead child had fled, it led almost inevitably to conditions of neglect, mistreatment and abuse." Children who were punished, in fact, were frequently beaten severely with whips, rods and fists, chained and shackled, bound hand and foot and locked in closets, basements and bathrooms, and had their heads shaved completely.

Preserving the Schools' "Civilizing Mission"

Their was a pronounced and persistent reluctance on the part of Indian Affairs to deal forcefully with incidents of abuse, to dismiss - as was its right and responsibility - or to lay charges against school staff who abused the children. In the face of criticism, and when



PHOTO: OLIVIER RENARD

In Front of the Daishowa Mill in Québec City

Demonstration in Support of the Lubicon Lake Cree

Jeanne-Mance Charlish, member of the Innu Nation, addresses one hundred protesters who gathered in front of the Daishowa mill in Québec City, on January 23. The rally was organized by the Amitié-Lubicons-Québec campaign in order to mark the second anniversary of a temporary injunction obtained by Daishowa against the Toronto Friends of the Lubicon and their boycott of Daishowa products. The trial launched by Daishowa against the Friends of the Lubicon came to a close last December and a decision is expected in few weeks. For more information: (514) 844-0484

abuse or neglect were revealed to the public, too often the department seemed to protect its own image rather than protect the children.

The Royal Commission reports that "the importance of the civilizing mission of the schools far outweighed issues of justice for the children". In fact, "members of the public, including parents, Indian leaders and journalists, felt the sting of aggressive departmental attacks when their criticism came too close to the bone."

In the long history of the schools, protests from parents and communities about conditions in the schools and the care of the children had not been uncommon. Many parents had struggled to protect their children, to prevent them from being taken to schools, or petitioned for their return. "More often than not, however, they had been brushed aside by the churches and the government".

Sexual Abuse

In 1990, the *Globe and Mail* reported that "Rix Rodgers, special advisor to the minister of national health and welfare on child sexual abuse, had commented [...] that the abuse revealed to date was just the 'tip of the iceberg' and that closer scrutiny of treatment of children at residential schools would show that all children at some schools were sexually abused."

Facts that could corroborate such a hypothesis are, according to the Commission's report, entirely absent from the public record or historical archives, and have been brought to light only by those who managed to survive abuse which was, in some cases, endured over many years.

Institutional silence on the matter meant that "abuse had spilled back into communities, so that even after the schools were closed their effects echoed in the lives of subsequent generations of children."

Healing for Whom?

According to the Royal Commission, "there was no consideration that the system itself constituted a

'crime"'. Rather, the focus has always been placed on individual acts which violated the Criminal Code.

These acts, the official story goes, although considered severe «errors» in judgment and reprehensible in nature, were in the end quite "human" and therefore "forgivable".

Perhaps in anticipation of the government's response to its findings, the Royal Commission states that "the government has refused to apologize or to institute a special public inquiry and instead wishes to concentrate on the 'now' of the problem", that is the "savage" who is sick and "in need of psychological salvation" or "healing".

In a report submitted to the Royal Commission in October 1994 and entitled *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*, Native researchers Roland D. Chrisjohn and Sherri Young had this to say on the matter of "healing": "if it is sickness you seek, don't look for it in the victims of genocide; it resides in the minds and hearts of the people who planned, designed, implemented, and operated the machinery of genocide, and who now seek to cover it up. The 'meaning' of Indian Residential Schooling is not the pathology it may have created in some Aboriginal Peoples; it is the pathology it reveals in the 'system or order' giving rise to it." #

Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en Victory

From previous page ...

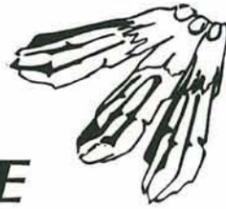
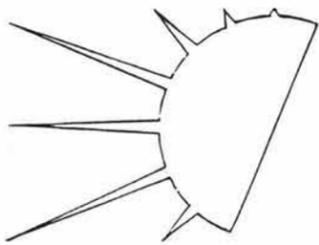
Chiefs of the Gitxan Nation and thirteen others from the Wet'suwet'en addressed the BC courts in order to have their ownership, jurisdiction and self-government recognized over 58,000 km² of north-western BC.

Seven years later, judge Allan McEachern rejected their arguments and refused to consider the legal merits of the chiefs' testimony, based in part on oral histories as recounted from generation to generation. Among other things, the judge claimed that the Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en's ancestral rights had been extinguished more than a century ago.

In 1993, the BC Court of Appeals rejected McEachern's affirmation on extinguishment and asked that both Nations be consulted with regards to any further development activity that could impact their lands. The Appeals Court, however, maintained the lower court ruling which refused to recognize Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en title to lands they were claiming.

The December 11 Supreme Court ruling in the Delgamuukw case is therefore very important. It recognizes Native rights and title to lands that haven't been subjected to treaties or land claim settlements, which in this case means practically all of BC. According to the ruling, the Gitxan and Wet'suwet'en Nations could control the extent of all future mining or forestry development on their lands.

The repercussions of such a ruling will have a major impact not only in BC, but in many other parts of Canada. Furthermore, the Supreme Court's legal recognition of oral histories will have to be taken into account in any litigation brought before Canadian courts from now on by other Native Nations. #



An Editorial by Kenneth Deer

"Stay Away From the Supreme Court"

With the author's permission, we are reprinting an editorial which appeared on February 20 in *The Eastern Door*, Kahnawake's weekly newspaper, a few days after spokespersons for the Inuit, Cree and Algonquin Nations testified before the Supreme Court of Canada on the issue of Quebec's right to secession.

While other Indigenous Peoples are presenting briefs to the Supreme Court of Canada on the Quebec issue, it is wise that the Mohawks are not there.

If anyone has any doubt that we should be there, all you have to do is insert Mohawks instead of Quebec in the questions to the Supreme Court and you will see why we should stay away.

"Do Mohawks have the right under the Canadian Constitution to secede unilaterally? Do they have the right under international law? If domestic and international law conflict, which would prevail?"

This is a question that should never be sent to the Supreme Court of Canada. If there ever was a question that the Mohawks would lose, that is the one.

Gambling with our right to self-determination and sovereignty by submitting such a question to nine judges born and bred in the colonial environment of Canada is tantamount to suicide.

In principle, and this is a position that we have always advocated, you can't secede from something you don't belong to. We have never been asked nor did we ever give our consent to join Canada. We have been surrounded and incorporated into Canada, but never absorbed.

We do not have the right to secede from Canada under the Canadian Constitution, but neither do they have the moral right to force us to stay in Canada.

Quebec is basically saying the same thing. They did not sign the repatriated Canadian Constitution of 1982 and, therefore, do not feel bound by it.

There are many parallels between the rights of the people of Quebec and rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. These parallels are important, such as the right to self-determination. But there are basic differences as well.

One fundamental difference

hinges on the fact that we were here first and that our right to our homeland is a valid one and predates any claim Quebec may have to this land. If Quebec thinks it has a right to independence, our right is stronger.

But the Supreme Court of Canada will not recognize that right. Not for Quebec, nor for the Mohawks. Therefore it is wise that we both stay away from the Supreme Court.

Now federalists will say that we are giving aid and comfort to the enemy, meaning the separatists, by agreeing that the Supreme Court of Canada is not the place to decide questions that should be answered politically. After all, self-determination is asserted, not decreed by a court.

Federalists have been asking for our help to fight separatism, but federalists view Mohawks the same way separatists do. We are subjected to the laws of Canada and Quebec, each of which is basically colonialist. While many Indigenous individuals may mistrust and loath Quebec, we cannot forget the mistrust or loathing we have for Canada.

The saying goes that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Yet, saying that if Quebec is our enemy, then Canada must be our friend may be using a flawed rationale. They are both our enemies, and we shouldn't forget that.

In all the court cases that effect the Indigenous peoples of Canada, the government of Canada has fought the hardest, and in many cases unscrupulously to reduce and diminish our rights to the absolute minimum. Even to the point that the government has said that Mohawks are not Indigenous to Canada.

So while the Crees, Inuit and Algonquins ask the Supreme Court to recognize their right to stay in Canada, the Mohawks, by staying away, are not asking anyone's opinion or permission. But we are setting our own course and we will determine for ourselves who we will live with and in what conditions.#

Solidarity With The Native People of Mexico



PHOTO: NEIL DIAMOND/THE NATION

KAHNAWAKE, MOHAWK TERRITORY – More than one hundred people, many from the Montreal area, gathered on March 16 to show their support to the Native victims of four years of low-intensity conflict in Chiapas. The demonstrators also wished to denounce the eventual signing of a free trade agreement between the Kahnawake Band Council and the Mexican State of Oaxaca, under terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOUNDED KNEE OCCUPATION

February 28 marked the beginning, 25 years ago, of the occupation by hundreds of native men, women and children of the village of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, site of the December 1890 massacre of three hundred unarmed Sioux Lakota.

For 71 days, from February 28 until May 5, 1973, the occupants denounced a corrupt Tribal Council, supported by the US Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the increased presence of federal law enforcement agencies on the reservation.

Participants in the occupation, rallied by the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO), demanded the respect of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty recognizing Native sovereignty and protecting the Black Hills against rampant uranium, coal and oil development.

According to the treaty, the Black Hills belong to the Pueblo, Navajo, Western Soshone, Crow, Ojibwa, Cheyenne and Lakota Nations which were all represented during the siege at Wounded Knee. Tribal Council President Richard "Dickie" Wilson would eventually negotiate the illegal sale of one-eighth of the Pine Ridge reservation to various multinational interests, including parts of the Black Hills, and declare open hostilities against Sioux traditionalists as well as members and supporters of AIM who opposed the sale.

Two Native occupants lost their lives during the 1973 standoff: Frank Clearwater, of the Cherokee

Nation, eventually died on April 25 from a bullet wound and Buddy Lamont, of the Oglala Nation, died from a gun shot on April 26.

Reign of Violence and Terror

Lamont's death was considered the first of hundreds of "accidents", many fatal, which occurred during a reign of terror and violence which shook Pine Ridge from 1973 to 1976 as Dickie Wilson presided the reservation with open support from the American government. Their objective was to do away with AIM and put a stop to the organization's resounding and at times spectacular actions. At least sixty-three violent deaths were documented, including many children, not one of which was ever investigated as Pine Ridge reached the highest *per capita* murder rate in the United States at that time.

It was in the wake of Wounded Knee and the successive waves of violence and intimidation which followed that a shoot-out occurred on the Jumping Bull ranch on Pine Ridge in June 1975. A Native man, Joe Killright Stuntz, and two FBI agents lost their lives during the incident. Stuntz's death was never investigated, and although US authorities admit today not knowing who actually killed the agents, it was Leonard Peltier who was arrested in Canada on February 6, 1976, falsely extradited, tried and convicted in the US. He has been in jail for the past 22 years serving two consecutive life sentences for a crime he never committed.

Source of irritation and Unity

The siege at Wounded Knee brought interna-
Over next page...

The Gustafsen Lake Crisis: Media Overkill

On February 14, Splitting the Sky, member of the Mohawk Nation, was in Montreal to speak on the Gustafsen Lake crisis in British Columbia during the summer of 1995.

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF JEAN-BASILE TASSÉ

Splitting the Sky dealt in detail with the "smear and disinformation campaign" coordinated by the RCMP to discredit and criminalise Native demands, justify a massive military build-up in the area and defend an eventual armed assault against some twenty Native and non-Native defenders who, for more than a month, stood their ground on unceded Sushwap land.

During the trial which began in July 1996, the defenders actually realised the extent of the means deployed against them, as well as the enormous repercussions on public opinion of statements and remarks made by police authorities during the crisis.

The Truth Gets Ambushed

According to Splitting the Sky, on August 27, 1995, as seventy-five Native Chiefs of the Union of BC Chiefs spoke sympathetically in support of the demands made by the defenders (while rejecting the means used to achieve them), the RCMP reported to the media that two of its officers had been ambushed by "Native terrorists" while driving a Suburban van. The officers reported that their vehicle had been severely damaged by gunfire, in fact, riddled by some 50 bullets, and that only their bullet-proof vests had saved them from certain death.

According to the official version of this incident, presented at the trial, the officer driving the Suburban fired back in a forward direction, to his left and his right, despite his well armed partner sitting in the passenger's seat, who apparently remained completely inactive during the entire ordeal. The driver carried out this impressive maneuver while driving backwards over a distance of one hundred feet

in the direction of enemy fire since the bullets that reached the agents' flack jackets did so through the back of their seats!

An incredible tale indeed, according to Splitting the Sky. In fact, after the crisis and during the 185-

Sheer Madness

In an editorial dated August 30, 1995, in Québec City's *Le Soleil*, Raymond Giroux stated that the August 27 incident at Gustafsen Lake constituted nothing less than "attempted murder against two

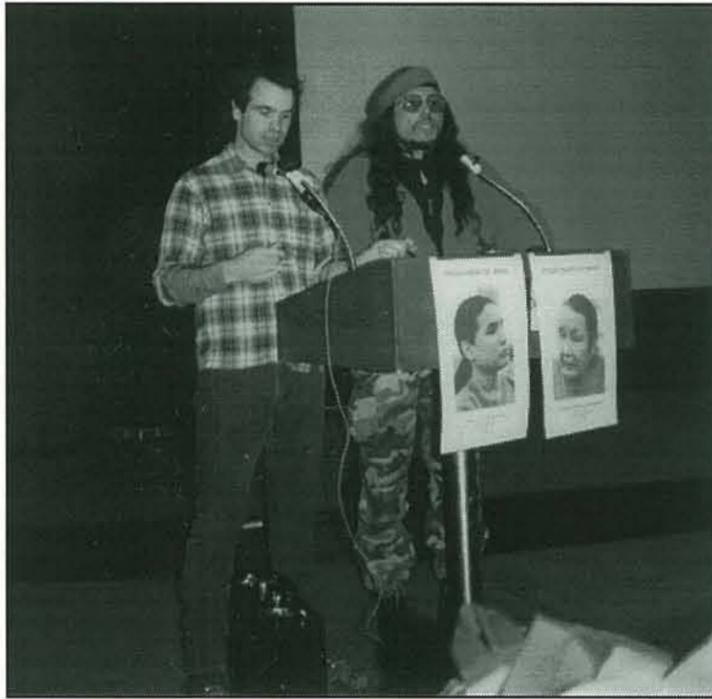


PHOTO: R. PATES

Splitting the Sky, right, spokesperson for an international campaign in favor of a full public inquiry into the Gustafsen Lake crisis and the liberation of Native political prisoners William Jones Ignace and James Pitawanakwat (see bulletin 66-67). While listening to the speaker, many among the sixty or so people who gathered at the University of Concordia couldn't help but recall the media coverage of the "Oka crisis" in 1990.

day trial which followed, the police never once presented a high-caliber projectile which could have linked the defenders to this incident. But, on September 5, 1995, *La Presse* reported: "RCMP Recovers Van Riddled with Bullets Fired by BC Native Rebels." A photograph depicting an almost unrecognisable shape draped in an imposing tarp accompanied statements to the effect that "the vehicle could serve as proof" if ever the "illegal occupation of a private ranch" by Natives "made its way through the courts". The Canadian Press article obligingly reported how, "in vain, RCMP officers had attempted until now to remove the Native occupants peacefully."

RCMP officers, shot in the back and saved by their bullet-proof vests. [...] There, as in Kanesatake (*sic*), according to Mr. Giroux, "dubious characters made use of a traditional claim to behave like criminals."

The same day, on the same page, Michel Vastel headlined his column in *Le Soleil*: "The Law of a Handful of 'Savages'". According to the unhinged columnist, "those people there are taking issue with two symbols of the West's conquest: property rights and the 'Mounties' [...] Paralysed by a false sense of shame with regards to the treatment of Native people, [this sick country] refuses to blink when representatives of the law are shot at."

Lessons for the Future?

Whether Mr. Vastel and his hard-line cronies like it or not, video footage and contradictory testimony from police authorities during the trial clearly demonstrated how this incident and others were fabricated. The accused, their supporters and a few disinterested journalists learned during what would become the longest criminal trial in Canadian legal history that over 1100 hours of video footage were taken by RCMP cameras during the Gustafsen Lake crisis. They also learned that fifty-six of those hours were to be used in the future as a training tool for RCMP officers dealing with a similar "Native crisis" elsewhere in Canada.

According to RCMP Corporal John Ward, seen on video footage with a shifty smile on his face, "it's not the first time we've had to take flak jackets out to the firing range." And, in fact, according to Splitting the Sky, that's exactly what happened on August 27, 1995.

In the same "training" footage, Sergeant Peter Montague, chief RCMP media liaison officer during the Gustafsen Lake crisis, states in a rather trite way that "smear campaigns are our speciality". Having first denied making such remarks, Montague retracted himself when faced with the evidence in Court and tried to brush the whole thing off as a joke.

Blame it on the Trees

On September 6, 1995, *La Presse* reported that the RCMP had deployed four Armored Personnel Carriers at Gustafsen Lake the day before. The APCs were lent to the RCMP by the Canadian Armed Forces and were driven by soldiers because, according to the police, the Native occupiers "had shot at members of an RCMP Emergency Response Team". The RCMP stated that this was "the fifth such incident during which its agents had been the targets of gunfire". It was now "obvious", according to Corporal John Ward, that the APC's were necessary "to protect our officers".

Splitting the Sky stated that the APCs had been at the Canadian Forces Base in Chilliwack since August 28 and that the authorities had fabricated the alleged incident to justify their deployment. In the night of September 4, therefore, the RCMP gathered the media to tell them that the defenders had

fired on a police vehicle out on a reconnaissance mission, disabling its rearview mirror. These allegations were reported as fact by the media, including *La Presse*. Ballistics evidence presented at the trial, however, demonstrated that the mirror in question had more likely been damaged not by a bullet, but by a tree branch...

Much Belated Mea Culpa

Rather naively and very late in the game, journalist Joey Thompson had to admit in an article in the *Vancouver Province* on September 26, 1997, that the media had been used by the RCMP during the summer of 1995 to convey a well orchestrated smear and disinformation campaign against the Gustafsen lake defenders.

He recalled how "members of the media were cherry-picked" and flown out by the RCMP to the Gustafsen Lake area by plane, and how "those reporters who didn't play by the rules were frozen out."

Despite the shaky consciences of a few journalists two years after the fact, however, Splitting the Sky clearly demonstrated how the Canadian media during the Gustafsen Lake crisis consciously and willingly gathered and handed over intelligence information to authorities. The media also transmitted allegations as if they were verified facts in order to influence public opinion and eventually justify a "final solution scenario" to the crisis.#

**For more information, contact:
First Nations Solidarity
Working Group - Concordia
Q-PIRG: (514) 844-7585**

WOUNDED KNEE (SUITE)

tional attention to Pine Ridge and sparked renewed Native sovereignty struggles across North America. The US Pentagon stated in a report, at the time, that the occupation was a "source of irritation if not embarrassment to the administration in general and the Department of Justice in particular."

Oglala elder Gladys Bissonnette, who was present for the 71 days the siege lasted, stated in the end, that if nothing else, "we had one thing - that was unity and friendship amongst [the] sixty-four different tribes..." present during the occupation.

In his book *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* on those turbulent years, author Peter Matthiessen says that the American government never seriously considered the terms of the 1868 Treaty, nor did it ever investigate the corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs which the occupants at Wounded Knee had denounced.

Matthiessen writes that "hearings held in June [1973] by the Senate subcommittee on Indian Affairs accomplished nothing. Despite open violations of the law, committed sometimes in the presence of FBI agents and US marshals, neither Richard Wilson nor his *goons* were ever prosecuted. Instead, more than 500 traditional people were indicted by the FBI in connection with Wounded Knee, and 185 were subsequently indicted by federal grand juries on charges of arson, theft, assault and 'interfering with federal officers'". #

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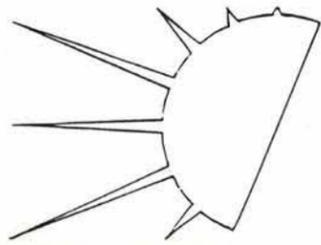
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Daishowa Boycott will spread

Friends of the Lubicon Win in Court

On April 14, the Toronto-based Friends of the Lubicon celebrated a legal victory against a major multinational pulp and paper company, Daishowa Inc. Three years after Daishowa sued the Friends of the Lubicon, the court upheld their right to organize a boycott of Daishowa products in support of the Lubicon Lake Cree Nation of northern Alberta.

After hearing twenty-eight witnesses and having reviewed over 1000 documents over the course of last fall's month-long trial, Ontario court judge James MacPherson concluded that "the manner in which the Friends have performed their picketing and boycott activities is a model of how such activities should be conducted in a democratic society."

Freedom of Speech Upheld

For a decade, according to MacPherson, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has protected "commercial speech", or a corporation's right to address the public in order to market and sell its products, make a profit and therefore harm its competition economically. Therefore, the judge reasons in his written decision, the right of consumers to engage in expression, especially in the absence of economic self-interest, should also be recognized and protected.

According to MacPherson, "if the great principal of freedom of expression protects a corporation, say Daishowa, whose simple message is: 'Here is why you should buy our products', then is there any reason why the same principle should not protect a small group of consumers of Daishowa products, say the Friends of the Lubicon, from saying to fellow consumers: 'Here is why you should not buy Daishowa's products'." In my view", writes the judge, "the answer is clear: there is no reason, in



Amitié Lubicons-Québec organized a press conference on April 24 to announce the victory of the Toronto based group, Friends of the Lubicon, against the Daishowa lawsuit. From left to right: Marc Drouin from Amitié Lubicons-Québec; Reinie Jobin, representative of the Lubicon Lake Cree Elders' Council; and Ed Bianchi, member of the Friends of the Lubicon, Toronto.

logic or in policy, for restraining a consumer boycott."

The judge goes on to reason that "the common law should not erect barriers to expression by consumers where the purpose and effect of the expression is to persuade the listener to use his or her economic power to challenge a corporation's position on an important economic and public policy issue. The plight of the Lubicon Cree", according to MacPherson, "is such an issue, as is Daishowa's connection to it".

Of the six main charges levied against the Friends of the Lubicon by Daishowa when the lawsuit began in 1995, five were categorically rejected by the Court, including intimidation, conspiracy and misrepresentation.

With regards to the tort of defamation, the judge has ordered that the Friends of the Lubicon cease referring to the ambiguous results of a March 8, 1988, meeting between Daishowa and Lubicon representa-

tives in Vancouver. The Court also ordered the Friends to stop using the word "genocide" when referring to the consequences of Daishowa's logging practices on Lubicon land.

The ruling, however, recognizes that "the essential subject matter of everything the Friends of the Lubicon say and do is the plight of the Lubicon Lake Cree in Alberta. According to MacPherson, "there can be little doubt that their plight, especially in recent years, is a tragic indeed desperate one.

The compelling testimony of Chief Bernard Ominayak painted a vivid picture of the disintegration of a proud people who had lived successfully and prospered, on their own terms, for centuries." MacPherson states that "the plight of the Lubicon is precisely the type of issue that should generate widespread public discussion", and that such an issue "deserves respect, protection and a forum".

The ruling, in fact, allows the Friends of the Lubicon to organize informational picket lines and distribute leaflets in front of businesses which refuse to abandon Daishowa products in order to educate "fellow consumers" on the Lubicon issue.

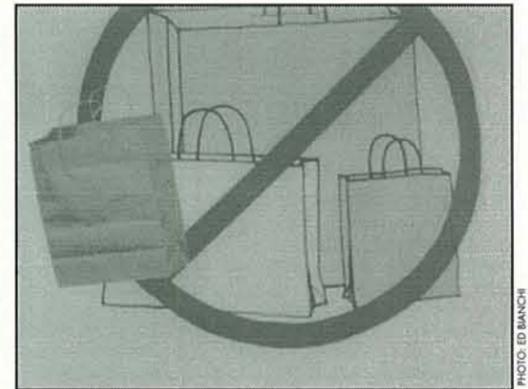
According to MacPherson, Daishowa's arguments in reference to and laws regulating "secondary picketing" cannot be applied in a non-labour context like a consumer boycott.

Daishowa will appeal

As important as the ruling is, it only constitutes a partial victory for the Friends of the Lubicon and their supporters, since Daishowa will appeal the decision to a higher court.

At a press conference in Toronto following the judgment, the Friends of the Lubicon announced that they would again start to contact Daishowa customers in ten days, "if Daishowa still refuses to make the commitment to do the responsible thing". They also added that "the boycott would be bigger and better than before" and that it would "extend across several jurisdictions".

Ten days later, on April 24, the Amitié Lubicons-Québec campaign officially launched a boycott of Daishowa forest products in Québec. For more information: 514-526-9970. #



An Ontario Court rejected a demand for an injunction requested by the multinational company, Daishowa, against the boycott of its products by the Friends of the Lubicon, Toronto. Following this, Amitié Lubicons-Québec launched a boycott campaign against Daishowa products including, among others, their paper bags.

Ipperwash SIX MONTHS OF PRISON FOR WARREN GEORGE

On April 3, 1998, Warren George was sentenced to six months in prison for traffic violations in Ipperwash Provincial Park in Ontario. He was found guilty of criminal negligence for dangerous driving of a car in 1995. "It is great injustice", says his aunt, Cathryn George, "do not talk to me about any respect of law in this case."

Judge Pockele considers George's action to be a part of "violence against the police" when on September 6, 1995, Dudley

George, one of the protesters, was killed by a policeman's bullet. According to another protester, Cecil Bernard George, Warren George simply tried to help him while he was being beaten up by the police, by scaring away the cop with his car.

According to Cathryn George, the actions taken by her nephew are justified because he was "defending the land and graves of his ancestors". Warren George will appeal the sentence.

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His name was Ty

By Terrance Nelson,
member of the Roseau
River Anishinabe First
Nation in Manitoba

Ty Jacobs, an innocent nine year old child and his mother, Connie Jacobs, both members of the Tsuu T'ina First Nation in Alberta, died on Sunday, March 22, killed by a shotgun blast from an RCMP's officer's weapon. In isolation, this incident could eventually be accepted albeit angrily as a tragic event, but there is a disturbing pattern emerging when it involves natives, of Canadian police shooting first and asking questions later.

A Native constable and a Native child and family services worker were also threatened but they didn't respond by killing the mother and child, they withdrew, as they had done earlier. If there is any justice, an impartial inquiry will prove that the killings could have been avoided.

Here in Manitoba, an inquiry proved that J.J. Harper didn't have to die, he didn't have to be killed by Winnipeg Police officer, Robert Cross. J.J. was just walking home, he hadn't done anything wrong. In Ontario, in 1995, Dudley George didn't have to die either, he was just protesting the theft of

There is a disturbing pattern emerging when it involves natives, of Canadian police shooting first and asking questions later.

his people's lands. Again it was the police that over-reacted, shooting first and asking questions later.

Historically, Natives have faced the same pattern of injustice over and over again at the hands of the Canadian government and it's agents, the RCMP. The Manitoba Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People contain overwhelming evidence of injustice against Natives, much of it at the hands of police officers. Time and

time again government officials try to pacify the anger of Natives, and Natives ultimately buy into it.

With much fanfare, Minister of Indian Affairs Jane Stewart recently apologized on behalf of Canada for the treatment of Natives in residential schools. Many years ago, Native children as young as five years old were picked up from their parents homes and put in institutions and subjected to horrendous abuse of every kind imaginable. Parents who resisted were subject to jail, to violent enforcement of Canadian laws and policies. Children who were hidden by their parents were hunted down by the RCMP using German Shepherd dogs. Stewart had promised a new beginning.

Tens of thousands of Native children suffered in residential schools and more recently tens of thousands more Native children were picked up by well meaning child and family services agencies to be placed in white homes. Some were even sold to American and European homes. Throughout these many decades, Native leaders, parents and elders tried to cooperate, rarely ever resisting, trying to believe it was in their child's best interest. Many of those children who went to

residential school, who grew up in white homes away from their people stopped believing.

Connie Jacobs didn't believe that her children would be better off away from her, her love, her home. Ty Jacobs died because he stood by his mother, he was afraid for his mother. For his bravery, Ty's body was punctured by the pellets fired from an RCMP's shotgun. No one knows how long he suffered before he died. No one knows whether he died instantly or suffered in pain in fear for hours.

Where were the warriors? Where were the leaders? Were we co-opted by our jobs as welfare workers, as child and family services workers, as Native constables, as chiefs and councilors? Were we paid to enforce the system upon our own people? The RCMP

asked for assistance in this incident by Native workers. Will we as Natives now cover up for the RCMP for our part in the deaths of Connie and Ty Jacobs?

Ty was a child. A child with dreams, with hopes, a child who loved his mother, his siblings. He is dead at the hands of a police officer. That police officer will show remorse, just like Robert Cross did. Like Robert Cross, he may receive a full pension and live in Denver on permanent disability. Maybe like the police officer who killed Dudley George, he will receive a slap on the wrist from white courts. Maybe we as Native people will co-operate as we always seem to.

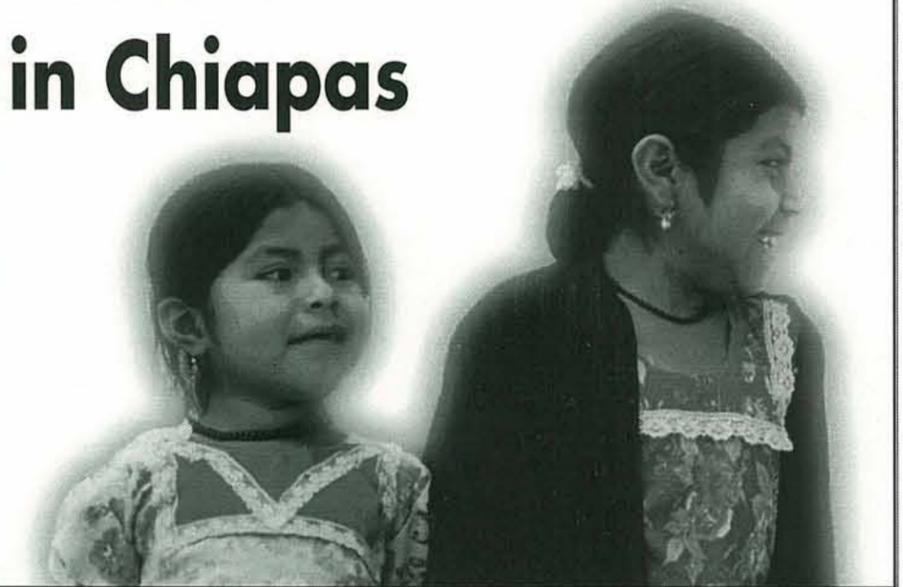
Ty's picture should be made into a poster to be placed in every Band Office and Child Welfare Agency in Canada to remind us that we must try

harder, we must never accept a remorseful mumbling from the minister of Indian Affairs as payment for the injustice so many faceless, nameless children suffered. How much is Ty's life worth? How much is the lives of the tens of thousands of children worth who suffered in residential schools and foster homes?

Unlike the thousands of mothers and fathers who believed in the white people and allowed their children to be taken away from them, Connie Jacobs died defending her right to be a mother. Despite her problems, despite all the past history that will now be used to defend the RCMP officer's actions, remember Ty loved his mother, Ty wanted to defend her, he wanted to stay in his home, with his mother and his brothers and sister. His name was Ty and we must remember that. #

Civil Commission's Report now Available

Violence in Chiapas



From February 15 to 28, 1998, the International Civil Commission on Human Rights in Chiapas traveled to Mexico to gather information and testimonies. Two-hundred-and-ten delegates from eleven different countries, including six from Québec, visited 150 Native communities in Chiapas to speak with Native people displaced by the conflict, Mexican government officials as well as community and Human Rights organizations.

According to the Commission's findings, Chiapas is presently in an advanced and alarming state of profound political and social turmoil. Time and again, the Commission was made aware of the incapacity of governmental institutions in ensuring basic human rights. The Commission also noted to what extent Chiapas in general and Native communities in particular suffer from generalized violence and impunity, due mainly to the presence of over 50,000 federal army soldiers and numerous paramilitary organizations. In Chiapas alone, there are over 15,000 refugees, most of them Indigenous, living in conditions that have been described as inhuman, without any protection, terrorized by the specter of last December's massacre of 45 people in Acteal.

A number of events in the last few weeks indicate that the federal government may be preparing military strikes in its quest to rid itself once

and for all of the Chiapas "problem". The government's position has in fact hardened, thus eliminating the way for any possible negotiations which could bring about a peaceful settlement in the area. A number of State military bodies have banded together in police raids in poorer neighborhoods of San Cristobal de las Casas and in Taniparlas, an Indigenous village. Threats against social organizations have intensified and the government has proceeded with massive expulsions of international observers present in the area. Will the 50,000 government soldiers now occupying Chiapas, invading villages, according to the government, in order to carry out works of charity, be the only witnesses in this imminent war?

The Commission presented its findings in a final report made public at a conference in Montreal on April 27. Sarah Baillargeon and Julie Marquette, two women from Québec who were recently expelled from Chiapas because of their observation work, were also on hand. #

The report is available in French and Spanish for \$12 from the Comité chrétien pour les droits de la personne en Amérique latine: (514) 387-2541. It is also available free of charge for anyone who wishes to copy it on a diskette or who wishes to retrieve it, in its original Spanish version, from the internet: <http://www.pangea.org/encuentro/x-rich>.

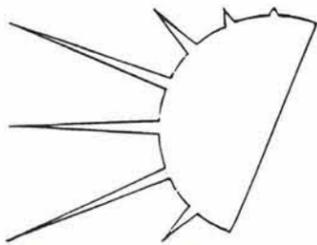


Leonard Peltier's Parole Hearing on May 4

Leonard Peltier's next parole hearing will be on May 4. We encourage people to write letters to the US Parole Commission stressing Leonard's ailing health and the importance of Leonard being with his family and the Native community who he has continued to reach

out to despite his years of incarceration. Please note that letters must state: "For Parole File of Leonard Peltier Reg. No. 89637-132" or else they will be disregarded.

Letters can be sent to: US Parole Commission, 5550 Friendship Blvd., Chevy Chase, MD, USA, 20815, Fax: (301) 492-6694



BIG MOUNTAIN: TIME IS RUNNING OUT

by Adam Gotlieb, special collaboration*

Time is running out on the Din'eh people of Big Mountain, Arizona. A few dozen keepers of the traditional ways are scheduled to be deported by the year 2000, so that Peabody Western Coal can access one of the richest mineral deposits in the U.S. Like the Cree of Lubicon Lake and scores of lesser-known First Nations across North America, the Din'eh have survived genocidal government policy of confinement, starvation, theft, and residential schooling, only to face extinction at the hands of a resource corporation.

Arizona is the U.S. state with the greatest number of distinct Native nations. The most populous of these, and the one with the biggest reservation in the country, are the Din'eh, also known as the Navajo. Surrounded by the Din'eh reservation, lies the Hopi reservation.

The Hopi have been here for thousands of years, the Din'eh since at least before Columbus. Until the 20th century, many Hopi and Din'eh affirm, the two nations co-existed peacefully. They were, and remain, trading partners.

The Long Walk

In 1864, Kit Carson led one of many U.S. Army deportation campaigns against First Nations, from Fort Defiance, Arizona, to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Nine thousand Din'eh were marched over 300 miles away from their homeland. Those who survived *The Long Walk*, as the Din'eh call it, were interned for four years in a prison camp at Fort Sumner. All told, about one-third of the deportees died in the process.

In 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act established the system of Tribal Councils, similar to the Band Council system under Canada's Indian Act. Tribal Councils are the only «official» Native authorities recognized by the U.S. government. They are funded and controlled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and are often nominated and staffed by non-Native representatives of the U.S. government.

This system serves the interests of the U.S. government and U.S. corporations. The Tribal Councils are generally much more open to selling off the land and resources to non-Natives than are the people themselves. Many of the lands Native people were originally confined to, because the U.S. thought they were barren, have turned out to contain much of the country's known deposits of uranium, coal, gold, and other resources vital to the U.S. military and energy corporations. Where 19th-century dispossession was about opening Native land up to settler farmers, the goal now is to give settler corporations access to Native resources. In this way, settlers may have been nothing more than Trojan horses,

and it is hard to see what even they have to gain from the corporate assault on Native lands today.

Coal mine

Big Mountain is a Din'eh sacred site, revered even by other First Nations as one of the most powerful places on the continent. As with the Black Hills of Leonard Peltier's people, the corporations and Tribal Councils see only a hitherto protected gold mine - of coal.

Peabody Western Coal already has access to some of the reserves. Each day, it pumps four billion litres of would-be drinking, sanitation, and irrigation water from this arid region, so that coal can be pipelined to power plants that provide electricity to the largely non-Native populations of Phoenix, Las Vegas and Los Angeles, among others.



PHOTO: ADAM GOTLIEB

Sheep, goats and crafts are the main sources of income for Din'eh «resisters» who eschew dependency on government payments. Under the Accommodation Agreement, however, the Din'eh are only allowed to possess five sheep per person.

Many of these acid rain producing factories are located on Native land.

As with Northern Québec's Cree, Inuit, and Innu who see their ecosystems upended for Southerners' hydro power, the Din'eh of Big Mountain bear the brunt of development's burden, without enjoy-

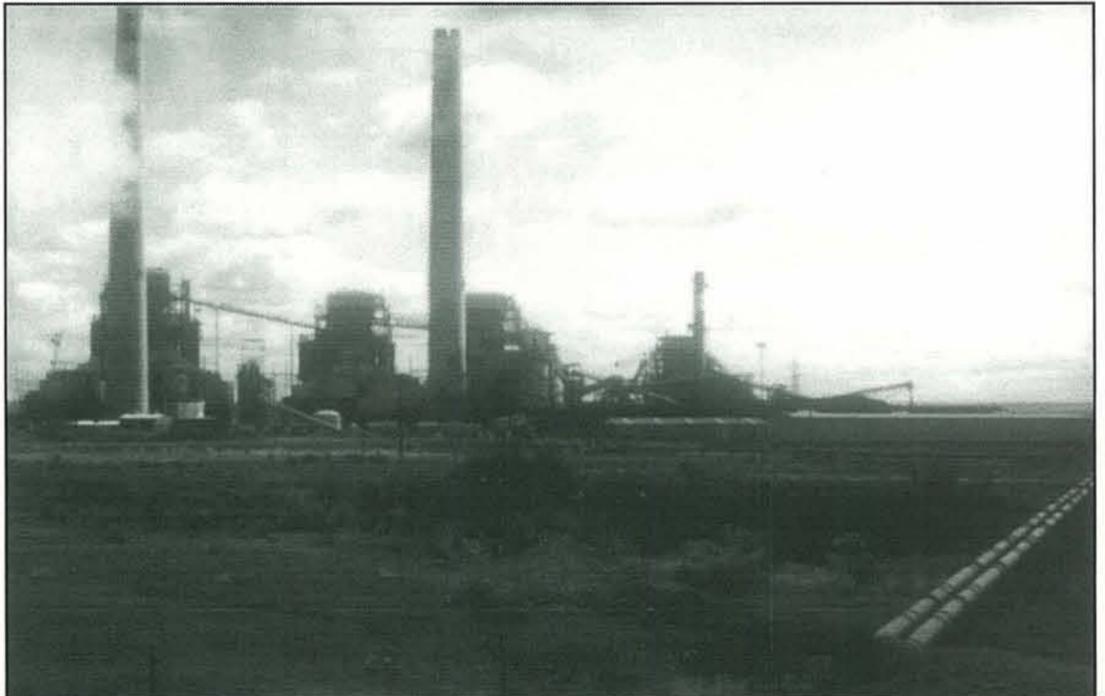


PHOTO: ADAM GOTLIEB

Where 19th-century dispossession was about opening Native land up to settler farmers, the goal now is to give settler corporations access to Native resources.

ing much of its benefit. In fact, the introduction of electricity to Native communities here is not felt by all to be a benefit, since it is part and parcel of the modernizations that are destroying traditional ways of life.

In more recent years, the Hopi Tribal Council claimed that the U.S. stole some of its land and wrong-

Din'eh from Big Mountain to «new lands» in Western New Mexico, lands that are heavily contaminated with carcinogenic uranium mining wastes. The forced migration of the Din'eh cleared the way for Peabody Western Coal to open the largest strip mine in North America now located at Big Mountain.

The 1996 Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute Settlement Act is another messy affair. First, it makes the U.S. look like the peacemaker between «warring» Native nations. In reality, the U.S. government is simply continuing to exert control over a conflict American colonialism created. Second, the Act gives the Hopi Tribal Council control over coal-rich lands which, coincidentally, the Din'eh have refused to sell. Third, Din'eh title to ancestral lands is being extinguished in one generation.

Accommodation Agreement

Din'eh living on the lands reassigned to the Hopi were given until March 1997 to sign an Accommodation Agreement. The agreement allows Din'eh alive today to continue living on their lands until they die, while all future generations will be banished from the lands in question. In the year 2000, the Hopi Tribal Council will begin deporting Din'eh who did not sign the agreement.

But even the last generation of Din'eh allowed to stay is seeing its rights severely infringed. According to the agreement, Din'eh may not keep more than five sheep each, cut trees for firewood, build or renovate housing, or hold ceremonial

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Big Mountain

From previous page...

nies without a permit. Rug and jewellery makers, among them ninety-year-old grandmothers who speak not a word of English, will not be allowed to sell their crafts unless they incorporate.

Sheep are particularly vital to the Din'eh: all parts are used to provide food, clothing, ceremonial objects, and such. Sheep and crafts are the main sources of income for Din'eh «resisters» who eschew dependency on government payments. Under the agreement, however, Din'eh with five sheep will possess assets of \$600 or less.

Thus, the Accommodation Agreement fits neatly into the fold of American history and policy whereby the U.S. government is making it impossible for Native people to survive: eat, be clothed, be sheltered, have income. This is genocide.

Like the Accommodation Agreement itself, the methods being used to force its adoption violate Din'eh rights. If the head of a Din'eh family, generally a grandmother or grandfather, signs the agreement, all members of the family - often as many as 40 or 50 people - are considered to have signed it. It's not surprising that the U.S. and its Native henchmen, particularly the Hopi Rangers, have been focusing their war of intimidation against the Din'eh on the elders.

Din'eh have had their livestock confiscated, been denied permits for gathering firewood, and endured booming low-level military flights over their homes. I experienced such flights at least once a week during my time on the reservation.

Resistance continues

There have been some encouraging developments of late. In

"I think there is no way we can survive if we get moved to some other land away from ours. We are just going to waste away. People tell me to move, but I've got no place to go. I am not moving anywhere, that is certain."

Pauline Whitesinger, Din'eh

early February 1998, the United Nations sent a special *rappporteur* to Big Mountain, to hear the Din'eh testify about the violation of their human rights and religious freedoms. In April 1998, Helena and Glenna Begay and Norman Benally of Big Mountain brought their people's case to the New York International Peoples Tribunal on Human Rights and the Environment.

Also, still pending is the «Manybeads» lawsuit which seeks to guarantee the Din'eh the right to stay at Big Mountain, based on the U.S. Indian Religious Freedom Act which recognizes land and plant use as vital to the exercise of religious freedom.

There are now fewer than fifteen Din'eh families continuing to resist deportation and they are surviving in extremely difficult conditions. There is a need for volunteers to act as observers and to herd sheep, which is physically demanding for many elders and prevents them from organizing their resistance.

Pressure is needed on the Hopi Tribal Council, the U.S. government, and the government of Canada, a major U.S. trading partner, to allow the Din'eh to live in peace in perpetuity on their traditional lands and to allow retraction of Accommodation Agreement consents signed under duress. #

* ADAM GOTLIEB spent time among the Din'eh in Arizona from January to March of this year.

The *Flagstaff Big Mountain Support Network* places volunteers at Big Mountain. It can be reached at (520) 226-9101 or by email at fbmsn@hotmail.com. Updates on Big Mountain can be heard in Montreal on CKUT 90.3 FM's *Native Solidarity News*, Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m.

Montreal Benefit for Big Mountain

Saturday, July 4 1998 at 8 p.m.

**Hotel 2 Tango
173 A, Van Horne
(corner Park Avenue)
Metro Outremont**

Recommended contribution \$7

Showing of "Broken Rainbow", a film on the Din'eh of Big Mountain, music by Critical Mass, Norman Nawrocki and The Snitches

Food and Drink available. Alcohol-free event.

For more information:
(514) 848-0465

Boycott of Daishowa Products Comes to an End

Lubicon Lake Cree Accept Daishowa's Commitment

On June 11, Mr. Bernard Ominayak, Chief of the Lubicon Lake Cree of Alberta wrote Tokiro Kawamura, President of Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd (DMI) to accept the company's June 9 commitment to stay out of Lubicon land until the Cree have reached a land settlement.

"Although it's been a long time coming", wrote Chief Ominayak, "the Lubicons acknowledge and accept DMI's public commitment that Daishowa, its related companies and their contractors, will not harvest or purchase timber from [our] approximately 4,000 square mile (10,000 square kilometre) area [...] until Lubicon lands and claims, including resource management and harvesting rights, as well as fish, wildlife and environmental concerns, have been settled. I have forwarded a copy of your letter to Lubicon sup-

porters advising them of our acknowledgement and acceptance and requesting that they bring the boycott of Daishowa paper products to an end."

The Lubicon Lake Cree have asked for such a commitment since 1988 when Daishowa obtained logging rights to 29 000 square kilometers of northern Alberta, including the entire Lubicon traditional territory

Successful Boycott Campaign

Kawamura wrote the Lubicon on May 20 to make a similar commitment which, however, only defined Lubicon land as an "area of concern." On the same day, Daishowa wrote the Friends of the Lubicon in Ontario asking them to put an end to their highly successful boycott campaign. The boycott began again on April 24, ten

days after Daishowa's application for a permanent injunction against the boycott was thrown out of court in Ontario.

Since then, the boycott has spread to Québec, Manitoba, the US, Europe and Japan. Before it could be called-off, the Lubicon asked Daishowa if "area of concern" referred to their entire traditional territory, not a much smaller area which may eventually be put aside for a reserve, if such is ever the agreement with the federal and provincial governments.

Daishowa is now expected to drop its appeal of the April 14 ruling in Ontario. After their successful boycott campaign, Lubicon supporters will now focus their attention on the federal government. #

Information:
Amitié Lubicons-Québec
(514) 526-9970

Residential Schools

UN affiliated organization looks into abuse

From June 12 to 14, the International Human Rights Association of American Minorities, a consultative body affiliated to the United Nations, was in Vancouver to take part in a tribunal looking into numerous cases of violence and abuse against Native children in some of British Columbia's eighteen residential schools.

The Association said it was "disturbed by repeated eyewitness accounts of murders and other atrocities in BC native residential schools." Relying on more than seven hours of previous testimony and documented cases, the UN-affiliated organization decided to "investigate allegations of murder, torture and medical experimentation on Native children" at the schools.

During two days of hearings, a dozen Native eyewitnesses contradicted what residential school officials continue to deny to this day. On May 25, over thirty officials of the United, Catholic and Anglican churches, the RCMP, and the federal government, including Prime



Minister Jean Chrétien, were ordered to appear before the tribunal by way of "Diplomatic Dispatches and Summons".

The Association's final report, its conclusions and recommendations are expected at the end of June and will be forwarded directly to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

First-ever class-action lawsuit

In the meantime, five Native survivors of the Fort Alberni residential school in British Columbia presently touring Canada were in Montreal and Kahnawake on June 5 to raise awareness about residential schools and to speak of the first-ever class-action lawsuit in Canada against the Churches and the federal government.

Thirty plaintiffs from various Native nations launched the lawsuit back in February in Nanaimo. All of them attended the Fort Alberni Residential School on Vancouver Island during the 1950s and 1960s, and all of them were abused by Arthur Henry Plint who, from 1948 to 1968, was responsible for supervising the male students at the United Church administered school.

Among the first to face criminal charges in Canada for mistreating Native youth, Plint, now 80 years of age, was found guilty of 18 counts of abuse in 1995 and 1997. The judge who sentenced Plint to 11 years in jail for violating the students' physical integrity called him a "sexual terrorist".

On June 4, in a preliminary decision in the case, the Supreme Court of BC ruled that the Churches and the federal government equally share responsibility for the tragic events which occurred in residential schools in Canada for more than a century. According to the precedent setting ruling, both are liable for damages to be assessed as the lawsuit proceeds.

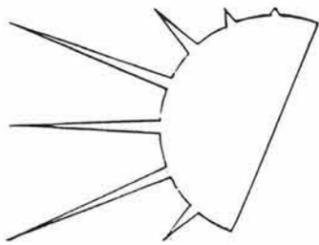
One of the main objectives of the class-action suit in British Columbia is to demonstrate once and for all that the residential school system was not only "a system of abusers, but an abusive system". Like the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' report in 1996 noted, and as the recent BC Supreme Court ruling underlines, abuses in residential schools are more a matter of institutional responsibility than mere individual fault.

In fact, Peter Grant, lawyer for the plaintiffs, asks: "How could these schools have been such a haven for pedophiles if they hadn't been set up by Ottawa expressly to destroy aboriginal culture by getting at the children?"

A favourable outcome in this historic case could allow the thousands of Native residential school survivors in Canada to launch one or a number of national class-action lawsuits against the Canadian government and the Churches in the future. #

Evelyn Roberts DeBarbieri 1922-1998

The Regroupement wishes to pay its last respects to one of our first and very committed members. We wish to offer all our condolences to her family.



Churchill Falls

Another Dam in Nitassinan

On January 11, the Innu of Labrador withdrew from talks with the Newfoundland government on the \$10 billion Lower Churchill hydro-development project, the second largest construction project in the world after the Three Gorges dam in China. Formal negotiations between Newfoundland and Québec began in March 1998 though no results have been announced. The Innu have said repeatedly that the project will not go ahead without their consent.

The first Churchill Falls hydro-project is located 400 kilometers north-east of Sept-Îles, in an area commonly referred to today as Labrador. Built at the end of the 1960s and completed in 1974, it was then the largest hydro-electric project in North America. No environmental impact study was ever carried out even if the falls in question were higher than Niagara Falls and perhaps more spectacular given their wilderness setting. The falls' roar could be heard for ten miles.

Today, downstream from the dam, the raging, tumbling falls have been reduced to a trickle. Upstream, the waters from a watershed as large as New-Brunswick converge into the stagnant Smallwood Reservoir, 6,700 square kilometers of flooded islands, lakes and coniferous forests.

In 1977, a study of mercury levels in the Innu population of Sheshatshit discovered elevated mercury levels in 37% of the indi-

viduals surveyed. The government responded with a press release advising the population not to consume more than half a kilo of fish a week. Today, signs written in a number of languages and scattered along the river still communicate similar warnings.

The lion's share of the 5400 megawatts of electricity produced at Churchill Falls goes straight to Hydro-Québec under the terms of an agreement signed in 1969 by Joey Smallwood and Maurice Duplessis. The contract guarantees Hydro-Québec an extremely low buying price for the power until the year 2041. That power is then sold by Hydro to the United States at a price ten-times superior to the initial buying price, allowing Hydro to collect \$ 600 million a year in profits from the deal.

Hugh Grant, an economist at the University of Toronto, has estimated that Churchill Falls I has already generated over \$ 14 billion



Los Dos Amigos. Five-hundred years after John Cabot stumbled onto Newfoundland, Lucien Bouchard (left), visibly shaken, and Brian Tobin (right), sporting seal-skin attire, discover the Innu in Nitassinan. A brutal awakening for both provincial premiers.

been told about the planned flooding," he told the minister, "I would have made arrangements to move my father's body somewhere else."

Press Conference Of The Century

In light of this, we can begin to understand why on March 9, 1998, more than a hundred Innu men, women and children from the Québec North-Shore and Labrador travelled to Churchill Falls to interrupt the announcement of a framework agreement between Québec and Newfoundland on a new hydro-project slated for the Lower Churchill River. It was certainly a memorable day, truly unforgettable for the Innu and their supporters, a day which sent shock waves rippling through Québec and St-John's for weeks if not months in part because of the exorbitant cost of the public relations nightmare which ensued.

More than \$1.4 million of public funds were spent on the press conference alone. Fourteen planes were chartered, filled with politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen and more than fifty journalists, all invited to Churchill Falls for a well-scripted event which was thoroughly debunked by the presence of Native protesters.

According to Germaine Mistenapeo, from the organization Mamit Innuat, it was the Innu women present on the road leading from the small Churchill Falls airport that day who gave the order to block the provincial premiers on their way to a very important press conference... Not only did Brian Tobin and Lucien Bouchard have to turn back, but they had to leave the site of the demonstration on foot since their vehicle had been blocked from going anywhere for over an hour. They eventually made it to Churchill Falls by helicopter,

Over next page...

in electricity sales. Hydro-Québec received at least 88 per cent of that, with the rest going to other investors and the province of Newfoundland. Hydro-Québec profits from this lucrative transaction played a major role in financing the first phase of the James Bay hydro-developments.

According to the centuries-old custom, the Innu were never consulted nor compensated for the losses they incurred because of Churchill Falls I, including the loss or damage of some forty hunting territories and at least two major burial sites. Nor have they seen a single cent from hydro profits made on their land. During an agitated meeting in Sheshatshit in June 1989 with federal Indian Affairs minister Pierre Cadieux, Innu resident Simeo Rich told the minister that his father is one of the people buried under the Smallwood Reservoir. "If I had

Solidarity with the citizens of Val-St-François

On October 22, 1998, an Innu delegation of more than a dozen people made its way to the Eastern Townships in support of the citizens of Val-St-François and their struggle against a hydro transmission line relay between the Hertel and des Cantons power stations. The 735-kilovolt power line was imposed on the population by government decree following the January 1998 ice storm and crosses prime agricultural land. According to Guy Bellefleur, spokesperson for Mamit Innuat, "we share a common struggle. We believe the time is right for the Innu and for Quebeckers to take this opportunity and begin a period of reflection and of solidarity with regards to major environmental issues."

Elder Philippe Piétacho was also pleased to support the citizens of Val-St-François. "I thought we were the only victims of Hydro. I see now that it harms a lot of people. I've seen the land that will be affected by the power line and it's a shame. I encourage the citizens to persevere in their struggle and I am happy to support them, because we have to help each other. [...] I was pleased to speak with a white elder," he said. "He spoke to me of his worries. He told me: 'I live here now because it was my grand-father's land'. Today in this hall, he is here with his family, his children and his grand-children. I am happy to see that he respects this land. It is a similar situation for the Innu."

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Second wind for the Regroupement



PHOTO: SÉBASTIEN BOUCHARD

One of many demonstrations organized by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones in support of the Mohawk Nation in the early 1990s.

"You are probably asking yourself what's going on with the Regroupement... Not only were we silent during the events in Listiguj at the end of last summer, but our bulletin has not been published since June." We sent a letter last November which began with these words of introduction, inviting our members to a meeting to evaluate the Regroupement's work and past activities and to see how the organization might continue supporting Native Nations in the future with the increased participation of a greater number of people.

Founded on July 11, 1990, the day the Sûreté du Québec attacked the Mohawk territory of Kanehsatake, the Regroupement has always wanted to be an action-oriented organization. It has wanted to actively support Native struggles, from the legal battle waged by

Mohawk political defendants in 1992 to the Innu struggle against the SM-3 dam in Nitassinan in 1993-1994 or the actual Lubicon Lake Cree land rights struggle. For the last few years, however, the number of Regroupement activists has decreased making it difficult for us to work beyond the publication of our monthly news bulletin.

On November 18, a number of long-standing members of the Regroupement as well as some new faces took part in interesting discussions on the efforts required to keep the Regroupement active. A number of recent issues touching Native peoples were raised and talked about in order to see how the Regroupement could get involved in the future. That meeting was followed by another on November 25 to assess our present mandate and objectives as well as the re-

sources available for our continued implication in the following areas of concern:

1. Communication

We have decided to keep publishing the bulletin since it has been an important source of information available on a regular basis to many people (60 issues in eight years). It seems important for us to acquire an email address with the idea of eventually creating our own web site. A flyer to be written will summarize the Regroupement's objectives and history as well as the means available to us to support Native communities. We plan to renew our contacts with alternative and Native media in order to exchange information and we will broaden and update our present mailing list.

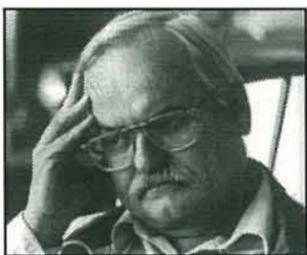
2. Links with Native Nations

We would like to follow major developments taking place on Native land more closely, including the Voisey's Bay mining development and the Churchill Falls hydro project in Nitassinan, and clear-cut logging issues on Lubicon Lake Cree land in Alberta and Algonquin land in La Vérendrye park, etc. We would also like to maintain and develop links with grassroots initiatives in Native communities such as the Innu women's shelter in Sheshatshit, Nitassinan. We would like to keep showing our support to the Mohawk Nation and support struggles lead, for example, by the Micmacs of Listiguj. We would also like to strengthen our ties with other organizations and groups which are supporting Native struggles here and abroad.

3. Education

Apart from getting people moving in support of Native issues, which remains the Regroupement's preferred area of intervention, we'd like to organize a series of events with the objective of raising public awareness in general, and union and student support in particular: conferences, exchanges, in depth publications on different issues. We'd like to develop an education campaign as well as the tools and materials necessary to reach

Pierre Vallières 1938-1998



In Québec, during the summer of 1990, few voices were heard among intellectuals and artists expressing support for the Mohawk resistance and fewer still distanced themselves from a growing racist current within a part of the general population. Writer and activist Pierre Vallières was a notable exception.

On numerous occasions in 1990, his voice resonated, free and powerful, during demonstrations organized by the newly formed Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones. Spoken from his heart and mind, his words expressed the anger, the shame and the solidarity that many others felt but had a hard time articulating for themselves.

That definitive voice passed away on December 22. His writings remain however and will be read for a long time to come. Numerous pages from Pierre Vallières' last essay, *Le devoir de résistance* (A commitment to resistance), are devoted to the rights of First Nations, "peoples of origin, damned among the damned, martyred and silenced, peoples forcibly locked away on inhuman reserves, raising their heads, again finding their voice to demand that their thousand-year-old sovereignty be recognised within the common American space."

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Churchill Falls (continued)

flying over the peaceful blockade, in order to hold an improvised press conference in a place they hoped the Innu wouldn't find. But the Innu arrived on the scene and interrupted the premiers' photo-op.

Following the media debacle at Churchill Falls, Yves Rock from Mani-Utenam wrote in an editorial in the monthly *Innuvelle*: "When premiers Bouchard and Tobin announced their proposed dam project they instead discovered Innu of people willing to defend their rights, and an elder who held a sign in her hands which read: 'Our land is not for sale'. After all," writes Mr. Rock, "the land belongs to the Innu: some have passed-on, others are still alive, but the vast majority are not yet born."

Mega Partnership

The terms of the Churchill Falls I contract were a serious point of contention between Québec and Newfoundland since the contract's signature. Newfoundland even fought the contract all the way to the Supreme Court. Numerous meetings took place to try and bring the provinces together on related issues and future developments along the Churchill River.

In January 1997, while in China on a Team Canada trade mission, Brian Tobin and Lucien Bouchard decided to meet and begin talks on their "gigantic project". Talks on the future of the Lower Churchill River between the premiers continued behind closed doors for two year and, faithful to the tradition, they systematically excluded the Innu from any of the proceedings and stonewalled their requests for information on the matter.

After the media began relating discussions between the two provinces on the Lower Churchill hydro-development project in December 1997, Kati Rich, spokesperson for the Innu of Labrador and then-president of the organization Innu Nation, wrote the provincial premiers on January 15, 1998, to advise them that any new development project in Nitassinan required Innu consent before it could go ahead. On January 27, Tobin answered that no negotiations were underway between Québec and Newfoundland. Less than three weeks later, the media announced that both provinces had in fact achieved a framework agreement leading to negotiations on the second largest construction project in the world.

Churchill Falls II

The project will increase the present generating capacity of the Churchill Falls complex by 1000 megawatts by diverting 25% of the St-Jean River and 50% of the La Romaine River, two important salmon rivers located on the Québec North-Shore. A huge reservoir will be created, flooding 1100 square kilometers of land and existing waterways in an area located 150 kilometers north of the Innu community of Mingan. Water from this reservoir will power a new generating station at Churchill Falls.

Another dam will be built at Gull Island, located on the Lower Churchill River, in order to produce an additional 2200 megawatts of electricity. The dam will measure 100 meters in height and 1.3 kilometers in length! The building of a third dam at Muskrat Falls, to produce 800 more megawatts, is also being looked at, but cost estimates for such a development seem prohibitive at the present time. An underwater power line, under the Straight of Belle-Isle, will be constructed to transport 1000 megawatts of power to the island of Newfoundland. A twelfth 735 kilovolt power line will also be built in Québec, linking the project directly to the American market where the project's remaining 2000 megawatts will be sold.

On March 10, 1998, Hydro-Québec's Chief Executive Officer André Caillé confirmed that demand for electricity in Québec has already been met and that electricity from the Lower Churchill project was meant for the American market. Considering the costs of the Lower Churchill development, it hardly seems justified especially in light of a December 1997 Sondagem survey which revealed that 53% of Québécois opposed the construction of new dams for the sole purpose of energy exports to the United States.

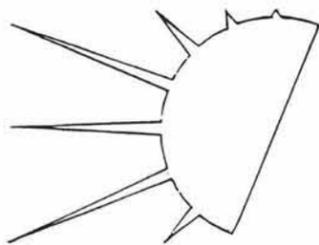
Including the dams proposed in this latest project, some twenty dams and major river diversions will have been built in Nitassinan since the 1950s in the absence of any scientific studies documenting the cumulative impacts of such developments on the environment or Native societies. Such rampant development continues today as the people most affected remain the last to know what's really going on.

At the end of April 1998, the Innu lodged a formal complaint before the International Peoples Tribunal on Human and Environmental Rights in New York, an organization affiliated to the United Nations. In their claim, the Innu assert that with respect of low-level military flights, the Voisey's Bay mine development and hydro-electric development in general, the Innu people are "constantly deprived of their resources to the detriment of their social and economic development and to the detriment of their environment." The Tribunal has no coercive powers, but a decision favourable to the Innu could well launch an international offensive against this latest Churchill Falls hydro-project.

schools, a project we hope to develop in a number of stages over a prolonged period of time.

As you can see, we are not about to run out of ideas. Since November, the Regroupement has been able to count on a growing number of people interested in these and other related issues. But we are always

looking for more input from individuals interested in getting involved and giving a hand with the tasks we have already mentioned. If you are interested in these interesting projects, don't be shy, there's lots of room to get involved. For more information, contact us at (514) 982-6606, extension 2242.



Guatemala

For an End to the Massacres...

Matteo Pablo is a Guatemalan of Mayan ancestry, of the Chuj ethnic group. He left his country following a massacre perpetrated by the armed forces in his village, Petanac, on July 14, 1982. For fourteen years, he lived in a refugee camp in Mexico before coming to settle in Canada in 1996. In a couple of weeks, he will be returning to Guatemala to attend the exhumation of the victims of the massacre and to provide his testimony as a survivor.

Matteo, why is it important to proceed with the exhumation?

People must know what happened at the international level. This must not be repeated. There were more than 400 native villages destroyed and massacred in Guatemala. Even at the international level, no one knows that there was a massacre in my village. It is not talked about.

The fact of attending the exhumation will make you relive some difficult moments. Are you apprehensive about your return to Guatemala?

Yes, but it is what I want to do. I want many people to know what happened. I feel it is my duty to denounce what happened and that gives me strength. There were 16 survivors of the massacre. My brother and I are the only ones who speak Spanish well and who are politically involved. So I must go to testify.

What did you witness on the day of the massacre?

The day before, a woman from San Matteo Ixtatan came to warn us that there had been a massacre of 46 persons in Ceve, a village near Petanac. But the people of my village did not want to run away. Everything they possessed was there: their animals, their lands; they didn't know where to go...

So the men decided to meet near the flag and wait to talk with the soldiers. In the army's eyes, those villages which had the flag were with the government and those which didn't were with the guerrillas. They wanted to protect themselves by meeting near the flag. When the time came to go to the meeting, I did not go. I was afraid. Five minutes before the army arrived, I went away from the village. They surrounded the village and houses. They tied the men's hands, and then they had them go into a house one by one and killed them when they were each inside. They went to find the women and children and herded them into a wooden house. Then they set it on fire...they burned them...they killed 78 people. I came back to the village about 4 o'clock in the afternoon... I didn't stay long. I was in



Matteo Pablo

shock and fled to a nearby village. The people of the other villages warned me that the army was looking for the survivors of the massacre. I was on the run for a week before crossing over into Mexico....

Why was it that your village in particular was targeted?

At the end of the 1970's, a mining company had started to make a trench in order to build a road in the mountains near the village. This was destroying people's lands and crops and, despite promises, no one was receiving any compensation for the losses. So we started to protest the road works and demonstrate against the company.

One day, many people from several villages met to demonstrate. The second day of the demonstration, it was not a representative of the company who came to speak with us but representatives of the army. They had come to try to convince us that the company's operations would benefit us. And the work continued. It was during this period that the guerrillas started to make armed propaganda and they burned the electrical installations of the company. So the army started accusing us of being guer-

rillas. But all that happened a number of years ago, three or four years before the massacre. And there were massacres in villages that had nothing to do with all that... So it is difficult to know if there is a direct link with that or not.

Are people afraid of threats if they participate in the event?

The ones who risk being threatened are my brother and I... the ones who will speak up front. But I do not think that there is a danger for those who will only be present... I am also a bit worried about papers because I do not have a Canadian passport and I don't have a Guatemalan passport either. So I hope I don't have problems leaving the country afterwards.

But it is still a protection to be accompanied by foreign observers...

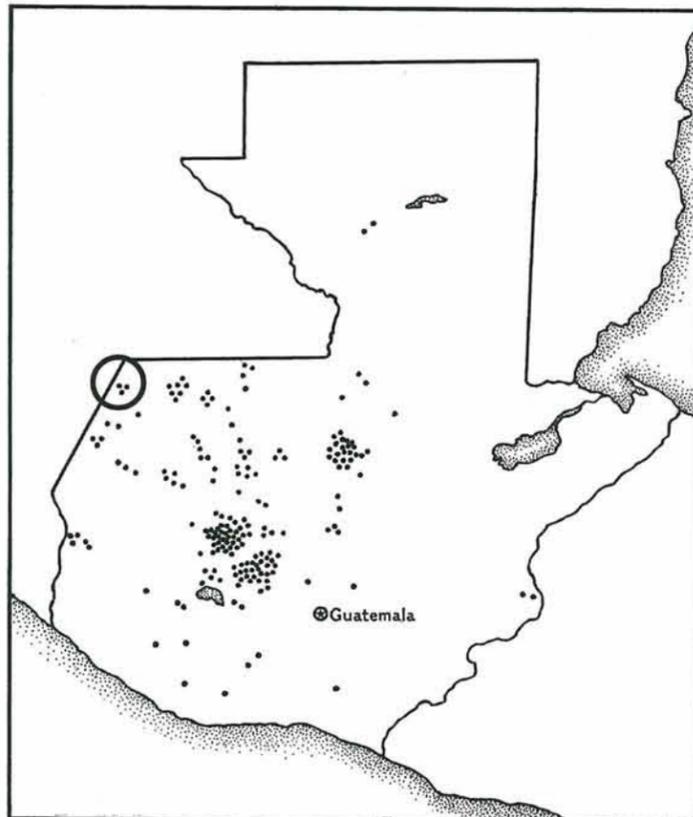
Yes, but when the army wants to do something, it doesn't respect anyone... With the peace accord, it's not as bad... But one just has to look at what they did to Archbishop Juan Gerardi recently. He defended the rights of natives and denounced the army and he was assassinated. Officially, he was bitten by a dog!

There was another exhumation recently in Rio Negro which made it possible to prove that there was in fact a massacre and certain persons were charged following that and condemned to death. What do you think of that?

It is good that there were trials, but unfortunately only those who pulled the triggers were charged and not the military officials responsible for the crimes, those who were in authority. Soldiers in Guatemala are enlisted by force. They are brainwashed, they are told that their mother, their father, their spouse have no importance. They are told, "If you kill so much, you'll be given so much." And the soldiers will kill their own families, their own friends.

But you believe that it is still worthwhile to denounce these massacres...

It is worth speaking because no one speaks, history continues, the repression continues. Why has there been so much suffering for so many years in Guatemala without anyone talking about it? There had not been an international presence before 1992. It is the army which holds all of the power in Guatemala. The colonels buy off people so that they will defend the interests of the rich. And they use intimidation. In 1982, in the "municipio" of San Matteo Ixtatan, the soldiers massacred a number of persons accused of being part of the guerrillas and they hung them in public in order to "make an ex-



Sites of massacres perpetrated by the Guatemalan army between 1978 and 1983. Petanac is one of the three villages encircled.

ample" and to intimidate people. And that still continues today. It is said, "We made peace, now keep quiet!"

Interview conducted by Patricia Desgagnés, February 1999.

"LIKE ANIMALS IN A ZOO"

We took this opportunity to ask Matteo Pablo what he thinks about the situation of native people here.

"What I realize by living here is that natives are treated everywhere the same. Like animals in a zoo, they are left outside of society. They are not taken into consideration. They are considered like second class humans. But they are human beings and are entitled to respect and dignity. With understanding and respect, there would not have been uprisings.

All of history is marked by the repression of the Indian peoples. Since the Conquest, the arrival of the Spaniards, the indigenous people were victims of massacres, in Latin America and in North America. And it continues today. I am telling only about the Indians of Guatemala, but it is the history of all places where there are Indians. For example, in Guatemala, slavery is legalized. Indigenous manpower is paid a minimum wage, so that it can be said that there is no longer slavery. They earn only money to eat, but they cannot think about building a house. How is it possible that this has lasted for hundreds of years? This is unjust. The responsibility of other countries in these massacres must also be recognized. The fact that they close their eyes...

The United States which sells weapons to the army... Who wrote the Charter of Human Rights? The same countries who violate it. It was done to wash their hands, to say that many things have been done, but under the table the opposite is done. It is a reflection by society that is needed. We must also become conscious of the importance of the earth. It is the basis of everything. Once I was told that the basic problem with natives was not the land, but an economic problem... How can one separate that?

We must reflect on the problems of our societies by trying to look ahead, to think about the next generations so that it doesn't happen that everything explodes if everything is oriented towards wealth. I think it is very important that people think more about this."

William Jones Ignace released on parole

The last remaining political prisoner from the RCMP siege at Gustafsen Lake [Ts'peten], British Columbia has been freed. Shuswap elder William Jones Ignace (Wolverine) was paroled in late January 1999 after spending more than three years in prison.



Despite often harsh prison custody, Wolverine remained true to his principles, declaring to the media upon his release, "Who's really in the wrong? This is Indian land. [The government] is in denial. They're in a state of denial. All you have to do is look at the law." He added, "How can you fight people who aren't honourable?" [The Globe and Mail, January 29, 1999, A6, *Native activist free, still defiant*].

The Longest Criminal Trial in Canadian History

In the summer of 1995, native sovereignists and their supporters re-occupied a parcel of land they considered sacred at Gustafsen Lake, 450 kilometers northeast of

Vancouver. The Ts'peten Defenders also asserted their right, in law, to unceded native territory in British Columbia, citing the 1763 Royal Proclamation and other precedents. As a result of their actions, and

their willingness to defend themselves, the Defenders were subject to the largest paramilitary operation in RCMP history and subsequently the longest criminal trial in Canadian history.

The less than two-dozen remaining defenders at Gustafsen Lake in 1995 were the victims of a immense military siege that involved over 70,000 rounds of bullets (some of which were illegal "hollow points"), armoured personnel carriers, tanks, grenades and land mines, as well as "psychological operations" aided by American FBI specialists. The Ts'peten Defenders were also the subjects of a concerted "smear campaign" undertaken by the RCMP. Indeed, it was revealed at trial that the RCMP Media Liaison for BC had said on an internal RCMP video, "Smear campaigns are our speciality."

Acquitted of the most serious charges against them by a jury, the bulk of the Ts'peten Defenders were found guilty of charges ranging from "mischief to property", simple mischief and possession of firearms. Wolverine and James Pitawanakwat (OJ) were singled out and found guilty of "mischief endangering life." Like Wolverine, OJ has also been paroled recently.

Independent and Impartial Public Inquiry

Despite their release, the smears and intimidation continue against the Defenders. A BC NDP cabinet minister publicly opposed Wolverine's release on parole, stating that the 67 year-old elder should not be freed to "terrorize the people of the Cariboo." Also, parole officers recently threatened to re-imprison Wolverine if he accepted a speaking invitation at a community College in Kamloops. This threat was made despite the fact that Wolverine was released without any gag orders.

The Ts'peten Defenders continue

to demand an independent and impartial public inquiry to investigate all the events at Gustafsen Lake in 1995, a request which has been formally supported by the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones along with dozens of other native and solidarity groups. In addition to the excessive tactics of the RCMP, the Defenders are hoping an inquiry will also investigate the role of the provincial government in the repression at Gustafsen Lake. Not surprisingly, all calls to date for a public inquiry have been rejected by the NDP government.

Erratum

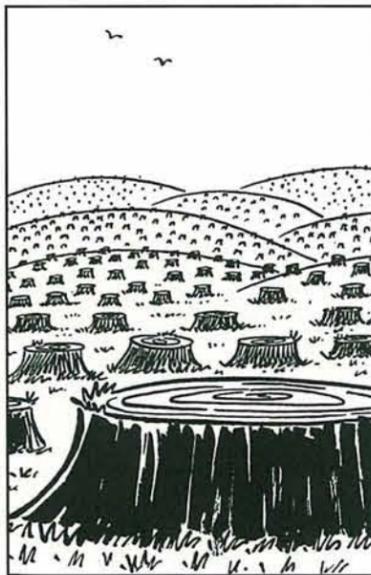
Another reason to not believe the media!

In our last bulletin (February 1998), the Regroupement en Solidarité avec les Autochtones (RSA) reprinted a major error made by the major newspapers in their coverage of the failed press conference on the Lower Churchill hydroelectric development project. The RSA repeated that it was the Union Nationale government of Maurice Duplessis who, in 1969, signed an agreement with Newfoundland on the development of Churchill Falls. However, Duplessis had already been dead for 10 years! We apologize to our readers for both imitating the mainstream press ... and bringing Duplessis back to life.

Information Evening

"No" to the clear-cutting

In December 1997, the Algonquins of the Great Lake, in Parc de la Verendrye blocked access to logging giant Domtar, preventing them from clear-cutting on their territory. After a moratorium imposed by the Quebec government, the Algonquins have finally signed an agreement.



Come meet

Jimmy Papatie, chief of the Great lake Algonquin community

Tuesday, March 23 at 7: 30 pm

at 3680 Jeanne-Mance St., 4th floor (métro Place-des-Arts)

organized by Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones (514) 982-6606 # 2242

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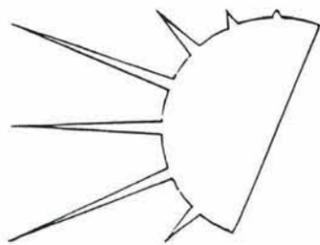
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Meeting with Jimmy Papatie

A plea for the future of the Great Garden¹

It is a vision of the future based on the values of responsibility, sharing, respect and understanding between two peoples who share the same territory that we retain from the March 23 meeting with Jimmy Papatie, chief of the Algonquin community of Great Lake Victoria, which is situated in de la Vérendrye Park in Abitibi.

At the invitation of the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, Jimmy Papatie came to speak of the realities of the Anishnabek (Algonquins) and of their relations with the "foreigners" exploiting their territory. He spoke with great simplicity and obvious pleasure. His speech was very clear (and clarifying); it centred on renewed hope for the future of the community and of the continuation of negotiations undertaken with the Québec government following an agreement signed last August.

"That's enough!" said the people of the Algonquin community of Great Lake Victoria one fine morning in early December, 1997. Not only was the region being overlogged after more than one and half centuries of exploitation of natural resources at their expense, but they had just received threats of legal action from a forestry company for having cut 200 trees to build houses. In addition, and after a long struggle, they had just learned that the limits to new logging permits by the government to forestry companies had once more been slapped aside in the name of the laws in effect.

After having unsuccessfully requested negotiations on the management of the territory for the umpteenth time, they used stronger methods. For more than a week, the community blocked the Baie des Sables road, the only access route for thirteen forestry companies operating in the Great Garden. The message was clear, "You will leave now and there must be negotiations to decide what will be done with the territory before everything is destroyed."

Following this confrontation, the government asked the forestry companies to withdraw for "security



PHOTO: PATRICIA DESGAGNE

Algonquins had received threats of legal action from a forestry company for having cut 200 trees to build houses.

reasons". "It should have justified this request," said Jimmy Papatie sadly, "by invoking the necessity to sit down and negotiate with the

Algonquins on guidelines for developing the lands, but it didn't."

Even so, this event led to a round of discussions involving the Ministry of Natural Resources, the forestry companies and the community of Great Lake which resulted on August 4, 1998 in the signing of a protocol of agreement between Québec and Great Lake. "The year that the discussions lasted," explains Jimmy Papatie, "was the only year of the last one hundred and fifty in which the Algonquin territory in de la Vérendrye Park could breathe and get its strength back. It was the first year in over a century in which there were no forestry companies operating at full capacity in the park."

A heavy historical burden

The impact of excessive exploitation of a territory on its inhabitants is incalculable. Over time, the territory has been submitted to multiple transformations, seriously affecting the state of "the animals that walk, that swim and that fly" and their habitat, as well as the people whose welfare directly depends on these resources.

To counter the problem of bud



PHOTO: JULES DUGUAY

Jimmy Papatie has been a member of the band council of his community for fifteen years, thirteen of those years as councillor and two years as chief.

worms, for example, great quantities of various pesticides were used in the park from 1971 to 1974. "Fenitrothion, natacil and zectran are all substances which even today we do not know the consequences of on the health of people," worries Jimmy Papatie. Furthermore, "huge dams were built for energy. In order to store water in the reservoirs, large areas had to be flooded and the Algonquin people who lived on this territory were forced away."

And on it goes. "The state of the park is deteriorating. Satellite photos taken at different periods testify to this: the green points on the maps are becoming more and more rare. The forest has lost 60% of its capacity. That's a lot. Moose are scarce. Our pantry has disappeared. 80% of the community lives on social assistance. People have had enough."

A foot in the door

The administrative agreement concluded with the Québec govern-

ment is intended to establish a mechanism for proposing measures to conciliate the interests of Kitcisakik (Great Lake Victoria) with those of the forestry industries.

"We are talking about an administrative agreement and not a treaty," Jimmy Papatie clarifies, because the debate continues.

"The Algonquin territory, the aboriginal rights have never been ceded to any foreign government, be it provincial or federal. Therefore, according to international law, the Algonquin territory of Kitcisagani would be under the sovereignty of Kitcisakik. We are still a people according to standards of nationality. We are still in our homeland. If this policy was being respected, the laws would have no effect on us. They would be null and void, even illegal," explains the Algonquin chief.

The mechanism provided by the agreement should also develop a process for informing and consulting the members of the community on the activities expected in the trapping regions of Kitcisakik and on the long-term objectives of forestry planning. The agreement states that implementation of this mechanism can lead to more specific agreements on the participation of Kitcisakik in the development and management of natural resources.

This last point is crucial because the current document in itself settles nothing. It does not satisfy the need of the Algonquin people to be an active party in the management and development of the resources in their territory. It only opens the door to agreements which should be more durable.

"When the agreement was signed, there was no one to help us understand forestry terminology, no environmentalists to explain the impact on the environment. In the next discussions, the services of these resource people must be included. To negotiate on an equal footing, we must have access to the information."

Over next page...



PHOTO: PATRICIA DESGAGNE

"If you come into the park and stay on route 117, you will get the impression that you are in the woods. There is a nice strip of trees on each side of the highway, but behind all that there are immense deserts. This is called the process of 'desertification'. This is what is presently happening in the park. There is no longer a forest like before - the white pine is no longer there. It is a wood threatened with extinction in the park."

Jimmy Papatie

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(1) Great Garden: Expression used by the Algonquins of Great Lake Victoria to designate their territory

One territory, two visions

Is it realistic to believe that it is possible to reconcile the interests of the Algonquins with those of the forestry, mining, hydroelectric or tourist industries present on the territory? It is obvious that certain mentalities and ways of doing things will have to change in order to reconcile the Algonquin conception of development and type of management of the territory and that of the other parties involved. At present, conservation and renewal are up against exploitation.

For the Algonquins, these notions should be integrated and go hand in hand. "What we sense presently is that the financial interests, which are the reasons for the existence of the present management of resources, push the forestry companies and the other participants who have a mandate to make de la Vérendrye Park profitable, to exploit the territory to the maximum before its inhabitants wake up."

The government is slowly becoming conscious that a process of reforming forestry laws must be undertaken and that the integration of Native people into this process is necessary. But there is still a way to go before Natives will be considered active participants in the negotiations. "Native people are consulted, but memorandums that they bring are simply filed away and it's finished there. That is how the government functions. It goes through the motions to keep people calm. But in the end, the government intends to continue granting concessions."

A major obstacle to reconciliation of the concepts of conservation and exploitation lies in the present organization which creates conflicts of interest. The forestry companies pay millions to obtain rights from the government which finances its agencies with these revenues, including the Ministry of the Environment and that of Natural Resources. It is difficult to have confidence in people who depend on profits generated by exploitation of the forests when the time comes to discuss "lasting development" with them. "Domtar was just sentenced to pay a \$17,000 fine for cutting in excess of its quota. According to our calculations, that comes to 5 cents a tree...I understand that they commit these infractions! The sanctions are ridiculous..."

Game plan

The first step of an action plan for the future of the territory of Kitcisakik consists of obtaining the

means, through future agreements which will be signed, of making a study of the territory in order to have an exact idea of the state of its resources and to evaluate its value.

"Our objective is to make an inventory of the territory. For that, it is necessary to impose a moratorium on logging for 1 to 5 years in order to give a forest committee the time to finish its work." But the government is not ready for that. "The reason is simple: there are millions of dollars at stake. There are forestry companies whose financial survival depends on government decisions."

Nevertheless, this step would be essential in the elaboration of a plan to manage and develop this territory. The goal of this exercise is not to expropriate the territory and prohibit non-Native developers from having access, but to be able to make informed decisions, as partners who are thinking of future generations.

The challenge is to ensure the perpetuity of the resources of de la Vérendrye Park and the active participation of its Native inhabitants. "What we would like is, within another generation, to have our people make a living without government aid."

The lessons of history

The historical strategy of shunting Natives onto reserves in order to "free up the land" rather than accepting that they have a rightful place in the management of this territory, was a grievous historical mistake which has left profound wounds.

The federal government recently offered an apology to Native peoples for its past errors. It must now assume its responsibilities and prove that it has a real political willingness to consider them as active parties in the decisions that concern them.

Québécois and Algonquins must



PHOTO: PATRICIA DESGAGNE

learn to live together by elaborating strategies for development that are profitable to everyone. Taking care of Mother Earth is not only in the interests of Native peoples. It is time to ally our forces by profiting from the lessons of history in order to write a chapter of which we can all be proud.

Now you will understand why, one fine morning in December, 1997, the people of Kitcisakik said, "Enough of this craziness! We want our place now."

Key dates in the history of Kitcisakik

- 1850 • Logging begins in Témiscamingue
- 1851 • Creation of 2 reserves: Maniwaki and Témiscamingue
- 1900 • Logging begins in Abitibi
- 1914 • Transcontinental railway passes through Abitibi, crossing the Algonquin hunting territories of Kitcisakik
- 1917 • First attempt to put the Algonquins of Kitcisakik on a reserve
- 1918 • Spanish flu epidemic in Kitcisakik. 29% of the population dies
- 1920 • Better organized logging in the territory
- 1928 • Beaver reserve in Kitcisakik created
- 1930 • Mining development in the Algonquin territory of Kitcisakik begins
- 1935 • Noranda starts its extremely polluting operations in Abitibi
- 1939 • Construction of route 117 which cuts right through the center of the territories of Kitcisakik. More and more tourists and game wardens are seen. Elaboration of regulations forbidding access by Algonquins to parts of the territory to prevent them from "disturbing" the tourists
- 1947 • Second attempt to squeeze the Algonquins out of Kitcisakik and put them on a reserve
- 1949 • Winnaway reserve created. Flooding of 200 square km of territory at Kitcisakik by the construction the Dozois reservoir
- 1955 • Pikogan reserve created, situated 2 km from Amos
- 1961 • Rapid Lake reserve created
- 1962 • Creation of the Simon Lake reserve
- 1973 • Kipawa reserve created
- 1981 • Third attempt by the government to put the Algonquins of Kitcisakik on a reserve
- 1997 • The community blocks the Baie des Sables road, the only access route for thirteen forestry companies operating in the territory
- 1997-1998 • The one and only year when there was no logging in the territory
- 1998 • Signing of the protocol of agreement between the Québec government and the community of Great Lake Victoria

For a harmonious development

"Who can give themselves the right to sell the water, sell the forest, to arrive in our home, in our garden, and then take everything they want to get rich and impoverish the community that is there?"

The small Algonquin community of Great Lake Victoria does not live in affluence despite the immense potential of its territory. Excluded from development projects, 80 % of the population must live on social assistance while 20 % works for the band council or the health centre. However, according to chief Papatie, all of the debate which has taken place in the community since 1997 has not focused on the question of money but rather on how to develop the land on which the people live, how to maintain and manage everything while finding a source of subsistence in order



PHOTO: PATRICIA DESGAGNE

to eliminate dependence on government programmes.

"Our people are fed up with being on welfare, of receiving \$450, \$500 or \$250 a month. What they want is to know what can be done with the territory to manage it - to share it as well. Two years ago, the council signed an agreement with SEPAQ¹ for the construction of six camping cottages at the Pines campground. Today, we are at the stage of putting these cottages on the market. We're talking about an investment of \$400,000 which allows the people of the community to be able to work."

"This is an example of partnership which shows our willingness and our ability to understand. We are not promoting violence. We are very conciliatory and open - we know that there are realities

in this territory. Up north, there are cities like Val d'Or, Amos, Rouyn Noranda where 150,000 people live. There's only 7,000 of us.² Like it or not, we must learn to live together... except we have to provide ourselves with the tools to be able to learn to live together in the same place because the two sides have been kept in ignorance for 150 years. What has happened in Kitcisakik is not taught in the books at university or in schools. This is the hidden face of history. Responsibility must be assumed collectively, by your people as much as by mine."

(1) Government agency mandated to administer de la Vérendrye Park.

(2) Total of the three Algonquin communities. In Great Lake Victoria, there are 350 people.

A language on its way to extinction

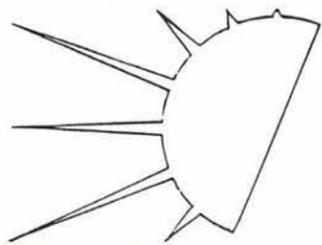


PHOTO: PATRICIA DESGAGNE

In the community of Great Lake Victoria, 20% of Natives speak only Algonquin (half of these are over 70). Nearly 40% speak French and Algonquin and 40%, especially the 7-15 year-old's, are unilingual French-speaking. This latter group exists because children are not educated in the community. They study in Val d'Or for ten months of the year.

"Language is a question of culture and pride," says Jimmy Papatie. "We must

develop an education programme in Algonquin, but we lack the money right now." According to him, Algonquin is one of the many Native languages that are dying out.



Guatemala's holocaust

On February 25, the Recovery of Historic Memory Commission (REMHI), created under the peace accords concluded between the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (GNRU) and the government of Guatemala, made public a 3,400-page report entitled *Guatemala: Memorandum of Silence*.

The REMHI began its work of researching and analyzing the causes and consequences of 36 years of war in Guatemala in December, 1996, shortly after the end of the armed conflict. For twenty months, it looked into more than 42,000 cases of human rights violations committed by both sides at various times during the civil war.

An Uncommon Cruelty

Among other things, the commission concluded that the army's perception that the Mayan communities formed a "natural" base of support to guerrillas exacerbated the violations of human rights of these people, "violations which showed proof of a strong racist compo-

nent". According to the REMHI, 83% of the victims of the armed conflict were of Mayan origin. The number of persons dead or reported missing in Guatemala was more than 200,000.

A quarter of the victims were women who "were killed, disappeared, tortured or raped, some of them for the beliefs they held or because of their political or social activities", while others were victims of the 626 group massacres recorded by the commission. The REMHI attributed 93% of the human rights violations to state security forces, 3% to the guerrilla forces and 4% remained unidentified.

During the release of the report's conclusions, one of the commissioners emphasized that the United



PHOTO: DOMINIC MORRISSETTE

States and its intelligence service, the CIA, as well as American corporations had contributed to "maintaining unjust and archaic socio-economic structures" in Guatemala. For the commission, "anti-communism and the doctrine of 'national security' were part of the anti-Soviet strategy of the United States in Latin America".

Excessive Repression

According to the REMHI, "the extent of the repression by the state was absolutely excessive compared to the military strength of the rebels". It specified that "the limited number of combatants could not compete militarily with the Guatemalan army... The state and the army knew the degree of organization, the extent of its manpower, the weapons used and the action plans of the guerrillas. They were therefore conscious that the military capabilities possessed by the rebels did not represent any threat to the political order of Guatemala."

The commission concluded that "the fact of including all opponents, democratic or not, pacifists or guerrilla members, legal or illegal, communist or non-communist within a single concept of internal enemy, served to justify numerous and serious crimes. Faced with a vast opposition of a political, socio-economic and cultural nature, the state used military operations intended to physically annihilate this opposition or to completely intimidate it by means of planned repression executed principally by the army and other national security bodies."

By thus fixing social organizations as its priority target, the forces of repression, says the commission, weakened civil society and this "limits its full participation in the economic and political spheres of the country today".

Genocide

The REMHI makes a point of specifying that the collaboration between the Mayan communities and the insurgents "was intentionally exaggerated by the state which, relying on traditional racial prejudice" thereby justified "massive and indiscriminate aggression against the communities". According to the commission, "with the massacres, torched earth operations, kidnapping and execution of Mayan authorities, leaders and spiritual guides" not only did the state seek to take control of the potential social bases of the guerrillas, but above all to exterminate the cultural values which assured the cohesion and collective action of the communities".

The commission emphasized that during the most bloody years of the war, the Mayan communities were targeted precisely because they were Natives.

Basing itself on the Convention for the prevention and suppression of the crime of genocide adopted by the UNO and ratified by the Guatemalan state, the commission concluded "that the agents of the state of Guatemala, in the framework of the counter-insurgency operations undertaken between 1981 and 1983, committed acts of genocide against the Mayan peoples living in four regions of the country".

The commission came to the conclusion that "for the most part, the violations of human rights were committed with the full knowledge or by order of the highest levels of the state".

The REMHI thereby rejects the often-repeated excuse by superior officers of the army or former heads of state according to whom subordinates in the army often acted in campaigns in an autonomous and decentralized manner. The com-

mission stated, to the contrary, that, "the high command of the National Defence was, within the army, the highest level responsible for these violations. Regardless of the various individuals who held positions of responsibility within the institution, there exists a political imputability amongst all of the successive governments. From this fact, the responsibility is shared between the President of the Republic, as commander-in-chief of the army, and the Minister of National Defence".

The Reaction of the Government

The conclusions and recommendations of the REMHI were warmly received by citizens' groups and welcomed by the GNRU, but the reaction of the government was something else altogether.

After maintaining a deathly silence for nearly three weeks, the government reacted by means of a press release distributed to the major daily newspapers on March 16. Without doubt bending to pressure from the most recalcitrant sectors, it refused to form a commission responsible for shedding light on the crimes against humanity committed by army officers or to purge the ranks of the institution as recommended by the REMHI.

According to the Minister of External Relations, the government had already asked for a pardon for its "mistakes" in 1998. It is time, according to him and representatives of the private sector, to turn the page and "think of the future and the prosperity of the country".

A civil servant of the Ministry of Tourism denounced the conclusions of the commission, stating that they would once again be tarnishing the image of the country in the eyes of travellers from all over the world...

Petanac under the Ruins



Mateo Pablo

In our March bulletin, you may have read the testimony of Mateo Pablo on the massacre committed in his village, Petanac, in 1982. He was then preparing to leave for Guatemala to participate in the exhumation of the bodies of the victims.

Petanac was a small hamlet situated at an altitude 2,500 metres in the province of Huehuetenango in north-western Guatemala. In fewer than five hours in July, 1982, the Guatemalan Army destroyed what the Native inhabitants of the village had succeeded in building up for more than half a century. The military strategy was supposedly counter-insurgency; the goal was to eliminate all potential support, real or imagined, for the guerrillas. The consequences in Huehuetenango, as well as in several other regions of Guatemala, were qualified by the Recovery of Historical Memory Commission as veritable genocide.

Today, only two large cypress trees indicate the position of this village which was once swept by clouds and bound to the peaks of the Cuchumatanes mountains. About forty metres from the conifers, five graves one metre deep, arranged in a semi-circle and dug up under a leaden sun, give up their secrets. From March 22 to April 11 of this year, at the request of the survivors of the massacre, a team of forensic anthropologists brought to light what the Chuj Natives of this community have been saying for 16 years.

The end of a world

The excavations reveal human bones, tattered clothes and old rubber boots, all hastily buried under pieces of board and strips of bark. A fifty-year-old man, standing above the fifth grave, stares at it and says in a voice devoid of emotion, "It is my brother. Yes, I'm sure of it. I buried him here myself, four days after the massacre. I remember, it was a Sunday..."

Over next page...

Firing at Rigoberta

I Rigoberta Menchu, an Indian Woman in Guatemala is a personal account of the violence inflicted upon the Mayan people in general and on Menchu's family in particular. Recently, a debate was sparked off by a chapter in a book by a U.S. anthropologist, David Stoll, in which he argued that Rigoberta Menchu "dramatically revised the experience of her village to suit the needs of the revolutionary movement she has joined." We reproduce here an extract of a text by Eduardo Galeano in defence of Rigoberta Menchu. The Uruguayan researcher and writer is well known for his role in raising awareness of the situations and struggles of Latin Americans. He is the author of it, among other widely read works, *Open Veins of Latin*

America.

Guatemala? Central America? Kansas is in the centre of America, isn't it? Guatemala is not on the map drawn by mass media, by those who make world public opinion. As if by magic, however, a Guatemalan woman named Rigoberta Menchú has been prominent lately in those media, but not because of what she has condemned in a country that has just gone through the Americas' longest and cruelest slaughter of this century. Rigoberta is not the accuser but rather the accused. Once again, as is to be expected in proper society, a victim is in the dock.

Gaseous Slander

Where else could it have begun? The United States media have unleashed a new mass campaign of chemical warfare. It all started with a U.S. anthropologist who spent ten years of his life investigating Rigoberta's inconsistencies and the guerrilla movement's responsibility for repression of the indigenous. "He came to Guatemala to study us as if we were insects," contends writer Dante Liano. "In his book he refers to witnesses and archives. Tell me what archives exist on the recent war. Do you think that the army offered him its archives?"

Not long ago Héctor Klee Orellana, a member of Guatemala's Congress, tried to consult the army's archives: he was later found with a bullet in his head. Bishop Juan Gerardi, who too had attempted to consult those archives, had his skull split open with a rock.

The New York Times propagated the anthropologist's story around the world, confirming and publishing his conclusions: the book entitled *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, published 25 years ago, contains inaccuracies and falsehoods. For example, Rigoberta's brother Patrocinio was not really burned alive; he was shot and thrown into a mass grave. Another conclusion reached by the anthropologist was that "she attended a private school for three years." It sounds as though she had studied at a private boarding school in Switzerland, but in reality it was a small school in Chichicastenango. The fault-finding goes on and on.

A Smoke Screen

Internationally the news has spread like wildfire. Suddenly numerous



PHOTO: DAN LAVOIE

Rigoberta Menchú, Nobel Peace Prize 1992

voices are calling Rigoberta a liar and talking about a scandal. Circuitously they are also discrediting the indigenous resistance movement for which she is both a voice and a symbol. One can only be suspicious when a smoke screen is rapidly raised to cover up the tragedy that lasted forty years in Guatemala, forty years that have been miraculously compressed into provocation by guerrillas and family conflicts; "Indian problems," you know.

Of course, much less of a stir was caused by the voluminous and well-documented report presented by the Church. It had been prepared by the commission directed by Bishop Gerardi, and it was distributed last year, two days before he was murdered. Thousands of accounts from all over Guatemala were put together like the pieces of a puzzle to form a collective remembrance of pain: 150,000 Guatemalans killed; 50,000 more missing; one million exiles and refugees; 200,000 orphans; 40,000 widows. Nine out of ten victims were unarmed civilians, the majority of whom were indigenous. In eight out of ten cases, those responsible were military personnel or their paramilitary groups.

The report refers to direct responsibility: that of the paid puppets. To find out about the responsibility of the paying puppeteers, the United

States would do well to send all its anthropologists, and the New York Times could send its entire reporting staff to investigate matters. Those in charge at the Pentagon and the White House know very well that they can simply whistle and look the other way because U.S. citizens have no damn idea where Guatemala is: what a colourful name, but it's so hard to pronounce!

Rigoberta and The Nobel Prize

The campaign against Rigoberta has made its way to Oslo. Some people have demanded that she return the Nobel Peace Prize or that it be taken away from her. The Norwegian Nobel Committee has ratified that the prize was awarded to the person who deserved it. According to its spokesperson, "the details referred to are not essential."

So much for that. The Nobel Peace Prize won by Rigoberta in 1992 was the only fair and decent commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the so-called Discovery of America, but, in addition, it enabled the Nobel Committee to give the prize the polishing that it sorely needed. The Nobel Peace Prize had first become tarnished in 1906, when it was awarded to Teddy Roosevelt, the one who shouted from the rooftops that war purified men. The Prize continued to be sullied when it was bestowed on other warlords, such as Henry Kissinger, who gave the world numerous corpses and godfathered Pinochet as well as other little monsters. The world is upside down when we discuss whether Rigoberta deserved this prize and not whether the prize actually deserved her.

Rigoberta and Her Country

The majority of Guatemalans are indigenous. However, in times of dictatorship or democracy, the dominant minority treats them the same way that South Africa treated the blacks under apartheid. Only one out of six Guatemalan adults votes. The Indians are just fine for attracting tourists, picking cotton and coffee, serving the domestic economy as beasts of burden, and giving the army its target practice.

Bossy parents who think that they are white will tell their misbehaved children "you act like Indians." "Guatemalan society" received the Nobel news like a bucket of cold water. Since then spiteful voices have called Rigoberta the "proper Indian" and the "polished Indian." Now they are calling her the "lying Indian." Rigoberta has stepped out of her place, and that offends them. If she were only an Indian and a woman, that would be tolerable. She would just have to make do with her double misfortune. She turned out to be rebellious, however, and that is unforgivably insolent. On top of it all, she committed the outrage of becoming a universal symbol of dignity. Powerful people in Guatemala and the rest of the world are not at all happy with the challenge that she represents.

Petanac under the Ruins (suite)

At the end of the 1970's, the Caribe mining company proposed the construction of a road which would pass by Petanac on its way to a mineral deposit. Although unsuccessful, the villagers opposed the plan because the road would destroy the parcels of land and the crops of several members of the community. When the Chilean company started work on the second section of the



PHOTO: MARC DROUIN

What tales the bones may tell...

road, the people of Petanac, supported by the neighbouring communities, decided to demonstrate. They succeeded in putting a stop to the works and demanded that the community be compensated for the damages caused by the first section. The company then accused the community of sympathizing with the guerrillas.

"Shortly after the first demonstrations," recalls another witness, Roque Castillo, "a Chilean engineer who worked for the company, warned me that if we continued our demonstrations, the same thing would happen to us as the people of Panzos", in the province of Alta Verapaz. They were massacred in May of 1978 during a peaceful demonstration in front of the town hall.

Mateo's cousin, who returned to live in Guatemala after a short stay in the refugee camps in Mexico, stated that, "the community had been denounced, in fact accused of manufacturing munitions for the guerrillas near a cliff where we often went to hunt for rabbits. We would burn branches which we had placed in their burrows to flush them out. The smoke attracted the attention of certain persons who believed that we were producing munitions...It is true, sometimes the guerrillas passed by here, asking us for tortillas or ears of corn. There were forty to sixty of them, they were armed and sometimes they even spoke to us in Chuj, Kanjobal, Pokomchi or Mam. At most, two people from our community were sympathetic towards them; one of these was my brother who lives in Mexico today."

What harm did they do?

Mateo Pablo also lost several members of his family, including his 97-year-old grandfather, the founder of the village, his wife who was 20 and a newborn baby only 20 days old. Like thousands of Guatemalans, he still asks the same question: "what harm did they do, what threat did they represent to the army?" For another survivor who lost his wife, his brothers and his parents at Petanac, the loss remains immeasurable: "The soldiers destroyed everything. They destroyed the food reserves that we had, they destroyed the fruit trees, they killed all of the animals that were there: chickens, dogs, mules, goats. They killed the men, women, children and elders. These people did not die due to an illness or an accident. They were of sound mind, healthy and alive when the soldiers finished them."

During the exhumation at Petanac, the forensic anthropologists painstakingly set aside and documented the remains of 15 men aged 12 to 97 and of 46 women, adolescents and children. The remains were examined and analyzed in a laboratory and, following the preparation of a scientific report, were then turned over to members of the community who buried them once more in accordance with their rites and customs.

Future plans

The survivors would like to establish a cemetery worthy of their relatives and neighbours killed in the massacre. They also wish to be able to establish beyond doubt the causes of their deaths and then bring to justice the authors of the massacre, both those who actually committed it and those who ordered it. In the long term, they want to be compensated and to rebuild their village as it once was. "Lots of things have happened here," says Matéo Pablo, "unmentionable, savage things. How many thousands of persons have lost their lives in Guatemala? More than 600 massacres have been documented and there were surely others which were never denounced because fear prevented the survivors from speaking."

"Peace," say Guatemalans, "begins where impunity ends." Several days after the start of the exhumation work in Petanac, a delegation of forty persons from the neighbouring village of Sebeb arrived to denounce, in its turn, the massacre committed by the Guatemalan Army in this village two days before that of Petanac. In the months to come, the thirty Natives, most killed with machetes by peasants like them under the approving watch of soldiers, will be exhumed. Little by little, the people of Guatemala are defying their fear, breaking the silence and "unearthing the truth" in order to denounce the government policies which caused one more holocaust in this end of a century.

Information: Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala, (514) 840-1008.

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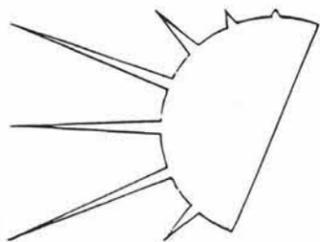
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The Crisis, Nine Years Later

by **Kenneth Deer**

reproduced from *The Eastern Door, Volume 8, Number 24, of Kahnawake.*



Every year at this time we are reminded of the events of 1990. The news articles in local and national newspapers, the stories on the television news and the Spiritual Gathering in Kanehsatake all keep the memories of that year alive. In Kahnawake, our own Echoes of a Proud Nation Pow-Wow was started to commemorate the summer of '90.

While some view the Crisis as a fight for power, cigarettes and casinos, they are wrong. It was a fight over land. I can remember my first night in The Pines. I was sent there on July 11 as a negotiator. I met men in fatigues who were still masked or wore camouflage paint on their faces. I could not recognize them all but most of them knew who I was.

They greeted me in passing and some stopped to say a few words. As I listened to the voices, I recognized some of them. These were young men, younger than I was in any case, who I thought did not have a political bone in their body. These were not casino supporters or cigarette runners but men who, through circumstances and necessity, came to The Pines to defend the land.

Some were past residents of the Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre known as the TC. They had a close affinity to The Pines since the centre is situated there. I knew some of these men when they were just high school students just a few years earlier.

Talking with them that night and the following days, they told me why they were there. It was still a very tense time. There was always the threat that the SQ would try to come back into The



Pines again. The men and women were under the threat, they were very open to discuss why they were willing to face arrest, prosecution or even death. They were adamant about their cause. They were there to protect the land. There was no doubt about that. I came away convinced that the people inside the barricades were sincere and clear on the objectives.

Those five days behind the barricades at Kanehsatake still remain with me. The issue was the land, and no one can change my mind

that it was anything else. True, there are some who tried to make the point that other agendas and personalities were behind the events of 1990, but people were not going to risk their lives for those. It was the land there was worth fighting for.

Today we are still seeing the results of the conflict. The Royal Commission, the rush to settle land claims and the recent creation of Nunavut in the far north are a direct result of the Crisis. Canada had to prove to the world that it can make major land settlements after the embarrassment of 1990. In the aftermath, the government began negotiating in earnest with the Inuit.

Without the Crisis of 1990, there would not be a Nunavut today.

"Without the Crisis of 1990, there would not be a Nunavut today."

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New Address

Le Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones has moved along with Alternatives to its new office situated at:

**3720 av. du Parc # 300
Montréal, Qué.
H2X 2J1**

The téléphone and FAX numbers have not changed.

Native People in Venezuela

IMATACA: STATE OF EMERGENCY

"Between the month of March and today, 10 Indians of the Akawaio, Kari'na and Pemón peoples who live here (Sierra Imataca) have died of paludism (malaria) caused by mining operations."

Italo Pizarro,

Capitan General del Sector de Sierra Imataca.

The IMATACA reserve is a protected zone of the Amazon forest with an area of 332,000 km² and is situated in north-eastern Venezuela. Several indigenous communities, Waraos, Pemones, Kari'nas, Arawakos and Akawaio, live there and find their means of subsistence in the natural resources of the forest. This region is very rich in minerals which, encouraged by the Venezuelan government's policy of economic development have, in recent years, attracted thousands of miners as well as large mining companies.

About 300 mining concessions have been granted, not only to the publicly-owned Venezuelan de Guayana Corporation but also to foreign companies, for the most part Canadian. In addition, an electric power line project is underway to link Venezuela with Brazil by crossing through the IMATACA reserve. The evolution of the situation is not only interfering with the balance of the reserve's ecosystem, which is of an exceptional biological diversity, but is restricting and disrupting access to natural resources necessary to the survival and welfare of the native communities which live there.

While the protection of the indigenous communities and their rights is written into the Venezuelan Constitution and their territories are classed as protected zones, the government continues to grant an increasing number of exploitation licenses to mining and forestry enterprises and to build across native lands an electric power line intended to supply a future industrial zone located in protected territory.

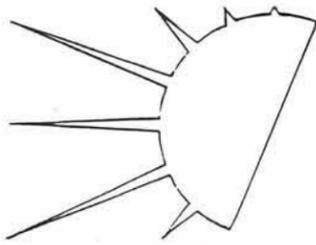
Faced with such exactions on the part of the Venezuelan government, the indigenous communities have organized their struggle. First of all through legal action at the Supreme Court, and then following the ineffectiveness of the internal judicial route, by peaceful protest action. In order to support the struggle of FIEB (Indigenous Federation of the State of Bolívar, which represents the native peoples of Imataca) and to make known the situation locally, the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones, in collaboration with the group FIAN-Quebec¹, will present an exhibition of photos and texts on the situation in Imataca.

This exhibition was created by the group FIAN-Geneva and it responds to what is an emergency. The Venezuelan indigenous question has for too long remained confined within the borders of that country, which explains that it has for so long not been perceived as dramatic on the outside. It is therefore urgent to present the native reality of Venezuela beyond the borders of that country. Furthermore, the case of IMATACA takes on a particular importance outside Venezuela in as much as the exposure of their struggle with the Venezuelan government also concerns native peoples of the whole world.

The exhibition will be first presented at the Museum of the Anthropology of the Université de Montréal, at 3200 Jean-Brillant, 3rd floor, Room C-3061, from September 27th to October 1st.

It will then move to UQAM (place and dates to be confirmed) and to the Rico café, 969 Rachel East, probably during the month of November (dates to be confirmed).

1 FIAN (Foodfirst Information and Action Network) is an international movement for the human right to food, as provided by Article 11 of the International Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Pact.



The new policies of the Québec government toward Native Peoples

More of the same...

On April 2, 1998, the Québec government launched its "new" orientations with regards to Native affairs. According to the Secretariat of Native Affairs, some thirty framework and sectorial agreements resulting from these policies have since been signed with fifteen communities throughout Québec.

It is surprising to note the popularity of these piecemeal agreements negotiated directly with band councils since several principles stated in a government document entitled "Partnership, development, actions" are the same as those found in the government's 1994 proposal which was rejected by the chiefs.

The so-called new orientations are in fact based on the same fundamental premises, notably the territorial integrity of Québec and the priority of the jurisdictions and laws of Québec. In addition, the government retains the same approach of global claims over the lands of indigenous peoples. It offers them the exercise of powers in specified territories, larger than the reserves, which are divided into three categories of land: fully-owned areas (properties), zones of traditional activities and zones of jointly managed resources included in the zones of traditional activities.

Despite the high number of agreements signed by the Québec government since it adopted its new approach, its orientations are irreconcilable with the principles held by the First Nations, namely the recognition of Native title over the land and the inherent right to autonomous government.

Divide and rule

In fact, the policies announced in 1998 by Minister Guy Chevrette

follow Québec's traditional policy which, since the famous meeting between Mr. Lévesque and the chiefs in 1978, has always been oriented toward harmonizing relations with Natives and the signing of agreements on particular issues.

Administrative agreements already exist like those Québec is currently signing with various Native communities. The government, however, this time prides itself in concluding them within the framework of fundamental markers which Natives consider unacceptable.

Armand McKenzie, lawyer for Mamu Pakatatau Mamit, the political wing of the Mamit Innuat group which is responsible for negotiations for the communities of Mingan, La Romaine and St-Augustin, does not agree: "Neither of the two sectorial agreements signed by the La Romaine band and the government concern territory and make no reference to the principles contained in the



"We are a long way from an agreement at the political and territorial level with the Québec government.", says Armand McKenzie, lawyer for Mamu Pakatatau Mamit, the political wing of the Mamit Innuat group which is responsible for negotiations for the communities of Mingan (picture), La Romaine and St-Augustin.

"By settling urgent economic problems piece by piece, they risk to undermine the motivation of chiefs at the negotiating table for global lands issues."

Guy Bellefleur, responsible for negotiations on behalf of Mamu Pakatatau Mamit

government's new orientations. These agreements are administrative agreements which have served to resolve urgent problems which have been on the table for years. The first one we signed was that of May 26, 1999 between the Innu Council of Unamen Shipu, the company Donohue and the Québec government concerning acquiring

the Étamamiou supplier. The second, that of June 29, 1999 between the Montagnais Council of Unamen Shipu and the Québec government, concerned the renovation of La Romaine airport and improving its access road. The latter concerned a demand which had been made twelve years ago."

The text of these agreements does not mention the principles of the government's "new orientations", supposedly elaborated in partnership with the Innu.

The political game being played by the Québec government around these agreements, by letting it be understood that the signers implicitly accept the principles of its orientations, adheres to the traditional rule when attacking Native questions: divide and rule.

In effect, according to Guy Bellefleur, responsible for negotiations on behalf of Mamu Pakatatau Mamit, these agreements could have a negative impact on global negotiations. By settling urgent economic problems piece by piece, they risk to undermine the motivation of chiefs at the negotiating table for global lands issues, progress at the local level reducing the interest of band chiefs in the national negotiations.

"This approach, which has the merit of providing the means to respond to concrete immediate needs in the communities, puts off the settling of the national dispute

which remains." (Michel Venne, Le Devoir, April 6, 1998).

An article by journalist Mario Cloutier, published in Le Devoir on May 20, 1998 and entitled "The First Nations reject Chevrette's proposals", states, and rightly so, that "the First Nations are up in arms due to the fact that the Québec government is seeking, without having consulted them beforehand, to settle their socio-economic problems by piecemeal agreements which make them, on the other hand, quietly accept the territorial integrity of Québec."

In the same article, one can read a declaration by Guy Bellefleur: "We form distinct nations and the relations to be defined must be on the basis of nation to nation. This is not the case with this new policy which can be described as unilateral (...). It is reprehensible that non-Native governments tie these notions to the granting of financial resources to Native Peoples. Such ties are particularly unacceptable with regards to essential services, community infrastructures and the economic development of Native Peoples."

Agreements which do not resolve the basic problem

Piecemeal agreements thus risk damaging the global negotiations by dragging them out indefinitely and this slowness at the negotiating table can only, in turn, increase the necessity for the communities to have recourse...to sectorial agreements in order to make progress with urgent dossiers. On the other hand, they in no way replace the global agreements, since they do not resolve the issues of a political and territorial nature.

Armand McKenzie is of the opinion that the government is shooting itself in the foot by seeking to put out fires and bypassing the basic problems which remain. The present principles of the two parties involved remain irreconcilable. "We are a long way from an agreement at the political and territorial level with the Québec government."

Research and interview: Patricia Desgagné

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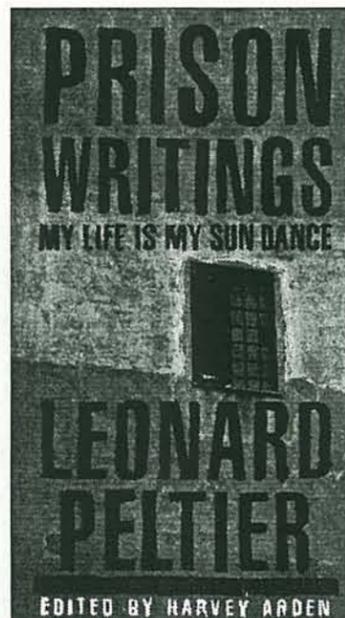
sur l'ethnocide des Innus, intitulé «The killing of the Innu» produit par Survival

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My life is my Sun Dance

Leonard Peltier: Prison Writings



Born of Ojibway and Dakota Sioux parents (with some French metis blood from which he inherited his legal family name), Leonard Peltier was one of the American Indian Movement (AIM) activists targeted for repression by the FBI following such AIM-organized events as the Trail of Broken Treaties demonstrations, which culminated in the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, DC in 1972. In the late 60's and early 70's, the FBI's notorious COINTELPRO programme "neutralized" Native, Black and anti-war political activists by slander, attack and arrests.

Wounded Knee

In 1975, traditionalists on the Pine Ridge reserve in South Dakota appealed to AIM for protection against the GOONS (Guardians of the Oglala Nation), a heavily-armed militia used by the corrupt Pine Ridge tribal council to terrorize and even murder traditionalist opponents. Leonard Peltier was part of the AIM group which responded to this appeal for help.

On June 26, 1975, two FBI agents allegedly searching for a young Indian accused of stealing a pair of used cowboy boots, followed several men in a red pick-up truck on the reserve. The truck pulled over and shots were fired, although no one knows who fired first. Soon the situation escalated into a firefight involving some 30 Indian men, women and children and over 150 FBI agents, BIA police, US marshals and GOONS. Two FBI agents and a young Indian activist died. Within hours of the shootout, according to the US Commission on Civil Rights which labelled it "a full scale vendetta", hundreds of paramilitary equipped, combat-clad FBI agents and US marshals staged a dragnet through the reservation in a fever of revenge in which Native men, women and children were terrorized and homes and property ransacked. There was no investigation into the death of the Native American.

Peltier managed to escape from this massive military attack. Later realizing he was being sought for the shooting death of the two FBI agents and fearing no possibility of a fair trial, he went into hiding and fled to Canada at the request of Native elders.

He was later arrested by the RCMP in Alberta and extradited by affidavits manufactured by the FBI which the government now concedes were false and fabricated. Four men were initially accused of the shooting

"Our human rights as Indigenous peoples are being violated every day of our lives - and by the very same people who loudly and sanctimoniously proclaim to other nations the moral necessity of such rights."

deaths. Two were acquitted and the government dropped all charges against the third to concentrate their "full prosecutorial weight... against Leonard Peltier."

He was convicted and sentenced to two consecutive life terms. The handpicked judge, favoured by the FBI for his anti-Indian reputation, systematically refused to hear much

"Certainly it was no accident that the day before the gunfight at Oglala, the head of the nontraditional tribal government was signing over to the federal government one-eighth of the Pine Ridge Reservation, now known as the Sheep Mountain Bombing Range, reputedly rich in uranium deposits."

of the defense evidence. Information from the acquittals of his co-defendants was ruled inadmissible. Jurors were convinced by the court that AIM "snipers" would kill them at any time. In short, Peltier was convicted before his trial even began.

Simple, but eloquent

Much of Prison Writings was written with a pencil on a yellow legal pad on the bunk of Peltier's 5 x 9-foot cell in Leavenworth Prison. In a simple, but eloquent manner,



In June, America's best-known political prisoner, Leonard Peltier, published *Prison Writings, My Life is my Sun Dance*.

he shares his story, his suffering, his anger and bitterness and his shame over this same anger and bitterness, his dreams, his poems and his reflections on the condition of Native Peoples, spirituality and life in general.

Peltier refuses to pose as a hero or even a leader, but humbly accepts his duty as an Indian and a human being to speak out against injustice, and he calls on every one of us to do the same: "Silence, they say, is the voice of complicity... Silence screams, silence is a message, just as doing nothing is an act."

24th year of incarceration

Despite overwhelming evidence produced by his lawyer, former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark, the US courts have refused to overturn Peltier's conviction, order a new trial or even grant him parole as he now completes his 24th year of incarceration.

Readers interested in knowing more about Leonard Peltier and the events of 1975 at Pine Ridge should go to the Leonard Peltier website: <http://members.xoom.com/freepeltier/index.html>, Peter Mathiessen's book, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (which has been republished after a shameless but unsuccessful 8-year attempt by the US government to have it banned) or Robert Redford and Michael Apted's film, *Incident at Oglala*.

Prison Writings is now available in book stores or can be obtained from the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee which deposits proceeds into his defense fund:

Leonard Peltier Defense Committee

P.O. Box 583

Lawrence, KS 66044, USA

Tel: (785) 842-5774

Fax: (785) 842-5796

Email: lpdc@idir.net

Ronald Cross, Kanien'kehaka 1957-1999



Ronald Cross, one of the best known Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk) defenders, better known under the nickname Lasagna, died on November 2, 1999, shortly after he was found unconscious at his job on the Champlain Bridge. The media took this opportunity to repeat the clichés and misinformation that it had continually spread during the crisis of 1990.

Ronald Cross was born in Brooklyn in 1957. His father, Gerald, a steel worker, was a Kanien'kehaka; his mother, Anna Casalasso, was of Scottish and Italian descent. This earned him the deliberately mafioso image of the "Italian from Brooklyn" that the media glued on him in 1990. This image not only hid his Kanien'kehaka origins, but also the fact that Ronald Cross spent a large part of his life at Kahnawake, where his family had returned to live in 1969. Cross, like many other Kanien'kehaka, returned to Brooklyn to exercise his trade as a steel worker, in 1990.

By chance

It was chance that led Cross behind the barricades in Kanehsatake. After having returned to Kahnawake, and having problems with alcohol, he decided to take a break and live in Kanehsatake, where his mother had been living since his father's accidental death. While taking a bike ride, Cross became aware of the barricade that had been maintained since March 11 to prevent the Municipality of Oka from enlarging the golf course, and he decided to get involved.

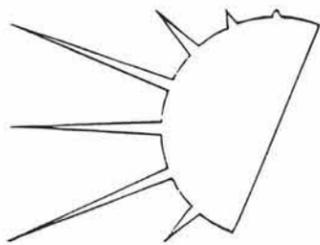
When questioned by a journalist from *The Eastern Door*, after Cross' death, Dennis Nicholas, who also participated during the crisis of 1990, described Cross' commitment in these terms: "I can recall when he first showed up in our camp. He was very quiet and wanted to know what was going on. He stayed a few days and then left but came back soon after. We were encouraged by his commitment. He asked many questions and he began to understand what the issue was all about. It was as if the fight to the defend the land filled a need deep inside him."

Political Prisoner

Ronald Cross paid dearly for this commitment and the visibility he acquired during the summer of 1990. He was savagely beaten during his arrest and spent nearly 4 years in prison after being found guilty of assault, possession of weapons and making death threats. "I didn't do all the right things, but I did my best to protect the people and the land."

Cross was released in August, 1999. A few weeks later, the Police Ethics Committee upheld his complaint of use of excessive force during his arrest, against three Québec Provincial Police officers.

In the book *Lasagne, l'homme derrière le masque* (Lasagne, the Man Behind the Mask), by the author Hélène Sévigny, Cross addressed these words to his people. "Everything was done for our children and for the future generations of the Mohawk people. I hope that our children and grandchildren will not have to endure what we have been subjected to, and that we have succeeded in improving their situation. I hope they will respect us, as we respect our ancestors when we think of all the sacrifices they made for us."



Native People Victims of Racism?

It is difficult to imagine how the Innu will regain confidence in the Québec judicial system after two recent incidents that took place in the North Shore region. Twenty years after the Moisie River events, it seems that racism and judicial negligence towards the Innu are still part of the picture.

Death of two Innu on the Moisie River in 1977

22 YEARS AND SIX INVESTIGATIONS LATER

June 9, 1977. It's 8 o'clock in the morning; the canoe of two Innu who had gone out salmon fishing several hours earlier is found empty at the mouth of the Moisie River, near Sept-Iles. The bodies of Moïse Régis, 25, and Achille Vollant, 20, are found several days later.



For many, Moïse Régis and Achille Vollant were the victims of growing tension between Natives and agents of the Ministry of Tourism, Hunting and Fishing.

The families and the Innu community of Mani-Utenam quickly become convinced that these were not simple drowning. Rather, they link the deaths to the increasing tensions over the future of salmon fishing with conservation agents of the Ministry of Tourism, Hunting and Fishing, the staff and members of certain private clubs as well as with certain travellers. Barely one week earlier, Achille Vollant and his father had in fact had a serious argument with one of the conservation agents on duty at the time of the drama.

Roberge Report Questioned

In October, 1998, the Roberge Commission tabled the latest report on this matter. Several months later, the families of the victims as well as the community of Mani-Utenam contested this report and announced in November, 1999 that they were bringing criminal charges against the fishing wardens involved in the affair.

They questioned the Roberge Commission for having based its report on five minor elements and for concluding that the deaths of the two Innu were accidental.

The lawyers of the Innu, Me Ken Rock and Me Alain Arseneault, presented their own report in which they expressed the following opinions:

- Something happened in June, 1977 on the Moisie River between the two victims and one or more wildlife conservation agents, with or without contact between the two boats, and this without eliminating the hypothesis of a life-saving attempt by the agents;
- The deaths of the victims was followed by a dragging of feet, which was both intentional and sometimes unintentional, at various levels of the justice system, delays motivated by the more or less conscious racism of several persons;
- The work of the Commission permitted access to previously un-

known documentation, to establish proof of facts which prior investigations did not take into consideration and, therefore, the work of the Commission had the result of increasing the degree of plausibility of their version of what could have happened on that June night in 1977;

• They do not dismiss the hypothesis of a purely accidental drowning, without the intervention of anyone else, but believe, however, that their hypothesis is just as valid as the one supported by the Roberge Commission;

• They therefore think that the Roberge report does not reflect the results of the work of the Commission, and from this is drawn the title of the present report (A Case of Hijacking a Commission).

Recommendations

Then the lawyers conclude their report with the following recommendations:

"The Roberge Commission allowed to bring to light the acts of violence committed by certain fishing wardens towards Innu before and after June, 1977.

1) We recommend to the leaders of the community, and more particularly to the Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam as well as the victims of this violence, to bring these facts to the attention of political and legal authorities so that criminal charges are brought against certain fishing wardens.

One might be astonished by such a recommendation, coming twenty years after the fact. It is just as surprising that the victims did not

bring charges at the time. But this would be to not know the distance that separates the justice system from the Innu community, a gap created on the one hand by the deserved lack of confidence by Innu in the system following the repetition of failures like the Roberge Commission and, on the other, by a mixture of ignorance and lack of interest on the part of authorities towards Native peoples and even more so towards their rights.

2) We suggest that the Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam set up a body to study the administration of justice (police and courts) in the community in order to make the necessary criticisms and to make representations to the appropriate authorities. This committee could also study the possibility of establishing an independent Native justice system applicable to members of the Innu community."

Complaints lodged by Innus after altercations with Whites rejected by the Quebec Provincial Police

On January 27, 2000, a press release issued by the Conseil des Innus (Innu Council) of Pakua Shipi reported the following: "It was in front of the Québec Provincial Police office in Sept-Iles that Marcel Lalo, Chief of the Innus of Pakua Shipi, denounced the racist attitude of the Québec Provincial Police because of the way complaints formulated by members of their community were treated.

After recent altercations between Innus and Whites from the village of St-Augustin, the Innus filed complaints with the provincial police in order to ensure that there would be an investigation that was conducted properly. Their complaints, however, were rejected, and the provincial police followed up on complaints filed by members of the White community instead. This resulted in the arrest and conviction of the Innu plaintiffs. Two young Innus involved in the dossier are standing trial, while others are serving their prison sentences."

For Chief Lalo, "this treatment is discrimination based on race or ethnic origin - which is severely condemned by the different human rights declarations. The provincial police did not do its job properly; it did not act with professionalism, integrity and impartiality. On the contrary, the detectives involved showed contempt towards the Innus, making comments unworthy of their public functions."

According to the Conseil, "the provincial police's attitudes, words and actions reflect preconceived ideas, stereotypes and clichés about Native People when they refused to consider them as victims. During this police investigation, the provincial police viewed the Innus as alcoholic, trouble making, brawling, thieving Indians, and the White plaintiffs as honest citizens, peacefully having a beer, incapable of any criminal actions, their peace disturbed by drunk, loud, violent Indians.

After numerous social studies and research, paid for by Québec and Canadian tax payers, after investigations into justice in Native communities in Québec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and after the diverse reports of the Royal Commission on Native Peoples, including the very recent report by the Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band Council, illustrating the discrimination that exists in the justice and police apparatus towards Native People, Chief Lalo invites the population and the White political leaders - including the upper echelons of the provincial police - to open their eyes and take the necessary measures that would permit Native People in general and the Innu in particular to apply Innu justice for and by the Innu. For Chief Lalo, this is the only solution."

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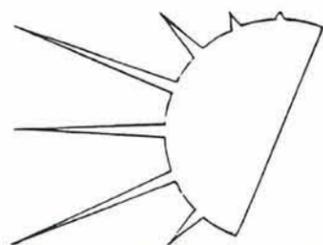
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NO REAL CHANGE SINCE 1990

To commemorating the tenth anniversary of the crisis of the summer of 1990 the Regroupement de Solidarité avec les Autochtones sent this press release on July 4.

The Regroupement believes nothing has really changed in the ten years since the police invasion of the Mohawk territory of Kanehsatake on July 11, 1990. We also believe the primary causes of what is called the Oka crisis are still present.

The Regroupement severely judges the attitude that both the Canadian and Québécois governments continue to adopt toward Native Peoples. The agreement signed between the Federal Government and the Kanehsatake Band Council, on June 12, 2000, left the 280 year old territorial conflict that was the source of the confrontation intact.

We underline the fact that Ottawa has always refused and is still refusing to recognize the legitimate rights of the Mohawks over the totality of their land. This refusal has legitimated the continual devastation of their territory by permitting numerous development projects. The project to enlarge the golf course, that plunged the entire country into a crisis, was only the most spectacular episode.

The Regroupement believes the



Members of the Regroupement participated in the Mohawk's commemorative march on the morning of July 11, exactly 10 years after the Québec Provincial Police attack that started the crisis.

Federal Government's attitude toward Native Peoples is still marked by paternalism, and it is not any more tender toward the Québec Government. The thirty or so agreements concluded in the last two years between Bouchard's government and various Native communities in Québec responded to real needs, however their principal goal was to "cool hot spots" and "avoid another crisis".

The Québec government has not recognized the national and territorial rights of Native Peoples. On the contrary, it continues, under the label of a "new policy", to cling to the dogma of Québec's territorial integrity, while denying the provinces' first inhabitants that which it demands for itself—recognition as peoples with the right to freely determine their own actions.

For the Regroupement, the changes

in the governments' policies toward Native Peoples in the last ten years are primarily in their form, and not in their content.

The Regroupement is equally critical of the media's treatment of questions concerning Native People—despite the *mea culpa* of several journalists after the summer of 1990. The negative and deformed image that the media, only to often, continues to project about Native realities continues to reinforce the ignorance, prejudices, and at times racism of a large part of the population.

¹ The Minister of "Indian Affairs", Robert Nault, chose June 21, National Native Peoples Day, to announce the agreement that he qualified as "historical" with the Kanehsatake Band Council. This agreement recognises a "provisional territorial base" for the Mohawks of Kanehsatake and the right of the Band Council of exercise control over it.

The agreement, which will be submitted to the population in September, 2000, only applies to a 260 hectare (2.47 acres) territory that is already controlled by the Mohawks and those acquired by the Federal Government since 1990. As the Mohawk Ellen Gabriel put it so well in a caustic critique, not only do the parcels of land in question represent only a minimal part of Mohawk territory, they will also remain "Crown land."



Like every year, the Regroupement organized bus transportation to the Kanehsatake PowWow.

The harassment of the Mi'kmaq has gone far enough!

The harassment to which the agents of Fisheries and Oceans Canada have devoted themselves against the Mi'kmaq of Burnt Church, in Miramichi Bay of New Brunswick, reached a peak on August 29th. It was then that some twenty powerful federal ships smashed into the small boats of fishermen who were intervening to prevent the seizure of their lobster traps. One of the Mi'kmaq boats was capsized while two others sprung leaks. The federal agents took advantage of the situation to proceed with new arrests.

This incident, which could have had tragic consequences, shows once again that the federal government should put an end to its daily harassment against the small community of 1,300 inhabitants of Burnt Church. Shortly after the incident, one of the Mi'kmaq rightly commented that his community "felt under siege." This must stop and quickly. Not only should Fisheries and Oceans Canada withdraw from Miramichi Bay, but Ottawa must recognize the hereditary rights of the Mi'kmaq, partially confirmed by the Supreme Court in the recent Marshall decision, and accept to revise the sharing of resources between Natives and non-natives.

On August 28th, the Minister of "Indian Affairs", Robert Nault, literally fled from a meeting to which he had been invited in Burnt Church followed by shouts of "coward" and "liar"...under the pretext that the meeting was of a public nature and that the media had been invited to attend. It was in front of an empty chair that the spokespersons of the Mi'kmaq described the living conditions in Burnt Church where two thirds of the residents live in overcrowded housing, where 80% of the population is unemployed and where fishing represents the only hope.

As for the argument that the federal government is duty-bound to protect lobsters and to impose quotas on Native fishermen just as it does on non-natives, the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Mathew Coon Come, quite rightly recalled that on August 17th, the federal Minister of Fisheries, Herb Dhaliwal, had wanted to limit the Mi'kmaq fishermen of Burnt Church to 5,000 lobster traps while, in this very same zone, 240,000 traps are used by non-native fishermen...

Thank you, Ms. Roback

During the summer of 1990, when she was ninety-six years old, Léa Roback marched and publically spoke out in solidarity with the Mohawk People, as she had done so many times, for so many different cases, during her long life as an activist.



Those who have been active in the Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones will always have a special feeling when they remember the demonstration that began at Philip's Square and ended at former Prime Minister Robert Baurassa's office, with Léa Roback in the rear, arm in arm with two other long-time activists, Madeleine Parent and Michel Chartrand. They will also remember the conference at Centre Saint-Pierre, when her astonishing vitality moved everyone in the overcrowded room.

The Regroupement sadly commemorated her death, but with the reinforced determination to contribute, however modestly, to the battle for justice and liberty that was hers.

The Ten Years of the Regroupement



Since ten years, activities organized by the Regroupement allow thousands of people, for the most part non-natives, to express their solidarity with native communities.

On July 11, 1990, barely a few hours after the attack on the Mohawk community of Kanehsatake by the Québec provincial police (SQ), activists from various circles called for a picket line the following day in front of SQ headquarters on Parthenais Street in Montréal.

It is the opening shot for a good twenty public events (demonstrations, vigils, public meetings, etc.) organized as the crisis evolves. This allows thousands of people, for the most part non-natives, to express their solidarity with the Mohawks, to oppose the racism being expressed in a disturbing manner by part of the population and to demand a just and peaceful settlement of the crisis.

These events, which are weekly at first and then nearly daily, often target the Montréal offices of premier Robert Bourassa. But large demonstrations are also held in Kahnawake and in front of the military camp situated near Oka. Various Québec personalities, including writer-activist, Pierre Vallières, singer Richard Desjardins and sculptor Armand Vaillancourt, break the embarrassing silence being observed in the normally more outspoken intellectual and artistic circles.

The Regroupement de solidarité avec les Autochtones (*Solidarity with Native Peoples*) is born. Toward the end of the crisis, it is agreed that the Regroupement, which was originally considered as *ad hoc*, continue its activities when the Mohawk barricades are dismantled in order to undertake the work of supporting Native peoples on a permanent basis.

Liberty for the Mohawks

On September 29, 1990, three days after some forty Mohawks and other Natives are arrested coming out of the treatment centre in Kanehsatake, where they had been surrounded by the Canadian army, the Regroupement demonstrates in front of the Farnham military base where they were incarcerated.

Over the course of the following two years, many other activities are initiated against the judicial repression of the men and women involved in the Mohawk resistance as well as against the police harassment of which the communities of Kahnawake and Kanehsatake are the victims. Two benefit concerts take place to help finance the legal defense fund set up to ensure the defense of those charged. In addition, demonstrations and public gatherings underline the various stages of the trials.

The Regroupement distributes regular accounts of these trials, particularly in the alternative media. These accounts will eventually be published in the form of a book, *Not Guilty, The Mohawk Trial*, following the acquittal on July 3, 1992 of the last 34 persons charged for their involvement behind the barricades of Kanehsatake.

The activists of the Regroupement also mobilized in 1993 when Mohawk activist Ellen Gabriel is cited for contempt of court by coroner Guy Gilbert because she refuses to give the names of those persons present at the Pines of Kanehsatake on July 11, 1990.

The close ties developed over the years also lead the Regroupement to schedule a benefit concert for CKHQ, the community radio of

Kanehsatake. And above all, these links convince it to lend a hand to the traditional pow wow, held since 1991 by, among other things, organizing year after year, transportation by bus from Montréal.

From Great Whale to SM-3

Immediately following the end of the 1990 crisis, however, the Regroupement starts to develop solidarity with other Native peoples. Among other things, a monthly bulletin is published starting in April, 1991 to speak about Native struggles both here and elsewhere.

On September 11, 1991, a demonstration organized in collaboration with the Grand Council of the Crees, brings together 300 persons to oppose the Great Whale hydro-electric mega project.

Beginning in the spring of 1992, it is another hydro-electric project, SM-3 on the Sainte Marguerite River in Innu territory that finds itself at the heart of work by the Regroupement. On May 30, more than 300 people greet the March for Nitassinan at the end of a 900 km march on foot undertaken three weeks earlier at Sept-Îles by a group of Innu united into the *Coalition for Nitassinan*.

A close collaboration is gradually established with this coalition. Meetings are organized. A book is published. It includes a history of the *Coalition for Nitassinan* and its opposition to SM-3 as well as the *Common Declaration for Peoples' Rights* which the traditional Innu have had signed since the march in 1992. On March 13, 1993, a picket line is formed in front of the Laval residence of the Minister of Energy, Lise Bacon. On October 8, nearly 200 people take part in a benefit concert, and on the 12th, an act of civil disobedience is held in front of the Hydro-Québec headquarters in collaboration with the Alliance for Non-Violent Action.

Things accelerate during the spring of 1994 as the date for beginning construction work at SM-3 approaches. A demonstration attracts 200 people in April. In June, at the same time that the *Coalition for Nitassinan* erects barricade to prevent the work from getting underway, members of the Regroupement occupy one of the Hydro-Québec offices in Montréal. Several days later, it is the riding office of the Minister of Energy and Native Affairs, Christos Sirros,

which is the object of an occupation.

Once the construction begins, the Regroupement is involved in the struggle against the repression of traditional Innu by the police forces and, above all, the band council of Uashat-Mani-Utenam which was then led by Élie-Jacques Jourdain. The repression is such that 12% of the adult population of Mani-Utenam was imprisoned for terms of just over one year.

On several occasions, the Regroupement also gives a voice to the Algonquins of Barrier Lake who oppose clear-cutting on their territory.

Whether it be yes or no

In 1995, at the approach of the referendum organized by the government of Lucien Bouchard on the political and constitutional future of Québec, the Regroupement modestly speaks out to defend the right to self-determination of Native peoples.

First of all, about 150 people attend a public meeting in Montréal. Mohawks Ellen Gabriel and Kenneth Deer, editor of the weekly, *The Eastern Door*, speak about the two-row wampum which, for four centuries now, represents the way their people see their relations with those whose origins are in Europe. The Regroupement also makes a presentation to the Commission on Sovereignty of the Cree Nation during its session in Montréal. During the referendum campaign as such, hundreds of stickers are posted in public places bearing the slogan: "*Whether it be yes or no, sovereignty for the First Nations.*"

Difficult years

The difficulty in keeping up a continuous mobilization in support of Native peoples outside periods of crisis, as well as the fatigue of the small core of activists who coordinate the Regroupement since its beginnings, result in a serious slowing down of its work in the mid-1990's.

The publication of the Regroupement's bulletin is maintained, but in a more irregular manner. Public meetings with spokespersons for various Native peoples are also held several times per year. One of the most successful is in 1999 with the chief of the band council of Great Lake Victoria, Jimmy Papatie, who speaks elo-

quently of the dangers that the large forestry companies pose to his territory which is known as *The Great Garden*.

A meeting held in 1996 with the Crees of Lubicon Lake, who are struggling against the forestry giant Daishowa and the Canadian and Alberta's governments, has more concrete results. The Regroupement considers it necessary to resume boycott activities against Daishowa in Québec. The boycott, which had up until then been concentrated in Ontario, was interrupted due to legal harassment by the company in that province. Towards the end of 1996, the Regroupement takes the initiative to invite other groups to a meeting that gives birth to the group *Friendship Quebec-Lubicon* which thereafter successfully undertakes publicity and pressure work in support of the Lubicons.

Among the other highlights of the work by the Regroupement over the past few years is the well-attended press conference in 1996 with Philomène and Georges McKenzie of the Innu who are opposed to the planned mining development on their traditional hunting lands. The Regroupement also collaborates in several activities calling for the liberation of Leonard Peltier who has been unjustly imprisoned in the United States for nearly 25 years.

But the weakness of the Regroupement in the second part of its existence also results in missed

opportunities. This is particularly the case in 1998 when the Mi'kmaq of Listiguj erected barricades across the highway 132 in reaction to forestry development.

The inability of the Regroupement to act on this occasion causes serious reflection by its activists. Will we have to abandon the work we have undertaken because we cannot devote sufficient energy to it? Or do we not need to rebuild the group by appealing to the members, some of whom have been supporting it since the beginning but without actively participating? Or should we try to seek out some new blood?

It is the option of rebuilding which is finally adopted, and this is what the Regroupement has been concentrating on since then.

The success of activities held around the tenth anniversary of the Oka crisis, in particular the public meeting in May of 150 people in Montréal, represent in any event, an encouraging sign.

Still a necessity

It is still just as necessary as it was in 1990 to work for solidarity with Native peoples. It is still just as necessary to speak out publicly to break the seemingly prevailing consensus and to demonstrate that, on the contrary, far from feeling threatened or attacked, non-natives can share the same pre-occupations for which Native peoples are often the standard bearers. There is still just as much of a need for concrete support, however modest it may be, for the work and struggles being waged in various communities.

The Regroupement is not alone in this work, but it can and should take its own place, based of course on informing and sensitizing but, when required, also on mobilizing.

Would you like to participate in the work of the Regroupement?

Then come to the information evening on Wednesday, October 4, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. at 3720 Park Avenue, 3rd floor (near Des Pins ave) in Montréal (Place des Arts métro, 80 bus north).

Become a member of the Regroupement and receive this bulletin in your mail-box!

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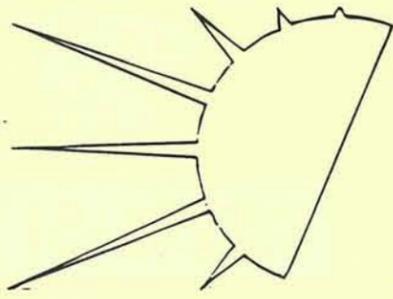
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SOLIDARITY WITH NATIVE PEOPLE



Bulletin 51

February 1996

Who has the right to destroy the environment?

Some excerpts of Winona LaDuke's presentation to the Women's Forum in Beijing in September 1995. She is Co-chair of the Indigenous Women's Network in the United States.

I am from the Mississippi Band of Anishinabeg of the White Earth Reservation in northern Minnesota, one of approximately 250,000 Anishinabeg people who inhabit the Great Lakes region of the North American continent.

[...] A primary and central challenge impacting women will be the distance we collectively as women and societies have artificially placed ourselves from our Mother the Earth, and the inherent environmental, social, health and psychological consequences of colonialism and the subsequently rapid industrialization of our bodies and our nations.

The Crux of the Problem

[...] Decisions are not made by those who are most affected by them, people who live on the land. Decisions are made by corporations with an interest that is entirely different from that of the land, or the people, or the women of the land. This brings forth a fundamental question. What gives corporations like Conoco, Shell, Exxon, Diashawa, ITT, Rio Tinto Zinc and the World Bank a right which supersedes or is superior to my human right to live on my land, or that of my family, my community, my nation, our nations, and us as women?

[...] Today, on a worldwide scale, we remain in the same situation as 100 years ago, only with less land and fewer people. Today, on a worldwide scale, 50 million Indigenous peoples live in the world's rain forests. A million



THE SHAPER, Susan Point

Indigenous peoples are slated to be relocated for dam projects in the next decade (thanks to the World Bank), from the Narmada Project in India to the Three Gorges Dam Project in China to the James Bay Hydro Electric Project in northern Canada. Almost all atomic weapons which have been detonated in the world are also detonated on the lands or waters of Indigenous peoples, most clearly evidenced here in China, and in the Pacific with France's obscene proposal to detonate atomic weapons in Mururoa. What exactly gives France the right to French Polynesia, I ask you?

[...] This situation is mimicked in the North American context. Today, over 50 percent of our remaining lands are forested, and both Canada and the United States continue aggressive clear-cutting policies on our land. Over two-

thirds of the uranium resources in the United States, and similar figures for Canada, are on Indigenous lands, as is one-third of all low-sulphur coal resources. We have huge oil reserves on our reservations, and the Western Shoshone Nation has the dubious honour of being the most highly bombed nation in the world, with over 650 atomic weapons detonated there.

We also have two separate accelerated proposals to dump nuclear waste on our reservation lands, and similarly over 100 separate proposals to dump toxic waste on our reservation lands. We understand clearly the relationship between development for someone else and our own underdevelopment. We also understand clearly the relationship between the environmental impact of types of development on our lands and the health impact on our bodies as women. That is the crux of the problem.

From Canada to Brazil

The rate of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon is one acre every nine seconds. (Incidentally, the rate of extinction of Indigenous peoples in the Amazon is one nation of Indigenous peoples per year.) The rate of deforestation of the boreal forest of Canada is one acre every 12 seconds. Siberia, thanks to American corporations like Weyerhaeuser, is not far behind. In all cases, Indigenous peoples are endangered. And there is frankly no difference between the impact in the North and the South.

Uranium mining has devastated a number of Indigenous communities in North America. Uranium mining in northern Canada has left over 120 million tons of radioactive waste. This amount represents enough material to cover the Trans-Canada High-

way two meters deep across the country. Present production of uranium waste from Saskatchewan alone occurs at the rate of over 1 million tons annually. Since 1975, hospitalization for cancer, birth defects and circulatory illnesses in that area have increased dramatically—between 123 and 600 percent. In other areas impacted by uranium mining, cancers and birth defects have increased to, in some cases, eight times the national average.

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[...] According to a number of recent studies, this has increased significantly the risk of breast cancer in women. Similarly, heavy metals and PCB contamination of Inuit women of the Hudson Bay region of the Arctic indicates that they have the highest levels of breast milk contamination in the world. In a 1988 study, Inuit women were found

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New Threat to B.C.'s Cheslatta T'en Nation

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Source: Rainforest Action Network, 450 Sansome St., #700, San Francisco, CA 94111, (415) 398-4404, e-mail boycottmc@igc.apc.org.



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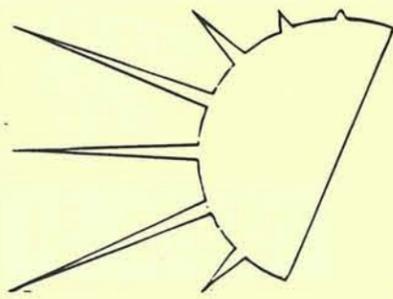
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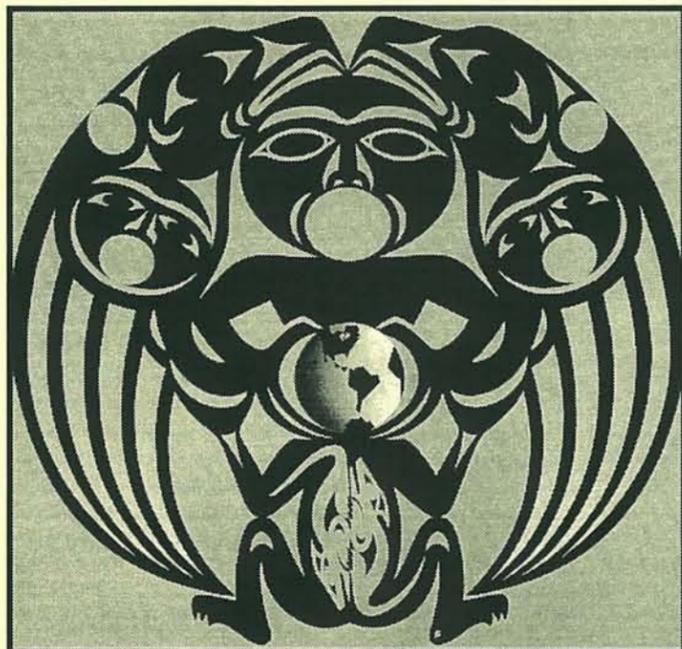
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