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students left out
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**Did Canada
cross the line
with Blackstock**
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Volume 29 No. 9 • December 2011

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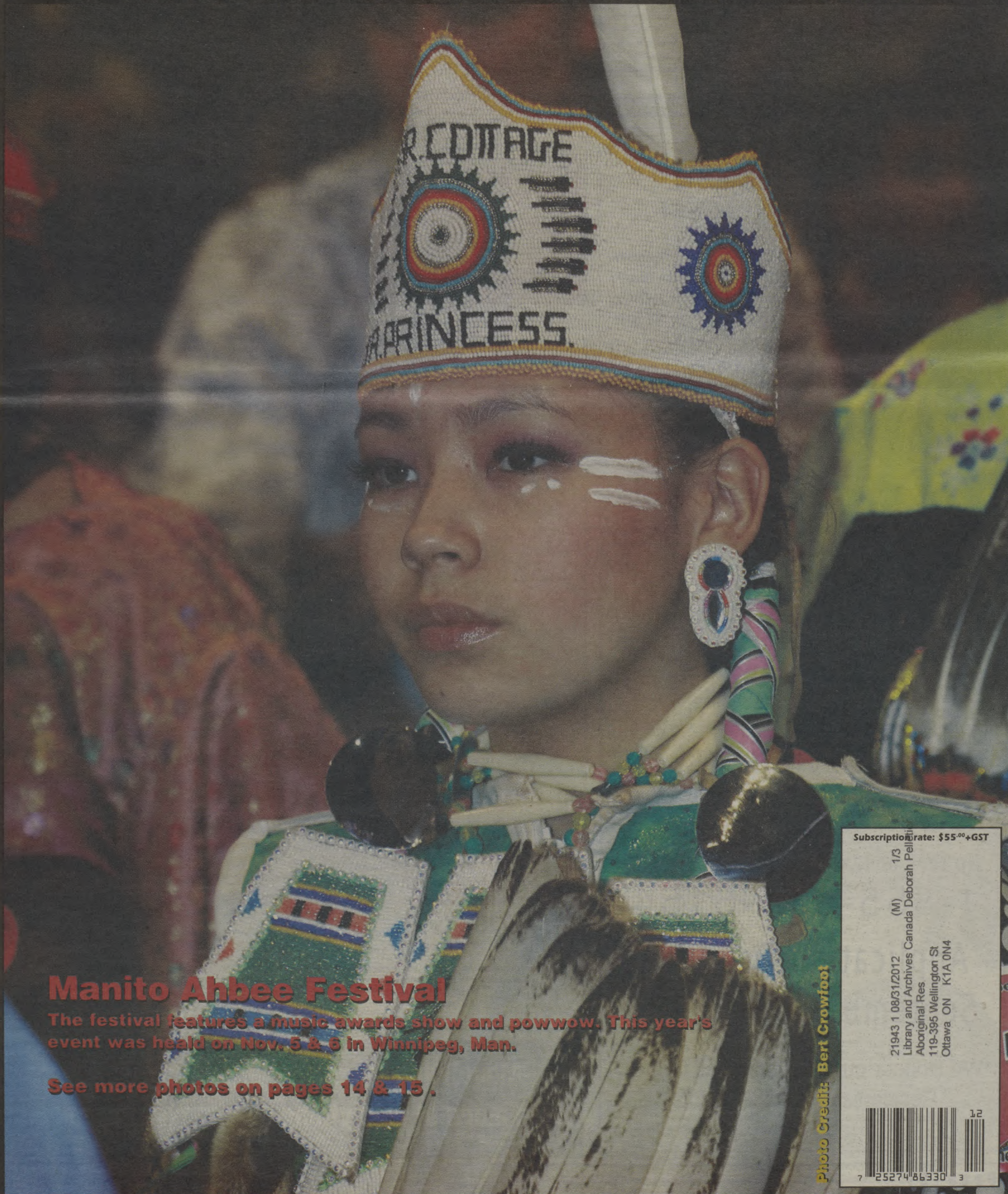
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Manito Ahbee Festival

The festival features a music awards show and powwow. This year's event was held on Nov. 5 & 6 in Winnipeg, Man.

See more photos on pages 14 & 15.

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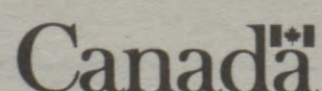
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Survivors remember RCMP involvement differently 8

A report that outlines the RCMP's official involvement over 100 years of Indian residential schools claims Canada's national police force was involved only in taking Aboriginal children from their homes to the schools and in returning truant students.

Window becomes a symbol of Canada's past 9

The federal minister in charge of Aboriginal Affairs refuses to accept the concept that the Indian residential schools system was a form of genocide, and this refusal underscores the urgency of open and frank discussion on the subject, said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo.

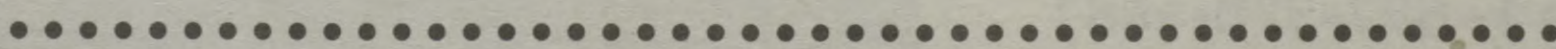
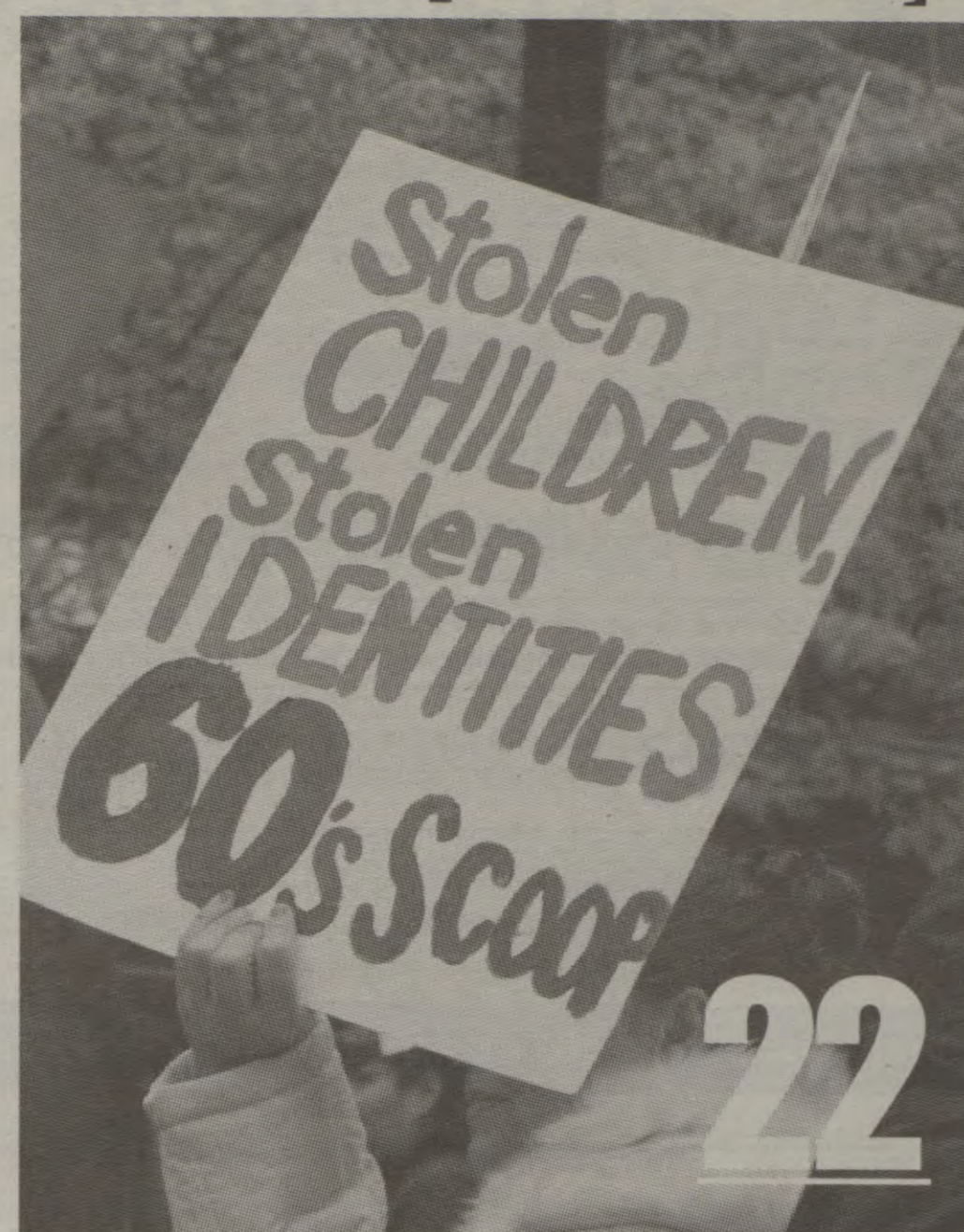
Social assistance adjustments coming 11

The road to poverty may get shorter for on-reserve First Nations people throughout the country. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development is working to ensure its 47-year-old income assistance policy remains in force.

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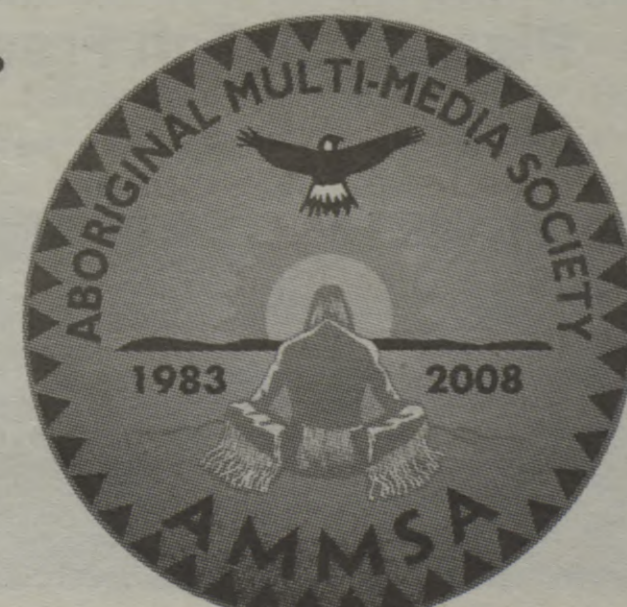
Annie Paingut Peterloosie spent the first 25 years of her life living off the land in Nunavut. She could tell you about the sheer joy of seeing sunlight on the horizon, even if only for a few moments after four months of constant darkness, and about welcoming the sound of streams running over rocks under the snow when warm winds blew.



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- Alberta Sweetgrass — The Aboriginal Newspaper of Alberta
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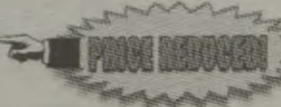


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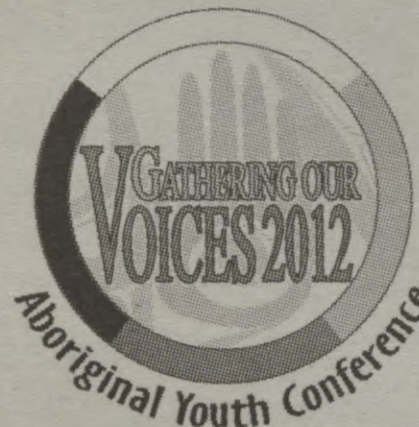
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When it's convenient for government, watch out!

There's an article in this issue of *Windspeaker* about the federal government's attempt to scale back social assistance payments on-reserve to comparable rates of S.A. provided by provincial governments. It made us go, 'huh?'

Ottawa is fighting on several fronts to not be held to provincial rates in such areas as child welfare and education funding that it seemed such a curious thing to have bureaucrats hell-bent on upholding a policy of parity in the territory of welfare payments. Could it be that it's just now convenient to hitch a pony to a provincial wagon when that province is slashing costs and reducing outgoings?

And what about that Dalton McGuinty who wants greater control over on-reserve education in Ontario? What's the end game there? Ottawa underfunds each First Nation child attending school on reserve by a couple of grand each year, and now the premier of the province wants to swoop in and provide a better way. Again... huh?

It seems to us that McGuinty is eyeing a big fat pot of money for administration that can be used to bolster Ontario's provincial coffers—call us jaded, we don't care—so don't pin angel wings and a halo on this guy yet. He seems to want to do an end run around the adequately funded education jurisdiction that many First Nations have been struggling to achieve for many decades, and that's just not cool or right, or going to work.

Why step in now, we have to ask? This is not the time to muscle out First Nations. Ontario says it does education better than anyone else is doing it now, but it's still the colonial perspective. It's still foreign to what we know works best.

Get out of the way great father and let us teach

our children. We don't want another outside government meddling. We require the adequate funds to operate on-reserve schools ourselves.

We know our children do better when they can speak the language of their forefathers, so fund that if you really want to make advances. We know our children do better when what they learn in school relates to what their realities are in life. So fund that if you want to see the gap in education outcomes between Native and non-Native reduced. We know our cultures are important to the identity and success of our children as they develop resiliency and self-confidence. So invest in this and reap the rewards. Smarter, more competent adults that will for decades contribute to a better Canada.

There's a group of chiefs that are now suing the federal government for hundreds of millions of dollars for underfunding education for all these years. A big grand gesture of frustration, but not really to be taken too seriously. Curious that it comes as the national panel on education ends its cross-country tour and before it delivers its report.

Huh?

We are going into lean times, you can bet your bottom dollar. The belts in Ottawa are getting a big hard pull and they won't mind delaying any discussion of education funding equity in the courts for the next few decades. So, that's not where we want to be.

We need a frank, respectful discussion upon whose foundation is the acknowledgment that what we've done up to now has failed, and First Nations people know a better way forward.

Windspeaker

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

THE THRONE SPEECH IN ONTARIO

has surprised a few with a promise from Premier Dalton McGuinty's government to improve the standards of First Nations education. The Toronto Star reports that McGuinty wants to "press" Ottawa for more provincial control "over the woeful state of federal-run Native education." He said the province has an obligation to ensure every child grows up strong, to be the best they can be and realize their potential. Native youth are the fastest growing demographic so the Star says helping Native kids helps Ontario in the long run. "When we want to take on emerging economies and succeed in a very competitive and turbulent economy we need our people at their best," McGuinty said. He said the feds aren't good at providing education. "They don't do education. We do education. And there are now international authorities who say we have the best public education system in the English-speaking world." Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse said something has to be done about the issue. "Why does a 14-year-old have to leave home to get a secondary education?" he recently asked. "The reality is, 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds aren't receiving any parenting once they leave their communities... the culture shock they experience is, I am sure, quite traumatic."

THE MONTREAL GAZETTE REPORTS

that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is facing funding and bureaucratic problems that may prevent them from reaching their goals. The commission is looking for more cash, is having difficulty accessing historical records from government departments, is encountering bureaucratic delays in hiring staff, and, now, the national research centre the TRC is mandated to create may not become a reality. "It now seems likely that the Commission's budget will not allow the Commission to fund the creation of a National Research Centre," wrote TRC Chair Murray Sinclair in his 2010/2011 performance report. "The requirement to create an entire federal department, subject to and accountable for the complete range of federal government statutes, regulations, policies, directives and guidelines, with a very limited staffing complement and with significant budget limitations, has posed considerable challenges." The Gazette says Opposition MPs are "worried about the commission's future considering the Conservatives are searching for five- to 10-per-cent cuts across the federal government." NDP Aboriginal Affairs critic Linda Duncan said the commission is being short-changed. "It's one thing (for the government) to create the commission, it's another to give it your full support."

MEMBERS OF THE ALL-PARTY

Special Committee to Appoint a Representative for Children and Youth have unanimously recommended that the House reappoint Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond for a second term as the Representative for Children and Youth for British Columbia. "During her first term, Turpel-Lafond has shown outstanding leadership in defining the new position of Representative for Children and Youth," said committee chair Colin Hansen. "We are pleased to recommend her reappointment for another five years. In the interview, we were impressed with her strong commitment to continuing the work of her office in advocacy, monitoring and investigation," added Mable Elmore, deputy chair. Turpel-Lafond was first appointed by the House as the province's first Representative for Children and Youth on Nov. 27, 2006. As an officer of the Legislature, the appointment was made on the unanimous recommendation of an all-party special committee.

Letter: Just a few corrections

Dear Editor:

Re: September 2011 issue in the article "AMMSA alum leaves cherished memories"

My reason for this letter is to correct information about my late nephew Kimowan Metchewais (Mclain). I enjoyed most of what was written about my favorite and talented nephew, Kimowan. My late father had given him this name Kimowan and not "kimo" as written numerous times. Kimowan was unique, and I know he was not ever impressed with his name being changed by his friends.

In another part of the article it was stated "he wasn't spiritual in any conventional sense." Knowing Kimowan all his life, he was very cultural to the point where his work had some bases of his teachings from what he learned in his earlier years from several Elders with their ceremonies.

I am hoping your written material can be corrected.

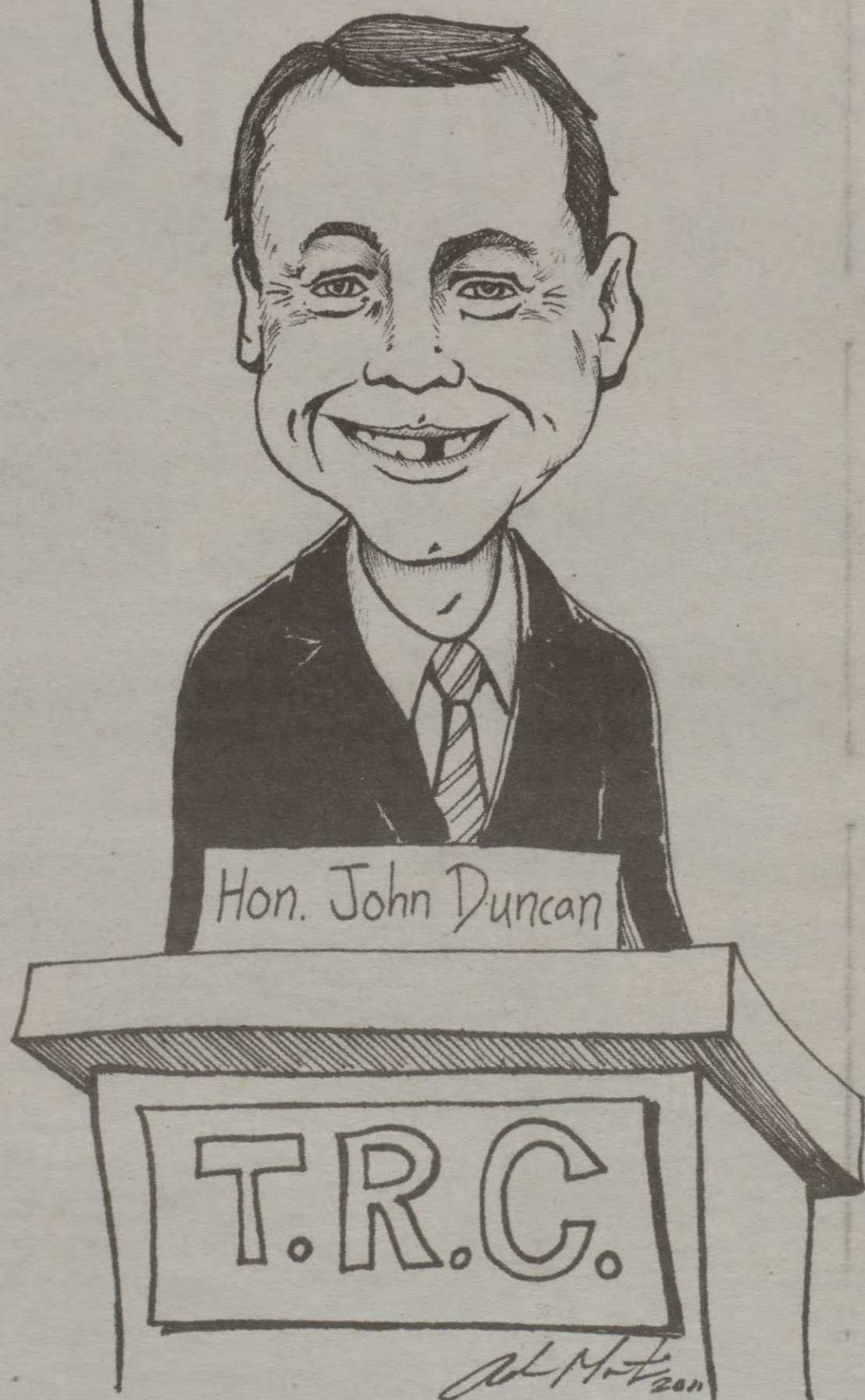
I have been in Kimowan's life many years and I always knew what he was doing and also was updated by him over the years about his journey. As stated, he would mention or make comments on various Native comedy, but on the other hand he was "a very proud Native man with humor."

Leona Metchewais

Rank Comix

by Adam Martin

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Lunch, Wednesday, February 15 – Presentation of the Aboriginal Youth Financial Management Awards
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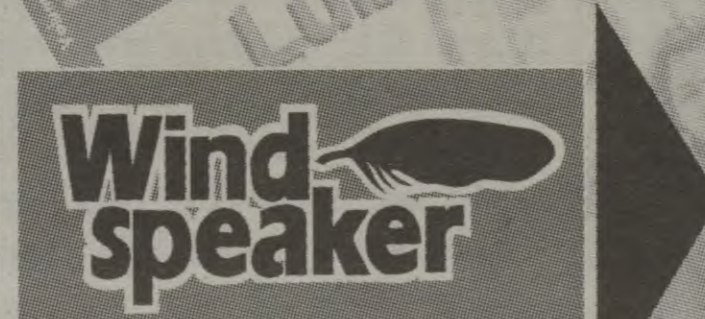
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Survivors remember RCMP involvement differently

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

HALIFAX

A report that outlines the RCMP's official involvement over 100 years of Indian residential schools claims Canada's national police force was involved only in taking Aboriginal children from their homes to the schools and in returning truant students.

"Our role was not involved specifically within the school," said RCMP Deputy Commissioner Canada East Steve Graham, who presented the 173-page report on the last day of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's most recent national event held in Halifax Oct. 26 to 29.

Marcel-Eugene LeBeuf, who authored *The Role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police During the Indian Residential School System* on behalf of the RCMP, wrote, "The report shows that

Indian Residential Schools were essentially a closed system between the Department of Indian Affairs, the churches and school administrator. The problems within the schools did not attract police attention or intervention because they were mostly dealt with internally or were unknown to the police."

However, many residential school survivors recall RCMP involvement differently.

"I do know there were accounts where the RCMP were called into the Shubenacadie residential school to deal with things. I do have an account from an Elder who said that one of the RCMP actually stopped a beating of a child at Shubenacadie residential school. So I do know that they are aware of some abuses that were happening in the schools at least here in the Atlantic and I'm sure that story is the same all throughout the country that they were aware of the abuses that were happening," Vanessa Nevin

told *CBC News*. Nevin, of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs, was one of the organizers of the TRC's Halifax event. Shubenacadie residential school is the only school in Atlantic Canada to meet the criteria to be included in the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, said he has heard similar stories from his family members that attended residential schools on the west coast of British Columbia.

"I would defer to and support other's experiences. Even from afar it would seem that authorities would have had some sense of understanding of what was going on within the schools and the school systems," said Atleo.

In a news conference following the tabling of the RCMP report, Graham said, "I couldn't comment specifically on other's memories. I can just tell you

what the research came back to us in terms of what the (RCMP's) role was."

Graham said the report involved talking to "a very good cross section of people."

However, LeBeuf noted that there was "very little written material about the specific role police officers played with regards to physical or sexual abuse in Indian Residential Schools... The available historical literature on the RCMP has no reference to Indian Residential Schools, even in provinces where schools were numerous."

Despite apparent discrepancies in the RCMP's official version of its role and what survivors said they remember of RCMP involvement, Atleo said the RCMP report is welcomed.

"I would suggest ... that their introspection of their role in the residential schools is an important act in the reconciliation process, in truth telling and that's what the TRC

is all about," said Atleo.

He also noted that the relationship between the RCMP and Aboriginal people continues to be difficult "even into the modern era."

Cpl. Mel Calahasen recently celebrated 25 years as a member of the RCMP. Calahasen, who grew up in Grouard in northern Alberta, recalled his mother's refusal to give him permission to join the force at 17 years of age although he already had a brother with the RCMP. A year later, as an adult, Calahasen joined.

"I think it had a lot to do with the negative connotations associated with the RCMP with the Aboriginal people back in the days. They were used as enforcers. Children were taken away from their homes without reservation and they were forced into these (residential) schools. I think my mom being in that era, even though she has never said that to me, I'm thinking that's probably one of the reasons," said Calahasen.

Window becomes a symbol of Canada's past

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

The federal minister in charge of Aboriginal Affairs refuses to accept the concept that the Indian residential schools system was a form of genocide, and this refusal underscores the urgency of open and frank discussion on the subject, said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo.

"We're pursuing a First Nations-Crown gathering with the Prime Minister this winter, because it's very clear that we've got to put the relationship back on its original treaty foundation of mutual understanding," Atleo said.

In October, John Duncan, minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada, claimed that the government's operation of Indian residential schools was an educational policy gone wrong. Duncan's comments followed his announcement that a stained glass window marking the residential school legacy would be erected on Parliament Hill.

Duncan said he did believe forcing children to attend residential schools was a form of genocide.

"No, I don't feel that way, but certainly it was very negative to the retention of culture and if it extended another generation or two, it might have been lethal," said Duncan.

"It's a well-known historical sentiment that residential schools were quote-unquote to

kill the Indian in the child," said Atleo.

Residential school survivors at the most recent national event hosted in Halifax by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission told story after story of being punished for speaking their Native tongue and forced to speak English, being isolated from other family members, and being prohibited from practising their culture and religion.

"At school they cut my braids. My sister screamed in terror when they cut her braids," Marilyn Ingram told the Commissioners' Sharing Panel on Oct. 28. The nuns at Shubenacadie Indian Residential School told Ingram that her grandmother would burn in hell.

"My story was no exception." Ingram also said that her brother was the last to die at Shubenacadie Indian Residential School.

"If we look at genocide in its dictionary terminology it talks about loss of life and I know that broadly it conjures up major, major death squads in Europe or in Africa, but First Nations experienced loss of life, experienced an overt effort to kill our languages, to disconnect children from their homes and their culture," said Atleo.

NDP leadership candidate and Quebec MP Romeo Saganash, who is Cree, instantly called for Duncan's resignation.

"It's a comment that requires an immediate apology and not only for those of us who survived the residential schools like me...but also for us who had family die there, those of us who

have seen the damage it has struck at the core of our communities, our families, our culture, for several generations," Saganash told *APTN National News*.

While Atleo isn't calling for Duncan's resignation, he is calling for talks to happen between government and First Nations.

"(We need) real mutual respect and that includes making every effort to have a shared understanding of not only what happened in the past (and) how we describe it, but more importantly, at this juncture, how we design a future that must be done in a joint fashion," said Atleo.

The stained glass window to be installed in the Centre Block on Parliament Hill in Ottawa is one way of moving forward, he said.

"It's a symbolic gesture for sure, but I think it's a symbolic gesture in the right direction. It's going to be permanent," said Atleo. He said it will help Canadians, as well as Parliamentarians, remember that children and families were impacted by residential schools.

The window, which will be the first thing MPs see upon leaving the House of Commons, will be designed through the joint effort of an artists' panel, and will be installed in 2012. Duncan did not comment on the cost of the window.

"It will stand as a significant piece of our shared history and I really, really put a lot of faith in the brilliance of our artists and our communities," said Atleo.



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo

PHOTO: FILE



John Duncan, minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada

PHOTO: FILE

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Residential school students left out of agreement



PHOTO: FILE

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Commissioners Wilton Littlechild (left) Murray Sinclair and Marie Wilson present before a Senate Committee hearing.

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

HALIFAX

Students of Shubenacadie residential school and other school survivors stood together in Halifax at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's third national event held Oct. 26 to 29, but others in Atlantic Canada left out of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement made it clear that the abuse they suffered was no different and just as bad as those who attended "Shubie."

Bart Jack, an Innu, who shared his story asked people to consider the former students of Labrador because the federal and provincial governments "do not recognize the fact that they've done anything wrong in Labrador. ... So for me to start talking about reconciliation, feeling good, apologizing, and so on, that has not happened in our community. That has not happened yet," he said.

Jack spent time at Mount Cashel in St. John's, which was closed in 1990. It was operated by the Roman Catholics and stories of sexual and physical abuse were common.

Jack also made reference to the residential school in North West River, in central Labrador, which was founded in the 1920s by Yale University students who came to work with the International Grenfell Association. A dormitory in that school was set up for Innu from Labrador.

Like other Indian residential schools which operated in Atlantic Canada, students who attended the two mentioned by Jack do not qualify for compensation under the IRSSA because they were run by the church or provincial government and had no federal connection.

"When I look at (the TRC slogan), 'For the child taken and the parent left behind'... I left (my parents) behind in 1969. When I came back they were different," said Jack. "There are at least hundreds of Aboriginal people... who have not been acknowledged as victims of ... residential schools and I say our work is not finished unless we get the government to recognize this."

TRC Commissioner Wilton Littlechild commended Jack for his call to action.

"There (needs) to be fairness and action in Labrador because they are being excluded."

Many stories were shared during the four-day national event. Some stories were told in English and some in Native tongue with the aid of translators, and all were heart-wrenching. For some it was the first time sharing their experiences.

"I didn't think it was going to be this hard," said Emmett Peters, who was accompanied by his wife and daughter. "This is the first time I ever talked about this.... It took me a long time to get over the shame."

Peters spoke haltingly of the 10 years he spent in residential day school and the impact it had on the rest of his life. From his parents not believing him and his siblings when they tried to tell them what was happening in the school, to how he "hated being Indian because I was told I was no good. I never felt comfortable in my own skin."

He spoke of his journey to recovery and self-discovery, finally forgiving himself for the things he had done, learning to love himself, and being the first person to bring the pipe into the prisons where he has worked for 26 years.

Peters, who was born on Lennox Island and is a hereditary chief, said although he had

forgiven the priests and nuns, one of his "proudest achievements" is raising children who are not baptized. "They're all brought up Indian."

Other survivors talked about not understanding why their parents had given them up to residential schools and some survivors talked about hating their parents. But during the course of the sharing panel, some survivors spoke words of forgiveness.

Elaine Paul, who attended Shubenacadie, talked about the generational loss that was felt. Paul said her father was also a survivor of residential school and did not know how to interact with and love his children.

"It goes through generations and generations and generations of abuse," said Paul. "I forgive you, Dad."

Commissioner Marie Wilson said moving from hate to love was a powerful transformation.

"(We've heard) positive and uplifting stories of transformation and hope and the incredible appreciation that so many of the speakers gave to those of you in the room who are here in ensuring and assuring them that no one of us is alone and they are not alone and that you understand from your heart ... what has been experienced," she said.

The theme of the Halifax event was *It's About Love - A National Journey for Healing, Families and Reconciliation*.

Said Littlechild, "Throughout all the pain (survivor Alexander Bruce Simon) still had the strength to say ... 'I love my people. I love my people.' And that was such a good way to capture the theme... for this particular national event."

The next TRC National Event is to be held in Saskatoon in June 2012.

Windspeaker News Briefs

THE NATIONAL CHIEF OF THE

Assembly of First Nations believes the Conservative government's omnibus crime bill will put more First Nations people in jail, and they are already disproportionately represented there. Shawn Atleo says First Nations have not been consulted on new tough-on-crime laws and it would benefit the country to have First Nations help design future-forward solutions. He said it was a government education policy that led to over-representation of Aboriginals in jail, and it will be education that can turn the tide against it. "That's poverty. That's the underlying trauma of the Indian Residential School system," he said. Give First Nations more control over programs, and that would move communities away from poverty and crime.

THE WATER TASTE CHALLENGE AT THE

57th Annual Northwestern Ontario Water and Wastewater Conference in Thunder Bay was won by the Dalles First Nation and the Bimose Tribal Council. Their source of water comes from the Winnipeg River, deemed as high risk in a recent national assessment due to microbiological components. "The Dalles First Nation water treatment plant took source water that was considered high risk, even though it came from a nice pristine environment, and they filtered it and ended up winning this contest," said Phil Tangie, technical services officer with Bimose Tribal Council in an interview with Wawatay News. Judging was based on the esthetics of the water, such as taste, smell, clarity and turbidity. "This isn't just a victory for Dalles First Nation, it's not a victory for Bimose, it's not a victory for Treaty #3," said Paul Otis, technical services officer with Bimose Tribal Council. "We feel it is a victory for First Nations coast to coast."

SPRING FLOODING IN MANITOBA HAS

cost millions, said Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. Hotels and expenses for flood evacuees have reached \$23 million. About 2,100 people from eight Manitoba First Nations are still unable to return home. Ottawa said the Lake St. Martin First Nation near Lake Manitoba will have to be moved permanently to higher ground. Manitoba's Aboriginal Affairs minister says putting up the evacuees in Winnipeg hotels was a bad idea. Elders checked out of the Place Louis Riel Hotel because the staff did not want them gathering in the hotel lobby. Violet Ross, 74, told CBC News about one occasion when a hotel security guard asked why she doesn't stay in her room.

ARCHEOLOGISTS DISCOVERED A

340-year-old coin from China near the proposed site of a Yukon gold mine, which may give more information about the 17th-century trade links between China, Russia, and First Nations in Canada. Chinese characters indicate the coin was minted in Zhili province between 1667 and 1671 during the Qing Dynasty. A dig near Western Copper and Gold Corp.'s proposed Casino mine site about 300 kilometres northwest of Whitehorse was the site of the discovery. It is the third historic Chinese coin ever found in Yukon. "The coin adds to the body of evidence that the Chinese market connected with Yukon First Nations through Russian and coastal Tlingit trade intermediaries during the late 17th and 18th centuries, and perhaps as early as the 15th century," a statement reads. Paul West-Sells, president of Western Copper and Gold, said "it's satisfying that the work we're doing to support development of the Casino project is also contributing to the understanding of Yukon's heritage."

THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT

Foundation has announced the 2012 recipients of the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards and they include the founder of the first and largest Aboriginal financial institution in Canada, the first self-identified Métis person to serve in the federal Cabinet, a young Métis woman who ran across Canada to raise money for poverty and medical research, and the first Inuit woman to become a lawyer. They will be acknowledged in a special gala event on Feb. 24 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in Vancouver. The 2012 National Aboriginal Achievement Award Recipients are Candace Sutherland of Manitoba who gets the Youth Award; Earl Cook of Manitoba, who is named the Youth Award winner (posthumous); actor Adam Beach of Manitoba who is the recipient in the Arts category; Chief Victor Buffalo of Alberta (Business and Commerce); Elder Dave Courchene Jr. of Manitoba (Culture, Heritage and Spirituality); Dr. Leona Makokis of Alberta (Education); Richard Hardy of British Columbia (Environment and Natural Resources); Dr. Janet Smylie of Ontario (Health); Violet Ford of Newfoundland and Labrador (Law and Justice); Richard Wagamese, Ontario (Media and Communications); Leona Aglukkaq, Nunavut (Politics); Grand Chief Edward John, British Columbia (Politics); Minnie Grey, Quebec (Public Service); Richard Peter, British Columbia (Sports); and Senator Gerry St. Germain, Manitoba (Lifetime Achievement Award). The Awards celebrate excellence in the Indigenous community and the limitless potential that Indigenous people represent. They recognize the highest level of achievement and provide terrific role models for Indigenous youth to achieve their potential.

Did Canada cross the line with Blackstock?

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, says she was shocked to learn that the federal government had accumulated close to 400 pieces of documentation about her over an 18-month period.

She is adamant, however, that Canada's surveillance of her shouldn't distract from the cause she is pursuing, equitable benefits for First Nations children in care on reserve.

"The major rights violation is not the violation of my privacy," Blackstock told Windspeaker.

"The major rights violation is the violation of these children's opportunity to get the same services as all other Canadian children enjoy," said Blackstock.

She assumes that the passion she has for her "cause" is what brought her to the attention of the government in the first place.

In 2007, the society and the Assembly of First Nations filed a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission alleging that the federal government was racially discriminating against First Nations children by providing less child welfare benefits on reserves.

The Canadian government funds child welfare on reserves at a lower rate than the funding provinces provide for child welfare services off-reserve.† The human rights commission referred the complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT). The federal government took legal action against the referral but lost.

Two weeks before the tribunal was to hear the case, the government appointed a new chair. CHRT chair Shirish Chotalia heard a motion from the government to dismiss the human rights complaint and subsequently ruled in favor of the federal government citing a legal technicality.

The caring society, AFN and the human rights commission each filed a judicial review of Chotalia's decision, which is to be heard in federal court Feb. 13 to 15, 2012.

"As a public figure one can always expect the department will take an interest in what you're doing, but I think as a private citizen there's a fine line as to what they would find, as example, on your Web pages and court submissions versus using their power to go the extra step ... to monitor and follow what I am doing," said Blackstock.

An incident in late 2009 caused Blackstock to question her treatment at the hands of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada officials and pushed her to file under the Privacy

Information Act for documentation the federal government had concerning her.

In December 2009, Blackstock accompanied the Chiefs of Ontario to a meeting with Aboriginal Affairs ministerial staff to discuss First Nations child welfare funding. Blackstock had been invited by the chiefs as an expert.

Blackstock successfully cleared the regular security procedures but then was told by an Aboriginal Affairs staff member that the department would not meet with the Chiefs of Ontario if she was present in the room.

She volunteered to stay in the waiting room. A security guard was present.

Blackstock immediately wrote then-Indian Affairs minister Chuck Strahl to find out why she had been excluded from the meeting. A staff member responded stating Blackstock had not been invited by the department.

However, the chiefs had other experts on hand that had not been specifically invited by Aboriginal Affairs but were still permitted to attend, said Blackstock.

In early 2010, Blackstock filed under the Privacy Act for documentation dating from the December meeting to the present.

By September 2011, Blackstock had in her possession a three-inch binder and a DVD with additional information that covered the time frame from December 2009 to June 22, 2011. In that binder was correspondence and information from two federal departments, Aboriginal Affairs and Justice, focusing primarily on Blackstock's interaction with the tribunal. It included emails between government officials, critiques of Blackstock's presentations at conferences, notes of child welfare conferences that Blackstock didn't attend, and the monitoring of both her corporate and personal Facebook pages.

"Another thing they did was pull my status application. It appears twice within the materials there. Status information not only has all your bare essentials, like proper name and date of birth, etc., but also that same detail about your parents and your siblings," said Blackstock.

In early summer 2011, she received her first package of information. The remainder of the documentation arrived in fall. The documentation from Aboriginal Affairs went as high as assistant deputy minister, while the documentation from Justice Canada reached the legal counsel handling the society's human rights complaint.

Knowing that she was – and still may be – under surveillance by the government will not intimidate Blackstock.

"It doesn't make me want to



Cindy Blackstock

step back at all," she said. "None of us should ever be silenced when a child's well-being and safety is at stake. And in this case, it's not just one child; it's thousands of children."

Blackstock is concerned about what this may mean for other Aboriginal advocates. After the news broke, Blackstock was in Saskatchewan meeting with First Nations chiefs and child welfare agencies and community providers.

"Many were scared for me and scared for themselves, as well," she said, adding she doesn't know if the information acquired by the government has been used against her or her organization.

The caring society is the only national Aboriginal organization without federal funding.

"My whole motivation to bring this forward is to bring this to public attention so this does not happen to other people."

Blackstock said she is considering action against the federal government, including filing a privacy complaint or amending the retaliation complaint against the federal government which was filed as part of the Human Rights Act. The act, she pointed out, says a party that is alleged to have discriminated cannot retaliate against a complainant.

Blackstock's privacy was raised in the House of Commons on Nov. 17. Edmonton Strathcona NDP MP Linda Duncan wanted to know why the government was "spying" on Blackstock.

In response, Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan said he had directed his deputy minister to look into whether "privacy rules were respected in this case."

"We wouldn't call it an investigation," said Michelle Perron, spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs. "We don't use that word here." Perron said she did not have a timeline as to when the report on the privacy issue would be completed.

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Honours recognize commitment to a cause

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

Two women dedicated to increasing awareness about the rights of First Nations people are among the newest recipients to be awarded one of Canada's highest honours.

Dr. Viola Robinson and artist Shirley Bear were two of the 39 people named to the Order of Canada on Nov. 4.

"It was an honour. The impact of how great it was didn't hit me until later," Robinson said, recalling being told last summer that she would receive the award.

"I was totally shocked," she admitted. "I couldn't imagine how I'd been selected," she said.

But Robinson's 30-year commitment to First Nation political issues earned her the nod from Canada.

The Mi'kmaq First Nation woman from Yarmouth, N.S. has been called a role model and leader for her dedication to the advancement of the rights of First Nations peoples across Canada. She has also been instrumental in negotiating a process for the implementation of governance and treaty rights for Mi'kmaq communities and has ardently fought to end discrimination against Aboriginal women nationally.

As well as her commitment to First Nation and human rights, Robinson has also been a member of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which she says was where she did some of her most important work.

"I've been quite active in this work since 1975 and I've been

continuous," she said.

Robinson, a mother and grandmother, decided to go to law school after raising a family because she wanted to "bring some accreditation to the work that I had done," she said, referring to her role in the Aboriginal political arena.

Soon after graduating from law school, Robinson was approached by various groups for advisor and committee positions.

"It just grew and grew and grew," she said of her early activism and political work.

Today her work continues to grow.

Just one week before receiving the Order of Canada, Robinson was given the role of lead negotiator for the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative; an organization responsible for treaty negotiations between the Mi'kmaq people, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada.

Robinson said she felt "doubly honoured", adding that her treaty work is a labour of love for her people.

"It's work that I have a passion for," she stated.

"I think [treaty negotiations] is the most important thing for the Mi'kmaq Nation," she added.

"With negotiations, it involves just about everything in Mi'kmaq life. You're looking at the future of your children."

She has great hope for that future, and especially the future success of women.

"I think that for younger Aboriginal women, they need to know that anything is possible," explained Robinson. "The potential for an Aboriginal

woman to be successful is there. All they have to do is go after it," she added.

"You have to be persistent and not let anything pull you back or bring you down," she encouraged.

But while she applauds First Nations women for being successful, Robinson rejects being labeled a feminist and activist and instead chooses to adopt a humanistic approach to her successes.

"I never considered ever calling myself an activist [but] everyone else did," she said.

"And I have never considered myself a feminist," she added. "I was just trying to do something for people who were struggling."

"I look at equality and I look at equal opportunity," she said. "Everything I did wasn't just for women but for everybody equally."

The other First Nation recipient of the 2011 Order of Canada is Shirley Bear, a member of the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick.

Bear, who is an artist, activist and curator, has helped bring social awareness to the importance of First Nation arts in Canada. Her own paintings are admired for honouring the wisdom, strength and spirituality of Aboriginal women and her activism for the rights of Indigenous women has been commended.

Like Robinson, Bear says she was shocked to learn she had been chosen.

"It was a surprise she said," explaining that she later realized a member of her community nominated her.

Unlike Robinson, however, Bear does not shy away from

being called a 'feminist' or 'activist.'

"I'm fearless, so I'm not careful," she said, pointing to the trailblazing mentality and true grit she possesses in the face of indifference and opposition to her causes.

"You don't back down," she explained.

"I've struggled to gain respect for what I do," she continued, adding that often times she felt she wasn't taken seriously as a First Nations artist and as a woman.

But Bear said she thinks progress regarding women's and First Nations rights is occurring through the younger generation.

"I think they're making strides," she said. "There are a lot [of Aboriginal women] that are outspoken, and that's wonderful."

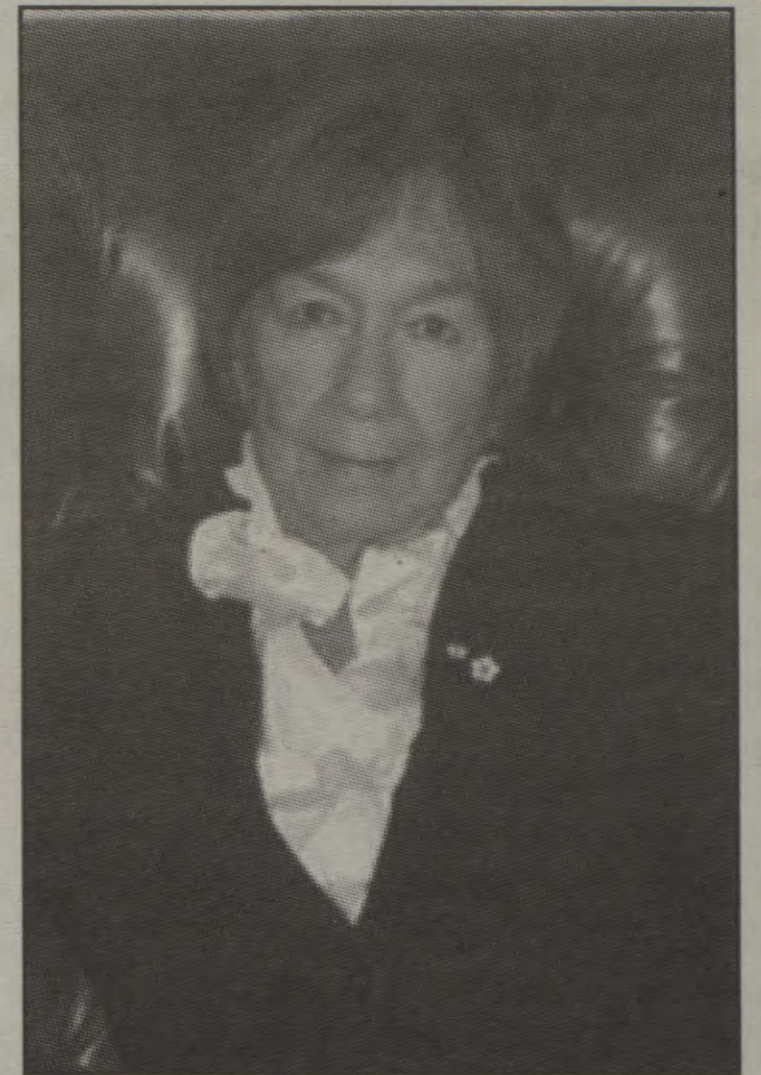
Asked how Bear thinks the honour of being an Order of Canada recipient will affect her life, she shrugs.

"Ask me in six months," she said with a chuckle.

"I suppose I could take full advantage of it and run around saying 'I've got the Order of Canada,' but I'm not like that."

"It was the last thing I expected because I never knew I made any movement happen," she said humbly.

Established in 1967 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Order of Canada recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. The order recognizes



Dr. Viola Robinson

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

people in all sectors of Canadian society.

The three levels of the Order of Canada are: Companion, which recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement and merit of the highest degree. Officer, which recognizes a lifetime of achievement and merit of a high degree and Member, which recognizes a lifetime of distinguished service in or to a particular community, group or field of activity.

This year 28 Members, 10 Officers and one Companion were chosen.

Robinson was appointed an Officer.

"It feels like you've just reached the top," she said.

"To be honoured in your province is a great honour, but to be acknowledged throughout the country is truly an honor," she said.

Social assistance adjustments coming

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

EEL GROUND, N.B.

The road to poverty may get shorter for on-reserve First Nations people throughout the country. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development is working to ensure its 47-year-old income assistance policy remains in force.

The policy sets on-reserve income assistance rates comparable to the province in which the reserve is located. Right now, the provincial government is starting to slash welfare payments in New Brunswick, so enforcement of the federal policy has New Brunswick chiefs worried.

Chief George Ginnish of Eel Ground First Nation said unemployment is more than 50 per cent in some of the communities in the province.

Ginnish said unemployment is quite high in his community in northern New Brunswick. He says families are going to have to make

the brutal choice of whether to pay the rent or put food on the table.

First Nations in New Brunswick have filed an application for a judicial review to stop the federal government from slashing social assistance rates. The government has been trying to slide in its enforcement of the social assistance policy since earlier this year.

"Over the past six, seven months, when some of our member communities [Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in New Brunswick], were in negotiations with ANAC for new funding agreements for this April, there were rumblings that there were going to be changes to the social development program," said Ginnish.

The changes to social assistance were not made clear before the negotiations. His community had been on one-year funding arrangements over the past several years. It was only this past year that a four-year agreement was inked.

He also says the policy was never clearly discussed with chief or council of Eel Ground First

Nation.

Not only that, Ginnish said the department didn't adequately consult any of the First Nations in New Brunswick.

Last April, the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs in New Brunswick sent a letter to ANAC expressing concern over the cuts. The letter also points out the drastic cut to rates.

"...the single adult rate will decline sharply, from the current \$1,100 per month to the \$537 per month currently allowed provincial recipients." The letter goes on, "The stated objective of the federal government is to move to a 'work-oriented' social welfare policy, and they cite the discrepancy between provincial rates and rates on First Nations as providing a disincentive to work on First Nations."

Chief Ginnish is troubled because the reality is it's hard to send people to work when there is little in the way of jobs. In Eel Ground First Nation, Statistics Canada indicates unemployment rates are 34.8 per cent, while the unemployment rate for the rest of

the province sits at 10 per cent.

"This is only going to make it extremely difficult on the poorest of the poor in our communities because there is no work available here, other than seasonal employment," Ginnish said.

Government information sessions occurred early this fall. Government sent notices out to chiefs inviting them to attend information sessions to learn about the social assistance changes.

"It's absolutely disturbing that there hasn't been a sit down or consultation," said Ginnish. "There was one letter after the fact saying the policy change would be difficult, but, we'll work with you to make this happen... It's backwards."

"From what we know of the rates, New Brunswick has one of the lowest social assistance rates in the country, and the program isn't working for the residents of New Brunswick, so, I don't know how they would expect they would know how it would work for us, especially if it's piecemealed," said Ginnish.

As far as Aboriginal Affairs and

Northern Development is concerned, it will be aligning all First Nation social welfare policies with that of the provinces. An email from the department states, "The policy of ensuring that First Nations receive income assistance rates that are comparable to those which provinces provide to those off reserve has been in effect since 1964 and thus represents the policy of successive federal governments."

The department also states regional variances in program delivery have been identified and corrections are being made to ensure a national consistency for the on-reserve income assistance program. The department also notes, "We realize that a limited transition period is required for First Nations."

The department has also indicated it's working with First Nation in the Atlantic region and the Atlantic Policy Congress "to develop an implementation plan that will transition First Nations communities to comparable rates."

(See *Social* on page 25.)

[strictly speaking] Taking a left turn at Albuquerque

One of the fringe benefits of what I do for a living is I have the opportunity to travel... a lot.

I get to see interesting places, learn fascinating things, and observe stuff I wouldn't normally get the chance to sitting in the Curve Lake woods watching raccoons fight, and desperately wishing I could get pizza delivered.

I am a man of few dreams.

Most recently, I found myself on the wind-swept and parched land of New Mexico, a fabulous place to visit, even in 101 degree weather. That stuff you hear about... 'at least it's a dry heat'. Ignore it. Hot is hot.

It had been a long time since I'd spent some quality time in New Mexico, but it was nice to be back and I learned some interesting things while I was down there this time. In particular, I learned about some of their laws.

For instance, in any bar or restaurant, everybody gets carded. I do mean everybody. I am 49 years old, and it had been at least 20 years since I was last asked for my I.D. At first I was flattered until somebody told me it's the law. It's a \$4,000 fine for



THE URBANE INDIAN Drew Hayden Taylor

the waiter, and a \$5,000 one for the establishment, if they don't ask for I.D.

For a brief moment, I felt like I was back in the '80s - the 1980's, not the 1880s.

More interestingly, when doing some window shopping at many of the amazing jewellery shops in the city of Albuquerque, most, if not all, of the items for sale were classified by tribe. There would be jewellery cases clearly divided and labeled Zuni, Pueblo, Navaho etc. Yes, jewellery segregation is still alive and well and living in New Mexico.

What intrigued me in particular was when I wanted to examine a particular ring. The woman behind the counter told me, as she handed me the lovely bauble, "it's by a Caucasian

artist." Again, by law, jewellery shops are required to inform customers which of their items for sale are made legitimately by Native artists, or by, shall we say... people of pallor.

Evidently, some years ago, there was some sort of scandal where non-Native artists were passing their work off as authentic Zuni art or something like that. Interesting. There's talk of expanding that ordinance to include other forms of Aboriginal artistic expression, including literary ones. I think, up here, that would be called the W. P. Kinsella law.

There is a Native belief that dictates that when you take something, you should always leave something else behind. I didn't want to disrespect that

tradition, and besides, we were always good traders. But my contribution to our cultural exchange, however, was a little different.

It was on the Navaho Reservation where I perhaps was at my most mischievous. I, uh... may have left some of the local people with a slightly inaccurate perception of the Ojibway. Unfortunately, this happens quite frequently around me. Can I help it if I like to tell a good and original story?

For example, I was in this Navaho home watching this grandmother make tortillas, and as I was talking with her and her family, I got a bit of a lesson on southwestern Indigenous cuisine. She was making flour tortillas, using a standard rolling pin to make it thin. Evidently in Mexico, they make corn tortillas, and frequently use a polished stone to flatten it. Then they asked me what, if anything, the Ojibway use when making our bread.

For some reason, I told them 'a fat baby'. The poor woman almost spit up her tea. For the rest of the afternoon, I was told, they couldn't get the image of Ojibway

women rolling a fat little baby backwards and forwards on a flour-dusted counter making Ojibway tortillas. I'm bad. I'm very bad.

And then, for some reason, the movie Star Wars came up. I think it was because many in the Hopi Nation believe George Lucas appropriated a traditional Hopi hairstyle for Princess Leia. Seriously. If you look at old photographs of Hopi women, they all have those bun-like 'dos over their ears. The Hopi Nation sits adjacent to the Navaho one. Evidently the Navaho way of the hair was to just wrap it up in a bun (so to speak) at the back of the head. Then this grandmother asked me how I would best describe the way Ojibway women traditionally wore their hair. I responded 'tinted with hair spray'. Again, more spit up tea.

My new Navaho name is now 'the Tea destroyer.'

One other thing I did notice while on the Navaho Reservation, you can get pizza delivered there. How civilized! More interestingly, they also have a Burger King and a KFC.

Get with the program, Curve Lake!

Ask for what you want; state what you need

Dear Auntie:

I feel so guilty for thinking this. My children are taking advantage of me. They only call when they need something, and when they drop off my grandchildren for me to take care of they sometimes disappear for days. I think, 'well, the grandchildren are better off with me than at a party where they could be hurt,' but it makes me feel small, like I have no other value. When I'm not needed, I'm completely forgotten. Any advice?

Signed,

I Feel So Sad

Dear I Feel So Sad:

Thanks for taking the risk and being honest with your feelings. I am glad you feel safe to ask the question and raise your misgivings about how unfairly you feel you are being taken advantage of. The bigger risk is having the grown up conversation about this with your kids and not losing out on time with your grandchildren. Being across the country from my family, I admire that you have time with your grandchildren and that you know they are safe.

One approach would be like diving into the deep end of the pool and sit the kids down to address outstanding family tension that can go as far back as childhood. Another more practical approach is to wade in the shallow end and have a conversation to bargain with your kids on what future visits with your grandchildren will look like.

One idea might be to make a coffee date with a close friend and decide on what limits you need to create to make more than just visits to convenience your kids



DEAR AUNTIE By J'net AyAy Qwa Yak Sheelth Cavanagh

going to parties. It is useful to take notes to review later. Finish the following sentence two to four times to get your ideas going. "Taking care of your kids I expect you to..."

Some examples might be:

Taking care of your kids I expect you to let me know when you are coming back to pick them up.

Taking care of your kids I expect you to join me for dinner or invite me over from time to time when I can enjoy the grandchildren when I am not responsible for them.

You are challenging both yourself and your kids to act like adults and be clear about what you need. The difference between complaining and communicating is the latter requires you to state what you need after explaining what is bothering you.

You will also know you are communicating effectively if you have your kids explain what they understand the new limits are and be sure to ask directly if they can agree. You may find it helpful to either write it out or just share a practice conversation with a close friend.

Give yourself what I like to call a bottom line statement you can always come back to that will

bring the conversation back to your message. For example:

I need you to understand my limits to make time with my grandchildren more enjoyable.

I am happy to have time with my grandchildren and I need you to understand I also value time with you.

I hope this is helpful, and good luck. Mothering our children is a job that is never done.

Lovingly, Auntie

Dear Auntie:

The holiday season is coming up fast with staff parties and New Year's Eve plans. I feel the stress of what to do. I have been sober and clean for 18-months and want to know how to handle the stress of being sober and clean during the holidays? Raising my three kids on my own means I have extra money during the holidays now that I have quit the party scene. My former party pals know I am sober but still try to convince me to pitch in for upcoming parties. Over the last year and a half I feel more and more isolated. What can I do to make this holiday special and get through it sober?

Signed,

Clinging To My Sobriety

Dear Clinging To My Sobriety:

I am proud of you and this 18-month continuing journey you are on with your sobriety. This is around the time of year I remember helping organize National Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week events working as a trauma counsellor. The holidays are stressful at the best of times and that much more with the pressures you describe.

Aside from staying sober, most everyone has to budget the extra cost of gifts, visiting, feasting and there may be added emotion with memories of beloved family members we have lost and cannot share the holidays with. Glad you are asking for direction to help you stay on track and true to the needs of your growing family.

Isolation is challenging to overcome while you renew a network of friends, and support will take time to nurture once you walk away from the party scene. This will test and reveal which friends want to support you or as you described pitch in for upcoming parties?

Solo parenting presents even bigger barriers to being isolated. Personally, I got involved with parenting groups through Friendship Centre programs that fortunately included shuttle rides, meals and child minding. This meant at least once a week I got a break for a few hours from the kids and enjoyed adult conversations that did not involve correcting behaviors. This was a vital way to offer myself some stress relief.

Clearly you value the needs of your children and know that your

determination to make sure this a memorable family time will take resistance to temptation. One idea is listen for free to affordable family events and plan to attend with your kids, so, when people ask, you can explain you have plans already.

More challenging would be to share your limits and kindly ask these friends to stop asking you to hang out in the party scene because you have your family's needs as your first priority.

Making homemade holiday gifts or cards may be of interest as a family activity. You can put extra attention into rehearsing for upcoming school concerts, and there is always decorating and baking.

Keep It Simple Sweetie is a classic AA saying—be gentle, caring and considerate of yourself and your family's needs. Remember, you did not just quit drinking, you also started a new beginning with your growing family at the heart of your journey of wellness.

Lovingly, Auntie

Have a question for Dear Auntie? Then please send it via email to: letters@ammsa.com

Check out Dear Auntie on facebook @ AskDearAuntie. You can read previous questions and answers or ask new questions of your own.

Editor's Note: The Ask Auntie column is published for readers' entertainment and consideration only. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by Windspeaker or the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society.

Ashley Callingbull — [windspeaker confidential]

Windspeaker: What one quality do you most value in a friend?

Ashley Callingbull: Trustworthy. If a friend is trustworthy, I can trust them with my feelings and secrets. Nothing is better than having someone to rely on who will always be true to you.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

A.C.: Stereotypes. They will never go away because the media is constantly pushing it in our faces. It is something I will have to live with being First Nations, but through all my success I am proving everyone wrong.

W: When are you at your happiest?

A.C.: When I am with my family. My family is the most supportive, loving and funniest people I've ever met. I am so thankful to have them in my life because they truly make me the happiest.

W: What one word best describes you when you are at your worst?

A.C.: Irritable.

W: What one person do you most admire and why?

A.C.: My mother, Lisa Ground. She is the most loving, hard working and supportive person I've ever met. Throughout all the struggles we had to live through and hard times we had to face, she continued to stay strong and love me unconditionally. I have never met a person who can live through what she has been through and still smile and live for others. If it wasn't for her I wouldn't be who I

am today. Thank you, Mom.

W: What is the most difficult thing you've ever had to do?

A.C.: Let go of someone who has passed. My grandmother and sister both passed on and for years I held on to the grief and made it my misery. One day I realized I had to let go of the pain so I can live and let them rest in peace.

W: What is your greatest accomplishment?

A.C.: I could say acting or being the first First Nations woman to become Miss Canada. But I would have to say working with youth internationally across the world. I had a very hard childhood living through abuse and poverty. I think it is important to give back to our future leaders, so I do so by doing motivational speeches, by speaking about my hard times, success and goals. It truly makes me happy to put a smile on a child's face.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

A.C.: There are three goals I wish to accomplish. To be acknowledged for my acting and be nominated at the Academy Awards, to be the first First Nations woman to win Miss Universe, and to make an organization for under-privileged youth.

W: If you couldn't do what you're doing today, what would you be doing?

A.C.: I know deep down in my heart I would still be working with youth and finding a way to give back as much as I can.

W: What is the best piece of

advice you've ever received?

"Live everyday like it's your last."

W: Did you take it?

A.C.: Yes. I live everyday like it's my last and push myself to my full potential and give constant love to my family.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

A.C.: I hope to be remembered as a person who loved and inspired.

Ashley Callingbull is a 21-year-old university student currently enrolled at Concordia in Edmonton and is working towards her Bachelor of Arts in Drama. She was born and raised in Enoch and has lived there most of her life. Her dreams in life are to work with underprivileged children teaching and mentoring, using her talents of acting, dancing and singing.

She is very devoted to her culture and people, and takes pride in her Native Cree heritage, and has shown this through her work with community Elders and children. The loss of some very close family members has led Ashley to spend a lot of time helping out at hospitals and charities throughout Alberta, including the Stollery Children's Hospital, Walk for the Cure, and Run for the Lung. The tough life situations she has come out of have taught her valuable lessons and, in her opinion, made her the woman she is today. She believes we are all incredibly lucky to be here and wants to make some kind



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Ashley Callingbull

of positive impact on the world.

Ashley has done a lot of voice over work in different languages, been in multiple TV series and has been involved in countless musicals. Ashley is currently filming Season 2 of the television series Blackstone.

One of her possible means of getting to do what she really wants

is through acting and modeling, both life-long passions. She has trained in stage combat, musical theatre and other theatrical arts. Ashley is also a motivational speaker, traveling internationally to work with youth. Ashley was asked and very privileged to speak at Harvard University and for TED Talks.

[radio's most active]

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

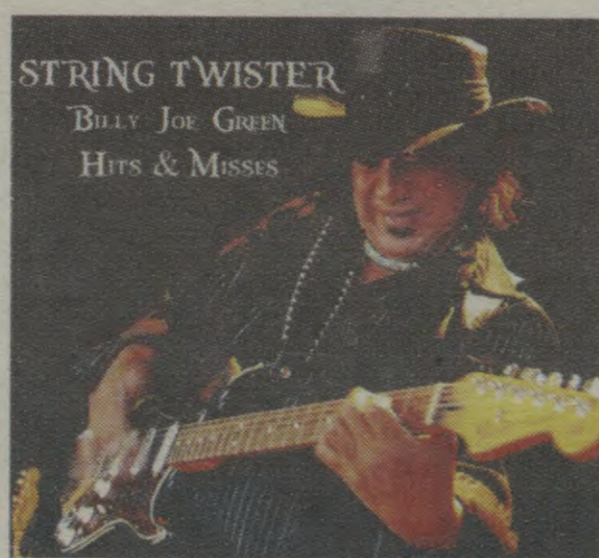
ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
Dorothy Mae	The Wind Brings Me Back	Roots
Wesley Hardisty	Gilbert's Barn Dance	12:12
Holly Vee	Undying Love	Love, Spurs and Rock & Roll
The Outlaws	Nobody Lives Forever	The Outlaws
Cassidy Mann	Kinda Cute	Cassidy Mann
Hector Menow	Rain Song	Rain Dancing
John McLeod	The Breed	Do It Anyway
John Tees	I Don't Want To Hear You	What Metis Means To Me
Jade Turner	The Way You Are	Thanks To You
Desiree Dorion	Freedom Ain't Free	Soul Back Jack
Phyllis Sinclair	Washerwoman's Lament	Dreams Of The Washerwoman
Tracy Bone & JC Campbell	Back In Love	Single Release
Samantha Crain	Up On The Table	You (Understood)
Genevieve Fisher	Good Thing He Can't Read My Mind	Without Borders
Christa Couture	Oh Yes Oh Yes	Wedding Singer & Undertaker
Leah Hunt	Need Someone To Love Me	Single Release
Sherry St. Germain	Kick Out The Lights	Kick Out The Lights
Crystal Shawanda	Fever	Single Release
Indigenous	Should I Stay	The Acoustic Sessions
Donny Parenteau	My Girl	To Whom It May Concern

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



OUR PICK

Artist—Billy Joe Green
Song—Keep the Circle Strong
Album—String Twister Hits & Misses
Label—Independent

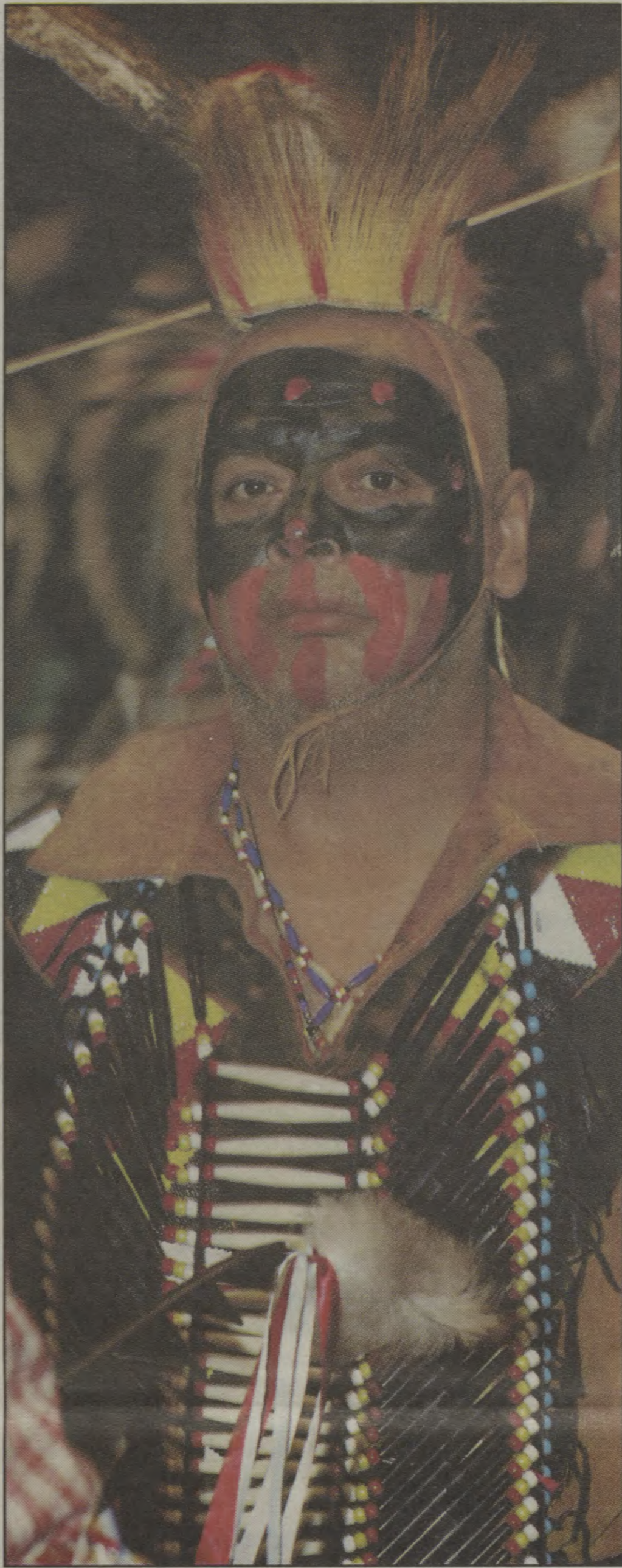
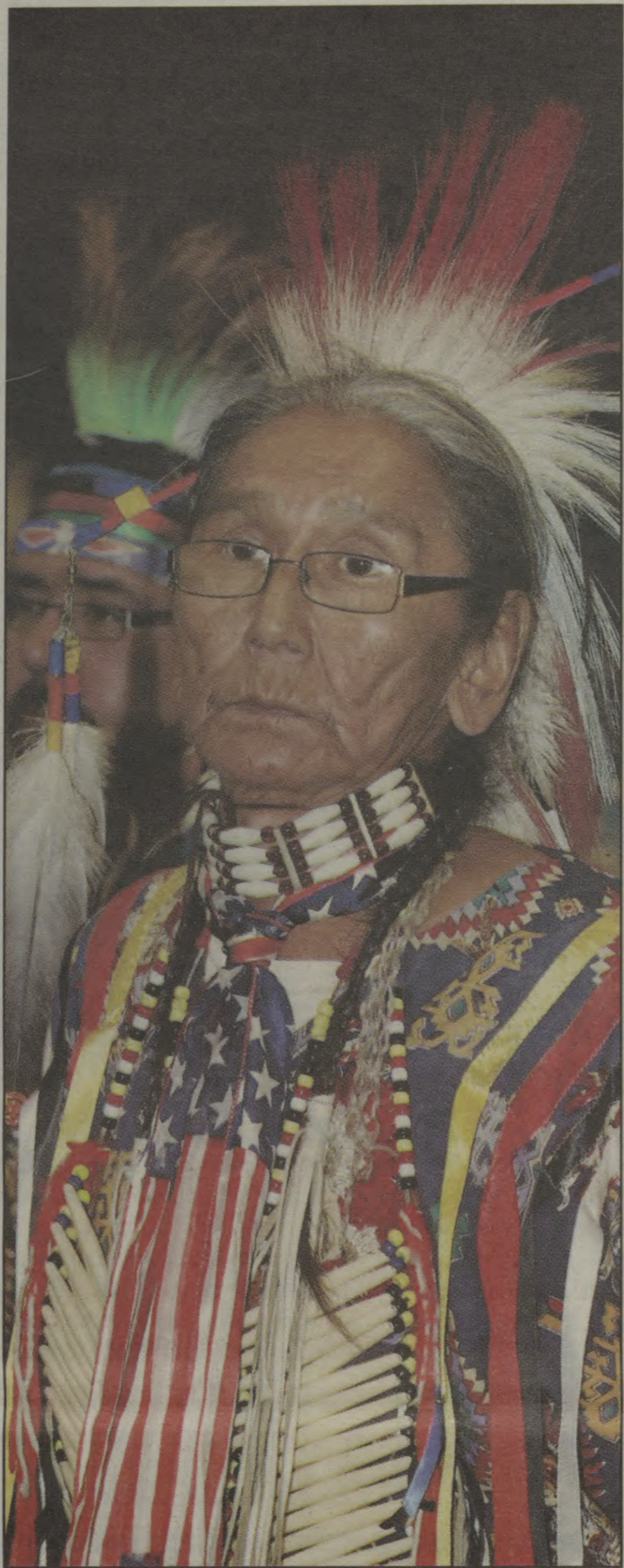


Billy Joe Green is an Aboriginal blues icon. As much as one can see that there are a growing number of Aboriginal artists following the blues musical genre, Billy Joe Green showed all of them how it's done "Indian Style". Inclusive of both subject matter and music styles, the hybrid of Aboriginal culture into the blues format is something that Green proved to all that

Aboriginal people can sing the blues as well or better than any other ethnically rich culture. Billy Joe Green's guitar playing gets down and dirty with gritty rough edges or he soothes and relaxes with gentle finesse. Green gives us all sides of his music from "on fire" to "relaxing and mellow". This cd is one of the best collections for both fans of Green's career or a perfect choice for someone new to his music. Anyone who is a listener of Aboriginal radio will be familiar with the song "Keep The Circle Strong", which was on regular rotation in the mid 90's.

The cd opens with a classic sound that's instantly laid back and shows off Green's guitar nimbleness on string twisting. From that point on its 16 more songs of every side of music Green has to offer over his career. Ending the cd, Green delivers a traditional drum song honouring his Aboriginal roots before signing off with a lullaby. If you have never heard of Billy Joe Green, take one part Stevie Ray Vaughan and two parts George Thorogood and put an eagle feather in his cap and Billy Joe Green is the real deal for any blues fan. There are no "misses" on this collection of songs as the title suggests. These are songs of hits and should have been hits if you can twist your mind around that title.

Review by : K. Kantan



ALL PHOTOS: BERT CROWFOOT

Faces of our people...participants in Manito Ahbee Festival's Powwow. The powwow took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 5th and 6th.





RAVEN'S EYE

Special section providing Aboriginal news from BC & Yukon

Off-reserve people want more than promises
Page 2

Mining companies face heated opposition
Page 3

Tsleil-Waututh Nation opposed to expansion
Page 4

Canada goes under the international microscope

By Shauna Lewis
Raven's Eye Writer

Washington, DC

Claims that Canada has violated the Hul'qumi'num people's human rights by not engaging in fair and just treaty negotiations were presented before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on Oct. 28 at its headquarters in Washington, DC.

The hearing, based on the merits of the Hul'qumi'num land claim, was significant because it is the first time the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is considering a Canadian Indigenous human rights issue. The commission meets several times a year to examine allegations of human rights violations in the hemisphere.

"This represents a historic opportunity to address a human rights issue in Canada that could have far-reaching implications

for the Indigenous movement worldwide," said Robert Morales, chief negotiator for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group (HTG).

The HTG is made up of the Vancouver Island Cowichan Tribes, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Halalt First Nation, Penelakut Tribe, Lyackson First Nation and Stz'uminus First Nation.

The group says the Canadian government is violating its 6,400 members' human rights by failing to recognize and protect their rights to property, culture and religion, as recognized under the Organization of American States (OAS) principal human rights instrument, the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man.

Canada has been a member of the OAS since 1989.

The HTG filed a human rights complaint against the government of Canada before the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on May 10, 2007.



Rosanne Daniels and Robert Morales of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group are supported by Union of BC Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and his wife Joan Phillip, a councillor for the Penticton Indian Band, in a human rights case launched against Canada internationally.

The complaint, filed in the form of a petition, claims that Canada has violated Hul'qumi'num's human rights by granting approximately 85 per cent of the lands traditionally used and occupied by the group to private land owners.

The largest act of confiscation of Hul'qumi'num territory and resources by Canada was the 1884 grant of approximately 237,000 hectares (or 70 per cent of the Hul'qumi'num ancestral territories) to the E & N Railway Company, a private railroad

corporation formed in the late 19th century to encourage colonization of Vancouver Island.

The HTG says the corporation, in turn, regranted many of the Hul'qumi'num traditional lands to private third parties.

(See *Canada* on page 4.)

Strike three for Lax Kw'alaams in Canada's courts

By Shauna Lewis
Raven's Eye Writer

Port Simpson

A First Nation fishing community on the North Coast of British Columbia is deeply disappointed after the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed its case last month, upholding a lower court ruling that the group has no constitutional right to conduct an all-species commercial fishery within their territory.

The Nov. 10 decision upheld the 2008 ruling of the BC Supreme Court.

The high court decision is a major defeat for the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, which had been fighting for the legal right to an all-species commercial fishery in the waters off their territory near Prince Rupert, BC.

The group brought their case to provincial court fighting for a constitutional Aboriginal right to harvest fish and shellfish outside of their federally allocated commercial and seasonal ceremonial food fish harvest.

But the court ruled against the

First Nation. The group later appealed, but the earlier decision was upheld and the case was dismissed.

The latest Supreme Court ruling brings a certain and abrupt end to the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation commercial harvest debate.

"I wasn't too happy when we heard the ruling," said Lax Kw'alaams Chief Garry Reece.

"We were asking them to commercialize all resources," he explained.

"That's how our people survived for generations," he added, referring to the band's rich fishing tradition. "Especially the eulachon grease trail," he said.

The BC Supreme Court had acknowledged that the Coast Tsimshian, ancestors of the Lax Kw'alaams, had traditionally harvested various species of fish and shellfish. But the case went flat when the court found that there was no proof of trade in all species.

Following the unanimous decision last month to uphold the lower court rulings, Supreme Court Justice Ian Binnie, now retired, stated that: "The trial

judge acknowledged that prior to contact with Europeans, the Coast Tsimshian largely sustained themselves by an extensive fishery. They did not, however, engage in any significant trade in fish or fish products except for a grease derived from a smelt-like species called the eulachon..."

In his statement, Binnie added that: "The Lax Kw'alaams live in the 21st century, not the eighteenth, and are entitled to the benefits (as well as the burdens) of changing times. However, allowance for natural evolution does not justify the award of a quantitatively and qualitatively different right. It was in part the lack of continuity and proportionality in the Lax Kw'alaams' attempt to build a full-blown 21st century commercial fishery on the narrow support of an ancestral trade in eulachon grease that concerned the trial judge. Her concern, in my view, was well founded."

In an alternative argument, the Lax Kw'alaams had asserted that the Crown has a fiduciary duty to honour promises made to them by Canada in the late 19th

century to preserve their fishery.

But in 2008 the BC Supreme Court had found no proof that the Crown had made any promises and therefore had no fiduciary duty to uphold regarding the First Nation fishery.

"The Crown had not made express or implied promises of any preferential access to the commercial fishery, and had made its intention to treat Aboriginal fishers in the same manner as other fishers clear," the trial judge stated.

The First Nation's lawyers also argued that an inquiry must be conducted before the courts can make any legal ruling on what constitutes an aboriginal right. They further contested that the courts must research and fully examine exactly what the group's pre-contact customs were and then make an informed decision based on the inquiry findings.

The Supreme Court of Canada disagreed.

They stated that according to the Court, judges can make decisions based on the presentation of evidence at a hearing and consequently it was found by the Canadian court that

the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation did not provide a convincing argument for their case.

"The practices, customs and traditions of the pre-contact society do not provide an evidentiary springboard to a constitutionally protected Aboriginal right to harvest and sell all varieties of fish in a modern commercial fishery," wrote Justice Binnie.

"In this case, the attempt to build a modern commercial fishery on the narrow support of a limited ancestral trade in eulachon grease lacks sufficient continuity and proportionality," he added.

But while the Lax Kw'alaams have lost their fight for commercial fishing rights, the Nuu-chah-nulth of central Vancouver Island made history in 2009 after winning a similar case they brought before the BC Supreme Court.

The landmark case, referred to as *Ahousaht et al v. Canada*, was the first court decision of its kind in which a First Nation group was granted the right to harvest and sell all species of fish caught within its territories.

(See *Strike* on page 4.)

Development continues to frustrate First Nation/settler relations

The West Moberly First Nation says Premier Christy Clark is on the attack against them. Her expressed political support of the Gething Coal Mine Project, slated for operation within the spiritual heartland of West Moberly's traditional territory, is reprehensible. West Moberly Chief Roland Willson said the community had struck an agreement with mine owners that they would not go forward with the project until they received the blessing of the nation, due to the possible adverse effects on their culture. West Moberly has worked with the company to identify three other locations outside culturally sensitive areas that would allow the parties to develop mines more sustainably. "But in one fell swoop, Premier Clark destroyed all of our hard work. She has no right dismissing our culture in that way," the chief said. The community is not anti-development, but it needs to take a breather from development. "We are currently forced to live with approximately six mines, 100,000 kms of pipelines, 60,000 kms of roads, 6,000 cut blocks, 10,000 facilities, 18,000 oil and gas well sites, and two large dams, in addition to another 28 proposed large-scale industrial projects, including eight other mines, BC Hydro's Site C Dam and Enbridge's Northern Gateway Pipeline. We're surrounded!" He said "Developing this mine means the displacement of our people and the loss of our culture. Premier Clark is deliberately sacrificing our families, our children, and our promised way of life all for short-term political gain and to bail out the Liberal Party. Stepping on us to look like a hero is morally reprehensible," Willson said.

Off-reserve people want more than promises

Off-reserve people want more than just fancy promises in a Throne Speech. They want the BC Liberal government to step up and take action. The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres is leading the charge to move a commitment from government for an off-reserve Aboriginal Action Plan off the page and make it a reality to improve conditions for 70 per cent of the provincial Aboriginal population. Aboriginal people are BC's fastest growing demographic, and fare the lowest on almost every social and economic wellness measure.

The province lacks a coordinated strategy to address the needs of Aboriginal people off-reserve.

"Hearing Lieutenant Governor Steven L. Point commit to developing an Off-reserve Aboriginal Action Plan last month was a ray of hope for BC's 145,000 Aboriginal people living off of the reserve, and an historic moment for the organizations that support them," said Annette Morgan, president of the association. "But with some of the highest rates of suicide, addictions, unemployment, poverty, victimization and incarceration, there is no time to waste. We must put words to action today." The goal of the action plan is to achieve better education and job training outcomes, healthier family life, culture and traditions. "Investing in an Off-Reserve Aboriginal Action plan is a winning proposition," said Paul Lacerte, executive director of the association. "When we improve economic activity and social stability for Aboriginal people living off-reserve, we lower costs for government and create a brighter future for our people and the economy of BC."

Tsleil-Waututh Nation opposed to expansion of crude oil facility

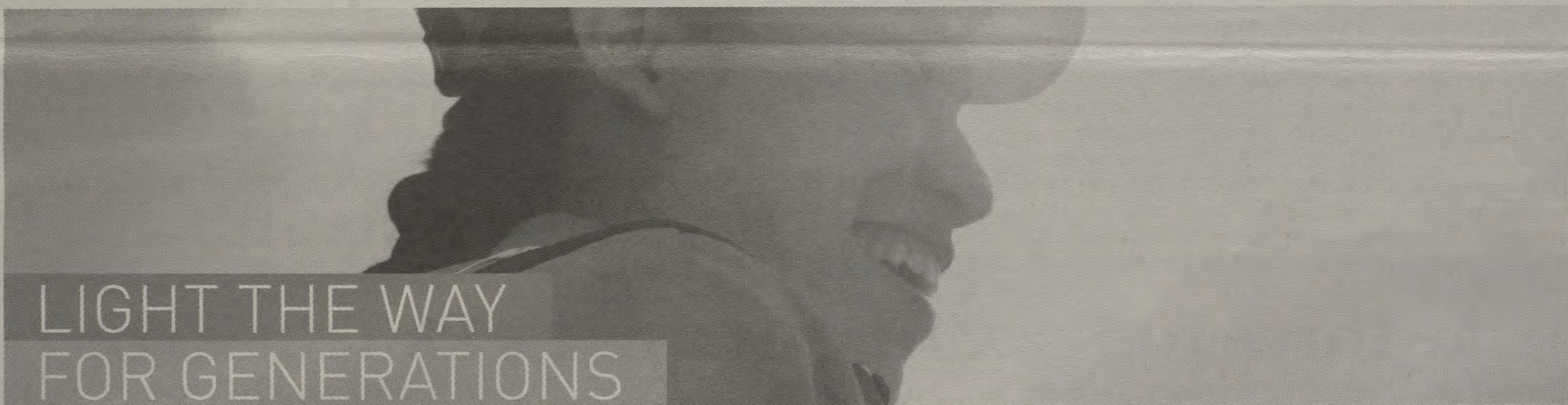
Chief Justin George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation has announced his government's opposition to the expansion of the Kinder Morgan crude oil handling facility proposed for Burrard Inlet. The opposition is based on the assessment of the future risks associated with the project. "Today we are going public regarding current impacts and risks associated with Chevron Canada's activities and their track record as citizens of the Inlet." Chevron's refinery on Burrard Inlet has been leaking oil from an unknown source on their property for some considerable time, George said. Tsleil-Waututh became aware of the leak in the spring of 2010 as a result of its potential to threaten a known and significant archaeological and cultural heritage site known as the Berry Point site. Despite repeated efforts on Tsleil-Waututh's part to ensure appropriate protection and mitigation, to our knowledge the oil leak has not been stopped. "Now Chevron has commenced dredging the bed of Burrard Inlet near their tanker moorage facilities," said Chief George. "Tsleil-Waututh insisted that dredged materials be tested for hydrocarbon and other contaminants. As a result of that testing, contaminants have been found that greatly

exceed acceptable limits for disposal at sea. These results were found after some dredged material has already been disposed of at the Point Grey ocean disposal site." Over the past year, Tsleil-Waututh has attempted to address these problems by engaging with Chevron, Port Metro Vancouver, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the BC Cultural Heritage Branch without material effect, he said. The oil leak continues and Chevron and the Port threaten to continue with the marine dredging. "I think it's fair to ask the question 'who speaks for the Burrard Inlet?'" said Chief George. "We take our responsibility for stewardship seriously, but Tsleil-Waututh cannot do it alone. We need the citizens of Metro Vancouver and their local government representatives to get angry and take action over what we can only conclude is irresponsible corporate citizenship and ineffectual government regulation." Chief George concluded: "If you want a glimpse of the future, look at what's happening at present and in our immediate past."

News report incorrect

A news report that stated the Coastal First Nations that oppose Enbridge's Northern Gateway Project would be willing to take another look at the development is incorrect, said Executive Director Art Sterritt. "We unequivocally maintain our ban on oil tankers on the coast," he said. Sterritt insists it was Enbridge that spoke of wanting a fresh start with Coastal First Nations. Sterritt, on behalf of the board, told Enbridge that a new start would mean having the Joint Review Panel stand down. "The Joint Review Process is seen by the Coastal First Nations not as objective," said Sterritt, "rather as a process that advances the Enbridge Project." He said he has been informed by Enbridge that the company is unwilling to have the review process interrupted. In August of 2009, Enbridge stated that the proposed project would not go ahead if First Nations communities opposed it, said Sterritt. "None of our communities support the project. Nor do any First Nations along the pipeline route."

"Why would we support a proposal that would put our rivers, oceans and life source at risk?" Sterritt said, adding it was time Enbridge take the correct action "and give us the fresh start they promised. It's time to shut down the Joint Review Process and the Northern Gateway Project."



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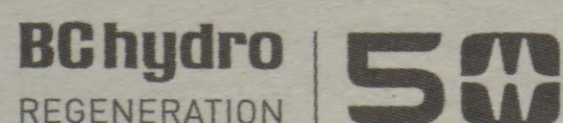
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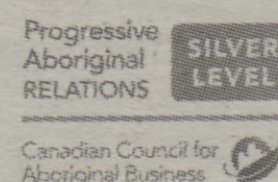
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GD511-255

Mining companies face heated opposition to B.C. projects



Several hundred people attended a protest against mining and pipelines Nov. 6 in Vancouver.

ALL PHOTOS: DAVID P. BALL

By David P. Ball
Raven's Eye Writer

Central British Columbia is turning up the heat on the mining industry as the Tsilhqot'in Nation heads to court against Taseko Mines, which has faced protesters at a proposed mine site.

Despite having its controversial Prosperity Mine blocked by the federal government during a review of the initiative, Taseko is challenging that decision in court, and in a separate case, is seeking an injunction against Indigenous protesters blocking test sampling in the proposed mine area south of Williams Lake.

"To have a mine there is not acceptable to us by any means," said Chief Joe Alphonse, chair of the Tsilhqot'in National Government. "This area is a spiritual area where our spiritual healers go for ceremonies.

"To us it's like a church or temple. We're not going to the Vatican and saying we want the Vatican converted to a casino hall. Well, that's the equivalent. And (the mining company is) going to lose, and that's going to be a tough pill for them to swallow. They're going to continue to face resistance and continue to lose support."

Chief Alphonse said that his nation plans to "resist" mining on their territory, through the courts and through protests, and that the problem is not simply Taseko, but the industry in general.

"The mining sector is the one sector that is refusing to change with the times when it comes to dealing with First Nations," he said. "They have to do everything to get consent. They have to consult First Nations people if they're going to be working on our territory.

"Until we have a say over 100 per cent of our territory, we won't give in. If we're going to move this country, we need mining reform."

In fact, mining projects across Canada are currently facing protests from a number of First Nations, explained Ramsey Hart, Canada program coordinator with MiningWatch Canada, an organization working for reform of the mining industry.

From the Tsilhqot'in nation to the mining "Ring of Fire" in northern Ontario, and in the Yukon and the Quebec-Labrador boundary, many Indigenous people are fed up with the lack of meaningful consultation from government and mining companies, Hart said.

"One of the most fundamental issues is the impacts mining has over Indigenous rights and title," he said. "In many cases it's on unceded territory."

"The most basic reform needed is an acknowledgement of free, prior and informed consent for mineral development activities; not just mines but also exploration activity. [And] increased participation in deciding how projects will get reviewed and whether or not those projects should go forward."

In historic landmark cases, Canadian courts have ruled that "free, prior and informed consent" is required from First Nations in order for resource exploitation to take place on traditional territories. Although the government has, in theory, enshrined this principle in its operations, in practice the industry continues to operate in much the same way as in the past.

"We have not found ways for there to be a meaningful collaborative process for reviewing projects, for there

to be benefit-sharing from those projects if they go forward," Hart added.

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs stands behind opposition to Taseko mines, saying the issues raised present a "very volatile situation" in the province, said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip.

"It pretty much impacts all First Nations throughout British Columbia. Their fight is our fight."

"They require free, prior and informed consent before any proposals. We have to be consulted at the outset, not after companies have invested tens of millions of dollars into a proposal. That simply doesn't happen."

Phillip said he is concerned that the Prosperity Mines proposal will become the epicentre of a new conflict across B.C. over First Nations rights, particularly as Premier Christy Clark recently announced that the provincial government has lost faith in the treaty process and is prepared to negotiate outside it.

"It's an attitude on the part of the (B.C. Premier) Clark government that recognition of our title and the legal obligation to consult is somehow optional," Phillip said. "In fact it's a legal requirement."

"Without question we're heading towards conflict. There has to be a dramatic shift in their approach to our Aboriginal titles and rights. There has to be unconditional recognition of that legal reality."

Other nations in B.C. face similar struggles. "A lot of people have been displaced, and mine-tailing ponds have made our people sick with cancer," said Telquaa, from the Wet'suwet'en nation in northwest B.C. "In central B.C. there are so many mines."

The problems many First Nations are facing around mining was recently addressed at Vancouver's Indigenous Assembly Against Mining and Pipelines, a conference which drew participants from Indigenous communities across B.C.

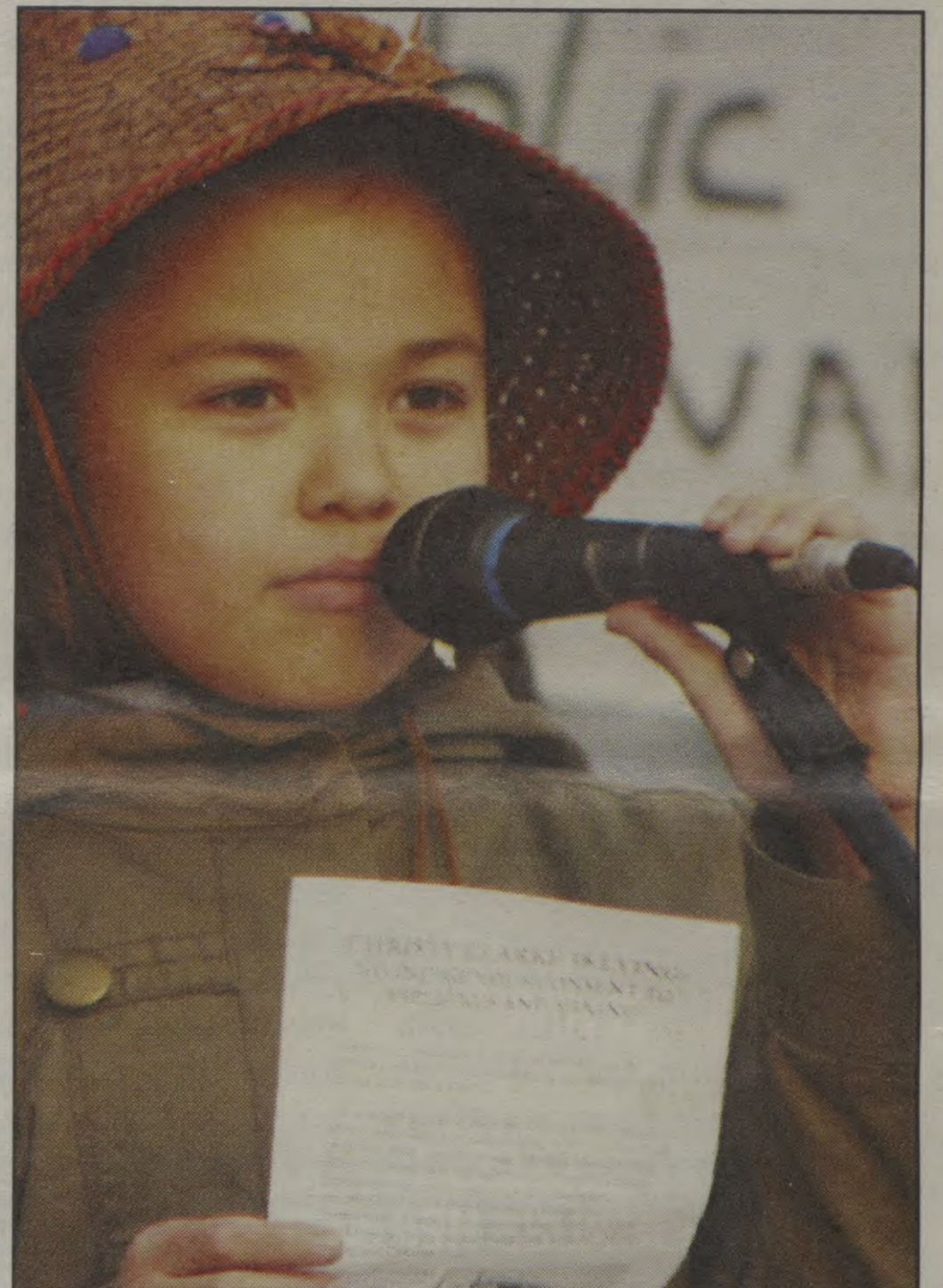
On Nov. 6, the conference organized a large protest march in downtown Vancouver, calling attention to many mining companies headquartered in the city which face First Nations opposition.

"It's the duty of the companies and of the government to come forward and inform the First Nations that they won't be infringing on us in any way," Chief Alphonse said, adding that the Taseko mine site is the location of one of the oldest archaeological finds in his nation's territory. "The mining sector thinks they are above the law. There's something very wrong with the way they do things."

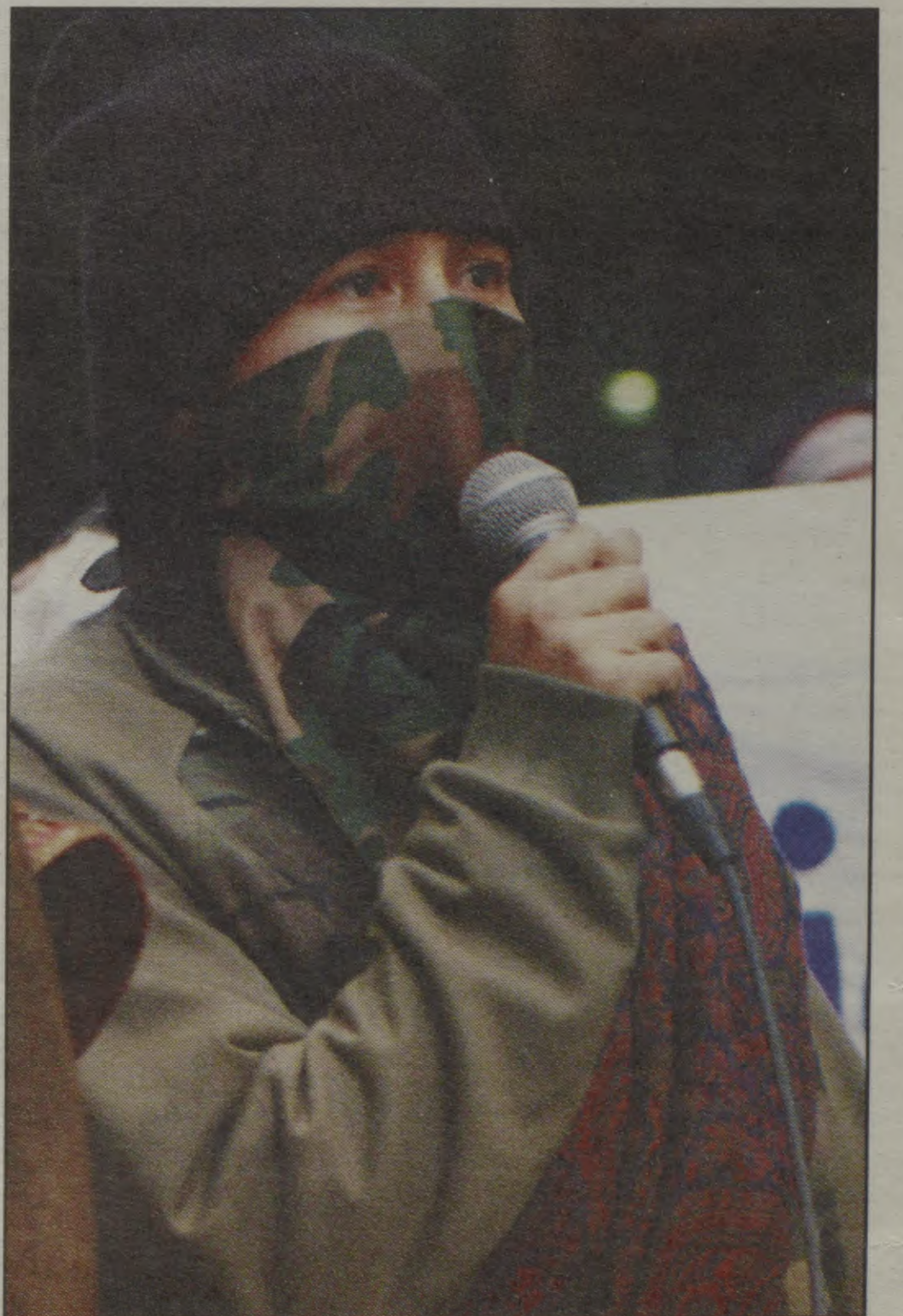
Taseko mines application is for 59 drill holes, and a second application is to subcontract logging to clear an area of land where the mine will be located.

Taseko Mines Limited describes the Prosperity Mine as "One of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in Canada," hosting what it believes is a "1.0 billion tonne measured and indicated resource containing 5.3 billion pounds of copper and 13.3 million ounces of gold."

In a press release, Taseko said, "Taseko Mines Limited ... was unlawfully obstructed from conducting work on the proposed New Prosperity Gold-Copper project. As a result of this interference Taseko has today initiated legal proceedings against the individuals responsible for the obstruction and is seeking an order restraining them."



Ta'Kaiya Blaney, 10, of Sleiamun Nation, addressed an anti-mining crowd in Vancouver.



Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

Canada goes under the microscope

Today large forestry and real estate development corporations—Hancock Timber Resource Group, TimberWest Forest Corporation, and Island Timberlands—own and control nearly 190,000 hectares of Hul'qumi'num traditional territory.

The HTG say they want Canada to fairly negotiate some form of restitution for the land grab, through the land's return, replacement or payment of just compensation.

"That grant affects almost 100 per cent of our traditional territory," Morales explained.

This battle between Canada and the Hul'qumi'num has been an arduous one.

Canada had argued before the commission that the British Columbia Treaty Process could provide HTG with a remedy in the form of a negotiated treaty that would settle its claims, but the commission specifically found that the treaty process had not allowed negotiations on the subject of restitution or compensation for the private lands within the group's ancestral boundaries.

On Oct. 30, 2009, the commission ruled that HTG's petition was admissible. In the ruling, the commission agreed with HTG that Canada has failed to provide an effective remedy for its alleged violations of the Hul'qumi'num people's human rights.

But Canada maintains it is continuing its talks with Hul'qumi'num and says that private lands claims are not off the

negotiating table. They remain hopeful that there will be some agreement made.

"Canada remains optimistic that a comprehensive agreement with the Hul'qumi'num is possible through negotiation and can be achieved with sustained effort from all parties," said Michelle Perron, spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

"The treaty process provides for land to be negotiated as part of a treaty settlement. These lands may be Crown lands or they may be private lands acquired on a willing seller/willing buyer basis," she continued.

"Modern treaties provide First Nations with a capital transfer which they may use to purchase additional lands. If all parties agree, provisions may be added to a treaty to accommodate future additions of land by the First Nations that can be designated as Treaty Settlement Land."

Canada would not comment on the HTG petition put forward to the commission.

"As this petition is before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, it would be inappropriate to comment on the HTG petition," AANDC stated.

But while the HTG await a decision from the human rights hearing held in October, they continue to spread public awareness of their case and have gained the support of many groups, including Amnesty International Canada, Ancient Forest Alliance, Canadian Friends Service Committee, Ecotrust,

First Nations Summit, Grand Council of the Crees, KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives and Lawyer's Rights Watch Canada.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Phillip described those who would claim ownership of Indigenous lands as "dark forces that seek to exploit the land for greed and profit." He stressed the importance of First Nations unity in regard to land rights and treaty fights.

"We need to come together and we need to collectively oppose the efforts of Canada to smother our Indigenous land rights."

"Indigenous land rights are not a new issue," he continued. "It goes back hundreds and hundreds of years and it is an ugly, ugly story," said Phillip.

"It goes back to the time when the Conquistadors went over to the Americas and slaughtered millions and millions of Indigenous peoples for gold. And the Indigenous land rights struggle has continued right up to this very day."

Those struggles are indeed ongoing for the Hul'qumi'num peoples, but whether or not the HTG will be triumphant in its dispute against Canada, only time will tell.

Regardless, Morales said the issue and future outcomes will undoubtedly shed light on just how seriously Canada considers recommendations made by international law and human rights organizations.

For now, however, Canada is standing behind its home grown solution to the situation.

Strike three for Lax Kw'alaams in Canada's courts

(Continued from page 1.)

But the Nuu-chah-nulth ruling also came with stipulations. Federal control over the fisheries was upheld in the ruling and the court sent the Nuu-chah-nulth and Ottawa to the negotiating table to discuss how to accommodate a Native commercial fishery.

Canada and the province of British Columbia challenged the court decision and in May 2011 the B.C. Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the B.C. Supreme Court ruling that acknowledged the right of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations to harvest and sell any species of fish in their territories (with the exception of geoduck clams).

Then on Aug. 17, Canada took their appeal application to the Supreme Court of Canada. The application has not yet been considered.

The Nuu-chah-nulth say they will fight for their constitutionally-determined fishing right to remain upheld, even if they feel they shouldn't have to.

"To me it's a shame that we have to fight for our recognition of rights and title and it's a shame that the Lax Kw'alaams had to fight for their recognition," said Cliff Atleo, president of the Nuu-chah-nulth

Tribal Council. "It's just not right that we are so ill-recognized by the province and Canada," he said.

"If our history is told among our people from generation to generation, it should be enough," Atleo said.

Chief Reece says he doesn't know what, if anything, the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation will do next regarding their struggle for extended commercial fishing rights. He said the legal fees for the case have cost the band over \$3 million.

"We'll have to sit down with our community members and try to see where we're going next with this," he said quietly.

Reece said the federal government must review and reconsider how they manage the BC commercial fishery. He says it is unfair to Aboriginal people living near the resources.

"It's been really poor management," he said. They [Department of Fisheries and Oceans] have all the commercial sector of crabs and prawns and we don't have that," said Reece. "And it is right in our backyard!"

"Our community is a fishing community and we rely on our sea resources and we're not able to do that," he continued.

"It's been an uphill battle," he said.

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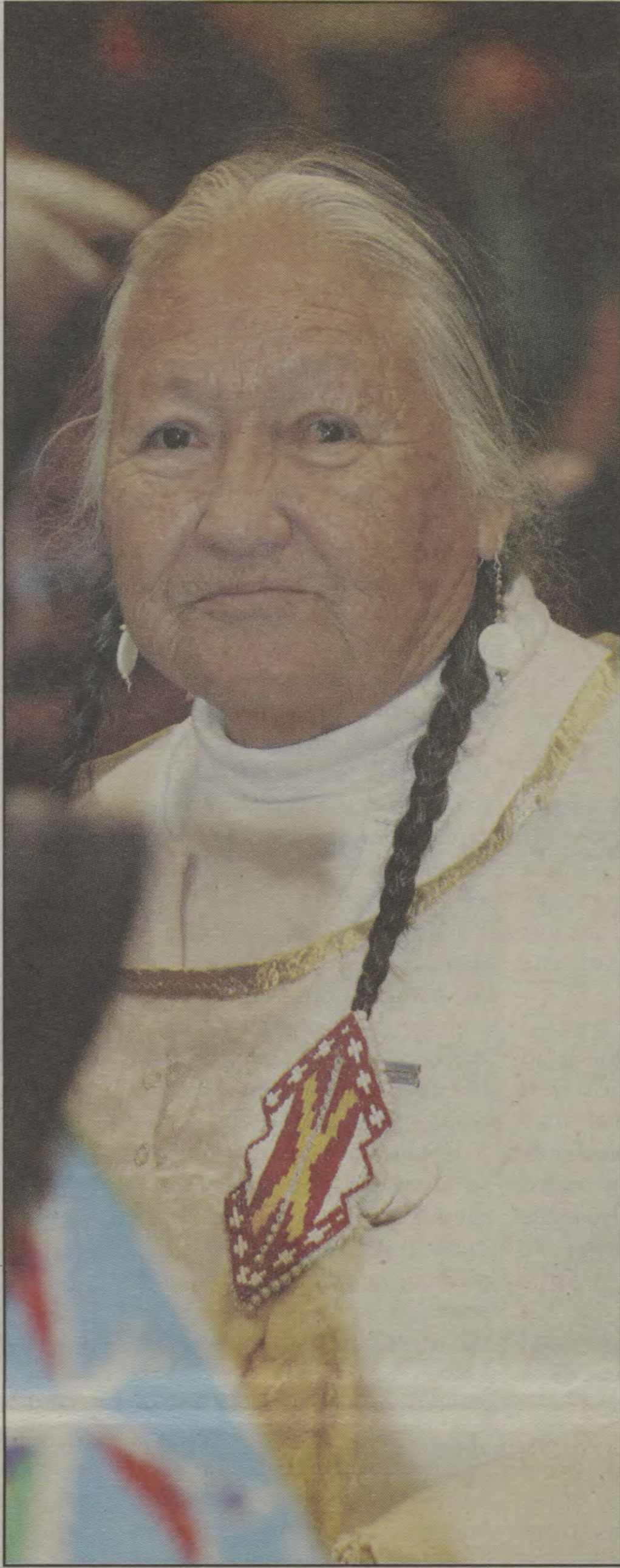
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ALL PHOTOS: BERT CROWFOOT

Faces of our people...participants in Manito Ahbee Festival's Powwow. The powwow took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 5th and 6th.



Be around success, and be successful

By Nancy Doukas
Windspeaker Contributor

Justin Rain is most recently recognized as the character Alan Fraser in the television series Blackstone that runs on APTN. What some might not know about him though is his work with Native youth in a personal project he began this past year called Artist Inside.

Artist Inside is an attempt to inspire native youth by sharing his personal experiences of his troubled youth and how he overcame his challenges to be where he is today.

Rain was born and raised in Vancouver, BC of Plains Cree decent. Rain says that Artist Inside was something he had wanted to do for a long time but was unsure of how to go about getting it started.

Last year he was asked to speak to some high schools in and around the Winnipeg area of Manitoba. These speaking engagements were part of a youth project attached to the Aboriginal Film Festival.

Rain says that the response was positive and that the kids had lots of questions and were really interested in his stories of how he got where he is today.

Since the speaking engagement meshed with his idea of sharing his life and his journey in the hopes of inspiring other youth to find their way, the project an Artist Inside, was born.

Rain says even though this is a personal project he receives lots of help. The initial project layout and structure was assisted by a few different writers, as well as producer Darlene Choo who has helped guide the project to fruition.

His agent and manager, Sara Parker of Principal Talent, is in full support of the project and takes care of the bookings for him. Parker is the initial point of contact for those interested in having him speak.

Rain recalls his high school days when sitting on the floor listening to a speaker sometimes "got old real fast." Which is why his project offers interactive activities throughout.

It's not just a speech on his less than sterling behavior during his high school years. It involves a 90-minute presentation divided into four sections.

Between each section there is a Q & A period where the youth get to ask questions and discuss what they are watching. An example of the visual presentation is Rain's demo reel screening. He says the purpose of this is so they become visually familiar with his work, not just hearing about it during the presentation.

A few short films are screened for the kids as well. One is an educational short that deals with identity and the obstacles we sometimes face as adolescents. He also has incorporated activities and exercises that actors sometimes do to prepare for the work they do.

Rain is forthright in his admission of being distracted and lost. He says he "was no A student".

He spent his time getting into trouble by using drugs, being involved in gang violence, succumbing to pressure from peers that were not the best to be around. He feels that these are experiences a number of the youth can relate to in their own lives.

Making that connection gives him an opportunity to offer an alternate path to the one they are travelling.

"Art does save lives. I think most people don't give "art" the respect it deserves. Or realize we are surrounded by it every day, all day in whatever our lifestyles may be. And I'm grateful that at a young age when I was struggling with addiction I realized that I wasn't surrounded by good people, positive people...creative people.

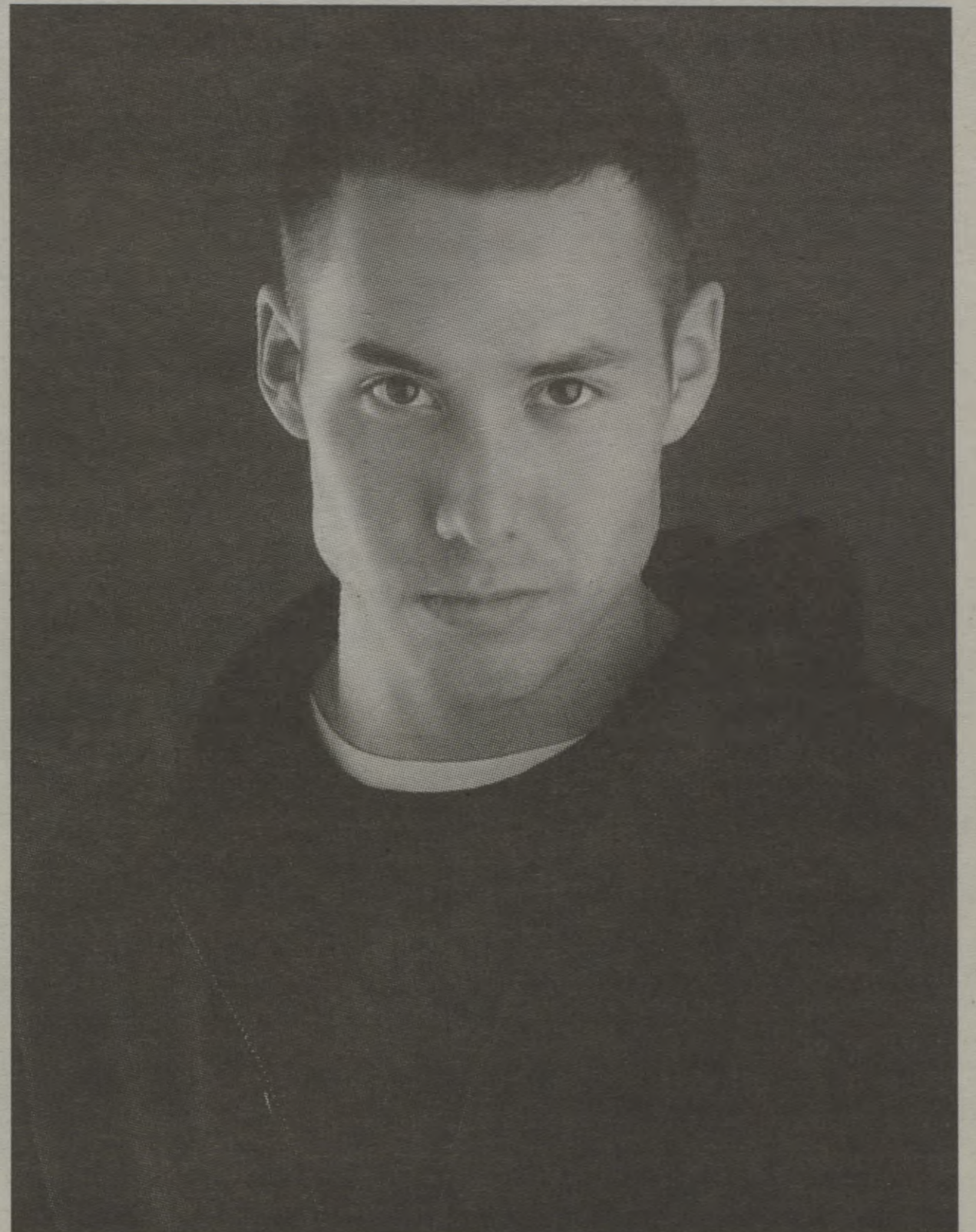
"I needed to separate myself and start surrounding myself with positive people. This had the hugest impact on my life from then forward."

Rain goes on to say, "I had overdosed a few times from party drugs, and the last time was a true awakening. If I had continued the course, I know for a fact I would not be here today. And how I was living was in direct relation to my surroundings and the people that kept me company."

Rain says that he believes, "We are who we surround ourselves with.

"If you want success you have to surround yourself with it; there is no other way. And I don't know any successful people that aren't being creative in a positive sense. Every creative person on this earth is an artist whether they know it or not. This is of course my own opinion. But I really do feel it's true. To the architects, swimmers, English teachers, photographers, singers, athletes, lawyers... every one of us is an artist in some way, shape or form. And this is what I mean by the 'Artist Inside' every one of us."

When asked what he meant by the statement, "Speak with your



Justin Rain

heart. Speak through your art." Rain says that "Any truth comes from your heart. I believe that every one of us can find the right answer to anything if we just listen to our own hearts. I like to think that most of the time when we ask others for advice, we're just confirming what we already know inside ourselves. Not in every case, but in most."

Rain wonders if we have nothing to express ourselves through, where does that energy go? He believes it builds up, creating frustration and that can lead to damaging behavior with long-term negative results. He

believes we need to express ourselves through whatever we love doing thereby creating a positive force in our lives.

Rain's vision for Artist Inside is to eventually build a team of artists to be a part of the A.I. group, each sharing their personal stories in the hopes of inspiring the youth to search out their own destinies.

Rain has spoken at a dozen high schools in and around Winnipeg and a few others on Vancouver Island. He hopes to reach many more, schools and youth in the years to come with Artist Inside.

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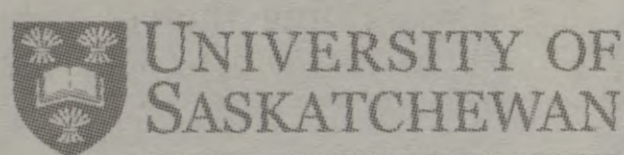
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[careers & training] UofM apologizes for its role in perpetuating assimilation

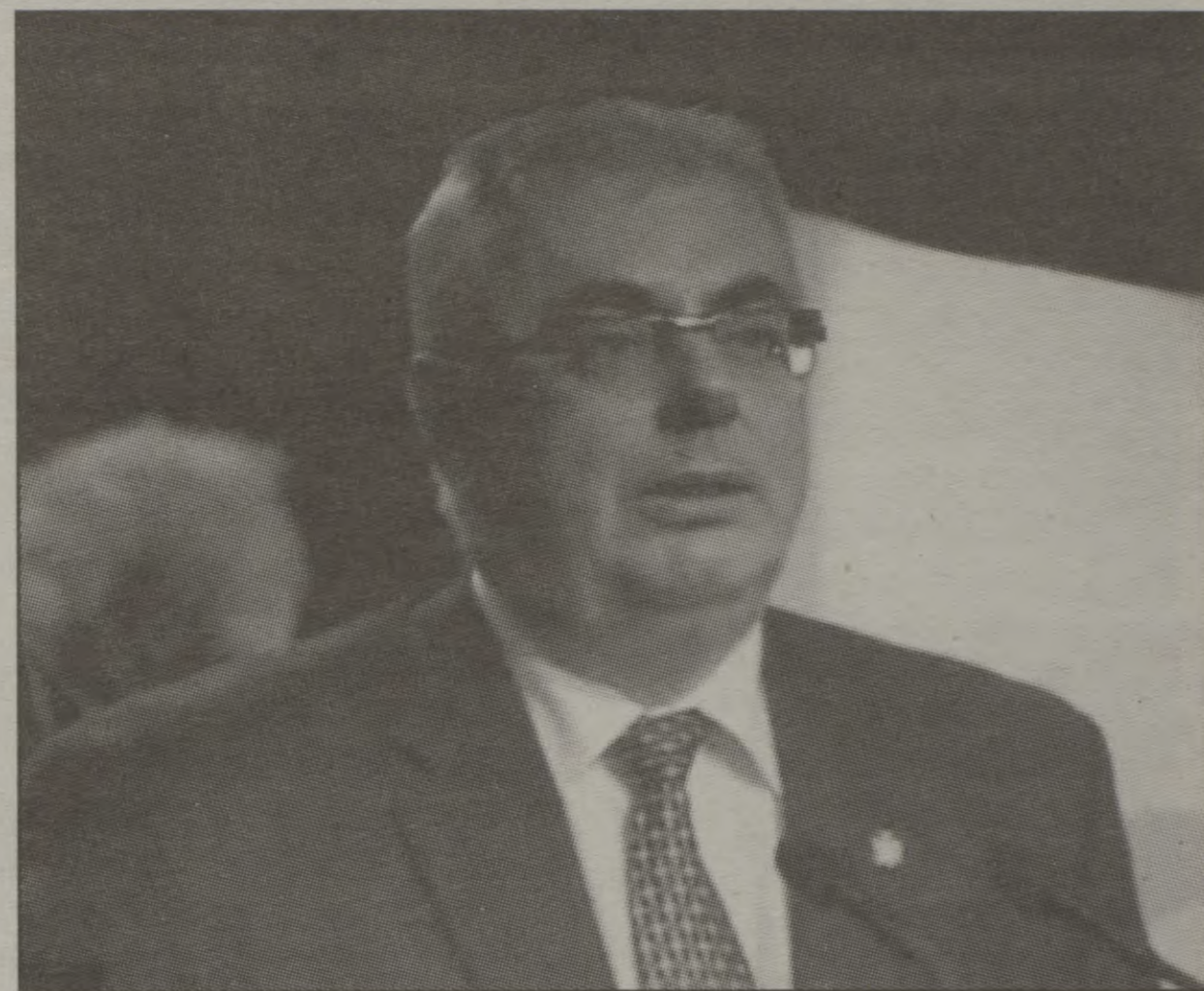


PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

President David Barnard delivered a heartfelt apology on behalf of the University of Manitoba for its role in perpetuating Indian residential schools.

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

HALIFAX

University of Manitoba President David Barnard not only apologized for his institution's role in educating the people who taught at residential schools, but for "fail(ing) to recognize or challenge the forced assimilation of Aboriginal peoples and the subsequent loss of their language, culture and traditions."

Barnard's heartfelt apology, which was often punctuated with silence as he composed himself, was delivered on Oct. 27 in Halifax at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's third national event.

TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair, a graduate of the U of M, acknowledged the "generosity of the words offered and also to mark the significance of that gesture."

The U of M is the first post-secondary institution to offer such an apology.

Barnard said the university felt it was necessary to take a leadership role "in helping expose the national shame that was the Indian residential schools system and the consequences of such a system."

He added that the university was committed to working with the TRC to both "advance research efforts" related to residential schools, as well as in truth-telling and reconciliation.

Sinclair said the role undertaken by the university was significant and that it was "probably one of the more important gestures" the TRC had received.

"We pay our respects to the University of Manitoba for having commenced this part of the conversation," said Sinclair.

National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo also commended the university.

"The idea that action is required as part of reconciliation; it's more than just a concept. It requires people to participate actively. And that's what they did," said Atleo.

"Steps like this can help advance notions of mutual respect, notions of understanding between First Nations and Canadians, and hopefully generate action that's needed to create a lasting change."

"The University of Manitoba educated and mentored individuals who became clergy, teachers, social workers, civil servants and politicians who carried out assimilation policies aimed at the Aboriginal peoples of Manitoba," said Barnard.

He pointed out that in the over 130 years the university has been in operation, there were 17 federally-funded residential schools in the province. The first opened in 1888 and the last closed a century later.

During that time, thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were taken from their communities, placed in residential schools, with many being abused physically or sexually. Those who were spared abuse had their language and culture taken from them. Children who did not attend residential schools attended day schools and suffered similar experiences. Some children never returned from school. Those who did return had a hard time connecting with their families and home communities.

"Many institutions had a direct or indirect hand in perpetuating the misguided and failed system of assimilation that was at the heart of the Indian residential school system," said Barnard.

He apologized to students of the university, who are the descendants of residential school survivors, as well as to Indigenous staff.

(See *Apology* on page 25.)

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[careers & training] Ojibway—There's an app for that

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

Want to learn Ojibway from the comfort of your own home, or on the way to work on the bus, or while waiting for an airplane? An Ojibway language app for iPhone and iPad has been created.

The app was designed by Derrick Baxter, owner of Ogoki Learning Systems Inc.

In a modern society with technology accelerating at a fast pace, Baxter believes the app is a good way to teach people.

"We have to start preserving this language. We have to start preserving our heritage. And the best way to do it is to get it into schools. Schools are really relying on digital technology to sort of retain the students' attention."

The Ojibway app contains words, phrases, numbers, as well as history lessons on treaties that Ojibway people have entered into. Words and phrases are also accompanied by syllabics.

The app is not only a good teaching tool, but close to Baxter's heart. The voice that is used to the enunciate words and phrases belongs to his friend,

Garden Hill First Nations artist Eddy Munroe, who passed away this past spring.

For now, the app is in the western Ojibway dialect.

"It's more of the Manitoba, northwestern Ontario dialect. What we tried to do was use phrases and terms that are understandable throughout the Ojibway area." He says he does have plans to add more dialects as time goes on.

Baxter testifies to the usefulness of the new tool. The father of three says his 12-year-old daughter picked up some language skills from the app.

"When my daughter found the app on her iPad, she started speaking Ojibway over the phone to my mom...It was such an inspiring thing."

The app is free and available at the iTunes store. Baxter hopes the Ojibway app will be available through Android and Samsung over the next four to six months.

Baxter would also like to create Cree, Dakota and Dene apps and says he would have to network with fluent language speakers to move forward on that.



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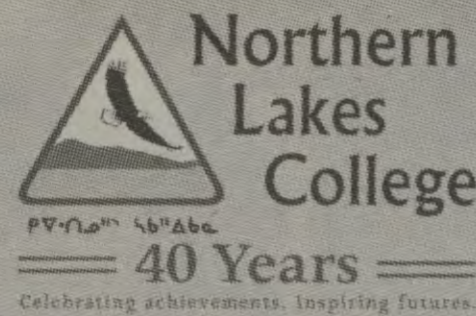


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


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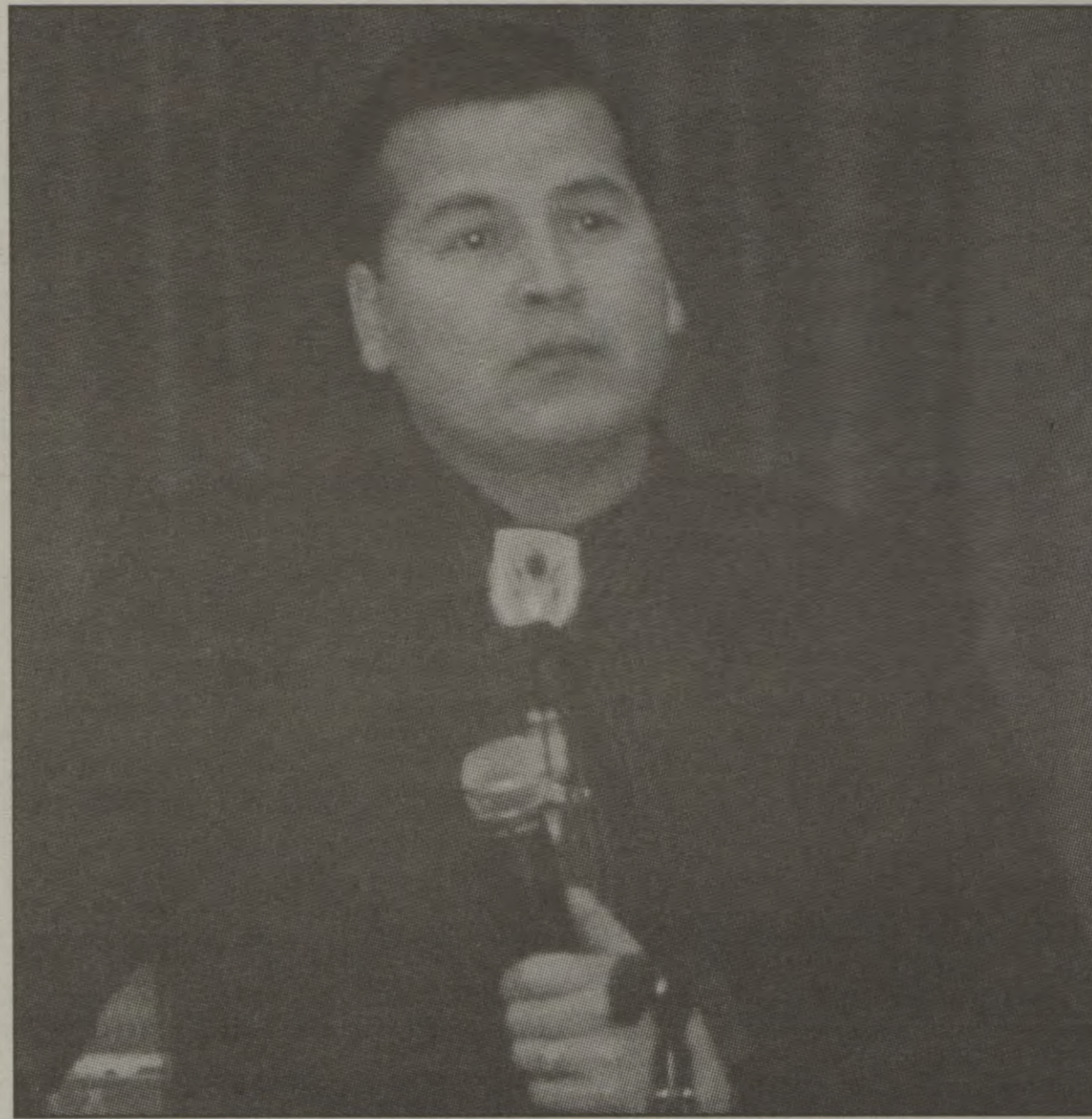


PHOTO: LILLIAN BLACKSTAR

Simon Bird, fourth vice-chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, attends the grand opening of the Indian Teacher Education Program in North Battleford.

By Lillian Blackstar
Windspeaker Contributor

NORTH BATTLEFORD, Sask.

Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs is planning for a brighter future for the territory by providing more educational programs at home for Aboriginal people.

On Oct. 26 at the grand opening of the ITEP (Indian Teacher Education Program), part of the BATC partnership with University of Saskatchewan, it was announced that the next step is to develop further alliances that will bring in more programs to the area, including agriculture, nursing, commerce and kinesiology.

It's the first year of offering ITEP in the Battlefords. Classes are held at the Don Ross Centre.

"With 50 students enrolled, there is utilization of cross-cultural education with Elders as resource people. It also provides students opportunity to maintain close contact with family ...," said BATC representative Sarah Gopher.

Another recent BATC partnership now in its second year of operation is with the North West Regional College here. An employment and training initiative, the Active Measures Program offers workplace Essential Skills programming.

Director of this program is Melanie Kahpeyewat. She is pleased to be a part of the

development of educational and training leading to employment of Aboriginal people.

"I'm really honored to be part of this initiative BATC has developed for First Nations. It's hard on family members when students have to go away, which is sometimes detrimental to them in their success to completing their programs/education," Kahpeyewat said.

City Alderman Ray Fox also spoke to those gathered for the grand opening, expressing his gratitude for the BATC offering programs for the benefit and development of the Battlefords.

Also in attendance was newly-elected Fourth Vice Chief Simon Bird of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations who spoke in both Cree and English to those gathered for the grand opening.

"Every day and every meeting we're faced with obstacles. Our students face high rent, high cost of living. Students, you have an advantage here in North Battleford of having your family members beside you while going to school right next door," Bird said.

Bird is also a teacher trained in the ITEP program. He thanked BATC for the invite to the grand opening.

ITEP Student Council Representative Quinton Swiftwolfe addressed those gathered, thanking everyone and presenting gifts to Ray Fox and Simon Bird on behalf of the student council. A traditional feast wrapped up the day's event.



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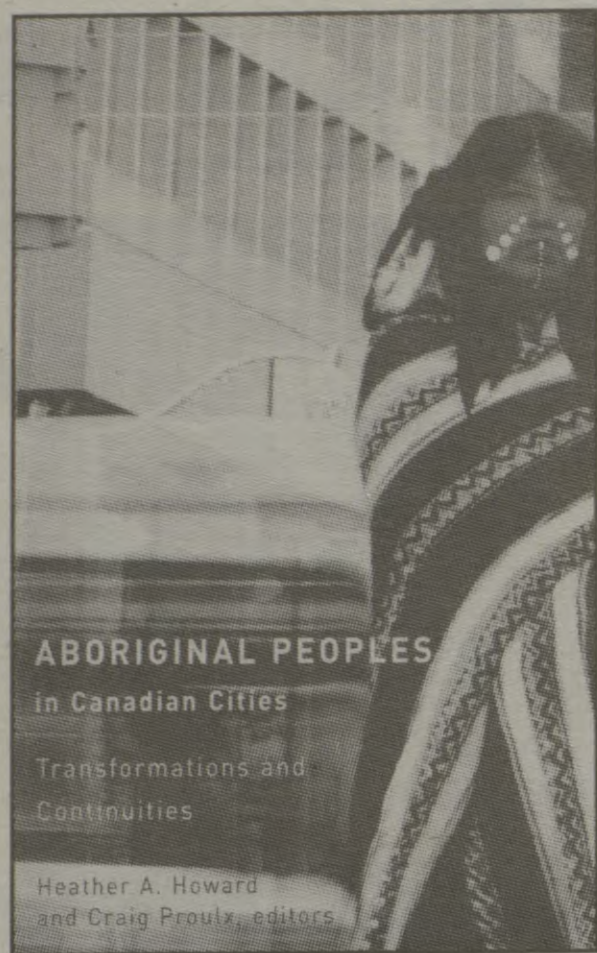
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Debunking modern myths about urban Aboriginals



Aboriginal People in Canadian Cities: Transformations and Continuities, editors Heather A. Howard and Craig Proulx
Part of the Indigenous Studies Series published by Wilfred Laurier University Press

Review by Shari Narine

In *Aboriginal People in Canadian Cities: Transformations and Continuities*, editors Heather A. Howard and Craig Proulx have gathered a series of interesting and thought-provoking essays that span the country, as well as topics.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that the majority of Canada's Aboriginal population lives in the urban setting. Since the 1970s, more Aboriginal people have called cities homes than they have called reserves homes.

According to Statistics Canada 2005, between 1981 and 2001, urban Aboriginal populations doubled in cities, even tripled in some.

"The development of urban Aboriginal communities represent some of the most significant shifts in the histories and cultures of Aboriginal people in Canada," say the editors.

What will probably come as a surprise is the ongoing battle urban Aboriginals face on an almost daily basis to strike down negative stereotyping, despite the fact that there is a vast example of successful First Nations, Metis and Inuit people in the mainstream population.

There are two prevalent stereotypes this book debunks, and in convincing fashion.

First, there is the concept of a homogenous Aboriginal population. Assuming the term "Aboriginal" proves homogeneity – or one culture for all – is a wrong assumption as Aboriginal is a collective term for First Nations,

Metis and Inuit peoples.

Essays by Newhouse, Howard, and Patrick et al, effectively illustrate how Aboriginal people in an urban setting are as unique as their reserve counterparts.

To assume moving to the city results in both loss of culture and individuality, which leads to a unified Aboriginal people, is a wrong assumption. Indeed most Canadian cities have a vibrant Aboriginal population. Many of these cultures come together on common ground, such as at friendship centres, and are a mosaic rather than a melting pot.

However, an interesting concept is presented by Flynn, who demonstrates that the Plains Indian ways of being are easier to adapt to an urban setting because Plains Indians were a nomadic people, willing to share and needing to adapt their culture as they moved through the west.

Flynn focuses on Vancouver and how, although the First Nation population comes from a wide area, it is Plains Indians ways that are more often used in healing ceremonies and celebrations.

The Aboriginal population taking part in Plains Indians-led celebrations but holding on to their own culture as well creates bi-tribal and sometimes tri-tribal

people.

Flynn does note that because of the precedent Plains Indians have set in that city, other First Nations people are starting to be more open with their tribes' ways and are adapting their ceremonies for urban sharing.

The second stereotype that this book examines and debunks is undoubtedly the more damaging of the two: the belief that Aboriginals in the urban setting cannot adjust and end up homeless, alcohol and drug dependent, and a burden on the system.

One of the more disturbing essays on this subject is provided by editor Proulx, who examines racism in the urban press by critically analyzing and tearing apart a series written by John Stackhouse entitled "Welcome to Harlem on the Prairies," which was published in the *Globe and Mail* in 2001.

Stackhouse's goal was to allow the reader to judge whether the gap that exists between Native and non-Native people can be "peacefully" bridged. In order to meet this goal, Stackhouse writes about a night of policing on 20th street in Saskatoon.

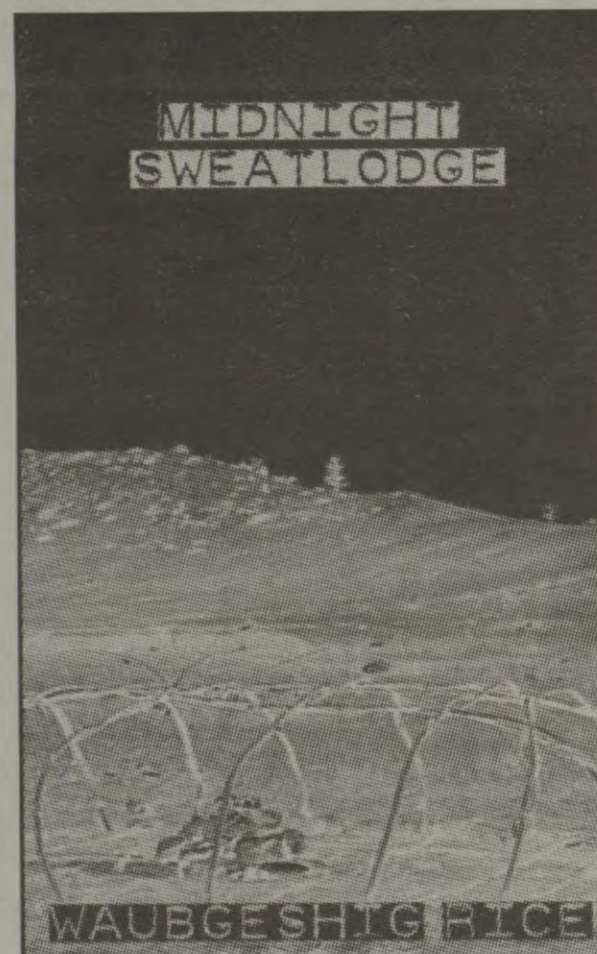
Proulx effectively demonstrates the power of language and how

Stackhouse, claiming to be an impartial writer, uses that language to do away with his impartiality. Proulx points out that Stackhouse leaves most of his Aboriginal subjects as nameless and thoughtless, describing them as behaving "recklessly." However, the non-Aboriginal players in the piece are fleshed out through their personal observations and backgrounds. Stackhouse's series does nothing to break from the stereotype of the cardboard Indian.

Essays also provide thoughtful insight into Aboriginal youth living in urban settings and how they both bridge the gap and talk about the gap between reserve and city with their graffiti art and rap music.

Aboriginal People in Canadian Cities: Transformations and Continuities is a well put together collection of essays that examine a wide variety of aspects of city living. The most difficult read of the collection is the introductory chapter, which is often times too clinical in its presentation of the essays that follow. However, on the most part, the essays are an easy read, captivating in the concepts they examine. The essays are thought-provoking and a number are disturbing.

Healing and struggle are central themes in new book



Midnight Sweatlodge
By Waubgeshig Rice
Published by Theytus Books

Review by Christine McFarlane

"Midnight Sweatlodge" is a collection of short stories written by Waubgeshig Rice, a member of Wausasking First Nation and a CBC reporter based in Ottawa.

It tells the tale of a group of young people who have gathered to take part in an ancient Aboriginal ceremony—the sweatlodge.

Each person who takes part in the ceremony looks for healing and gives us a glimpse into the difficulties in his or her life.

Each story in *Midnight Sweatlodge* reflects a struggle of sorts, whether it is dealing with isolation, loss, an identity crisis, depression or substance abuse.

Each person participating in the ceremony takes his turn in baring his soul, recounting painful experiences that have been witnessed.

Within the very first story, "Dust", the reader learns about two brothers who grew up on their reserve, their closeness and camaraderie apparent, and how their lives change after a standoff in their community when they witness the police shooting of their father.

The two young boys are catapulted from living carefree, playing baseball and swimming with their friends, to dealing with the grief and loss of their father.

Through this story, Rice discusses an issue that is all too familiar for many First Nations

communities these days, the terrible toll that comes with the fight for land rights. The story relays both a personal and political side to hanging "onto identity, tradition, the bond between Mother Earth and her children—us," and how the death of the brothers' father impacts the young storyteller sitting around the fire in the sweatlodge.

In another story, "Bloodlines", the reader is exposed to the love between a First Nations man and his non-Native girlfriend in a contemporary urban city and how the young man deals with being amongst people not used to hanging out with an Aboriginal person.

The young man says his presence is still a novelty to the

urban community around him and how, with his girlfriend, he wants to draw his own bloodlines, be in control of making life and "being able to control how that life turns out."

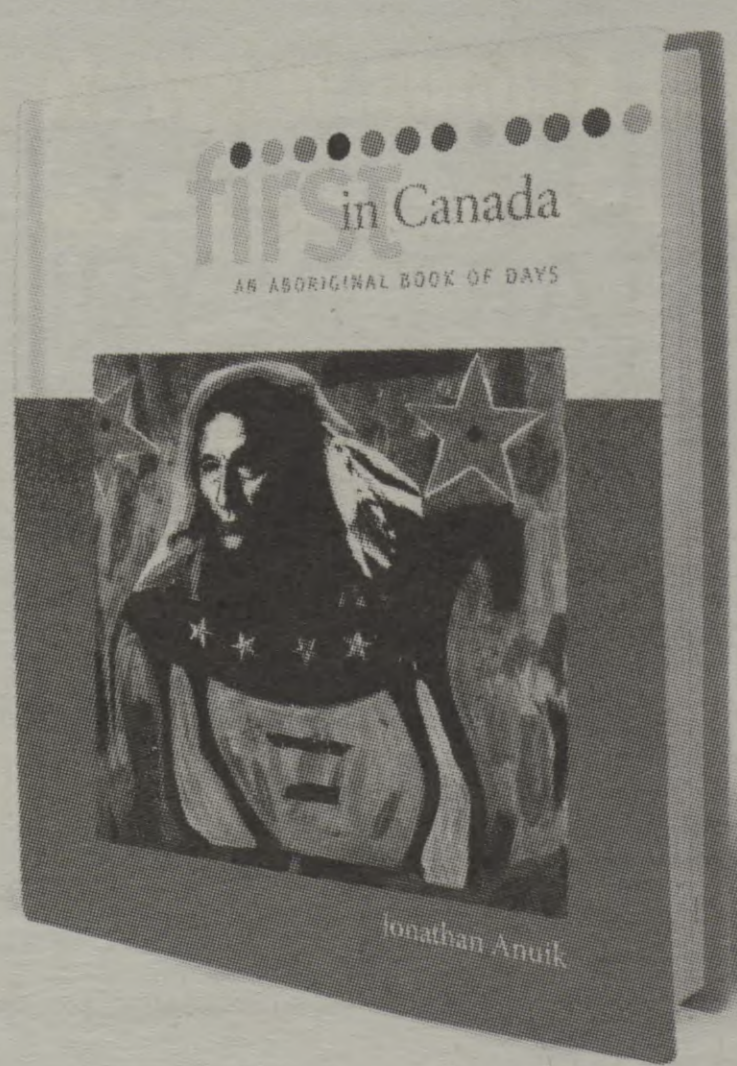
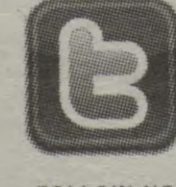
For his first book, Rice does a great job in each story by conveying that, though each situation is unique to the individuals, everyone struggles in one way or another and it is possible to heal through sharing with each other.

Rice also exposes non-Native readers to some of the difficulties that young Native people face in Canada, and attempts to break the negative stereotyping of young Aboriginals. This book is a great collection that gives important issues a platform.

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Riel, the icon, humanized through poetry



Louis Riel: The Heretic Poems
By Gregory Scofield
Published by Nightwood Editions

Review by Christine McFarlane

Louis Riel is a pivotal figure in Canadian history, and those who have never really understood him are taken on a journey by writer Gregory Scofield.

"Louis Riel: The Heretic Poems" is Scofield's new four-part book. Métis poet Scofield draws

attention to Riel by juxtaposing historical events and quotes with poetic narrative and this allows his readers a glimpse into each part of Riel's life, beginning with "Le Garçon (The Boy)."

This section shows us Riel as a boy sitting on a train in the poem "Trip To Civilization, 1858" with Scofield recounting Riel's journey to St. Paul, and relaying the thoughts of Louis Riel from his journal notes.

"Twenty eight days we watch the trees grow sparse, and the oxen sway

as if their legs are all tendon and marrow.

Finally we reach St. Paul, thank God

And what an exalted sight; to be a pane of glass

In one of the churches, a step at city hall."

Scofield gives his readers further insight into Riel's journey by showing us a glimpse of Riel's thoughts as he travels by steamboat.

me, Louis Schimdt and Daniel McDougall

by steamboat

we are three crates of prairie dust sailing down the Mississippi to Wisconsin

Then by train we go to Chicago. Me, in a velvet seat. Louis

Schmidt at the window. Daniel McDougall asleep, Sister

Valade

Plucking the hairs on her chin Oh my! Oh my!"

Within the section titled *Le President*, we witness a reactive Riel in the poem "The Revolutionary." A note from Sir

John A. Macdonald states "the impulsive half-breeds have got spoilt by this emeute (rioting) and must be kept down by a strong hand until they are swamped by the influx of the settlers" and Riel responds.

"Countrymen-va chier! I say to him, pointing to all

the puppets of Parliament, va chier!

I devote myself not to a masterpiece

Of rhetoric, a sermon of permission

Nor flowered admonition

What I declare here, to you

Is a sermon of salvation, a coaxing fire

We must set ablaze

A spark!

A flame!

A storm!

Within the section titled "The Spokesman" Riel is revered, and we are witness to another large figure in Métis history, Gabriel Dumont.

Finally in *L'Homme D'Etat (The Statesman)*, the reader becomes a

witness to Riel's prayer before being hanged.

In the poem "The Request" Riel laments:

"This is my fear.

To be put in a box. A poorly chosen box.

One that is constant quarrel over size and shape.

This is my greatest fear"

Scofield's ability to make his readers become a part of Louis Riel's life and journey is amazing. His voice is ideally paired with both the subject matter and Riel's own poetry and as you read each selection of poetry, the life of Louis Riel's is humanized.

Readers will see Louis Riel outside of being a folk hero and martyr. They see him within various roles, as a young boy, a friend, a husband, a father, lover, a poet and a visionary.

Louis: The Heretic Poems is 96 pages and published by Nightwood Editions, which is an independent publisher distributed and marketed by Harbour Publishing.

Settler education the gap that needs bridging for true reconciliation

UnSettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling and Reconciliation in Canada

By Paulette Regan
Published by UBC Press 2010

Review by Christine McFarlane

On July 11, 2008, the Canadian government apologized to the victims of the Indian residential school system and established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that is tasked with attempting to mend the deep rifts between Aboriginal peoples and the settler society that

engineered the system.

"UnSettling the Settler Within" by Paulette Regan opens with a foreword by Taiaiake Alfred who states "In a global era of apology and reconciliation, Canadians, like their counterparts in other settler nations, face a moral and ethical dilemma that stems from

an unsavoury colonial past." Alfred explains that Canadians grow up believing that the history of their country "is a story of the cooperative venture between people who came from elsewhere to make a better life and those who were already here." He writes "Canadians do not like to hear that their country was founded through frauds, abuses and violence perpetrated against the original peoples of this land."

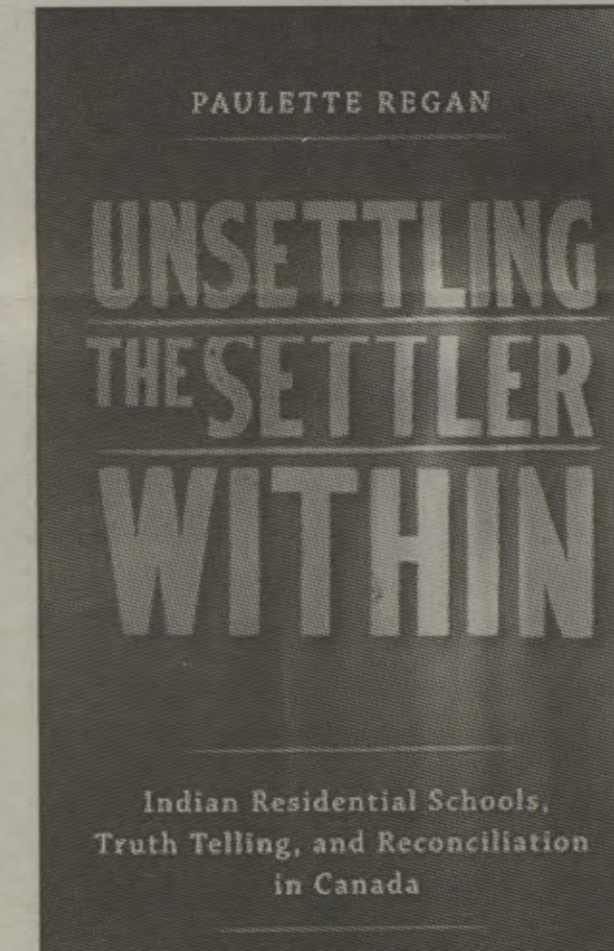
"UnSettling the Settler Within" is a book that gives a counter argument to the peaceful creation myth and offers up the history and legacy of colonial violence that characterizes the Indian residential school system.

Author Regan rejects a self-congratulatory version of Canadian history and challenges her readers to re-think the myths that form the basis of settler identity.

She argues that in order to truly participate in the transformative possibilities of reconciliation, non-Aboriginal Canadians must undergo their own process of decolonization, and in order for the process of decolonization to happen Regan believes "they must relinquish the persistent myth of themselves as peacemakers and acknowledge the destructive legacy of a society that has stubbornly ignored and devalued Indigenous experience."

"Today's truth and reconciliation process must make space for an Indigenous historical counter-narrative in order to avoid perpetrating a colonial relationship between Aboriginal and settler peoples."

Regan, a non-Indigenous individual and academic, writes this book from the perspective of her own work within the



Canadian government, and as a result of her own learning journey as a Director of Research for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

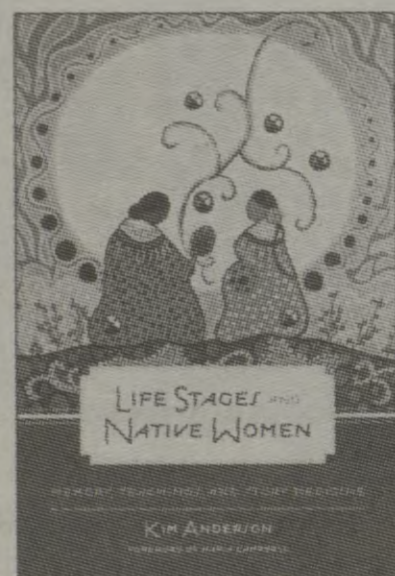
She relays how the 2008 apology to Indian Residential School survivors marked a watershed moment of national truth telling about Canada's past, and as a settler on these lands in Canada, the apology itself had her asking herself "what would it mean in concrete terms for the settler majority to shoulder the collective burden of the history and legacy of the residential school system."

She argues "history teaches us that, despite the cry of "never again," societies are quite capable of replicating in new forms the harmful societal attitudes and government policies of the past."

She also questions how non-Indigenous people can make good on the promise to ensure that the attitudes that inspired the residential school system for more than a hundred years will never again prevail in Canada.

(See *Settler* on page 25.)

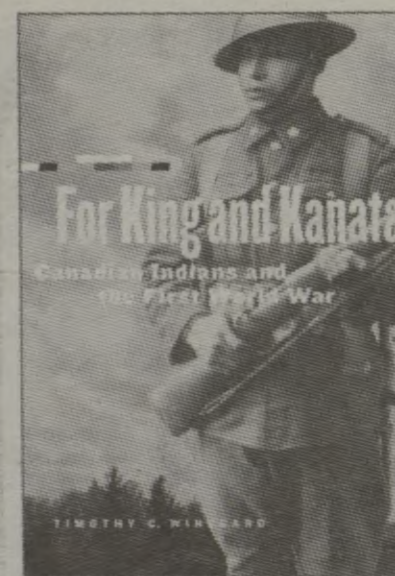
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Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Sixties Scoop rally takes to Toronto streets



PHOTOS: ROB LACKIE/UNIQUEINUK

A rally and march was held in Toronto Oct. 27 to bring awareness to issues around the Sixties Scoop.

By Rob Lackie
Birchbark Writer

Toronto

The sound of the drum echoed through the downtown core of Toronto on Oct. 27. It was the day before an appeal of the class action certification of *Brown and Commanda vs. Canada* would be heard before the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

Native Child and Family Services hosted an information session about the case, which has the potential to impact 16,000 Aboriginal people in Ontario that were directly or indirectly harmed by what is known as the Sixties Scoop.

The scoop involved social services removing Indian children from their families and placing them in care or up for adoption with non-Native families, resulting in a loss of culture, language and identity. Many of those children, as adults, are still struggling to reconnect to their families and communities.

Marcia Brown and Robert Commanda began an effort in 2009 to bring a class action lawsuit against Canada to hold the country accountable for the ongoing, devastating toll its actions had on Aboriginal families.

Brown is of Beaverhouse First Nation and Commanda is of Dokis First Nation.

Jeffrey Wilson is the legal counsel representing Brown and Commanda in their battle. The class action was certified in May 2010. But the attorney general obtained permission to appeal the certification order. That

appeal was heard on Oct. 28.

Registered with the class action are Aboriginal people who were placed for adoption or in foster care with non-Aboriginal families in Ontario between Dec. 1, 1965 and Dec. 31, 1984.

A rally was also held to bring public awareness to the issue. About 100 or so supporters gathered for an afternoon march along the streets of downtown Toronto.

They walked west to Bay Street, then followed it south to Dundas Street, where the growing crowd stopped for drumming and singing, interrupting traffic flow from all directions.

The marchers moved south to Queen Street to the front of old City Hall and the heart of the Financial District accompanied by police walking beside their bicycles.

As the drum beat faster, more people joined the spectators to watch the procession. Marchers carried signs, posters and flags.

The march went along Queen Street, stopped at Yonge Street and then Church Street, then headed north on Jarvis and all the way up to Gerrard and Allan Garden.

Marchers chanted: "Who needs our children?" and then replied with "We do."

The tired and anxious crowd heard from John Fox, American Indian Movement Ontario Representative and child welfare survivor who was the leader of the day's rally.

"It's not about us anymore," he told Birchbark. "It's about the survival of our next generation of children."



Now grown, the children that were removed by social services from First Nations homes have launched a class action in Ontario.



John Fox, AIM Ontario Representative and child welfare survivor.

Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

Participants Sought

Organizers are expecting more than 60 teams to compete in a long-running tournament in Val-d'Or, Que. The 31st annual CREE Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament is scheduled for Dec. 8 to 11. Matches will be staged at the Centre Air Creebec, which is also home to the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League's Val-d'Or Foreurs.

The tournament is organized by the Cree Regional Events & Entertainment (CREE) and the Cree Nation Recreation Directors. The event is expected to feature more than \$75,000 in prize money. Teams will be competing in seven categories.

For the men, there's four hockey groupings, including an Oldtimers division for players aged 40 and up. There's also a women's hockey category. There's also two broomball divisions for women, including a recreational category for those 30 and over.

More information is available by contacting tournament director Freddy Schoeneich at schfred@cablevision.qc.ca or by phone at (819) 354-0205.

New sports program

Thunder Bay's Lakehead University and Wasaya Airways, a First Nations owned company, have teamed up for a new sports and leadership program titled Reach Up! It is aimed at youth in First Nations communities in northern Ontario that are serviced by Wasaya Airways.

This program will see Lakehead coaches and athletes visit various communities. Coaches will discuss how to grow and maintain interest in various sports. And they will also provide tips on how to train for specific sports.

Lakehead athletes that travel to the various communities will meet with First Nations youth to share their personal experiences and also discuss things such as peer leadership and life goals. One of the goals of the program is to encourage Aboriginal youth to receive a post-secondary education, which will not only benefit themselves but their communities as well.

Lakehead University already has more than 1,000 Aboriginal students enrolled in its various programs. Wasaya Airways currently flies to more than 25 locations across northwestern Ontario.

Peter wins award

Richard Peter, a veteran of the Canadian men's wheelchair basketball team, is one of this year's recipients of a National Aboriginal Achievement Award.

Peter, a member of Cowichan Tribes of British Columbia, is one of 15 individuals who were announced as this year's winners during an event in the House of Commons in Ottawa on Nov. 22. Recipients will be honoured at a gala event on Feb. 24 at Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Peter, 39, has been playing wheelchair basketball since he was 15. He's been using a wheelchair since he was injured in a bus accident at the age of four.

Peter has been a member of the national squad since 1994. And he's had his share of career highlights. He was a member of the Canadian squad that captured the gold medal at the 2000 Paralympic Summer Games in Sydney, Australia. Peter then helped the Canadians defend their crown at the '04 Paralympics in Athens, Greece. He was also a member of the Canadian squad that captured the silver medal at the '08 Paralympics in Beijing, China.

As for this year, Peter helped Canada capture the gold medal at the Paralympic World Cup, which was held in Manchester, England. Peter was also inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame last year.

Ex-pro gives support

Former National Hockey League star Scott Niedermayer is supporting British Columbia's Ktunaxa Nation.

Niedermayer and the First Nation have expressed their opposition of a resort in Jumbo Valley, located in southeastern B.C.

The Ktunaxa Nation has opposed the proposed Jumbo Glacier resort as it impacts its people's rights and interests.

Niedermayer and Ktunaxa Nation officials commented on their displeasure with the proposed resort in the B.C. Legislature in mid-November.

Niedermayer is not Aboriginal himself, but he still has a keen interest in this area.

"I grew up in the Kootenays and value the stunning and rugged beauty that the region has to offer," said Niedermayer, who won four Stanley Cups during his pro career before retiring last year. "I have always been a vocal opponent of development happening in the Jumbo Valley. There are very few areas like this left in the world, and we should preserve it for future generations. I want my children and all British Columbians to be able to enjoy this area, just as I am able to."

Niedermayer's support is a huge advantage for the Ktunaxa Nation. Besides his four NHL championships, Niedermayer also won a pair of Olympic gold medals during his career. He was the captain of the Canadian squad that won the gold medal at last year's Vancouver Winter Olympics.

[sports]

Pitcher puts herself 'out there' for the opportunities

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

GLENELG, Australia

Holly Denny is a Rebel with a cause.

The 20-year-old Mi'kmaq from Nova Scotia's Waycobah First Nation is currently showcasing her softball talents Down Under.

Denny, a pitcher, is toiling with Australia's Glenelg Rebels, a club that competes in a league called A Grade.

Glenelg is a suburb of Adelaide, the capital of the state known as South Australia.

While in Australia, Denny is also suiting up for the South Australia Starz, a select team that plays monthly matches against other clubs representing the various states in the country.

Denny landed in Australia because of a little bit of investigative work on her part.

"I Googled Softball Australia and emailed a coach," she said. "They were interested and we worked some things out then."

Denny arrived in Australia on Oct. 20 and is scheduled to stay until April 5, 2012.

The Rebels' season began in late October and continues until March.

Denny's expenses for the trip and her accommodations are being covered by the Aussies. In return, besides playing, Denny provides pitching clinics for those in the Rebels' organization.

"They haven't had a pitcher come in and help them with details so this is working well for both sides," Denny said, adding many in Australia have a different style of throwing and she's working on mechanics with athletes to improve their pitching speed.

Denny believes the calibre of women's softball in Australia is a tad better than the quality in Canada.

"I would consider it maybe a little bit stronger than senior women's softball in Canada," she said. "The program that allows the states to play each other at the end of each month really contributes to producing great players for Australia. In Canada it's a little different where you don't really get to see the very top players compete at the end of each month."

While growing up in Nova Scotia, Denny played for numerous softball teams. A highlight was representing her province at the 2009 Canada Summer Games in Prince Edward Island.

For the past six years Denny has also suited up for the Red Nation Jets, an Alberta-based women's club that participates in the annual Canadian Native Fastball Championships.

The Jets captured the 2010 national title. The club also placed second at this year's national tournament, which was



PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

Holly Denny



held in Winnipeg in late July and early August.

Instead of just participating in the nationals in 2012, the Jets, whose roster includes athletes from various provinces, plan to play together throughout the summer.

Denny is confident her Australian experience will be a boost for her softball career.

"I am hoping to get one step closer to becoming the best I can be," she said. "I believe it will help me since it is an off-season training time for me if I were in Canada."

Denny is hoping to play a high level of ball for a few more years. "I'd like to play at a competitive level until I am 24-25 years old," she said. "There is a lot I need to work on and I haven't hit the best I can be yet. So after I hit the best I can be that might be when I am 25."

Denny started playing backyard baseball when she was rather young. Then, at age 12, she turned to softball.

"I was a catcher first," she said. "Then I picked up a ball before a game and tried pitching. I was horrible but determined to become better."

Denny attended Wekoqmaq Mikmaqewey School but it didn't

offer any high school sports.

"You really have to step outside your box to get where you want to go because it definitely won't be coming to you," she said.

Denny believes Aboriginal athletes living in rural areas, like herself, need to be proactive to play organized sports. So she has some advice for others.

"Define what you want and chase it," she said. "Put your name out there because more than likely nobody is going to know who you are."

Though she's been in Australia for more than a month now, Denny said she's also still trying to adjust to certain words people in that country use. For example, tea means dinner and a jumper is a sweater.

Denny added post-game etiquette is also different. Instead of saying "Good game" to an opponent, it's customary to simply say "Thanks."

As for getting around, that's an experience in itself for Denny.

"The whole driving scene is crazy," she said. "Being on the driver's side and driving on the opposite side of the road was scary for me at first. After I got off the plane and got into the car, I could barely look at the road because it felt like cars were coming at me."

[health] Landmark agreement begins hard work of health care service

By Debora Steel
Windspeaker contributor

Vancouver—First Nations in British Columbia are a step closer to their goal of developing a First Nations Health Authority with the signing of a legal agreement between Canada, the province, and the First Nations Health Society at a ceremony held in the Squamish Nation longhouse on Oct. 13.

Dignitaries, including Health Canada Minister Leona Aglukkaq, provincial Minister of Health Mike de Jong, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo, and a number of First Nations chiefs, gathered to participate in the signing of the landmark agreement.

The agreement is a first in Canada, intended to provide greater decision-making for First Nations regarding how health services and programs are planned, designed, managed and delivered to First Nations people.

A prayer song was offered, with a blessing bestowed on the visitors to the longhouse that day.

Elder Tiyaltelut, Audrey Rivers, gave a blessing that honored the past, present and future generations—the leaders. She also asked for the safety and health of the children.

The ceremony began when a sacred space was created in the longhouse with blankets placed on the dirt floor. Signers, blanketed in red, except for First Nations Health Council Chair Doug Kelly, who wore a traditional wool blanket, were drummed into the venue and circled the building twice. They were then stood on the blankets where they were introduced.

“BC First Nations wish to be fully involved in decision-making regarding the health of their people,” reads the agreement, so the parties will work together to create a new health governance structure that will result in a more integrated health system that reflects the cultures and perspectives of BC First Nations and incorporates First Nations’ models of wellness.

The new health governance structure will be composed of a First Nations Health Authority; a Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health; the First Nations Health Council; and the First Nations Health Directors Association.

The First Nations Health Society will now work to establish a First Nations Health Authority over the course of two years. This authority will plan, design, manage, deliver and fund the delivery of health programs for First Nations in B.C.

The federal government, the province, and other health funding will be provided into the future for this work. As part of their work, the authority will, among other things, collect and maintain clinical information and patient records and develop protocols for



BC First Nations cemented an historic agreement to take over health care services for their citizens. A tripartite health agreement was signed by Health Canada’s Leona Aglukkaq, BC’s health minister Mike de Jong, and representatives of the First Nations Health Council and First Nations Health Society on Oct. 13.

the sharing of patient records and information with BC’s Ministry of Health and other BC health authorities.

Over time, the authority will redesign health programs and services that replace federal health programs to better meet the health and wellness needs of First Nations people.

There is also a community engagement component of the new agreement as the authority takes shape.

Signing the agreement for Canada was Aglukkaq. In the Inuktitut language Aglukkaq said “Today is a very happy occasion.”

She acknowledged former federal minister of Health Tony Clement for his “innovative” BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nations Health Governance, signed in 2007, the goal of which was to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations in B.C., and close the gap in health between First Nations people and other British Columbians. That tripartite agreement provided a blueprint that guides the development of the new health governance structure.

Aglukkaq said the First Nations Health Authority is the heart of this new governance structure for health programs and services managed by First Nations people for First Nations people.

She said the work forward won’t be easy, but “I know we can and will do it. The results will be worth it.”

Minister de Jong signed on behalf of the province and described the “big history” of First Nations/newcomer relations as the

trail that led to the agreement.

Some of that history is very sad, he said, with the European’s arrival and the devastating effects it had on the Indigenous populations.

Contact marked the beginning of many difficult years, he said, with great injustices. He said the agreement signed that day allows for something “as fundamental as letting a people take charge of their health care again... That’s big history.”

“We are doing it first and the rest of the country is watching this longhouse today.”

De Jong said it was the people who would breathe life into the agreement, because “the days of a First Nations child that cannot be expected to live as long as any other child must end.” He said the agreement would make that happen.

Grand Chief Doug Kelly of the Sto:lo Nation signed on behalf of the First Nations Health Council. He thanked the Squamish Nation for opening their house for the business of the day. It was sacred ground upon which to come together to bring the spirits of the ancestors to witness the event.

And it was their late great leader Joe Mathias who discussed the need for healthy communities. Kelly said no matter how hard one negotiates such things as treaties, it would not achieve healthy communities, and healthy communities are necessary for any self-government agreement to be successful.

Kelly said First Nations leaders met in May to discuss the agreement and overwhelmingly approved moving forward on it.

“There are hard times coming,” he explained, with British Columbia and Canada both looking to reduce budgets as they battle deficits.

The chiefs chose the certainty of the funding being promised over the uncertainty of what might be promised in the future.

“We know how much will be invested over five years,” adding it was time to begin to manage change rather than have change manage First Nations.

National Chief Atleo, A-in-chut, witnessed Kelly’s signature on the document. A-in-chut said the ceremony signaled a brighter future going forward.

“We know how much it means to see the people return to a place of health and balance.” He said it will take an incredible effort, but by working together, the partnership of First Nations, Canada and B.C. will be able to smash the status quo.

Atleo said the day was about understanding the past, knowing what the current reality is, and imagining what’s possible. And it all begins with listening to the people, who should have a role in deciding their health in the future.

Douglas White III of the First Nations Summit, a member of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, said he felt “good in my heart” to witness the events of the day. He expressed his deepest congratulations to the people who had worked on the agreement over so many years. He said that by working together, the damage of the past can be repaired.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs President Stewart Phillip said it was incredible the distance that

had been traveled by First Nations in B.C. since 2007.

He reflected on the animosity that permeated discussions before 2005, when disparate First Nations groups around the province were at odds with each other’s agendas. Putting that aside was deeply personal for him, Phillip said, after the deaths of men in his community, gunned down and killed in a drug trade turf war.

“I knew in my heart that we did not have the luxury of squabbling,” he said.

In his work as a marriage commissioner Phillip said the bride, groom and their families are always happy and smiling during the ceremony, and he tells them that these special moments of celebration are “a gim’me.” It’s up to them to take the “brilliant light” of those moments into their hearts and use it as strength when they come to the difficult times and the hard work that is inevitably ahead.

He said it was going to take an enormous effort on everyone’s part to make the agreement that was signed work going forward.

Namgis First Nation Chief Bill Cranmer offered a prayer song to join the spirits of the people and call on the Creator to continue to work with them to improve the situation for First Nations.

Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council President Clifford Atleo Sr. described the coming work as a “huge, huge task” that would require the input of all Nuu-chah-nulth people. He was excited by the possibility of having health delivery and service shift from Health Canada to First Nations control.

U of M apologizes for its role in perpetuating assimilation

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

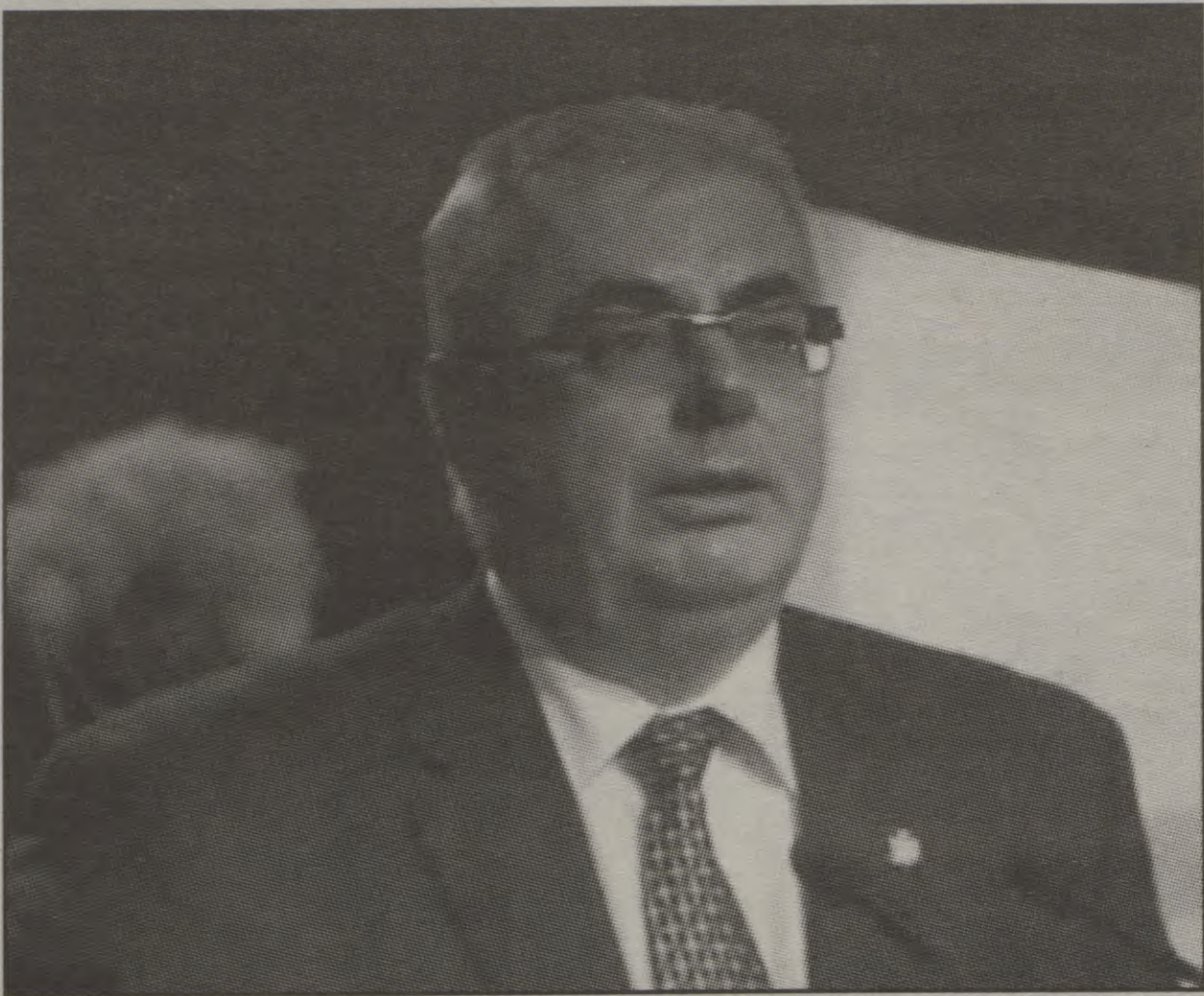


PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

President David Barnard delivered a heartfelt apology on behalf of the University of Manitoba for its role in perpetuating Indian residential schools.

HALIFAX

University of Manitoba President David Barnard not only apologized for his institution's role in educating the people who taught at residential schools, but for "fail(ing) to recognize or challenge the forced assimilation of Aboriginal peoples and the subsequent loss of their language, culture and traditions."

Barnard's heartfelt apology, which was often punctuated with silence as he composed himself, was delivered on Oct. 27 in Halifax at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's third national event.

TRC Chair Justice Murray

Sinclair, a graduate of the U of M, acknowledged the "generosity of the words offered and also to mark the significance of that gesture."

The U of M is the first post-secondary institution to offer such an apology.

Barnard said the university felt it was necessary to take a leadership role "in helping expose the national shame that was the Indian residential schools system and the consequences of such a system."

He added that the university was committed to working with the TRC to both "advance research efforts" related to residential schools, as well as in truth-telling and reconciliation.

Sinclair said the role undertaken by the university was significant and that it was "probably one of the more important gestures" the TRC had received.

"We pay our respects to the University of Manitoba for having commenced this part of the conversation," said Sinclair.

National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo also commended the university.

"The idea that action is required as part of reconciliation; it's more than just a concept. It requires people to participate actively. And that's what they did," said Atleo.

"Steps like this can help advance notions of mutual respect, notions of understanding between First Nations and Canadians, and hopefully generate action that's needed to create a lasting change."

"The University of Manitoba educated and mentored individuals who became clergy, teachers, social workers, civil servants and politicians who carried out assimilation policies aimed at the Aboriginal peoples of Manitoba," said Barnard.

He pointed out that in the over 130 years the university has been in operation, there were 17 federally-funded residential schools in the province. The first opened in 1888 and the last closed a century later.

During that time, thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were taken from their communities, placed in residential schools, with many being abused physically or sexually. Those who were spared abuse had their language and culture taken from them. Children who did not attend residential schools attended day schools and suffered similar experiences. Some children never returned from school. Those who did return had a hard time connecting with their families and home communities.

"Many institutions had a direct or indirect hand in perpetuating the misguided and failed system of assimilation that was at the heart of the Indian residential

school system," said Barnard.

He apologized to students of the university, who are the descendants of residential school survivors, as well as to Indigenous staff.

"We also apologize to First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders and Elders. We recognize that we need to build trust and fulfill our role as an open and welcoming community of learning, discovery and outreach," said Barnard.

Barnard said the university wanted to "ensure that the values of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and communities infuse scholarship and research across the university."

Sinclair said his experience in the post-secondary system was one that "has often not reflected who I am and what I think and how I think and how I want to be."

Sinclair pointed out that not only were Aboriginal children taught in school that they were inferior, but that non-Aboriginal children were taught the same things about First Nations, Métis and Inuit children.

"As a result of that, one of the challenges we face as a commission is to go forward with a view to recognizing that if it was through the educational system that part of the legacy of residential schools has lived on so long and so deeply, then it must be through the educational system that change will occur and will occur in a more long-lasting way," said Sinclair.

He noted that changes were beginning at the grade school level and had to continue into the post-secondary level.

"It is important for us to know that in the future when our children want to go on from their high school experience and become whatever it is they seek to be in life that they will be welcome within an educational institution that understands the importance of bringing balance to the knowledge that is shared, to bring respect to the conversation that goes on about Aboriginal history and Aboriginal people, both past and present, in this country, as well as in the future, and that in turn will gear them to be able to do their work as Aboriginal people with a complete sense of self and a full sense of respect for their identity as well as a full sense of self-respect about their identity," he said.

Sinclair said there would continue to be people who would not understand the need for an apology, whether from the prime minister or from the University of Manitoba.

"Those people are not important to this conversation if they continue to refuse to see that it is indeed important that that conversation continue," said Sinclair.

Lakehead UNIVERSITY

Founding Dean, Faculty of Law

Lakehead University is conducting an extensive search for a Founding Dean, Faculty of Law, to take office at the earliest opportunity, and no later than the summer of 2012, and invites expressions of interest, applications and nominations.

Lakehead is a comprehensive university with a reputation for innovative programs and cutting-edge research. With campuses located in Thunder Bay and Orillia, Lakehead has approximately 8,100 students and 2,250 faculty and staff. Known for its multidisciplinary teaching approach, and its emphasis on collaborative learning and independent critical thinking, Lakehead offers a variety of degree programs at the undergraduate, Master's and Doctoral levels, as well as on campus and community-based programs, continuing education and distributed learning. Home to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (West Campus) and located at the head of Lake Superior, Lakehead's Thunder Bay campus is one of the most beautiful in Canada. Many of its programs in engineering, education, arts and sciences are complemented by fieldwork and a focus on northern socio-economic issues. Further information regarding Lakehead University is available at www.lakeheadu.ca.

Fully approved, funded and supported, the JD degree program offered by the new Faculty of Law will provide an emphasis on working with Aboriginal peoples to address the legal needs of Aboriginal communities in the north, legal issues related to the resource-based Northern Ontario economy, and increasing participation in sole and small firm practice. The Faculty of Law will be located in Thunder Bay's historic Port Arthur Collegiate Institute and will be admitting 55 students yearly, with its first

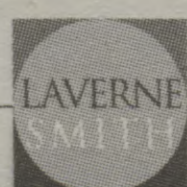
class graduating in 2016. Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), the Founding Dean, Faculty of Law will be responsible for all academic, administrative and external activities of Ontario's first new law school in 42 years.

The Founding Dean of Law at Lakehead University will be a legal educator and scholar with experience that is relevant to Aboriginal, northern and rural legal issues and interests. In addition to possessing a Law degree at the graduate level, candidates should have an open and collegial style, outstanding management, communication and interpersonal skills, a creative approach to problem solving, the ability to inspire staff, faculty and students, and the capacity to build and sustain positive work relationships with academic and other administrative units. The ability to promote and serve as an advocate for the Faculty of Law's mission, goals and ongoing accomplishments will be essential.

The Search Committee will begin considering potential candidates immediately and will continue until the position is successfully filled. The initial appointment is for five years, renewable for an additional five years. Lakehead University is an equal opportunity employer. Applications, including a letter of introduction, curriculum vitae, and the names of three references (who will not be contacted without consent of the applicant), should be submitted in confidence, electronically, to the university's executive search consultants:

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[footprints] Annie Paingut Peterloosie

Elder believed a solid future comes from understanding the past

By Dianne Meili

Annie Paingut Peterloosie spent the first 25 years of her life living off the land in Nunavut.

She could tell you about the sheer joy of seeing sunlight on the horizon, even if only for a few moments after four months of constant darkness, and about welcoming the sound of streams running over rocks under the snow when warm winds blew.

She knew everything on the land had a purpose, especially the ice that surrounded her. She built homes from it, melted it for tea, and carved holes in large chunks of it to weight nets to catch seals swimming near the sea shore in the springtime; a hunter would never use a rock because it would warm in the sun, melt through the snow and the net could be lost.

Annie made it her life's mission to preserve and share Inuktitut culture and language through sharing the life she knew as a young girl in Akunnig where she was born. It was a camp between Hall Beach and Iglulik on Baffin Island.

In 1963 her family settled in the Arctic Bay, but continued to live a subsistence lifestyle, following the migration of the caribou, hunting and fishing. Even when her family moved to Pond Inlet in 1981 she continued to live traditionally.

In years past, when the snow geese returned to the land in May, her family would find a dry, rocky beach to put up their tents. While the men concentrated on hunting seals sunning themselves on the ice, harpooning whales and shooting caribou, the women processed the meat and sewed sealskin and animal hides into coats, pants, mukluks and mitts for the coming cold season.

A delicacy was arctic char gently boiled in a kettle over the even flame of a quilliq, the distinctive oil lamp used to both

heat and cook in the Arctic. Annie often demonstrated how seal fat was pounded in the lamp and tufts of Arctic cotton, which grows on the land, was lit to act as a wick.

"The lighting of the quilliq at celebrations honouring the coming of the sun is something Annie was called upon to do as a venerated elder," said Roberta Jamieson, head of the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF). She was delighted to meet the diminutive elder in late 2010 when Jamieson accompanied Annie and the 13 other National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients to Ottawa to be presented in the House of Commons. Annie received the Culture, Heritage and Spirituality Award for 2011.

"She is tiny but she's a giant in terms of her value when it comes to Indigenous knowledge. We have lost a national treasure," commented Jamieson. "Her joy and warmth touched each person and the strong connection she was able to make with all individuals was extraordinary."

Annie loved to preserve traditional practices so young people would remember the old ways. At the Nattinuk Visitor's Centre in Pond Inlet, Annie assisted with teaching schoolchildren, tourists and community members about traditional Inuit languages, music, art and food harvesting, and at Pond Inlet Arctic College she taught students to design and create traditional Inuit clothing.

"I want to help the community so much," she said in a biographical film on the NAAF Web site. "This generation is losing the Inuktitut language and culture. I want to make sure Inuktitut is preserved for the people of Pond Inlet and Nunavut, as well.

"I didn't always listen to what my grandmother said, but since I've grown up, I discovered why they were always trying to teach the ways of our people. I'm finally living a good life now and it's because I understand. It is impossible to create a solid future without first understanding the past."

Annie also helped her people and the world to understand more about the Inuit and their traditional knowledge through her film and theatre work. She appears in John Houston's films *Kivioq* and *Diet of Souls*, the latter about the spiritual relationship between Inuit and the animals.

Annie's husband Jayco is also in the film and, in it, he describes a shaman's perception of how a seal feels at the moment when it rises to a breathing hole, and when its last breath and the hunter's harpoon merge.

Houston had this to say on a CBC Web site regarding the loss of people like Annie: "Anybody who has the idea that these people are special, they have special things to contribute, catch it now, catch it fast because the example that we learned again this week with the loss of Annie Paingut Peterloosie, they're not going to wait forever. If you want to do anything special with them, they're ready."

Annie appeared on stage, as well, with the Tununiq Arsaniit Theatre Group.

In other areas of her life, the Inuk elder helped sustain the spiritual and mental health of her community. She worked as an addictions counsellor and regularly advised judges in the Nunavut Court services on matters of traditional healing and community sensitivities when sentencing convicted persons.

In outpost camps she acted as



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Annie Paingut Peterloosie

a counsellor and healer for individuals who had recently gone through the court system.

"Annie had been battling cancer for some time before I met her," commented Jamieson.

"The recent loss of her husband, Jayco, impacted her, too, but she just kept going."

Annie passed away on Nov. 12. She was 75 and is survived by five children.

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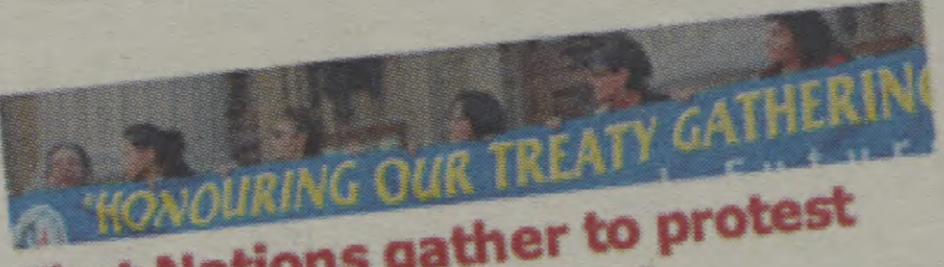
By Shari Narine Windspeaker Contributor
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Industry has one more First Nation to consult when looking to do work in northern Alberta. A special ceremony was held Sept. 12 that celebrated the conclusion of years of negotiation that resulted in the creation of the province's 45th First Nation...

Time and funding crunch challenges Atlantic working group

By Shari Narine Windspeaker Contributor
HALIFAX
Only one school in Atlantic Canada is recognized under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), but those students are not the only ones impacted by the trauma of being torn away from their families. "We have the least number of..."

Maggie Black Kettle [footprints]

By Dianne Meili
Blackfoot Elder overcame fear to pass on traditional ways To walk into Maggie Black Kettle's tipi from the bustling grounds of the Calgary Stampede was to enter the peaceful eye of a pounding, frenetic storm. The muted light, smell of prairie sage,...



First Nations gather to protest government treatment

By Shari Narine Sweetgrass Contributing Editor
EDMONTON
Chief Allan Adam announced in front of a loud and boisterous crowd of over 500 that the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation will be taking court action once more, this time challenging the provincial government's Public Lands Act in order to protect...



Assu takes a fresh look at West Coast art

By Shauna Lewis Raven's Eye Writer Vancouver
Contemporary artist Sonny Assu has a knack for infusing the politics of modern pop culture with traditional First Nations style, and his latest works are no exception. In his exhibit entitled 'Longing,' Assu, a member of the Laichwiltach First Nation...

U of A Hospital gallery showcases diverse talent

By Dianne Meili Sweetgrass Writer EDMONTON
In a quiet recess of the frenetic University of Alberta Hospital is an artistic showing of diverse Aboriginal talent. Shifting Patterns, curated by Edmonton's Aaron Paquette, features paintings, claywork and photography by established and emerging...

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On behalf of the children [editorial]

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