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WGC Newsletter

Each month we try to gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native news events and top stories for our membership. A well informed and updated clientele is better able to see, relate with, analyze and grasp their situation more effectively when they have the tools to work with. It is our objective to provide as wide a scope as possible for our readership to be as informed as possible. This format of providing news and the disseminating the right information is our top priority.

Web access: Not only our local readership is serviced with this format of news production, but the audience that surfs the net can benefit as well. A talented and seemingly tireless worker, Sharon Green, from Ontario helps us to reach our audience and readers around the world by putting our monthly newsletter on her web site. To view her site go to Gathering Place First Nations and search in there to find our newsletter.

Contact

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A "HOLE" IN THE RIVER AT TOBIQUE

p.paul

Lo and behold, there's hole in the river at Tobique FN. Check out the circled section on our cover page. The cavity is created from the swirling waters below the dam when the water is released. This huge hole can be seen clearly from satellite pictures taken above the site.

The hole has grown larger year after year since the dam opened a half century ago and the erosion has in effect reduced the Reserve land considerably throughout that time. There is even a possibility that one day some families living near the falling shoreline may have to move to higher ground.

In the accompanying aerial photo, showing the west direction, the encircled section denotes the location of the oval shaped hole which has expanded roughly 1200 metres into the reserve land to date.

And in the southerly direction, or downstream of the dam, the hole's boundaries extend roughly 1500 metres across from one point to the opposite straight-line point.

The main damage to reserve land comes from erosion, flooding and washouts, etc., which extends a full kilometer downstream, in total consideration, from the dam to where the Tobique and St. John rivers join.

The flooded area below Tobique dam is the headpond of a 2nd dam below, Beechwood, which was built in late 1950's, shortly after completion of Tobique dam. Beechwood is about 30 miles below Tobique dam.

Fiddleheads lost:

The present flooded area below Tobique dam was once a prime territory prior to the coming of hydro projects. Within that flooded kilometre below the dam were excellent fiddlehead areas for our people.

Swimming holes

The flooded area also had excellent swimming holes where kids swam and frolicked daily through the summer months. Those fun places were lost when Beechwood was activated in the late fifties. Unfortunately, all of these natural fun and gathering spots disappeared when the flooding occurred.

The first dam construction started in 1949 and ended in '52. This was when erosion began tearing into the reserve land when waters were released. The resulting damage included the loss of our swimming areas, our precious fiddlehead islands and roughly a famous two-mile long salmon habitat.

And not to forget the annual Atlantic salmon runs through this area that attracted great numbers of visitors and tourists year after year to witness and view the great upstream parade of Atlantic salmon.

And then combine that with the annual migration of sports fishermen from across Canada and the U.S. who came to enjoy the sport and the excitement of landing the greatest fish around, the Atlantic salmon, at Tobique.

In retrospect, the close ties and relationship native people had with the river and its environment were quickly dashed forever when the dams went into service.

In memory of these grand moments, attractions and good times, while unfortunately, we still have to live with the expanding 'Hole', we can recall those happier times, coupled with the memory of how the 'old timers' of Tobique used to just relish into their salmon fishery sport while earning some handsome guiding bonuses at the same time.

It is a legacy that salmon, fiddleheads and the lost recreation areas will always be fondly remembered as Tobique's past, and sad to say, because of the on-going erosion from the dams, our unheralded future.

1969 WHITE PAPER TO ERADICATE INDIANS AND TAKE OVER THEIR LANDS & RESOURCES

p.paul

TFN (Special) - Several years ago (1969) the Department of Indian Affairs, DIAND, tried in earnest to unwind itself of fiduciary responsibility for native people by attempting to ram the notorious 1969 White Paper down the throats of Canadians, and even took a shot at First Nations as well. The project failed.

So radically repulsive, malicious and vindictive was this government document that almost in lightening speed, native people collectively rose up against it and defeated this diabolic instrument that was about to eradicate them for good.

The national reaction of Canada's native people was huge, instantaneous and overwhelming as opposition sprang up virtually overnight and sped across the land like wildfire.

As native people scrolled through this paper they immediately realized the destructive and malicious nature that would be lethal to their well being. The Paper clearly indicated that the intent was to destroy and liquidate every First Nations in the land through legislation.

The nationwide native furor literally bounced back on government's laps telling them in no

uncertain terms, that " This land is still ours in every conceivable manner, right, and rule of law, and that basic tenet will never change. From our perspective, we haven't given up the land, nor have we sold it, surrendered it, or lost it to anyone in this continent or in the world. It is still rightfully and legally ours.

What the whiteman took of our lands without consent or acquired through contrived acts of deceit, trickery, bribery and parliamentary manipulation, amounted to stealing land. That orchestrated collusion or conspiracy was aided and abetted by layers of government croonies and officials who used every trick, fraud, bribe and deceit in the book to pull off the grand theft. In the first place, the land was literally swindled from our nations with the use a foreign, non-understood language, and without our consent or consultation.

Secondly, treaties, land deals and contracts conjured up by shifty bureaucrats were forced on Indians who could not possibly read, relate or understand the basics of the business-at-hand, were quickly tricked and misled into putting their "X" on these alien documents. This deliberate deceit proceeded without giving Indians the benefit of proper explanation, examination or understanding of business transpiring or what was contained in these documents. In short, the treaty process was a bloody sham perpetrated on innocents for the purpose of stealing Indian Land.

From these twisted and one-sided white transactions, therefore, the documents produced cannot or should never have been valid or be legally recognized due to the outstanding impropriety, diversity and immense cultural gaps between the two parties.

Additionally, the fundamental differences and totally staggering linguistic barriers that prevailed between the two 'negotiating' sides' should have automatically convicted one side of 'colossal fraud' and criminal action and fraudulent manipulation.

But likely, the most destructive procedures used against native people were the 'legal' instruments and gaping procedural inconsistencies that were hopelessly locked between the two sides, one rooted in a primitive culture base, the other using alien, undefined rules of the whiteman's Law that were impossible to bridge and reconcile for effective purposes. The gap between these two entities was just too immense and complex to possibly overcome in one sitting to produce 'true' specimens of an honest, valid legitimate land treaties.

From these incredibly remote polarities, therefore, all land treaties made between whites and Indians in those early times should have been automatically banished, voided and not given legal recognition, or be acknowledged as final, bon fide legal documents, and be subject to court of law.

In all fairness therefore, all land treaties that were forced upon native people over the past 500 years or more should be reexamined today, or at least be questioned by proper authorities for their legal integrity, propriety, authority and validity. .

Not surprisingly, similar methods and malicious procedures were forwarded in the 1969 White Paper.

The White Paper produced under questionable circumstances by Canada's Prime Minister, Pierre Elliot Trudeau along with an inept lieutenant at that time, Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chretien, should have been immediately voided and made irrelevant due to misdirection and untimely introduction.

And yet, this ill-conceived document was expedited without much ado or deliberation and was allowed to proceed without native consent and consultation.

In reality the White Paper represented underhanded, colonial-type trickery of land grabbing, complete with subtle intents to legally eradicate Indian status and taking over Indian lands and resources while turning native people into brown-skinned Canadians in the end.

Again the Canadian government erred horrendously in this case as it surged ahead without

receiving consent or going through due process in the attempt to end fiduciary responsibility for native people that was inherited from the Crown at Confederation.

What Trudeau and Chretien implied in their White Paper was that "Indians had no special status or legal rights that rose above the average Canadian, despite the Indians' deep-rooted heritage and unchallenged longevity and empirical domain in this land.

Fortunately, the White Paper was soundly defeated and properly disposed for its wayward direction and untimely presentation. Further, the destructive ends and purposes behind it, were luckily uncovered on time to avert another national calamity and disgrace.

A similar eradication experiment was tried later in 2003 called Bill C-7, Governance Act, headed by the Minister of Indian Affairs, Robert Nault. Bill C-7 met quick demise as were other attempts with the same ambitions. The Nault C-7 document failed from the huge pressure organized by a united front of all native nations across the country.

No doubt, other demonic schemes will rise in the future trying to destroy native nations and undo their unique position and identity in this land. But not to despair, aboriginal nations will always survive and collectively keep what is rightfully theirs, and overcome any devious attempts to eliminate them.

CANADA & HARPER GOVT. SAY NO TO U.N. RESOLUTION ON INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

p.paul

TFN (Special) For more than twenty years Indigenous nations from around the world have been relentlessly lobbying, trying to introduce a universal document to the United Nations that would formalize their representation and membership in that assembly. Such an opportunity would also open up a formal channel for networking and dialogue with all sectors of UN and with one another.

The attempt to bring the document to the floor for discussion and debate had consistently failed over the years for lack of popular support by the Assembly until June 2006 when UN gave its consent to hear and hold a vote on the Resolution.

In order to gain formal recognition and allow the Resolution to become valid and stand independently, the Assembly must vote unanimously in favor for its adoption. Assembly rules maintain that a failure to achieve unanimous support forces the applicant to restart their entry process from the starting point.

Unfortunately the initial test June did not achieve unanimous backing.

Canada, Russia and United States combined with a glaring "No" to the request.. A second attempt to pass the Resolution is scheduled for a vote during the fall/winter ('06-'07) sitting. Canada's negative position aired on CBC:

In a CBC-Radio program, "Current" aired November 21, 2006, a representative of the Department of Indian Affairs, Fred Caron, of Ottawa was interviewed by the "Current's" hostess, Anna Marie Tremonte, regarding the status of the UN Resolution and Canada's negative position towards it.

In the interview, Mr. Caron cited a number of reasons why Canada voted "NO" but also said, "by taking that 'NO' position it leaves the door open for continued discussion on the matter for gaining a better focus and perspective for the next vote."

In the interview, Mr. Caron prefaced his remarks by saying that the essence of the Resolution was more a symbolic gesture rather than real in terms of attaining the 'power of vote' and achieving full membership.

In short, the implication left was that Indigenous Rights Resolution will likely face obstacles in the long-term for achieving full recognition and endorsement in UN.

Fred Caron said allowing the Indigenous Rights Resolution to stand and receive UN seal of

approval would, 1) force a parliamentary review of Aboriginal Title, 2) affect doing business as usual, 3) affect resource exploration and development. 3) cause undue delays in project implementation.

In so many words, Mr. Caron indicated that Indigenous peoples presently hold only "observer" status in the UN, short of having full rights to vote and actively participate in national and international arenas.

It is quite a revealing and a shocking comment on Canada indeed, that this country, which professes leadership in advocacy for human rights would consciously and openly vote NO to the UN Indigenous Rights Resolution.

Canada's "NO" vote stains her image and indicates that a sick colonial attitude prevails in this country towards Indigenous populations.

The onus on the unfortunate outcome in the June vote now rests squarely on the shoulders of the current government, but more precisely, lies on the lap of the prime minister himself, Mr. Harper, who, by the way, may have revealed a taint or discoloration around the neck for taking the negative stance.

However, Canada, resting on its laurels as a committed advocate on human rights, plus owning the fiduciary responsibility for native people, got slammed properly into the hot corner for sure. With this untimely turn of events, Canada by rights, should reconsider her decision of joining US and Russia in vote against indigenous nations and allow Indigenous peoples full rights and privileges in UN.

To effectively right the wrong, Canada should immediately reverse its 'No' position and follow the popular trend demonstrated by the collective UN membership in the June 2006 vote.

Otherwise, Canada could rightfully be questioned whether they live in a free and a democratic society.

PASSPORT NEEDED TO FLY TO U.S. AFTER JAN. 23

Travellers flying to the United States will officially need passports starting Jan. 23, according to the Homeland Security Secretary.

Michael Chertoff told the Associated Press that the department would announce plans on Wednesday.

The original date of implementation as part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative was Jan. 8, but officials missed a 60-day deadline.

Chertoff said that figures from September indicated that 90 per cent of passengers leaving from Canadian airports were already using passports.

The requirements will also apply to all Canadians and Americans entering the United States by land and sea by mid-2009, more than a year later than originally scheduled due to complaints from business groups and politicians on both sides of the border.

Last month, U.S. ambassador to Canada David Wilkins said a proposed high-tech identification card for Americans would speed up cross-border travel. It came just days after the U.S. State Department announced plans for a wallet-sized passport card, good for 10 years.

The development of the card had been hampered by technology issues, which also delayed the State Department's original plans.

The card will use radio frequency identification technology to link the card to a database containing biographical data and a photograph.

Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire earlier this month proposed that handheld driver's licence scanners, already in use at some military installation gates, be tried for a three-month test program at the Blaine border crossing south of Vancouver and at the Port Angeles border crossing south of Victoria.

Gregoire said she hoped it could be studied as an alternative to requiring pass cards or passports. Statistics indicate that only 23 per cent of Americans have a valid passport. The new air rules will also be a change for travellers from Mexico and Bermuda.

TIME FOR NATIVE CHIEFS TO WEIGH IN ON BORDER CROSSING ISSUE

p.paul

Time is fast crashing in on us and we have yet to hear strongly worded opposition from native leadership regarding use of passports by native people at the border.

The preceding cbc-news item represents a huge challenge to the 1794 Jay Treaty where the treaty clearly states freedom of Indians to freely pass and repass the US/Canada border at will without being subject to interference, molestation or requiring visas, passports or any other border documents.

The Jay Treaty has now been in affect for over 200 years and the new passport regulation may possibly disregard status quo, or may bypass conditions outlined in the 200 year-old Treaty. In other words, if the new passport regulation comes as a blanket requirement for all air travelers entering U.S. as early as Jan. 23rd, including native passengers, than the Jay Treaty would have been impacted.

In the event of encountering these border crossing difficulties at US airports, what preparations are being made by our chiefs at the present time to meet these challenges?

If indeed anything has been prepared, then our people should have been notified already or advised of regulatory procedures to follow when or if they are delayed at airports.

Realistically, time has now essentially expired to get out meaningful information to the public in case of detainment at airports and we already may be in a bind.

In any case, all native persons planning to use US air facilities starting January 23rd should come prepared with proper documentation regarding their aboriginal status to minimize difficulties.

PLACE OF PEACE, MT. SAUGMAUG (Carleton) PARK, NICTAU LAKE

p.paul

Ever come to a special place that is so awesome and breathtaking that you can't take it out of your mind?

A lot of us have visited places that made a powerful impression or literally zapped magic in us, and they stay.. These are the places where you remember exactly what you saw, what you felt, what you did and experienced and made you a 'convert', so to say.

If there was one such spot where a sense of peace, harmony was in the air, that place might have been Lake Nictau, located in the upper reaches of the Tobique River, in Mt. Saugmaug (Carleton) Park.

Just recently, in past September, our spiritual leader, Dan, headed our Forest Watch group of friends and comrades who live in the Mt. Saugmaug vicinity, on a tour through the lake area and came upon this idyllic location.

Normally, the forest watch agenda entails picking a destination and doing the tour while tracking, tracing and observing changes in forest conditions and in the natural environment. Another element followed is, en-route through the tour, the party usually takes a lunch break and holds a traditional ceremony for meditation and thanksgiving.

The break and ceremony on this particular trip in September took place at an unusually beautiful spot, at a small isthmus on the west shore of Lake Nictau.

Anyone familiar with the serene surroundings and the breath-taking panorama at Lake Nictau can quickly identify and relate with the awesome beauty of the lake and the become very attached to the majestic Mt. Saugmaug that stands nearby guarding the mirror-surfaced lake.

The solace and peace and calm over the lake is only broken now and then by the soothing shrills of playful loons swimming and diving off in the distance in the quiet waters.

Or a possibly one might hear the unmistakable sounds of "quack-quack" traveling over the waters made by a duck or two observing human activities from a distance.

Nor is it unusual to look skyward anytime, or towards the mountainsides to see eagles or falcons aflight on their food-gathering tasks for their young.

The September peace and solitude at Nictau Lake is just one awesome experience that anyone can enjoy and relate to, freely and with unbelievable pleasure.

The protective mile-high peaks around you, accompanied by the placid lake waters, just about takes you back to the very beginnings of life, or, in other words, recedes you, in time, to the natural 'comfort and security of the womb' where you were surrounded by serene and peaceful waters of nature, very much akin to the safety and security of mother's natural fluids.

As we got deeper into the traditional ceremony, the participants unconsciously alluded to similar reflections of being cuddled or cradled and securely embraced by the massive majestic mountains and waters around us.

During a personally inspiring interlude in the Circle Ceremony, thoughts ran rampant to the ancient times when only native birchbark canoes traveled freely through this sacred setting and our ancestors marveled at the vastness, the splendor of this place at Lake Nictau.

The lake lies peacefully tucked within the protected wilds of Ski-gin-o-wee-kog, (native homeland) and is physically situated in the heart of the pristine northwest region of New Brunswick, Canada.

Perhaps, one day when more traditional gatherings and ceremonies are held at this location, the Spirit may guide you, or grant you the good fortune of participating in a Circle Ceremony at this magnificent spot, where indeed an individual can personally sense and appreciate, in mind and spirit, the awesome serenity in the Place of Peace.

And not surprisingly, some may even sense a miniature pulse emanating from within while there.

FREE TUITION AT HARVARD FOR NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

Harvard University has announced that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families will pay no tuition. In making the announcement Harvard's president Lawrence H. Summers said, "When only 10 percent of the students in Elite higher education come from families in lower half of the income distribution, we are not doing enough. We are not doing enough in bringing elite higher education to the lower half of the income distribution."

If you know of a family earning less than \$60,000 a year with an honor student graduating from high school soon, Harvard University wants to pay the tuition. The prestigious university recently announced that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families can go to Harvard for free... no tuition and no student loans!. In addition, Harvard announced a reduction of fees for students from families with incomes between \$60,000 and \$80,000. To find out more about Harvard offering free tuition for families making less than \$60,000 a year, visit Harvard's financial aid website at:

<http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/daily/2006/03/30-finaid.html>

or call the school's financial aid office at (617) 495-1581.

DAN'S CORNER -LOVE OUR EARTH MOTHER AND DO HER NO HARM

Of all of the different species created by Great Creator: the four-legged, the winged-ones, the finned-ones, the creepy-crawlies and the planet kingdom; the only species that has forgotten Great Creator's original instructions are the human species - the two-leggeds.

Those original instructions state, in part, that everything created by Great Creator is sacred and that we humans should treat it as such.

Most humans, including Indian people, have forgotten the original instructions. At some point in our five hundred year contact with eurocanadians those sacred instructions were no longer lived, nurtured nor passed on to the next generation.

All other species continue to live those original instructions and cry out to humans to return to the Traditional Teachings as all two-leggeds once did.

They cry out to the two-leggeds and they persist in their attempts to communicate to us their message to love, respect, nurture and protect the Great Earth Mother to no avail.

All of the other species consider it their sacred responsibility to get the two-leggeds to hear and heed their message to love and protect our Great Mother and to do her no harm.

For the two-leggeds to hear and heed the message of Creation they must remember that they are love, and that they are created in love by Great Creator. And that love is the only thing that is real in Creation. Love for oneself, love for family, love for community, love for the Ancestors, love for the People and love for the Seventh Generation.

In other words, respect for loving, positive, peaceful and nurturing relationships for and within all of Great Creator's creation.

The message from Creation, from the other species, will continue until the two-leggeds change their ways and cease in their headlong rush toward self-destruction. For that headlong rush means the certain destruction of our Sacred Earth Mother and all of Creation.

Great Creator will never allow this to occur. All My Relations. Dan Ennis Nov. 26, 2006

THANKSGIVING MYTH

By John Two-Hawks

Mistakes, Lies & Misconceptions about American Indian people

Let me begin by stating that thousands of years before the 'official' Thanksgiving Day was proclaimed by Governor Winthrop of the Massachussetts Bay Colony in 1637, North American Indigenous people across the continent had celebrated seasons of Thanksgiving. 'Thanksgiving' is a very ancient concept to American Indian nations. The big problem with the American Thanksgiving holiday is its false association with American Indian people. The infamous 'Indians and pilgrims' myth. It is good to celebrate Thanksgiving, to be thankful for your blessings. It is not good to distort history, to falsely portray the origin of this holiday and lie about the truth of its actual inception. Here are some accurate historical facts about the true origin of this American holiday that may interest you.....

'Thanksgiving' did not begin as a great loving relationship between the pilgrims and the Wampanoag, Pequot and Narragansett people. In fact, in October of 1621 when the 'pilgrim' survivors of their first winter in Turtle Island sat down to share the first unofficial 'Thanksgiving' meal, the Indians who were there were not even invited! There was no turkey, squash, cranberry sauce or pumpkin pie. A few days before this alleged feast took place, a company of 'pilgrims' led by Miles Standish actively sought the head of a local Indian leader, and an 11 foot high wall was erected around the entire Plymouth settlement for the very purpose of keeping Indians out! Officially, the holiday we know as 'Thanksgiving' actually came into existence in the year 1637. Governor Winthrop of the Massachusetts Bay Colony proclaimed this first official day of Thanksgiving and feasting to celebrate the return of the colony's men who had arrived safely from what is now Mystic, Connecticut. They had gone there to participate in the massacre of over 700 Pequot men, women and children, and Mr. Winthrop decided to dedicate an official day of thanksgiving complete with a feast to 'give thanks' for their great 'victory'....

As hard as it may be to conceive, this is the actual origin of our current Thanksgiving Day holiday. Many American Indian people these days do not observe this holiday, for obvious reasons. I see nothing wrong with gathering with family to give thanks to our Creator for our blessings and sharing a meal. I do, however, hope that Americans as a whole will one day acknowledge the true origin of this holiday, and remember the pain, loss, and agony of the Indigenous people who suffered at the hands of the so-called 'pilgrims'. It is my hope that children's plays about 'the first Thanksgiving', complete with Indians and pilgrims chumming at the dinner table, will someday be a thing of the past. Why perpetuate a lie? Let us face the truths of the past, and give thanks that we are learning to love one another for the rich human diversity we share.

DEAN'S DEN - The Promise

The small stream trickled silver
The winter-beech had leaves of gold
In all the land, the Blessing
From that Story told of old,
The rabbits nibbled tender buds
As the snow-owl reappeared
The beaver munched on "popple"
And the deer on "old man's beard",
The squirrel snuggled safely
Deep in a hollowed tree
While the gorby shared his larder
With the black-capped chickadee,
A weasel scampered cross the crust
Amid berries for the grouse
While flurries showed the traces
Of a little country mouse,
A porcupine high in a spruce
A moose - right over there
The course of life unfolding
New bear cubs in their lair,
Frogs are buried in the mud
For the pond is thickly iced
All nature illustrative of
The Promise ... of The Christ!
I wonder - that they understand
A universal rhyme and reason
Or, what mankind remembers as
Our precious Christmas Season!
D.C. Butterfield

ANOTHER NATIVE STAND IN B.C. - SPAET MTN.

p.paul

TFN, (Special) Yet another bullying pressure is being put on the native lands in British Columbia.

This time it is a dispute over a mountain range where developers are trying to force their way in without due process or meaningful consultation with the local and legitimate native owners.

We will feature a more detailed report on Spaet Mountain in our January issue.

For now we can only send our encouraging words and our prayers to Ms. Cheryl Bryce and her friends who are spearheading the fight to save Spaet Mountain and keep the land intact.

Good luck, Cheryl!