

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John River

This publication produced monthly at Tobique, NB, Canada E7H 5K3



Samuel de Champlain's view of Ouigoudi (Saint John Harbour) 1604

Enjoy!!

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Wulustuk Times:

Each month we try to gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readership. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our policy is to provide you with these right tools.

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(NOTE: Sorry for delay of publication. A beloved family member was taken from us on Dec. 1, '08)

Ouigoudi, Maliseet Site at St. John Harbour 1604 - a Tranquil Native Setting -(See cover)

CHAMPLAIN'S DREAM COME TRUE

In Wolastoq Park, a fairly new tourism development located above the reversing falls in Saint John, there is a large wooden sculpture of historic geographer and explorer, Samuel de Champlain, his eyes looking out over the St. John river at that location.

Four centuries ago on June 24th, 1604, Champlain and Pierre du Gua de Monts, holder of the trade monopoly for New France from King Henry IV, sailed into the mouth of the Wolastoq River, which happened to be St. John the Baptist's Day. Since no European had been to this place before, and since Champlain was mapping the region for the first time, he decided to give it the name River St. John.

In his journal Champlain drew a detailed map of the area, showing the now famous reversing falls, the three small islands above the falls, the portage (carry) that the Wolastokiyyik (or Wulustukieg) used to navigate around the falls with their birchbark canoes, and a small island below the falls on which stood a fortified village of the Wolastoqiyyik called Ouygoudy (also spelled "Ouigoudi"). He even made a sketch of their huge lodge, and also of several Wolastoqiyyik carrying bows and spears. Marc Lescarbot, who visited the village a year later, described Ouigoudi in detail as well as the customs of these people. The Great Sagamore (Chief) of Ouigoudi and all of the St. John River was Secondon (or "Chkoudun", as spelled by Lescarbot who spent four days in their village).

Champlain describes this area of the river in detail. "This river is dangerous, if one does not observe carefully certain points and rocks on the two sides. It is narrow at its entrance, and then becomes broader. A certain point being passed, it becomes narrower, and forms a kind of fall between two large cliffs, where the water runs so rapidly that a piece of wood thrown in is drawn under and not seen again. But by waiting till high tide you can pass this fall very easily. Then it expands again to the extent of about a league in some places, where there are three islands. We did not explore it farther up. But Ralleau, secretary of Sieur de Monts, went there some time after to see a savage named Secondon, chief of this river, who reported that it was beautiful, large, and extensive, with many meadows and fine trees, as oaks, beeches, walnut-trees, and also wild grapevines." What a beautiful place he described.

The village of the Wolastoqiyyik was located on what was many years later known as Navy Island, and over the last century, this island was totally transformed and became the ship building and shipping Port of Saint John. The channel that separated the island from the mainland disappeared. In 1968 the Saint John Harbour Bridge was completed, spanning from a point near Ouigoudi to a point near Long Wharf. A board walk around the shore of harbour passage has a plaque which identifies the original location of the historic village. Bentley Street in Saint John follows the portage around the falls where the Wolastoqiyyik carried their canoes.

While exploring the coastline, Champlain recorded his observation that this country consisted of very dense forests. This concerned him as he speculated about colonizing this land. "If the land were cleared up, grain would flourish excellently." Later that winter, when the snow was three to four feet deep, he observed that it didn't melt away until the end of April, "... lasting much longer, I suppose, than if the country were cultivated." In other words, he is saying that

the forests must be cleared if Europeans are to settle here. I think history has proven that this part of his dream has come true.

Champlain also was interested in finding iron and copper and other minerals. In August 1605 he visited Chief Chkoudun at Ouigoudi and asked him to guide him to a copper mine he had heard about. Chkoudun took him to the mine, but Champlain discovered that the rocks in that location got covered by the tide two times every day, making mining impossible. But he did not let this mine discourage him. Later he invited Chkoudun and a Souriquois, Messamouet, to guide him for two months while he explored further along the Atlantic coast for places of interest, for mines and for settlement.

Champlain's dream was to clear the land of the forests in order to melt the snows faster, shorten the winters, warm up the climate, and enable the European colonists to plant their more tender crops. Of course the forests would provide lumber for ship building and exporting to France. He explored for copper and iron mines in hopes of identifying resources for supplying profitable industries.

Today the reader can see by the pictures included with this article, what Champlain's spirit, as represented by the wooden sculpture, views when he looks out on the river landscape at the reversing falls. He sees smoke rising into the sky, but not the smoke he saw 400 years ago coming from the small villages of the native people he found living here, but rather, the emissions from big industry smokestacks.

The question that must be asked is whether Champlain's spirit is pleased with what he sees? His sculpture represents the European culture that came here, contending that God had given them North America to have dominion over as per their Christian biblical books of Genesis (1:26-28) and Psalms (72:8). This so-called authority was stressed over and over again, "In the name of God and the King." And hence this country became known as the Dominion of Canada.

Does Champlain's spirit view this scene above the reversing falls as a culmination of years of success and prosperity, and so he smiles, or does he see a poisoned Mother Earth and instead, he sheds tears?

For those Euro-Christian intruders, the words written in Genesis 1:28 never held so much meaning as they do today, when the Creator said to the humans he had created, "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand." With this assignment of responsibility as stewards of this earth, how does our report card look today? - Nugeekadoonkut



*Champlain's View of
Ouigoudi today, 2008.
(St. John harbour)*

Ouigoudi (St. John) today 2008, an industrial centre that spews hazardous wastes

p.paul

It's been over 400 years since Champlain first visited the St. John Harbour in 1604 and many of the remarkable things he saw within the tranquil native setting at Ouigoudi amazed and inspired him to dream of greater things to come.

The setting (1604):

On the southern edge of the huge forest of Skiginoweekog (Native Homeland) was the ancient Maliseet village of Ouigoudi where traditional pre-contact, inter-tribal bargaining, exchange and trading was conducted regularly. It was the first known indigenous trading centre of its kind in the east.

Within a close proximity of Ouigoudi was a vast abundance of food that consisted of moose, deer, bear, caribou, beaver, muskrat plus many other smaller wildlife species of every description that freely roamed nearby, ready for hunt, game and food, year around.

It is no wonder that after Champlain visited this important and strategic location other Europeans were drawn to Ouigoudi to witness and partake in the abundance and indigenous trade and barter.

In all probability early European immigrants would have very likely chosen this location to establish homes and communities because of the huge availability of natural resources found on the land and in the waters surrounding Ouigoudi.

And by the fact that Saint John claims to be one of the oldest cities in the country lends credence and proof to its drawing power for immigrants and settlers from earliest times to the present.

Over the years however, the population of the city has grown by leaps and bounds and a clear need to provide employment for the masses accompanied that dynamic growth.

In time the solution to question of providing jobs was brought to fore and answered when a huge petroleum refinery was built in the city around the mid-century that presently employs thousands of workers here and abroad.

However due to the nature and functions of this gigantic industrial complex some negative tentacles from its operation have surfaced, i.e., the toxic wastes emitted from the plant.

These toxic gases and other hazardous materials bombard the atmosphere 24/7 which reduces the air quality, impacts water purity, tweaks soil fertility, endangers wildlife and affects human health and safety in every direction for miles around.

In a nutshell, that is the price paid for progress, industrial development, and job creation.

From there, the question arises, - how are good health and safety to be protected while living in midst of fog, smog, smoke, air borne particles, stack emissions and hazardous wastes, etc.?

One of the earliest casualties for living in this incredible industrial soup is the loss of an Indian community that originally held the focal point of interest in the area. At the present time natives have essentially disappeared through time and pressures of urban and industrial development. Added to that loss is a way of life that sustained the original inhabitants for untold centuries.

These factors along with the social, cultural and economic circumstances that prevailed in a restructured 'modernized' community have driven native people to uproot and re-establish communities elsewhere in other parts of Skiginoweekog (native homeland).

In search of tribal unity, cultural cohesion and basic survival mechanisms, most natives relocated and established reserves upstream some 50 to 250 miles north of the city. As a result of total exodus only a few native people remain in Saint John today.

It is unfortunate that Wulustukieg (Maliseet people) and the ancient Ouigoudi village are now just an asterisk or a memory of a well organized and superbly unified tribe that Champlain saw as 'keepers of a paradise' living in peace and tranquility in a land considered as 'their own'.

Equally discouraging is the cost of progress and industrialization that impacted on Champlain's dream of altering and reshuffling resources while integrating races and cultures for economic purposes within a constituency.

Ironically the city has evolved into a character of 'duality' of sorts. On one side, a very positive profile and the other weighted with a less attractive attribute.

Originally the foresight projected for this populous centre favoured high expectations and clear optimism. And generally the city has somewhat lived up to that forecast. But on the other hand, a less favourable characteristic has emerged resulting from the city's industrial activities where sinister accounts of suspicious or unfriendly climate and atmosphere have raised widescale concern.

Taking this dual profile to test, however, one has to look at the city's merits from that combined perception as well, on one side, weighing the negative factors reflecting on the city's 'testy' atmosphere, and two, looking at the positive attribute where lasting jobs, relatively stable prosperity and a safe/secure environment is maintained for the population. Oddly enough these two polarities have adequately co-existed and amply survived side-by-side for centuries and progress continues to forge ahead despite the prevailing circumstances.

These are the two solitudes that define and dominate the central stage when one scans the socio-economic status, profile and character of the city today.

Stewart Paul elected Chief, 6 Councillors retain seats, 6 new members in Council

p.paul

For the third round that goes back to the 1990's, Chief Stewart Paul will again be taking the helm for Tobique for the next two years replacing the ousted chief, Gerald Bear, who lost the leadership by a sizable margin.

Six new, younger incumbents came on the scene in the Tobique election of November 21st. They will be joining five veteran members from the previous council roll call.

Roughly 75% of the 800 eligible voters showed up at the ballot boxes which remained open for twelve hours straight, from 8 am to 8 pm. Then there was an overnight interim called as the RCMP took command of the ballot boxes over night for security reasons. On the following day the count was made which ran for roughly six hours until the winners were declared.

The six new council members are: Lynn Sappier Dingee, Richard Moulton, Wendell Nicholas, Kim Perley, Paul Pyres and Joanne Martin Sappier.

The 6 veteran council members include Ross Perley, Brenda Perley, Dave Perley, Tina Martin, Tim Nicholas and Robert Hassencahl.

As might be expected, Chief Paul's new Council will face an uphill struggle immediately as the various agencies and departments in the band are either running shorthanded and/or operating somewhat below par due to the financial obstacles that have prevailed over several years.

Additionally, a third party management team designated by Indian Affairs, is presently in place at Tobique and has been share-managing the budget and resources for some five years already with the objective of revamping the band finances into a solvent position.

No immediate change from this dual management format is expected however, despite the entry of a new chief and council team.

However, unwinding a band from sizable deficit has been known to take years to bring to par in some instances. Not good news for the newly elected council members.

In the initial weeks the council positions and portfolios selection will likely take top billing in business and discussions until such time decisions are made where each councillor will sit and which portfolio they will oversee.

In the meantime the new crew will probably undergo quite a steep learning curve and things will probably run quite slow at first while they swat their way through some rocky and bushy trails.

No doubt though, one day the new members will jell into place and move things quite handily ahead in their assigned responsibilities and from there, likely, adjust into 'cruise control'.

The band members will unfortunately will need to be patient while this deliberate paced launch is going on. That is about the scope and pattern we can expect from our councillors for the time being. But rest assured, there are better days ahead.

Natives get bigger role in Lib Vancouver convention, May 2009

New rules mean about 7 per cent of delegates will be aboriginal, more than double the figure in 2006
BILL CURRY November 17, 2008

OTTAWA -- Remote native reserves and downtown Indian Friendship centres are going to be getting a lot more attention from the Liberal leadership hopefuls, thanks to new rules setting aside hundreds of coveted convention delegate slots for aboriginals.

When Liberals gather to elect a new leader in Vancouver in May, at least 7 per cent of the delegates are expected to be aboriginal.

That's far more than the percentage of aboriginals in Canada - 3.8 per cent - and the percentage of aboriginal delegates at the 2006 Liberal leadership convention in Montreal, which was 2.7 per cent.

As a result of this new position of influence, Liberals predict aboriginals will be wooed like never before, said Joshua Fraser, co-chair of the party's aboriginal peoples commission.

"I believe we'll probably be courted a lot more aggressively by the leadership candidates," said Mr. Fraser, who is from the Peepeekisis First Nation in Saskatchewan, but now works in Calgary. "It also means that as an aboriginal peoples commission, we have to be careful to ensure that none of these positions are abused."

There is no clear definition in the Liberal rules as to who qualifies as aboriginal, a broad term that includes status and non-status Indians, Inuit and Métis. Mr. Fraser said that in the event a person's aboriginal ancestry is challenged - which he expects will be rare - their claim will likely have to be validated by their local community.

The new rules governing aboriginal delegates, which were approved at the 2006 convention, mean western provinces with high aboriginal populations now have fewer aboriginal delegate positions. In contrast, Ont. and Que. now have significantly more positions for native delegates.

Liberal organizer Ajay Chopra, who said he encouraged more than 40 aboriginals from the Prairies to go to Montreal as Bob Rae delegates in 2006, said holding the next convention in Vancouver makes it easier for aboriginals to attend because so many live in Western Canada.

Mr. Chopra, a former aide to Assembly of First Nations national chief Phil Fontaine, said he is currently planning on supporting Martin Cauchon in the race. He said an aboriginal candidate could do well given the rules, suggesting his former boss as a candidate.

"With all the potential for aboriginal delegates, they might as well run one of their own candidates," he said. "I think Phil Fontaine would make an excellent prime minister."

Fontaine said via a spokesperson that he has no interest in the Liberal leadership, but supports all efforts by political parties to encourage a greater role for aboriginals and aboriginal issues.

Liberals with experience in organizing delegates say it can sometimes be a challenge persuading aboriginals, many of whom are from low-income communities, of the value in spending a large sum of money to attend a convention. There is talk of organizing buses to

get delegates from the Prairies to Vancouver as well as fundraising to help them cover travel costs.

The delegate positions from Canada's 308 ridings include quotas dictating the number of men, women, youth and seniors, but the aboriginal positions are the only slots set aside by the party based on race or ethnicity. Mr. Fraser said that is because the Liberals recognize the special place of aboriginals in Canada.

"We have a very unique position in Canada," he said. "Aboriginal people are a distinct population who are underrepresented."

How the formula changed:

A comparison of aboriginal delegate rules for the 2006 Liberal leadership convention in Montreal and the new rules in place for the May, 2009, vote in Vancouver.

2006

Each province was allotted a certain number of aboriginal delegates based on that province's overall percentage of aboriginals. The formula produced 244 possible positions for aboriginal delegates, of which 132 registered in Montreal. That figure represented 2.7 per cent of the 4,951 voting delegates.

2009

Each of the 308 ridings can now send 22 delegates to Vancouver, of which two per riding are reserved for aboriginals. With 8,800 delegates expected in Vancouver (including ex-officio delegates such as current and former MPs), the 616 aboriginal spots would represent 7 per cent of all voting delegates. _ Bill Curry

Cash, land pave the way to BC Treaty, a brand new step-by- step path for FN

Judith Lavoie, Times Colonist November 14, 2008

The provincial government is trading land and cash for the prospect of a future treaty with the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations on Vancouver Island.

The unprecedented incremental treaty agreement with the band from the west coast of the Island will see about 63 hectares of land and \$600,000 transferred to the Tla-o-qui-aht in stages as negotiations progress toward a final treaty.

Five parcels of Crown land, most of it forested, are within the District of Tofino and will be transferred as treaty negotiation milestones are reached over the next four years.

Tla-o-qui-aht Chief Councillor Francis Frank pegged the value of the land, most of which is adjacent to the Tofino industrial area and near the Tla-o-qui-aht-owned Best Western Tin Wis Resort, at more than \$19 million. It will allow the band to pursue economic opportunities.

"Although this is not a final treaty, it is one step toward our ultimate goal of self-determination," Frank said at a ceremony yesterday attended by Premier Gordon Campbell and Aboriginal Relations Minister Mike de Jong. The land will not be added to reserve land, meaning it will be subject to local zoning rules and property taxes.

De Jong said the groundbreaking agreement represents a new way of approaching treaties.

The first cheque for \$100,000 was handed out at the ceremony, and Campbell said the agreement shows that BC is committed to finding creative ways to reach treaty agreements.

"I believe this first step can lead to a second step, which will lead to a third step, which can lead to the treaty that will make a difference in the lives of every single one of you," he told the audience at Tin Wis.

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations represent more than 900 people, but only about half live in the immediate Tofino area.

The first parcel of land, 16.3 hectares, will be transferred immediately, and the Tla-o-qui-aht are being given first refusal on another parcel if it is no longer required as an emergency reservoir. Other transfers of cash and land will come when an agreement-in-principle is reached, on the anniversary of the agreement-in-principle, when a final agreement is initialed and signed.

Under the incremental treaty agreement, the nation will not be allowed to initiate aboriginal rights and title court action against the province and, when the final agreement is signed, the nation must withdraw from a fisheries court action initiated by the Ahousaht band. The cash and land handed over during the next four years will be part of the final settlement, which Frank hopes could come within a year.

Tofino Mayor John Fraser said in an interview that most people in town support the incremental agreement. "It's an exciting time," he said.

Preliminary plans for the land parcels focus on tourism, Fraser said.

"I'm not sure what the final plans will be, but I think they want to build another high-end hotel and an education centre," he said.

The Tla-o-qui-aht withdrew from the Nuu-chah-nulth treaty table last month to pursue the incremental treaty agreement.

Innovative Start-ups catching the wind

TYLER HAMILTON, Toronto Star

Emission-free wind power has come a long way since the technology first emerged in old Europe as a way to pump water and mill grain.

How can we get more energy out of the wind and at the same time make it a more reliable source of electricity for the grid?

There are many innovators determined to answer that question, and they are an important reminder of how much room there is to improve upon a technology that first emerged in old Europe as a way to pump water and mill grain.

One example is a new laser-based wind sensor developed by Catch The Wind Inc., a start-up based in Virginia but traded on the TSX Venture Exchange. It can measure the speed and direction of wind about 20 seconds before it hits a wind turbine, allowing the machine to angle its blades and position itself to avoid the punishing forces that come from gusts and wind shear.

The wind industry already uses something called a Light Detecting and Ranging system, or Lidar device, which shoots a laser beam into the sky in the shape of a cone and can measure the speed and direction of the wind as dust-like particles cross its beam. But these are bulky and complex systems that sit on the ground and are used mostly to gather historical wind data at a site before a wind farm is developed.

Catch The Wind has adapted Lidar technology so it's light, small and rugged enough to be built directly into a wind turbine and its control system. The device projects its beams up to 1,000 metres in front of a turbine's blades and provides the seconds of advance warning the turbine needs to change its orientation. The company claims this can improve turbine power output by 10 per cent, lower maintenance costs and extend the operating life of wind farms.

In Vancouver, a company called ExRo Technologies Inc. says it has come up with a dramatically new generator design for converting wind energy into electricity. Most wind turbines today contain a gearbox that adjusts to changing wind speeds so that the generator shaft turns at a steady speed. The gearbox essentially smoothes out the variability of the wind and keeps the generator running as efficiently and stable as possible.

But the gearbox also adds enormous cost to a turbine. ExRo has come up with a generator that doesn't depend on a gearbox's mechanical transmission. Instead, the generator is built with its own internal electronic transmission.

To understand how this is different, we need a refresher on how a typical generator works. Basically, magnets attached to a shaft are encircled by copper coils, which are connected together. When the shaft turns electric current is created as the magnets pass by the coils. More current results when the shaft spins faster; less when it spins slower. Failure to smooth out this speed can cause a lot of instability and this is where a gearbox is needed.

ExRo takes an entirely different approach. The coils in its generator, instead of being connected together, are kept separate and can be turned on and off electronically and pretty much instantly. When a light wind hits some of the coils can be switch off, and more coils can be turned on for faster winds. Essentially, the guts of the generator adapt to the wind - and hence shaft speed - rather than forcing the shaft speed to adapt to the needs of the generator.

ExRo says this approach allows turbines to tap winds at much lower and higher speeds, and over a year can lead to a 50 per cent or more increase in power generation. And one could easily see Catch The Wind's device integrated with the electronic switches in ExRo's generator to improve efficiencies even more.

There are other innovations bubbling up. This column has already profiled Toronto-based WhalePower Corp., which has a new design for wind-turbine blades that mimic the aquatic efficiency of a humpback whale's flipper. The company says the blades, which are distinguished by the humpback-inspired bumps on their edge, can capture more energy out of the wind while lowering the wear and tear on turbine components.

On a final note, the potential of energy storage is always a hot topic. There is tremendous work going on in universities, government labs and in the private sector to develop a form of energy storage that's economical and can be scaled up to hundreds of megawatts.

A stealthy battery developer in Massachusetts called Premium Power claims it has developed a new type of flow battery based on a zinc-bromide chemistry that is fully recyclable, has three times the energy density of lead-acid batteries, and can operate about 30 years with little degradation.

It runs on zinc and salt water, making it non-toxic and safe to handle. The company is beefing up its system so it can be used to store power generated from utility-scale wind and other renewable energy systems. Two major utilities - one in Canada, the other in the United States - have ordered \$200 million (U.S.) worth of these batteries, according to one source.

This kind of storage, together with the other advancements highlighted above, bode well for the future of wind power.

It's a reminder that green-energy technologies on the market aren't frozen in time and that shortcomings we may identify today shouldn't preclude these technologies from our long-term plans.

Indeed, a determination to overcome these shortcomings should be a clear part of the plan.

INDUSTRY FACES DELAYS, RISING DEBT COSTS

HALIFAX -CP - Independent wind producers are facing big hikes in debt costs, raising doubt on whether ambitious construction goals will be met over the next few years, say financing experts.

Chris Gifford, a vice-president with Allied Irish Banks in Toronto, says worrisome signs for the industry came recently when EarthFirst Canada Inc. - the proponent of a major wind farm in British Columbia - declared it was seeking creditor protection.

"I think it's a warning sign, what happened to them (EarthFirst) could happen to other people," he said in a telephone interview.

The German bank WestLB AG has said it intends to "enforce security" on its \$131-million loan to the Calgary-based wind firm.

Meanwhile, a news release issued Thursday by EarthFirst says attempts to find fresh financing had been "severely hindered by the unprecedented crisis in the global financial markets."

In addition to the Dokie 1 wind farm in B.C. and the smaller Nuttby wind project in Nova Scotia, the company also has permits for further projects in B.C. and Ontario.

Scott Urquhart, vice-president of corporate finance at Jennings Capital in Halifax, says the problem facing Canada's independent wind producers is they are heavily reliant on debt, borrowing between 70 to 80 per cent of their financing.

He has assisted small Atlantic Canadian energy and mining firms to find lenders and investors in the past few years. However, he said when he was recently approached by two wind firms in Nova Scotia, he advised them to wait out the storm. "Some of the banks are ... not doing deals at all, and it's going to be into the new year before you can talk to the banks about doing some of these projects," he said.

Urquhart said last year banks and insurers were financing the projects at rates in the range of 6.5 per cent. But he estimates interest costs are now above 8 per cent, and lenders are offering shorter terms for smaller loans.

\$10,000 fine in eagle-parts trafficking case

Brockville Record, CP

Bald eagles and other rare birds continue to fall prey to poachers in British Columbia who sell their feathers and body parts in an underground market that stretches across Canada and into the United States, says a spokesman for B.C.'s Conservation Officer Service.

The arrest of 15 people after a year-long undercover investigation into illegal trafficking of protected bird parts has not halted the activities of poachers who make money killing bald eagles and other birds, Rick Hahn, Lower Mainland operations supervisor for the service, said Friday.

"We don't think it has stopped," he said. "This was one segment of it, which was a pretty large segment, but we're pretty sure it's continuing."

The province announced Friday that a Victoria-area man was the seventh of the 15 people arrested and charged to face penalties under the Wildlife Act.

David Essary Bill of Brentwood Bay, B.C., was fined \$10,000 after pleading guilty to unlawfully trafficking in bald eagle parts following a year-long investigation that involved B.C. Conservation Service Officers, Canadian Wildlife Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RCMP, Vancouver police and agencies in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Bill must pay \$9,000 to the Habitat Trust Conservation Foundation, a wildlife organization that helps fund conservation projects. He must also pay the courts \$830 considered the proceeds of crime and complete 100 hours of community service.

The investigation began in 2005 after the remains of 50 bald eagles were found in North Vancouver. In the end, suspects from Vancouver, Chilliwack, Langley, Duncan, Chehalis and Brentwood Bay, in B.C., as well as Hagersville, Ont., were charged under the Wildlife Act. A total of \$52,430 in penalties has been assessed so far against the seven convicted.

Hahn said he could not estimate how many protected birds were killed by the poachers. He said the eagle is a spiritual symbol for aboriginals and eagle feathers are used in traditional regalia. "There's a market for them and there's also a little bit of a profit to be made," Hahn said.

Hahn said eagle feathers are difficult to come by through legal means, "so the only way to get the eagle feathers is to kill those eagles." The undercover officers never saw anybody actually kill an eagle but investigators believe the poachers would either bait the birds or go to places they congregated and shoot them.

The officers engaged in covert operations where they observed trafficking in bird parts. Tips from the public, and from aboriginal people, helped officers in their investigation, he said.

"The First Nations bands might be fundamentally opposed to this and they don't look at it in a high light at all," said Hahn.

He said the Tseil-Waututh First Nation and Squamish First Nations helped in the investigation. "They don't support the illegal activities that are going on," he said.

Hahn said he believes the activities of the poachers could affect the eagle population. The poachers are seeking adult breeding birds and even though bald eagles are not endangered in British Columbia, illegal hunting will deplete their numbers. "I don't think it can sustain a heavy harvest illegally," he said.

At the time of the investigation, the maximum penalties for poaching were fines of \$50,000 and six months in jail. The act was amended last spring, with the maximum fines raised to \$250,000 and maximum jail terms of two years.

Obama's commitment to Native Americans as President, -a true partnership

By Barack Obama Oct 24, 2008 Indian Country Today

For 20 months now, I've traveled this country, often talking about how the needs of the American people are going unmet by Washington. And the truth is, few have been ignored by Washington for as long as American Indians. Too often, Washington pays lip service to working with tribes while taking a one-size-fits-all approach with tribal communities across the nation. That will change if I am honored to serve as president of the United States.

My American Indian policy begins with creating a bond between an Obama administration and the tribal nations all across this country. We need more than just a government-to-government relationship; we need a nation-to-nation relationship, and I will make sure that tribal nations have a voice in the White House.

I'll appoint an American Indian policy adviser to my senior White House staff to work with tribes, and host an annual summit at the White House with tribal leaders to come up with an agenda that works for tribal communities. That's how we'll make sure you have a seat at the table when important decisions are being made about your lives, about your nations and about your people. That'll be a priority when I am president.

Here's what else we're going to do. We're going to end nearly a century of mismanagement of the Indian trusts. We're going to work together to settle unresolved cases, figure out how the trusts ought to operate and make sure that they're being managed responsibly - today, tomorrow and always.

We need more than just a government-to-government relationship; we need a nation-to-nation relationship, and I will make sure that tribal nations have a voice in the White House.

Now, I understand the tragic history between the United States and tribal nations. Our government hasn't always been honest and truthful in our dealings. And we've got to acknowledge that if we're going to move forward in a fair and honest way.

Indian nations have never asked much of the United States - only for what was promised by the treaty obligations made to their forebears. So let me be absolutely clear - I believe treaty commitments are paramount law, and I will fulfill those commitments as president of the United States.

That means working with tribal governments to ensure that all American Indians receive affordable, accessible health care services. That's why I've cosponsored the Indian Health Care Improvement Act in the U.S. Senate, and that's why I've fought to ensure full funding of the IHS so that it has the resources it needs.

It also means guaranteeing a world-class education for all our children. I'll work with tribal nations to reform No Child Left Behind and create opportunities for tribal citizens to become teachers so you can be free to educate your children the way you know best. We'll increase

funding for tribal colleges. And I will make Native language preservation and education a priority.

To give families in our tribal communities every chance to succeed in a 21st century economy, I will cut taxes for 95 percent of all workers, invest in job training and small business development, and put people back to work rebuilding our crumbling roads, schools and bridges.

And I will never forget the service and sacrifice that generations of American Indians have given to this country. We have to keep our sacred trust with Indian veterans by making sure that no veteran falls into homelessness, and that all our veterans get the benefits and support they have earned.

Let me just close by saying this. I was born to a teenage mother. My father left when I was 2 years old, so I never knew him well. I was raised in Hawaii by a single mother and my grandparents, and we didn't have a lot of money - we even turned to food stamps at one point just to get by.

Where I grew up, there weren't many black families. So I know what it feels like to be viewed as an outsider. I know what it's like to not always have been respected or to have been ignored. I know what it's like to struggle.

Every president is shaped by his own experience. These have been mine. And so I want you to know that I will never forget you. The American Indians I have met across this country will be on my mind each day that I am in the White House. You deserve a president who is committed to being a full partner with you; to respecting you, honoring you and working with you every day.

That is the commitment I will make to you as president of the United States.

Dan's Corner - Root of our Birth Rights

In 1492 when Christopher Columbus landed on the shores of our homeland (Turtle Island) there was no country that we now know as India. Instead that particular country was called Hindustan.

The people that Columbus encountered when he and his crew landed were the Carib, the Tainos and the Arawak. These people were much like the Indians on the mainland, who were remarkable (European observers were to say again and again) for their hospitality and their belief in sharing. These traits did not stand out in the Europe of the Renaissance, dominated as it was by the religion of popes, the government of kings, and the frenzy for money that marked Western civilization.

Here is what Columbus wrote in his journal: They brought us gifts of all kinds which they exchanged for our glass beads. They are well-built with excellent bodies and handsome features. So tractable, so peaceable are these people. Columbus wrote about his feeling that there is not in the world a better nation. They love their neighbours as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle and accompanied with a smile, their manners decorous and praiseworthy. Columbus continues writing in his journal on the beautiful people that were the Indians of the Americas. He wrote that ethically, morally and spiritually these people were as close to God as any he had encountered anywhere.

In his journal he began referring to them with the Latin term "indios", meaning child or children of God for their god-like qualities. Since the Europeans spoke in different dialects some pronounced the word indios as Indian or Indianer. In time the word became Indian and its original and true meaning was lost.

In my youth I had tremendous difficulty being called an Indian because to me it was a negative put-down being equivalent to nigger, chink, redskin or honky. Today, however, I am very comfortable with the label.

And I agree with Columbus' assessment of our people and our outer and inner beauty. That we are beautiful in every way. I am honored, privileged and proud to have been born an Indian.

All My Relations, Dan Ennis

Dean's Den - Khaki Christmas

It's great to enjoy

The idyllic comforts of home

But when you're youthful, and yearning

The urge is to roam,

Society sucks

And all life is a barb

So you step up and "sign up"

For the good "khaki garb",

It's boot camp and buddies

Like, you've made your escape
Then it's being "deployed"
Where you're whipped into shape,
But your "vision" soon alters
When you engage the "war zone"
It's "live fire" and "live ammo"
And - you feel so alone,
It's all battles and bloody
And you grow up real quick
When the combat gets real
And the bullets come thick,
But you struggle to triumph
Until you finally win
And you march home - for Christmas
To be with your kin,
It's a true "khaki Christmas"
And with arms opened wide
They meet you and greet you
With "uniform pride",
You've experienced cultures
You now see the world as "one"
And for what you've accomplished
Comes a sense of "well done",
And, in moments of memories

You contemplate Christmas' worth

Good will toward all

And Peace ... on this earth!

D.C. Butterfield

I see the countless Christmas trees around the world below,

With tiny lights, like heaven's star reflecting on the snow.

The sight is so spectacular, please wipe away that tear,

For I am spending Christmas at home with God this year.

I hear the many Christmas songs that people hold so dear,

But the sound of music can't compare with the Christmas choir up here.

I have no words to tell you the joy their voices bring,

For it is beyond description to hear the angels sing.

I know how much you miss me, I see the pain in your heart,

But I am not so far away, we really aren't apart.

So, be happy for me dear ones, you know I hold you dear,

Be happy I'm spending Christmas at home with God's this year.

I send you each a special gift from my heavenly home above.

I send you a memory of my undying love.

So have a Merry Christmas and wipe away that tear.

Remember, I'm spending Christmas at home with God this year.