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Travelling by dogsled at Nemegos, near Chapleau, Ontario. (NFB photo)

Views on Indian migration to North America clash

The Los Angeles Times

The first Indians to set foot on the North American continent did so in comparatively recent times, according to Prof. Paul S. Martin.

He says they ran hard and fast and were equipped with such a panoply of hunting skills and weapons that it might be said that they were, quite literally, loaded for bear.

Fairly certain

Dr. Richard S. MacNeish, on the other hand, paints a picture of those first emigrants similar to the image of emigrants coming to the United States much later: ragged, unskilled and poorly equipped to cope with the problems of survival in a new world. Moreover, Dr. MacNeish places the Indian entry into this continent far back in time, to an era when Neanderthal man still roamed Europe.

Prof. Martin, who teaches at the University of Arizona, and Dr. MacNeish, the director of the Peabody Foundation for Archaeology in Andover, Massachusetts, reflect polar views of the paleo-Indians.

Prof. Martin sees the first Indians arriving about 12,000 years ago, their hunting skills and weapons well-honed from centuries in their former Asian homeland. In one large migratory wave, they landed in the New World and quickly spread across it, hunting many indigenous animal species to extinction as their own numbers rapidly grew.

Conversely, Dr. MacNeish envisages the first Indian bands poking into North America 40,000 years or more ago. In his view, they did not possess the technical expertise to fashion any but the roughest and crudest of stone tools and weapons. Instead of in one large population wave, the Peabody official believes the paleo-Indians came in a series of small waves and that their numbers increased only slowly.

The argument is both spirited and continuing, according to Dr. Rainer Berger, a University of California at Los Angeles professor of anthropology, geography and geophysics. Dr. Berger is also a party to the argument, since he and his UCLA laboratory have played a key role in calculating the antiquity of various human and animal fossils found throughout North America, which tend to support the MacNeish position.

"It seems fairly certain that man was here at least 40,000 years ago," Dr. Berger told a visitor to his UCLA basement laboratory recently. "Whether he was here 50,000 or 100,000 years ago remains to be seen."

Artifacts dated

Dr. Berger himself determined the 40,000-year figure, based on a radiocarbon-14 analysis of material from an ancient Indian firepit on Santa Rosa Island, just off the Southern California coast. It is, Dr. Berger said, the oldest site of human activity so far discovered in the Americas, joining Pikimachay Cave in the highlands of Peru and the Lewisville, Texas, firepit. The latter two excavations have yielded, like the Santa Rosa dig, evidence of animals bones and stone tools (choppers, scrapers and hammers) dating back at least 20,000 years ago.

Some archeologists are still reluctant to abandon what might be termed the "late-comer" model of humanity's colonization of the New World, for several reasons.

A land bridge across the Bering Straits, connecting the Asian and American continents, was available to migratory bands of paleo-Indians for approximately 10,000 years or so, from roughly 23,000 to 12,000 years ago, when the last Great Ice Age peaked and then ended.

The Indians were operating at a level of technical complexity, at the time of the European discovery of the Americas, about on a par with that of the Romans of Caesar's time. Since the great civilizations of Mesopotamia and China predated that of the Romans, it seemed unlikely to modern scientists that the American Indians could have occupied the land for at least as lengthy a time without having developed more elaborate cultures.

With the advent of radiocarbon-14 dating in the 1940s, scientists were able to date many paleo-Indian remains and artifacts — and there seemed to be a cut-off at around 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. If the Americas were occupied long before that, they ask, where are the signs of that occupation?

Taken together, these reasons seemed to many scientists to make a good case for a date of entry into the New World of around 15,000 years ago, give or take a few thousand years.

Travel slow

But the slowly growing number of 20,000- to 40,000-year-old sites and artifacts is putting pressure on this long-held view of the earliest Americans. And people like Dr. MacNeish are offering alternate explanations for such thorny questions as the paucity of evidence prior to 12,000 to 15,000 years ago.

If his scenario is correct, Dr. MacNeish has argued in professional journals, then one should not expect to find a great deal of very old artifacts. Those first groups who came into the continental vastness of North America 40,000 years or more ago, he has stated, would have been few in number and poorly equipped. Whatever artifacts they may have left behind in their wanderings could easily have been covered over in the intervening time by geological processes.

Moreover, Dr. MacNeish believes, if the earliest Americans were unskilled hunters, then their populations would have grown slowly — he would put the annual growth rate at 0.1 per cent, while Prof. Martin holds out for 3.4 per cent — and, necessarily, so would the evidence of their existence.

Where Prof. Martin would have the late-coming paleo-Indians spreading rapidly, rapidly enough in fact to move from Northern Canada to the southernmost reaches of South America, a distance of almost 10,000 miles, in about 1,000 years, Prof. MacNeish has the earliest Americans moving slowly and sporadically.

In particular Dr. MacNeish has difficulty imagining those long-ago Nomads moving easily from one ecological zone to another. Having adapted themselves, say, to the desert environment of the southwestern United States-northern Mexico zone, the paleo-Indians would have been more likely to exploit this sort of environment to its fullest before venturing into the tropical jungles of Central America, where they would have to develop an entirely new spectrum of living, eating, hunting and gathering habits.

If this was the actual dispersal pattern, this line of reasoning proceeds, it would necessarily have been too slow for those bands to have spread over both North and South America in just 15,000 years.

THE INDIAN VOICE

An impressive mask depicting Komokwa, a legendary spirit of the sea, was presented to Premier Bill Bennett as he officially opened the new native Indian gallery at the Provincial Museum in Victoria. Making the presentation were Chief Thomas Hunt, left, of Fort Rupert, and Chief James King of Gilford Island. The Premier was so pleased with the gift, carved by Richard Hunt of Victoria, that he decided to hang it in a special section of his office which features the works of native artists.

NEW WOMEN'S JAIL IN N.W.T. TO BOOST TOWN'S ECONOMY

N.W.T.: The first permanent women's jail in the Northwest Territories has recently opened. Located in Fort Smith, the new facility will hold a maximum of 20 prisoners. According to the new jail's superintendent, it will be "a small boost to the town's economy".

For Native people in the North, the new jail will definitely have more effects than "boosting economies" It's an indication of the many problems that plague our people - and government's only answer to the high incarceration rate is to construct more and bigger jails. Rather than work effectively in programming to prevent high incarceration rates, governments only answer has been to build new jails or expand present ones.

The Native people in the North are beginning to feel the damages that southern Native people have felt for years and unfortunately the high number of people in jail is one of them. One would think with all the years of experience in Native affairs, government, with all its expertise, would have developed more worthwhile and effective answers.

HOW A 16-YEAR OLD ALGONQUIN FEELS ABOUT HER LANGUAGE

This poem, by Roberta Keyshik of Grassy Narrows, Ontario, was written for a high-school competition in Kenora. Incidentally, Roberta won first prize. She shared this poem with Nancy Edwards, who interviewed her in Calgary this past summer when she was one of the delegates to the Youth Forum which was held at the same time as the United Church General Council.

"I'm losing something precious
Something that is a very important part of my life.
Without it I have no means of communication with the unchanged;
Without it I have no pride, no way of expressing;
I am losing something that I was born and was raised with,
Somthing that my ancestors hoped I would raise my children with.
Without it they will have no knowledge of their ancestors;
Without it they will lack respect for their people;
No way of remembering them.

Council Communicator

Natives told their sufferings are seeds of power in Lord

WESTERN CATHOLIC REPORTER

BY TIM LILBURN,
Communications, Regina

FORT QU'APPELLE, Sask.— The prophet Ezechiel might have been thinking of the native people of North America when he beheld his vision of unparalleled desolation: a valley of dry bones in which no living thing grew.

For the Indian people's encounter with white civilization has left them with but a fraction of their ancestral land and a culture that is seriously weakened.

Individually, some Indians, unable to cope with these losses, have succumbed to alcoholism and despair.

But Ezechiel was inspired by God to command the scattered, lifeless bones to take flesh and breathe. They did, and the valley of death was transformed to a place of life.

So it is with Indians. Long the victims of malevolent historical forces, they are now being called by their own prophets to be reborn in hope.

AT A recent meeting here, native leaders from the United States and from across Canada were asked to think of the sufferings and defeats of the past as the seeds of a great power. They were told that this power is a part of the strength of the risen Lord.

"If you've been misunderstood, beaten down, found yourself in a gutter, and you've bounced back, you've got a power that goes with the crucifixion," Sister Jose Hobday told 75 delegates attending the annual meeting of the Native Peoples' Pastoral Committee, an organization established to help build native leadership in the Church.

Sister Hobday spoke from the heart of Indian experience. Raised by native parents, she lives on the Papago Reservation in southern Arizona where she helps the people develop structures and resources to give them control over their education, nutrition and politics, as well as offering seminars on prayer.

The power which Indians gain from being reshaped by their suffering enables them to share their gifts with the world, rather than hiding them in a spirit of shame, she said.

But the native people must first rediscover the beauty of their traditional culture and value system.

She advised the Indian religious leaders attending to "get back in touch with the dirt that you came from," to resurrect such traditional values as respect for the land and reverence for the dead, and share them with white society.

ONE OF the great gifts of the Indian is his spirit of hospitality, Sister Hobday said, noting that native society is based on a sharing way of life, "while other cultures are built on greed."

Native people's generosity has been exploited but the virtue of their hospitality has not been diminished, she added. "It is still a better way to pursue the 'almighty give-away' rather than the 'almighty dollar,' even if this means you lose as a result. Your free giving is an example to others."

Indians are "people of the heart, not people of the head," the American nun said. "We live closer to the heart of meditation." This means that Indians enjoy a less hurried, more joyful mode of existence that is an excellent antidote to the bustle of modern, middle-class living.

Many traditional Indian values come from their close relationship with nature, Sister Hobday explained.

"Our ancestors let the land press into their spirits. And they pressed out to meet it," she said. If there is discord and moral decay in Indian communities today, it is because the people have lost contact with the spiritual communion with creation that their forefathers enjoyed.

TO REGAIN personal and social equilibrium, Indians must get back to their cultural roots, she said. "Knowledge and being a part of our heritage gives us pride and power" and this power is enhanced by the gifts which come with Baptism.

Sister Hobday said traditional Indian values and Christianity were the two paths native people must follow to achieve personal and communal wholeness. By combining these two influences, Indians will "fashion a new heart" and learn to express a basic, earthy appreciation of the Gospel with their lives.

In small workshop groups, the NPPC delegates discussed specific problems impeding the formation of Christian communities on their home reserves.

Many of the native religious leaders expressed alarm at the excessive use of alcohol and the high rates of suicide among their people, blaming this largely on the fact that native people, especially the young, feel alienated from the support of their ancestral culture but find white values foreign and unattractive.

The sense of moral and cultural rootlessness is the source of tremendous social stress on reserves, said Rick Redman, one of the workshop leaders.

Mr. Redman, a Sioux from the Standing Buffalo Reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle serving as a social worker in Regina, said Indian teenagers often use drugs and alcohol to put themselves in touch with the spirits worshiped by their ancestors.

When this doesn't work, they resort to suicide which is seen as the only way Indian children can tell the world: "I don't want you anymore."

MR. REDMAN laid much of the blame for the value vacuum in which many Indians lives, on residential schools which take the Indian child away from his home environment and remove him from the influence of tribal elders.

At school, he is taught to regard the religion and culture of his ancestors as inferior, Mr. Redman said. This, and a strict system of penalties imposed for the use of native language, are part of what many Indians see as a deliberate plan to make reserve children un-Indians.

"At the residential school, the teachers treated us Indian kids like potato plants," Mr. Redman said. "They uprooted us from the earth that nurtured us, shook away the dirt, peeled away our brown skins and made us white."

The rebelliousness and violence which outsiders note in Indian society are the fruits of the de-culturization process many Indian students underwent in residential schools, he added. They are signs of Indians struggling to regain their individual dignity and a pride in their race.

Many of the methods used to regain this pride, like drugs and violence, are counter-productive, serving only to deepen despair, Mr. Redman said. "We must come to the realization that square one on the road to cultural integrity is inside ourselves."

THIS was echoed by many native leaders at the conference. One summed it up: "The Church is inside of me. All the solutions to all the problems faced by my Indians are inside of individual natives."

Sister Hobday reinforced this notion of spiritual self-reliance for Indians and challenged native leaders to overcome the resentment they carry with them from the past, reaching beyond themselves to share what they have learned from their struggle with personal defeat.

"Everything you have suffered, every pain, is power to heal others," she said, adding that the Church was the most appropriate medium for Indians to use when sharing their wisdom with the world.

Sister Florence Leduc of Fort Qu'Appelle, who was re-elected facilitator of the NPPC at the meeting, expressed hope that the Church would provide structures which would allow native leaders to come forward.

The atmosphere among the delegates clearly indicated that native people had the will to take positions of power in the religious communities on their reserves.

All responded to the invitation of Bishop Omer Robidoux, OMI, representing the Canadian bishops, to receive from him at the concluding Mass, the gift of inner strength which gives power to the vocation of leadership.

Marieval honors nuns

MARIEVAL — The Sacred Heart of Mary parish council here celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Hyacinthe, Nov. 20.

IN THE afternoon, in spite of the cold weather a good number of people gathered in the Marieval hall. A diaporama was given on the different activities of the mission since the arrival of the Sisters. Father E. Benoit read messages from Bishop Halpin, Father Aubrey, provincial of the Oblate Fathers, and Sister Clarisse Bergeron, provincial of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Then came the unveiling of three souvenir plaques commemorating the centennial and the services that the Sisters have given to the mission of Marieval since 1901. There are five Sisters working at the residential school and one Sister is a pastoral worker.

Louis Whiteman, student residence administrator, offered a cheque and a gift from the residential staff.

IN THE name of the parish council, Mrs. Mary Ann Lavallee presented the commemorative souvenir plaques. Father Benoit offered one on behalf of the Oblate Fathers.

Sister Gregoire and Sister Miclette in the name of all the Sisters extended their profound gratitude and most sincere thanks to all who prepared the celebration. — RC

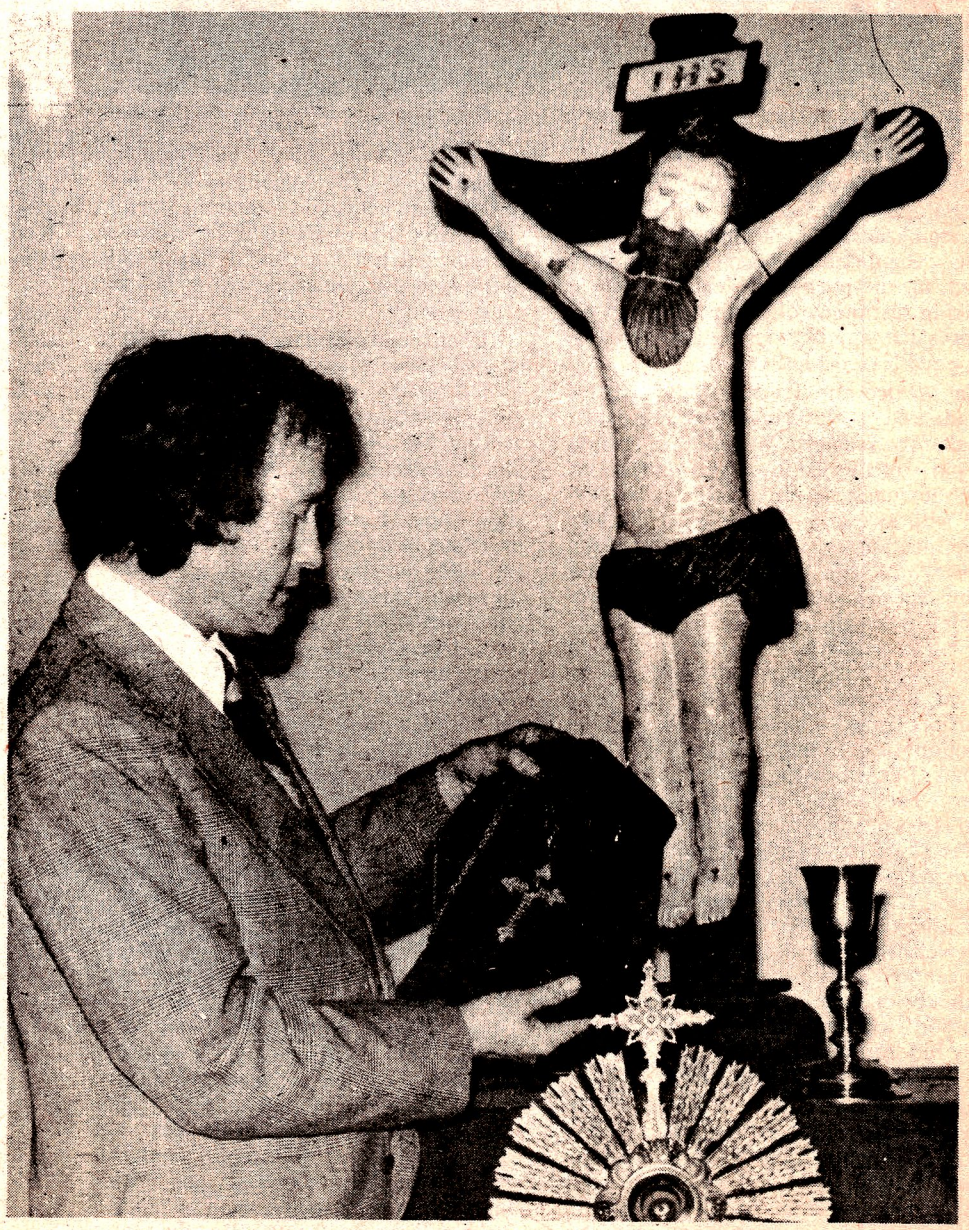
B.C. Indians to get land

VANCOUVER (CP) — British Columbia Indians will be given thousands of acres of valuable land taken from them 62 years ago, plus millions of dollars in compensation for other lands that cannot be returned, government officials announced Thursday.

About 30,000 acres will be turned over by B.C. while the compensation will be paid by the federal government. Sources said the compensation might range as high as $50 million.

Some of the land involved is in downtown Penticton and near downtown Vancouver.

Announcement of the land return was made at a news conference following a meeting between Indian Affairs Minister Hugh Faulkner, Allan Williams, provincial labor minister responsible for Indian affairs, and representatives of the 22 Indian bands affected. Faulkner said more negotiations will be needed. Williams said more negotiating sessions are scheduled for mid-March.



John Bone of the New Brunswick Museum staff examines a pectoral cross originally worn by the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Bathurst, N.B. The monstrance and chalice also come from the Diocese of Bathurst. The crucifix is a 19th century example of primitive art from the village of Shippegan. The body is carved from single piece of wood, with the arms joined on.

CANADIAN CHURCHMAN

A Pilgrimage to Remember

KAINAI NEWS

Our pilgrimage to Our Lady of Guadalupe of Mexico City will linger in our memories and in our hearts for a long time. Guadalupe, Mexico! The very word, for the people of Mexico, means a striking testimony of faith, hope and an impressive way of praising and venerating our Blessed Mother.

In Mexico the feast of our Lady of Guadalupe is the biggest and greatest feast of the year - two million people from all parts of the world come to attend it. The most striking trait which we witnessed with awe and admiration is the way they incorporate, at this most beautiful shrine of North America, their cultural habits such as dancing, drama and music: Their culture thus becomes a symbol of their devotion to our Blessed Mother - a symbol which is analogical to that of King David dancing before the Arch. The pilgrims come to express their devotion throughMass, Communion, Hymns, Costumes, Dances dating back four hundred years. They express their devotion through strict penance such as walking many miles along the rugged roads of Mexico country, fasting, bare-footed as they approach the Shrine, on their knees. Upon leaving the Shrine, they sing their farewell hymns, dance their farewell dances and then retire from the shrine without turning their backs to Our Mother...with tears of regret and sadness they bid "au revoir"!

History of Our Lady of Guadalupe

On December 9, 1531, a young Indian boy, by the name of Juan Diego was going to attend mass at Tlateloco when he saw a bright light and heard celestial music. He saw a beautiful lady in the midst of this glorious light, and she invited him to come closer. The beautiful lady told him in his Indian language that she was the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God. She told him that she wanted a Shrine built in her honour, so she could manifest her love, compassion, help and protection. She told him, "Go to the dwelling of the bishop in Mexico and tell him that I, the Virgin Mary, sent you to make known to him my great desire."

The Bishop of Mexico was reluctant to believe Juan Diego's story. Juan returned to the place of the apparition, Tepeyac Hill, and found the Virgin waiting. He told her all about his failure. She told him to go back. This time the Bishop requested that the lady give him a sign. Juan reported this to her. She promised to answer the Bishop's request the following day. The sudden illness of his uncle, Juan Bernardino, prevented Juan to meet the beautiful lady. Two days later, December 12, as he was getting a priest for his dying uncle, the Blessed Virgin, once again appeared to him and said, "It is well, young and dearest of my sons, but now listen to me. Do not let anything afflict you and be not afraid of any illness, accident or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Do you need anything else? Your uncle will not die, be sure he is now well."

She told him to go to the top of the Hill where she had spoken to him on three occasions and there he would find blooming flowers. She told him to cut them and bring them to her. Juan did as he was told. Surprisingly he found a miracluous garden of roses growing on the rocky summit of Tepeyac Hill. He cut the roses brought them to the lady, she arranged them in his mantle, and told him to bring them to the bishop. When Juan Diego unfolded his mantle to show Bishop Fray de Zamarraga the roses which the lady had arranged, fell to the ground and there appeared in his mantle an exquisite picture of the Virgin Mary, just as he had described her previously. That same day the Blessed Virgin Mary had also appeared to Juan's uncle and had restored him to health. She mission-ed him to tell the Bishop about his miraculous cure and how her precious image would crush the serpent.

Four centuries have passed, and still today millions of people gather every year from December 9-12 at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe to venerate the miraculous portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary imprinted on Juan Diego's mantle made from the fibres of maguey cactus. The ordinary life span of this material is 25 years. After 400 years the authentic portrait remains fresh and lovely. It's place of honor is above the altar in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

It is at this Shrine that we the pilgrims have witnessed so much faith, and for this unique experience we wish to thank the organizers of this pilgrimage, Father A. Duhaime o.m.i. and Father Murray from Browning Montana. We also wish to thank the oblates of Mary Immaculate fromMexico City for their kind hospitality. A special thank you to Father Hubenig who welcomed us at the airport, gave us an interesting tour of the museum, briefing us on the culture of the Mexican people, and especially making our stay in Mexico City a pleasant one.

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Group to ease race tension

By STAN KOMA

REGINA — Potentially explosive racial tensions are developing here and native leaders are worried.

In a bid to forestall violence, they have united to put a damper on the situation between natives and the white population.

Stan Klyne, chairman of the Regina Race Relations Association, said native-white relations are "really bad".

"We have finally got the police to admit there is a problem here," he told The Register.

The RRRA is a recent native initiative trying to build understanding in the community. And one of the most acute areas of tension is between natives and the police.

Estimates of the number of Indians and Metis in Regina run between 19,000 and 30,000. The area's population is about 150,000.

"More and more native people are coming here from the reserves every day," Mr. Klyne said.

"They are a product of the government," he added. "Ottawa has been saying: 'We'll take care of you' for 150 years. Now, all of a sudden, it wants the natives to be responsible after being pampered for so many years."

Tim Lilburn, who works part-time in communications and social action for the Archdiocese of Regina, said natives come to the city with high expectations. Many of them soon become disillusioned and alienated.

They come for two reasons:

- They can't stay on the reserves because there is very little for them to do there.
- They are attracted by the "good life" of the city as presented via television, radio and magazines.

They see fancy cars and beautiful houses and they want a part of it," Mr. Lilburn explained.

"But to get these things they need pretty good jobs. And in many cases they don't find the jobs. It's hard for anyone to get a job here now . . . but especially hard for the natives."

One result is a strong feeling of alienation in the native community.

Mr. Lilburn is the Catholic representative on the Inter-Church Race Relations Committee, which has representation from six major Churches.

The interfaith committee is supporting the native race relations association, as well as initiating its own programs to foster harmony in the community.

Mr. Lilburn delivered the committee's message of support for RRRA to city council recently.

The council has been asked to donate funds to the native association to help it organize an educational program. The association is seeking a total of $260,000 from municipal and federal governments to launch the program. So far, the only contribution has come from the Donner Foundation in Toronto — $48,000.

Mr. Lilburn said the native association is trying to act as an ombudsman . . . the middle-man between native and non-native peoples.

"They want to act as facilitators for native people in dealing with the government and as educators for the police and native people," he said.

Already the interfaith committee has supplied two people to assist seminar training sessions with the police on native questions.

"Our sessions have been very good, very positive," Mr. Lilburn said.

"The police have been open," he said. "They say they can't risk polarization between themselves and the natives. They want to learn and the natives say they also want to learn from police experiences."

The interfaith committee is also sending speakers to various Church groups to get more people involved in the city's racial problems.

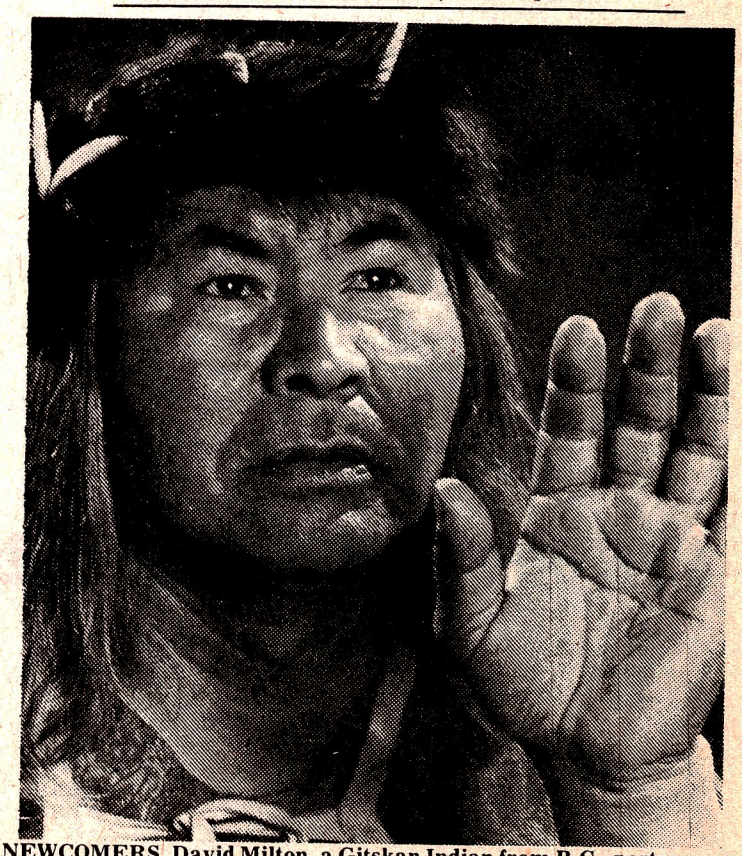
In addition, he mentioned a recent retreat for young people which included native speakers, visits to their homes and a "big supper" for everyone. "There was a good feeling generated," he said.

The Catholic Church here has a hall called "Wickiup" (Objiway for meeting place) and native and non-natives are encouraged to meet so that the spirit of friendship will grow.

"There is little communication between natives and non-natives," Mr. Lilburn said. "Two solitudes are emerging. This is an unhealthy and un-Christian situation which can be remedied by being more open, more generous in our understanding and support."

Mr. Klyne said the local race relations association is also trying to encourage the natives to have pride in their heritage and dispel the stereotype image of the Indian.

"I am very hopeful for the future," Mr. Klyne said.



NEWCOMERS. David Milton, a Gitskan Indian from B.C., portrays an ailing Indian chief in the prologue of the Newcomers series on CBC-TV, Sunday at 8:30. The film dramatizes a young Indian's trials to become the new chief and his love for a girl he is forbidden to marry. (CBC Photo)

Inuit tell TV crew "not to come back"

by Annette Westley

Father Jules Dion [left] with Mr. and Mrs. C. Bourassa and family.

A few years ago it seemed that Inuit culture would disappear and the native people would be strictly under the supervision of white people, according to Father Jules Dion at Wakeham Bay in Labrador diocese.

But today these same natives are so anxious to be independent of the white man that they don't hesitate to tell a CBC crew to ask permission before doing any filming for TV.

"The council (of the Inuit community) told them not to come back," says Father Dion, "and they had the right because it's their land. Especially since the program was to be on native women."

The 250 Inuits at Wakeham Bay, 600 miles north of Schefferville, in northern Quebec, have a council which takes care of municipal services. It makes decisions for the village itself in areas such as communications and TV programming. Also a representative is sent to attend government meetings, "keeping an eye on mining development, environment, pollution and all things pertaining to their existence."

The Inuit people feel they are different and want to stay that way, says the Oblate. "We can see more and more by the results that they are proud of themselves and want to run their own business. They are very touchy about any interference from white people."

Father Dion is not treated as an outsider. He says, "I feel at home here as I'm considered one of them. I have been given the right to vote, to be elected on council or on the school board. I have no problem communicating with them."

The people are moving ahead not only with social changes but also in religious practise. Even though the community in terms of mission is very young, (Father Dion arrived there from Belgium about 22 years ago), the people have the same feelings about being prepared to take care of their religion.

Bishop Peter Sutton, visiting Wakeham Bay at that time, asked if the Inuit people had a religion in terms of tradition.

"Their belief in the past," replied Father Dion, "had been associated with a 'somebody' that was taking care of the world, it was not a religion but superstition. This 'somebody' was like a witch doctor, called "Shaman".

This is why the Inuit people are very anxious to learn more about the Catholic religion and therefore need more printed liturgical material translated into their language and well illustrated.

"I think they understand better when they see a picture," says Father Dion, "than trying to read the text. The people like to look at comics and read and I would like to translate some religious magazines, which is what Father (Alexis) Joveneau is doing at La Romaine."

(Working with Indian people on the south eastern edge of the diocese, Father Joveneau publishes books and other religious material in the Montagnais language "dwelling on the duties of baptised Christian).

"The people's ultimate goal," says Father Dion, "will be to find capable persons among themselves who will take care of their business, like administrators, nurses, teachers, carpenters and religious. In religion they will have to work the hardest because they are not prepared, so they will need white people to help them.

"I have a man who is taking part in the church services and religious activities more and more. I hope one day he will be ordained as a deacon or a priest and be the one to take care of the community here."

Your contribution to Church Extension $3,000 pledge to Father Dion will help the Labrador missionary produce translated and illustrated religious publications that the Inuit people find so attractive.

New survival test for Labrador m

Assuring their survival has always been a major struggle for the Montagnais Indian people in Labrador diocese, according to Father Alexis Joveneau.

To get their food they had to endure stalking caribou through the wilderness and digging through the ice to get their fish. It was not ususual for them to walk 250 miles to Goose Bay to get their other supplies.

Today the welfare cheque has made the fight for their existence somewhat easier but a more important struggle for survival has emerged — not merely to free themselves from handouts but to preserve their way of life as a people.

After 23 years in his La Romaine mission, the Oblate believes the native people are ambitious not only in the economic and social fields but also in religion.

"And that's where our work lies," he says, "to help them channel all their talents, their powers and their desires towards leadership. Already within them, an Indian Church is spiritually building up."

At a recent conference when Father Joveneau met Father Posset from Mackenzie and Father Goussaert from Churchill, he was surprised that they did not talk about their homeland, Belgium, in spite of this being their first meeting in 24 years.

Instead they discussed their missionary experiences and were amazed to find that their native people, although in different areas, were all anxious to take on responsibility for their own future as people.

"It was extraordinary," he says, "that we came to the same conclusion, to put forth our efforts, as missionaries and as a

Church built by volunteers

by Annette Westley

There were many hot days last summer, really too hot to work on construction, especially when the labor is volunteered. But the high temperatures did not deter the strong enthusiasm in the Indian people at Buswah to build their church.

Every day a core of different volunteers came, some in their 80s, like Ignatius Trudeau, others in their 'teens who worked on high levels like the roof, while at the same time, holding their regular jobs. Women made their contribution too, alternating in groups, they provided two daily meals.

Buswah, a small reserve of some 400 inhabitants, overlooks an inlet of Georgian Bay in northern Ontario. The community made news about a year ago when their story appeared on this page telling Extension readers about the Indian people's dedication and eagerness to build a new church because their 75-year-old one was decrepit, unsafe and could no longer be propped up. After 12 years of holding bingoes and such, they raised $12,000 and approached their pastor Father N. MacKenzie to begin construction.

"We had no architect or blue print," says the Jesuit. "We made up the plans as we went along in building. We held meetings every week to discuss the future progress and in this way, it became a community project."

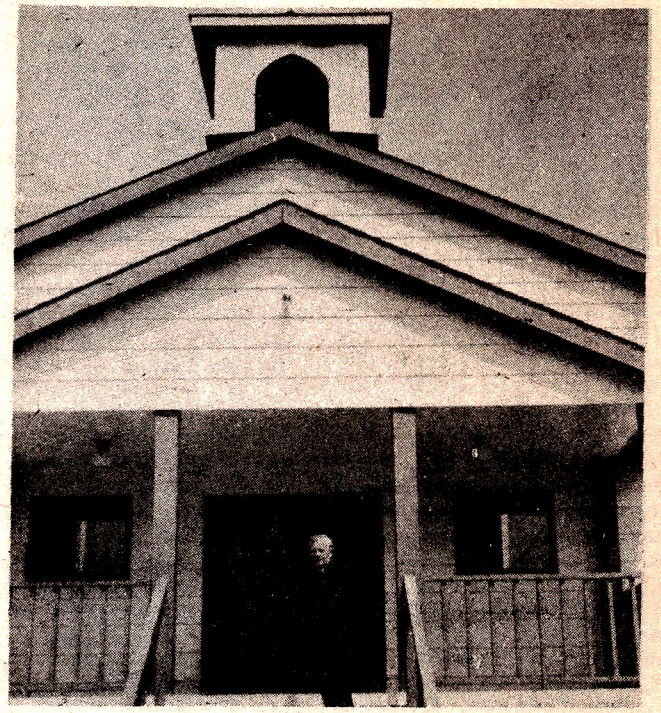
Most of the volunteers were experienced men since they had built their own homes or worked on construction. Only the foreman, also a native who had the machinery, was paid "a small sum". The total cost of the building which serves as a church, community hall and as an emergency quarters for lodging, is $20,000.

Combining a church and dormitory may sound unusual but at a recent ordination of Indian deacons at Wikwenikong, four miles away, the out-of-town attendance was brought to the Buswah church where, after the sanctuary was closed off, cots were laid out in the isles to 'house' the overflow.

Father MacKenzie proudly gave me a tour of the building, explaining how it serves three purposes which includes the kitchen, office and other facilities, conveniently located off the main entrance.

Last May, the church, named in honor of St. Romuald, was blessed by Bishop Alexander Carter of Sault Ste. Marie diocese.

"The people really need the church here," says the pastor, "because few have cars to travel the four miles to Wikwenikong."



Father N. MacKenzie, S.J., stands proudly at St. Romuald Church in Buswah, Ont., which cost only $20,000 because of volunteered labor.

After persevering for 12 years to build-up a down payment of $12,000, they have raised $6,000 more from donations and proceeds of bingoes since a year ago when the story of their project first appeared on this page. This leaves a balance of $2,000 to cover the total cost of $20,000 for a new church in these inflationary times.

As far as the volunteers are concerned, as one put it, "I'll get my pay in heaven."

tives

By Annette Westley

team, to keep on working with even greater convictions in urging the people to take over their Christian communities."

The Oblate's one reason for coming to Canada, he says, was to find Indian people and work with them. Now he finds mission work more interesting than ever "because these people are in a period of their existence where they are searching for a better life. After living with them and listening to them," he adds, "we must give them that chance."

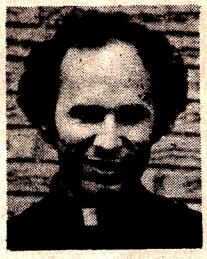
That opportunity at La Romaine is opening up for them. During the past three years, Father Joveneau with his mission team have extended their work to publication in the Montagnais language. The native people themselves contribute many articles, especially on their hunting adventures and on leadership. The missionaries provide religious material dwelling on the duties of baptized Christians.

"Whatever, the subject," says Father Joveneau, "whether it be hunting, leadership or religion, it is extremely important that it be done in the native language because the people have taken the community role in hand."

For the past few years, the Indian Sports' Committee has helped with the cost of printing paper, stencils and ink. From La Romaine, with its population of 560, the written word circulates out through to all native people in five neighboring reservations.

The publishing team no longer has to contend with a balky worn out duplicator. Through a friend of a Women's Auxiliary (CCES) member, a Gestetner in excellent condition is now churning out the good word in the cause of leadership at La Romaine.

'They promise love and fidelity then divorce. How can that be?'



by Jacques Johnson, OMI

WESTERN CATHOLIC REPORTER

Earlier this year I wrote about an old Indian patriarch in Fort Vermilion who spoke powerfully at the funeral of his 65-year-old son, expounding his belief in the resurrection and the happiness of his son with God.

The 89-year-old clan leader also invited his people to more moderation in the use of alcohol as it had become a real plague in the community.

Finally he had encouraged them to resist the onslaught of "new religions" that were sowing doubts in many minds, and he pleaded with them to remain faithful to the true religion.

Since then I learned that his 87-year-old wife died after slowly waning for a few weeks as she lay in the hospital.

Her husband was also in the hospital at the time, but on a separate floor. When he learned that his wife had passed away, he asked to go up and see her.

HE STOOD at the foot of the bed, caressing her feet and expressing aloud how beautiful she was. He eulogized about her character and many fine qualities.

He also exclaimed how happy he felt she must be as she walked with God in heaven.

"I do not cry," he said, "because she was once in misery and she is no longer miserable."

But even as he spoke his eyes filled with tears . . .

He volunteered to speak at the funeral of his wife as he had done for his son a few weeks before.

He left the hospital to come to church that morning, and even though he was quite weak he left his cane behind: "God who is all-powerful will give me the strength," he said simply.

After the priest's homily, the old man came forward and with a strong voice he addressed the assembly in Cree.

HIS FIRST concern was to console his people and reassure them about the well-being of the grandmother.

"We are the ones who should be pitied," he declared. "We are the ones who are in pain and who know all kinds of sufferings. She is in peace, she walks with God and she lives in happiness."

He spoke of the afterlife and of the hope that is ours in the resurrection. Proceeding to speak about his wife, he listed some of her qualities. He noted how good a person she was, how devoted she was to her 14 children whom she raised very well.

She was a kind person and she welcomed whoever would come, and she would feed them. She had never taken liquor in her life, but had spent much time in prayer as she had a strong faith and deep trust in God.

After this, he spoke about their wedding day, more than 67 years before.

"THE PRIEST asked us if we agreed to live together for the rest of our lives and whether or not we were to remain faithful to one another," he said.

"We told him YES, and we were able, with the help of God, to live up to that promise. I thank God for the good years we've had together.

"I wonder though about what happens today when couples come in church, and to the priest and to God they promise love and fidelity, and after two years they are divorced.

"How can that be? I wonder. Isn't a word given, nowadays, not worth anything anymore?"

He then spoke about drinking and challenged the people to look into the terrible consequences that excessive alcohol creates in the homes. It brings quarrels, disunity, and marriage break-ups. Because of it, many married people and many children are being hurt.

He encouraged them to turn to God and to pray more and he indicated how prayer had been of major importance in his own marriage, how it brought peace and forgiveness, harmony and increased love.

THE OLD patriarch ended his discourse by thanking God for the gift of his wife who was a precious treasure for himself and his family.

Soon, he hoped, he would join her and live with her and God in happiness for all eternity.

As a distant witness, I marvel at how God's Spirit touched the life of this humble man and how he was able to react to life's great tragedies with such peace, lucidity and strength.

He is a true witness of the resurrection, and a witness of true Christian marriage.

The conditions for a successful marriage are universally valid. Moderation, self-control, prayer, charity, respect and mutual appreciation, sobriety, a deep faith, are all necessary for harmony in the home and happiness in the family.

But don't take my word for it. Rather take it from someone who's lived it successfully for 67 years!

MANITOU COLLEGE TO BECOME A JAIL

QUEBEC: While the federal government cannot adequately finance an Indian Education Centre, it is more than willing to fund jails and prisons. Plans to turn Manitou Community College in La Macaza, Quebec into a 110 inmate jail were recently announced by the Solicitor-General's department.

Officially opened in the summer of 1973, Manitou College was established as an alternative to sending Native people to impersonal institutions in unfamiliar urban surroundings. Natives from isolated reserves often have difficulty adjusting to these institutions in large cities. Manitou College offered the equivalent of grade twelve or first year university classes to Native students from across Canada. Fine arts, communication, social sciences and humanities were some of the classes offered but provided an emphasis on the past and present situation of Native people. For example, an economics class not only offered the basics of economics, but also provided a look at the current economic situation of Native communities and Indian reserves.

Manitou College had been plagued by the problems of inadequate funding since its openings. While the cost of support for one student per year averages between $3,500 and $4,500, the cost of keeping one inmate in jail for the same length of time is $20,000. Perhaps the government would sooner see our people behind bars than obtaining an education ...

Natives help church people struggle with Indian-ness

By MARJORIE BEAUCAGE, RNDM,

PRAIRIE MESSENGER

WINNIPEG (WH) — The Indian-Metis Friendship Center was the gathering place, here Jan. 19-20, for about 50 people from the United Church and a few others from different churches and agencies who shared some interest or involvement with native Canadians.

THE PURPOSE of the meeting as presented by Hugo Unruh, coordinator of the event, was "to deepen personal sensitivity and understanding of native Canadians in Winnipeg; to look at our own prejudices, attitudes, learnings, and relationships and begin to explore the implications of this in terms of work with native people."

After a brief factual overview about native peoples in Manitoba by Verna McKay, a community worker with United Church missions in the Winnipeg core area, Emma Laroque, a master's student at the University of Manitoba, presented a historical perspective of the church from her Metis viewpoint. The context of her presentation was her own struggle with Indian-ness and "the haunting responsibility that the church has in history".

Interspersed with wit and humor, she painted a panorama of the church's role in "civilizing and Christianizing" this land, and the impact of this process on her people. Missionaries were caught up in the European drive to expand and explore, observed Ms. Laroque. Coupled with this domination of the New World was a sense of "having the truth", thus giving the church tremendous psychological advantage over the world. "The church mistook truth as a possession rather than a gift," she commented.

REFLECTING ON the past and how the church "got technology and the gospel to ungrateful savages" was a framework for her question, "Where is the church today?" Answering her own query, she felt that the churches' vulnerability to government schemes in pipeline debates and expansion in the North was not as total as in the past; at least in the official hierarchy, the church is standing by native people. The hope for the church, she suggested, lies in avoiding cultural blindness and returning to its original primitive, biblical roots.

She further emphasized that "the church can and must evaluate society, heal broken peoples, receive gifts."

Ms. Laroque believed that the church today must be prophetic, faithful and servant. "The church is not called to be a follower of society; it must return to its original sources and learn to identify with oppressed people. The church as lord provider possessing truth as though it had everything and we had nothing, must become the church of genuine servanthood."

STAN McKAY, Sr., a United Church Winnipeg Presbytery lay worker among native Indian people, began by sharing his values and experience of being Indian. This set the tone for the second day as he invited participants to lay aside their prejudices and honestly listen.

In a gentle quiet manner he affirmed his right to be different and not to be treated as a "junior partner" in church affairs and decision-making. "We do not beg or thank you for these rights; we paid for them with our culture, dignity and self-respect until we became a beaten race."

The experience of broken-ness was a theme repeated by the panel of native people in the afternoon. Mary Richard, director of the Indian-Metis Friendship Center, reflected on the church in the past and critically asked why the church's best attribute, charity, had been so distorted.

CHARITY IN her experience, was "receiving summer clothes in winter, winter clothes in summer, and getting boxes full of high-heeled shoes to wear on muddy roads."

She pointed the churches in the direction of ministering to those who have no one to turn to and who are not active church-goers.

"Knowing who they can go to" was the plea re-echoed by Phyllis Keeper, a community education worker at Norquay School in Winnipeg. The lack of continuity in personnel working with native people and the mobility of families, make it difficult for real change to occur, she said.

"GIVEN A chance, Indian people can get the job done", claimed Larry Starr, coordinator of services to native children at Children's Hospital in Winnipeg. "The job involves more than interpreting," he said. "We are part of the medical staff team and act as advocates for the kids and their parents. We also have to deal with the medical profession's misconceptions about native people."

Fiola Thickfoot, a registered nurse in Winnipeg, shared some of her own pain of growing up "different" in the city. She urged more dialogue in order to overcome racism and discrimination.

Throughout the meeting, participants were constantly being asked to make room for Indian people in today's world and not "change us to fit your system".

Cree writing course

THE BEAR HILLS NATIVE VOICE

A course in Cree syllabic writing will be given at Maskwachees Cultural College Thursdays at 1 p.m., Bob Silverthorne, college director, says.

The instructor will be Abe Saddleback who will give the course, assisted by Mrs. Muriel Lee, college librarian.

Anyone wanting to take the course must be able to speak Cree.

"It's invaluable that the young people of the Hobbema Reserves keep the written Cree that has developed long before the white man came to this country," Mr. Silverthorne says.

He says there are many publications written in Cree and Cree Indians could read them if they could read and write syllabics.

The board of directors of Maskwachees Cultural College feels that being able to write Cree syllabics is an important part of the Plains Cree Heritage.

It also is an advantage as many historical documents are written in Cree syllabics.

The course is offered by the college free, Mr. Silverthorne says. And all materials will be provided.

These materials include the book "Muskwachees" — a history of several Hobbema people — as well as books on stories and legends of the Cree People.

"Muskwachees" was published so youngsters could have an historical view of local figures, Mr. Silverthorne concludes.

One million acres

Indians get treaty land

By TIM LILBURN, Communications, Regina

PRAIRIE MESSENGER

REGINA — The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians (FSI) is now negotiating with both the federal and provincial governments on behalf of 15 provincial bands for a final settlement of outstanding Indian land entitlements. Once these negotiations are complete, the bands will receive an increase in their collective land holdings of nearly a million acres.

This land transfer will fulfill the promises the Canadian government made to Saskatchewan Indians under the treaties it signed with them nearly one hundred years ago. One concession made in these treaties — the most important one as far as Indians are concerned — is the allocation of 640 acres to every family of five in each band, or an allotment of 128 acres to every single person.

IN RETURN for these parcels of land, the Indian people ceded large tracts of land in Western Canada to the Canadian government. The Indians have met their part of the bargain, but the federal government has been somewhat less faithful in upholding its side of the agreement.

The hundred year delay in some bands receiving their full land allotment is the result of two factors, according to Doug Cuthand, secretary of the executive of FSI. One has been the need to organize Indian people in the province to fight for the land that is rightfully theirs. Another has been the apparent bad faith of the federal government in meeting its full treaty obligations.

"We knew a long time ago that we had not received our full quota of land. But as long as we were unable to press our position, the government was not prepared to act. It wouldn't go the extra mile for us," Cuthand said.

CUTHAND SAID that the present negotiations between FSI and the two levels of government are the result of several years of research into the question of treaty land entitlements. This research was conducted by FSI and financed by the Federal Department of Indian Affairs. It shows clearly that 15 bands never received their full entitlement; in fact, it proves that one of the bands failed to receive any reserve at all.

According to Al Gross, manager of Inter-Government Relations in the Saskatchewan regional office of Indian Affairs, the federal government hopes to satisfy its treaty land allotment responsibilities to the 15 bands through application of a long-standing agreement between it and the western Canadian provinces. Under the Natural Resources Transfer Agreements, which date back to 1930, the Prairie provinces must provide unoccupied Crown land to meet land entitlement promises made by the federal government in their treaties with the Indians.

However, a solution based on this federal-provincial arrangement is complicated by the fact that little unoccupied Crown land exists in the southern part of the province where many of the 15 bands have their present reserves. If the bands were to accept a settlement on this basis, it could mean that they would be forced to split their reserves into several parts.

THE PROBLEMS of governing and developing several separate reserve units make this arrangement an unattractive option for many bands, Cuthand said. Neither would the bands be willing to accept marginal lands near their reserves. "Our land entitlement negotiations are a one-shot deal. The agreements we finally reach will be binding until the end of time," he said.

Concern for the welfare of future generations demands that the bands settle for nothing less than the best possible solution in their land entitlement negotiations.

Cuthand went on to explain that a straight financial settlement of Indian land entitlements, like the one accepted by the Alaskan Indians and the Cree of James Bay, is also out of the question. "Indians' dearest possession is land. Its value can't be put in money terms, because our land is what identifies us as a nation. Look at the ancient Jews: a landless people is a nationless people," he said.

Cuthand expressed the opinion that the best way to resolve the issue of outstanding land entitlements would be to expand existing reserves. This would involve the purchase of land adjacent to present Indian settlements. Much of this land is prime agricultural acreage, and already under cultivation.

CUTHAND POINTED out that no pressure would be placed on farmers who own land near present reserves and do not wish to sell their land to the bands. He explained that though the 15 bands were eager to claim the land owed to them it was not the intent of FSI to force people off their farms.

"The buying of land must be done with care and regard for the rights of others. We don't want to treat people in the same way as the Canadian government treated us when they took our land," he said.

A number of the 15 bands have made a tentative selection of the land they wish to claim to satisfy their full treaty entitlements. Two — Stoney Rapids and Canoe Lake — have made a final decision on the acreage they wish to occupy. The lands which the other bands are considering are being selected in consultation with the Department of Indian Affairs who are providing advice on resource development and agricultural possibilities. Great care is being taken to select land that has significant economic potential.

ONE EFFECT of a successful resolution of land negotiations between Indians and government, according to Cuthand, is that larger reserves will cause the urban native population in the province to decrease. He said that more land will mean that the bands will be able to maintain a greater number of people on their reserves through expanded farming operations and a broader based economic development which will create more jobs.

Most native people now living in urban centers like Regina, where they make up close to one-third of the population, would be happy to return to their reserves if jobs and land were available for them there, he said. "The city experience of our people has not done them much good at all."

Cultural College gives education to natives

THE BEAR HILLS NATIVE VOICE

The purpose of Maskwachees Cultural College is to upgrade the education of Indian people and help them get a university degree, says Maurice Wolfe, president of the Board of Directors.

"Many Indian people would rather go to Maskwachees Cultural College than go to a white school in the city," Mr. Wolfe says in an interview.

Going to Maskwachees, he says, "gives Indian people a chance for an education and a chance to talk in their own language."

In a white school or college, Mr. Wolfe says, Indian people would not get a chance to talk Cree. Speaking Cree at school helps them become better in their own language.

At the same time, he says, we are making Indian teachers out of these students. These teachers will be able in the future to teach school children in their native language, helping them learn.

"We don't want to lose our identity," Mr. Wolfe says. "It's important.

"Some of the old people come and talk to the college students about native culture," Mr. Wolfe says. "It's like a living history for the students."

Maskwachees Cultural College is locally-run with its own native board of directors, Mr. Wolfe says. The board which he heads includes elders, chiefs and council members from the Four Bands. Also on the board are members of the Four-Bands School Committee.

This native board of directors makes up the policies of the college. It decides what classes will be taught and what courses will be offered.

At present, Maskwachees Cultural College offers three years in a four-year bachelor of education program — in association with the University of Calgary.

"The elders come to the college and tell the old, traditional Cree stories in Cree," Mr. Wolfe says. "We tape the elders and their stories in both Cree and English for later use on closed circuit television.

"The days of sitting around the campfire and telling the old stories is nearly over," Mr. Wolfe says. "The cultural college, however, is doing essentially the same thing — but for television."

All stories are in both Cree and English — helping strengthen both languages.

"These stories help especially in strengthening the Cree language," Mr. Wolfe says.

The value of the instruction at Maskwachees Cultural College, is it makes people proud of their Cree heritage," says Bob Silverthorne, college director.

"At the same time," Mr. Silverthorne says, "students are getting a chance to get an education so they can hold a job in a modern world."

Maskwachees Cultural College, Mr. Wolfe says, started 3½ years ago after a study done by the University of Alberta into the educational needs of Hobbema.

An influential person on the steering committee who helped get the college going was Theresa Wildcat, a former native teacher.

She acted as a go-between between the University of Alberta and Ermineskin School.

The natives involved wanted a study program on the reserve, but the University of Alberta did not want to co-operate in this.

"So," says Mr. Wolfe, "the Hobbema committee approached the University of Calgary which agreed to get the college going."

The Young Maskwachees Cultural College started with night courses at Ermineskin School.

A total of 23 persons took night school, instructed by Bob Silverthorne, who then was an instructor at the University of Calgary. Mr. Silverthorne then was appointed director of the new cultural college.

From the night courses, the concept expanded to a college "to give students a chance for a university education," Mr. Wolfe says.

The key to the growth of the college, Mr. Wolfe says, was to train Indians to teach native children schooling, partly in the Cree language.

"The chiefs and councils felt," Mr. Wolfe says, "that if schools had native teachers, the children would relate better and stay in school. The children would finish their education and no drop out."

It is important to have models of successful Indian people in native schools, Mr. Wolfe says.

"We have had teachers' aides and janitors, and now we are getting teachers themselves of native origin."

Also, he says, if children do not understand a subject when it is explained in English, the native teacher can explain it again in Cree. When this happens, the children usually understand.

The board of the college sets the policy guidelines. On the board are the four chiefs of Hobbema, one band councillor and one band elder, plus two school committee members.

President of the board is Maurice Wolfe. The four chiefs are Frank Buffalo of the Samson Band, Gordon Lee of the Ermineskin Band, Peter Bull of the Louis Bull Band and Leo Cattleman of the Montana Band.

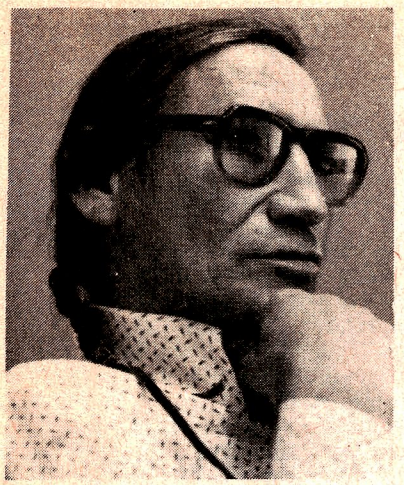
Maskwachees Cultural College is the only college in Canada making bilingual television programs on native culture, says Mr. Silverthorne.

And the college is stronger than even a good junior college since its courses are full university courses taught by university professors, he says. Any of the courses at Maskwachees are accepted for full credit at the University of Calgary and Red Deer College.

The Hobbema College has a good library of books for children and adults. There is an especially good section of books dealing with Indians.

The Living History Series also deals with cultural matters such as the proper erection of a Cree-style tipi or the duty of "the whipman" at a pow wow.

"We televised things that present a positive self-image of the Cree people. Besides television, we are publishing books and even Christmas cards in Cree and English," Mr. Silverthorne concludes.



Road to Sobriety

- George Goodstriker talks candidly about long journey

By Caen Bly

KAINAI NEWS

Prompted by an advertisement he read in the local reserve paper for an alcoholism counsellor, George Goodstriker, an alcoholic at 39 years of age, applied and got a job.

At the time, George, a Blood Indian, had 18 months of sobriety under his belt and a strong will to help others. His quest has succeeded in making him become one of the most respected and Knowledgable counsellors in the business today.

George may not realize this but Nechi Institute on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (Training Centre) have very high regard for this man, as does his associates with whom he works at Kainai Alcoholism Services.

It was a rewarding opportunity to spend an afternoon with George recently and for these reasons I believe it is beneficial that others know a little bit more about this individual and the work he is involved in.

To begin with, George told me about the job he secured in Calgary with Native Alcohol Services 'Out Patient Centre' in May of 1975. He said, 'When I applied I was told to come in for an interview and the first thing they asked me was, 'why do you want the job?' His reply to them was, 'I have been an alcoholic and I want to help other human beings, but I know nothing about this disease.'

Not knowing what was expected in being an alcoholism counsellor didn't scare George off, because he was being sincere in his effort to help other fellow alcoholics. 'I got the job and the first requirement was to attend training sessions at Nechi Institute.' (George has completed all of the required training sets and is now qualified as an alcoholism counsellor. He graduated with a certificate issued by the Grant McKewin Community College in Edmonton with full).

Now, one year and five months later, George has gained a real insight into the effects of alcohol among Indian people and he's a strong advocate of alcoholism programs. In the following paragraphs he talks candidly about some of those concerns.

'I want to help others with their problems, but I can't help unless they want help themselves. Alot of people come in and ask us to give them sobriety but we can't. You can't go out to a store and buy it, and I can't give him mine, but I can guide him. We have a saying in counselling, 'Don't rescue, we only assist' - that means don 't play God.''

During the 20 years of being an alcoholic George talked about what made his life change after he termed 'hitting rock bottom.'

He said 'To think back I ask myself what made my mind up to quit .' I can't really say for sure but I guess the main reason was that I wanted to live and I realized I still had some good in me yet.

I was put on this earth for a purpose to help other human beings--which I wasn't doing while I was drinking. I was only hurting people.

Right now I see a drunk and I see myself. When I was first sobered up I watched and learned from people. I could see a person with real good qualities I couldn't have until I tried it, so I went out and tried everything. I went for spiritual help and that was one of the biggest things that helped me. You might say I was conditioned, as a result of boarding schools, where they told me my language was no good, my Indian ways were no good. I was taught--you do this, this and this. I went to church twice a day but I didn't know why I was going. I was stuck in two cultures.

When I hit rock bottom in later years I realized that I was an Indian inside. The Indian then began to come out in me. I saw people, I saw nature. Everything around me was moving and I wasn't. But I wanted to move too and to live.

Today, I don't rush. I don't plan too far ahead. Alcoholics base life on excuses to drink and I can't ever drink again. If I take one drink I'm gone.

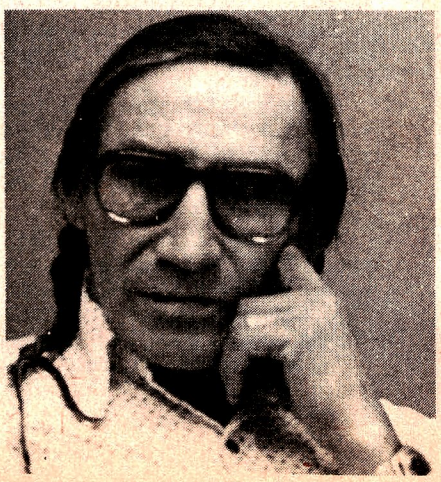
There's alot of things I learned two and a half years ago that I had learned a long time ago but I never stopped to think about. As for human beings I see myself in the. When I see a drunk it's pitiful because he's not whole--something is controlling him. He will deny it. But drunks are phonies--they're not real people. Today I believe I'm a real person. I'm sober. I wake up to morning that is beautiful. I see the sun come up and the sun set and this is a day I like. I only ask for a day. I can't ask for too much more.

This is one thing - I pray alot. Before, when I was white conditioned, the only time I prayed was when I was going up before a magistrate, waiting for a miracle, but it never happened. 'Now I say my prayers in my Indian tongue. I made up the words and they come from within me.

I never went to an AA (Alcoholic Anonymous) meeting for 18 months after I quit. I lived by the things around me. Then I went to an AA meeting in Calgary and I liked what I heard. It's the same thing as the Indian way of life to me. The twelve steps which are used are their guidelines. I was living them my way, my Indian way, because everything was there for my own comfort. Today I don't have to follow right to the book because they are just guidelines. What I mean is, if a person talks within himself that's the spirit talking. At an AA meeting that's where each individual is speaking of his spirit and that's a spiritual meeting to me. It's like a gathering of elders talking about experiences. I liked the fellowship. I is good. I go every chance I get, to an AA meeting.

When asked what changes he foresees for the Kainai Alcoholism program he said, 'You have to reach the top people. I'd like to see programs on the reserve for resource personnel. For example, we set up a workshop called, 'We are Responsible' held in Calgary last year for all agencies and all chiefs and councils on reservations. If they don't want these kinds of training programs who else is going to want them? They must practice the program Nechi offers to set the example.

On a reserve in northern Alberta (Kehewin) their chief and council are right behind this program. Last year their statistics revealed that 12 deaths were directly related to alcohol. Last year only one death occured as a result of alcohol. They have an alcoholism treatment centre



right there in their own area and the Chief, Joe Dion and Council are backing it. In reference to the Blood Reserve, George said, 'I don't know why the leaders don't look at alcohol as a problem because that is the number one problem on all Indian reservations. In order for people to be made aware of this fact there has to be a program because the people don't see alcoholism with open eyes.

As an alcoholism counsellor I can't go out to a person and tell him, 'Okay, your time is up to quit drinking--No. It's like this: for example, I can't say, 'you stay away from that woman.' It's the same with liquor. The guy loves that liquor. I heard a person once say, (and liquor is that powerful) 'If a woman has a baby, she's part of that baby, but when she drinks, that bottle comes between her and that baby.' You see it all the time. A person has got to come to counselling or must come to someone close to him. We can't make that decision for him to quit.

I hate to go up to a person and tell him, 'I got a problem with my drinking.' It's the same with others. A lot of people won't talk about it. To help those who need help we set up programs like group therepy sessions, to get people to be responsible for their own actions. Talk! If you got a problem, it's up to the counsellor to get that out! Ask questions to get him to come out with his problems and then ask him what he's going to do about it.

An alcoholic is a person who will look for excuses. If I ask 'why did you do that?' they will blame. He blames everybody. It's a disease--it's a feeling disease. When that individual is sincere and wants to do something about the alcoholism then we can help.

For teenag ers they often say, 'I don't have problems with drinking.' It's the young people we also have to reach. Most people don't know what an alcoholic is. An alcoholic, to me, is a person that drinks and he's got problems through drinking. It could be problems through living, a job, a family, money, anything that is affecting that alcoholic.

A guy can work year round with out missing a day but, how is his health, how is his family life?

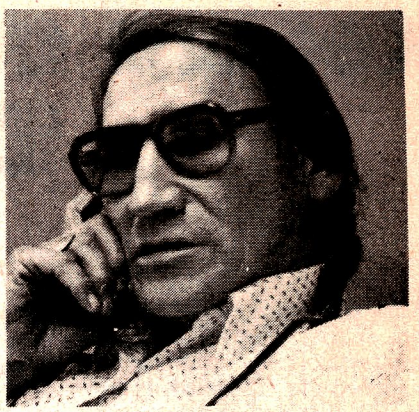
See, when you drink you affect an average of 10 people around you. You affect your wife, your kids, your job, your church, yes--everything around you. But the alcoholic thinks - I'm the only one being affected.

That was my thinking. I never stopped to think I was hurting others around me. You're living too fast. Nowadays people are living for only eight hours a day and for a paycheck every two weeks.

George believes alot of people procrastinate about religion. In the Indian religion the beliefs are strong. The people are free.

He told about one discussion he had with a guy. We were talking about alcoholism and I was telling him about my program I was working on and I was told, 'you're talking religious to me, what do you mean.' He said, 'religion, to a person, is what you believe in life.' I told him, 'my religion is Indian religion. As for alcohol,' I told him, 'we weren't given alcohol, it was given to the white people. They use it in their culture, communion, church, but that's theirs. We're given a pipe and a smudge. That's our belief. In other words we're just bought off by alcohol - it's killing us off right now.

George cites that he began drinking to be a part of the crowd. 'I didn't want to be left out. I guess we hate to face reality,



we hate what we are. Auh, there's so many reasons why people drink. I must have run out of reasons to drink. I had to drink to eat and to talk.

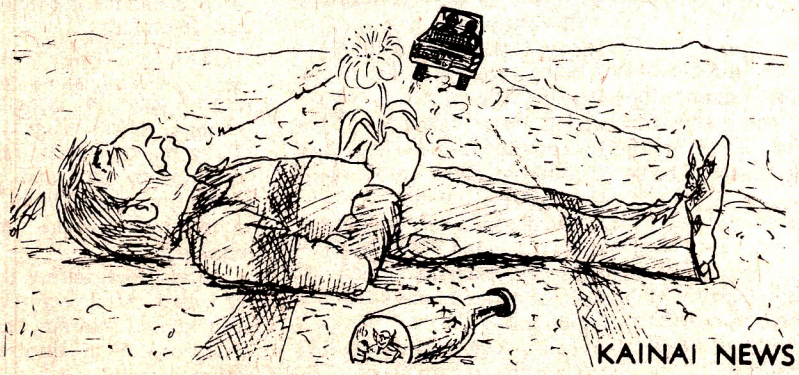
When I drank I tried to be a white person. This is what I mean - I was stuck in two cultures. I didn't know where I was, but when I was drunk I could out talk anybody.

Jails and alcoholics go hand in hand and George was not shy to talk about the years of installment plans he had with the institutions. He said, 'I did 17 years in installment plans. I never missed jail in 17 years, and in hospitals. I went through 4 DT's. I experienced seeing dead people, people who died from booze and seeing myself in the happy hunting ground. During the 20 years I was drinking I learned how to panhandle, how to bum, but you can put all that to good use.

To clarify what he meant by this, George told me about one client who came to him frustrated who said, 'I'm thinking of going back to my old ways of breaking into houses.' George asked him what he did to prepare before breaking in and he said, 'I case the joint down and look for weak spots then I go in.' So George told him, 'have you ever thought of putting those talents to work?' I told him to imagine being out on a trip and seeing a guy with problems - the same as you've got. Now look for his weak spots.' He looked at me dumb, and I told him, you can be a counsellor too. You can help another human being who's more important that what you are. By helping him, you're helping yourself.' He shook his head and said I think I'll go out and try it!'

In summing up George said, 'my job never stops.' In reference to whether he carries on with counselling a person even after that person has reached sobriety, he said, 'I'll counsel a client until his death. I can see a person all the time and what we're doing is communicating. All alcoholics need a friend and all alcoholics think everyone hates them, but there are many like me and others who are there and ready to help. But to help an alcoholic he has got to want to help himself.' George strongly believes this and he is certainly doing right in his choice of being the real person he contends that he is.

DON'T LET DRINKING GET YOU DOWN



Since you cannot refrain from drinking, why not start your own saloon in your house. Be the only customer and you will not have to buy a license.

Give your wife $55.00 to buy a case of whiskey. There are 240 drinks in each case. Buy a drink from your wife at 60 cents a drink.

In 12 days (when the case is gone), your wife will have $89.00 to put in the bank and $55.00 to buy another case.

If you live ten years and continue to buy whiskey from your wife and die in your boots, your widow will have $27,125,470.00 on deposit. That's enough to bring up your children, pay off the mortgage, marry a decent man and forget she ever knew a BUM LIKE YOU!!

Kenora and its people 'Development' poisons

PRAIRIE MESSENGER

KENORA, Ont. — Representatives of the Kenora-Keewatin Ministerial Association have questioned the "so-called development" that pollutes Ontario's environment and gives Kenora the province's highest rates of alcohol consumption and violent deaths.

REV. JOHN Fulmer, of the Lutheran church, Rev. Stewart Harvey, of the United Church, and Rev. Cliff Lafreniere, a Roman Catholic priest, presented a brief Jan. 17 to Ontario's Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, headed by Justice Patrick Hartt.

The brief said the Keewatin clergy were concerned about a pattern of development that has produced water contaminated with radioactive materials, PCBs, DDT, mercury, asbestos fibres and arsenic; that has made fish unsafe to eat, that poisons the air and may be making mothers' milk unsafe to drink.

"The earth is polluted through the touch of its inhabitants and its people are paying the price," they said, quoting the prophet Isaiah.

THE THREE clergymen stated they were alarmed that "those who pollute and those in our government whose job it is to monitor and police the corporations both seem intent on trying to cover up and ward off lawsuits, rather than openly admitting the extent of the problem and cleaning up the damage . . .

"And even when, on that rare occasion, the polluter is taken to court, found guilty on several counts and fined, the fine is so ridiculously low. Often lower," they said, "than that fine usually charged to someone who has taken too many fish when angling."

Besides criticizing "the almost daily" increase of pollution in the Kenora area, the ministerial spokesmen stated their concern about the "almost total breakdown of a once proud nation".

CITING EVIDENCE from the 1977 report of the Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario, the ministers observed that the Kenora district "was found to have the highest per capita alcohol consumption, the highest rates of arrests and violations for liquor offences, the highest rate of alcohol diagnosed hospital discharges, and the highest rate of deaths due to accidents, poisonings and violence" in the province.

In 1969, they said, "the alcohol consumption of the Kenora district was 16 percent above the provincial average. Five years later, in 1974, it was found to be 34 percent above the provincial average."

Although such complaints and the need for employment have been mentioned "hundreds of times in various briefs and submissions", according to the association's statement, "we still see no evidence that (this) message is being given the serious consideration that is deserved."

THE CLERGYMEN said that as leaders of the spiritual community they could no longer remain silent: "We simply cannot continue to break laws of God which have existed from the foundation of the world without paying the full price for doing so."

Calling for a 10-year plan to meet Kenora's "human and social stress", they invited all people, whether Indian or white to assume full responsibility for present conditions and to work for a more promising future.

The Kenora-Keewatin ministerial association, they said, is also ready to assume its share of leadership and responsibility in solving the problems.

Education needs "shaking"

Indian education needs a "shaking of the grassroots," according to Mrs. Theresa Wildcat, Hobbema educational activist.

Mrs. Wildcat was speaking at the opening of the two-day Alberta Indian Educators' Association convention to some 100 Indian educators.

She brought greetings to the convention from the Alberta Native Teachers' Society. She said this organization was promoting the Indian education system most suitable to meet the needs of the native students.

"A shaking of the grassroots is needed," Mrs. Wildcat says. "Parents need to become more involved in the community."

Too many educators, she says, remain complacent "in our little world of teaching".

An effort by teachers is needed to "pull the community into our schools," she says.

Mrs. Wildcat says she feels too many Indian teachers are civil servants "content to remain fixtures in their offices, and not get involved in the community".

Many "well-intentioned" teachers and some parents are trying to bring about change, Mrs. Wildcat says. They must be encouraged to remain to improve native education and "help us to bring about the needed change."

Hugh Reid, acting director of Indian Affairs of Alberta's educational system, brought greetings from the regional office.

Thank You!

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Addressee

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