INDIAN RECORD

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Respect and promotion of social justice, human rights and cultural values.

History made at First Ministers Conference

by Beatrice Fines

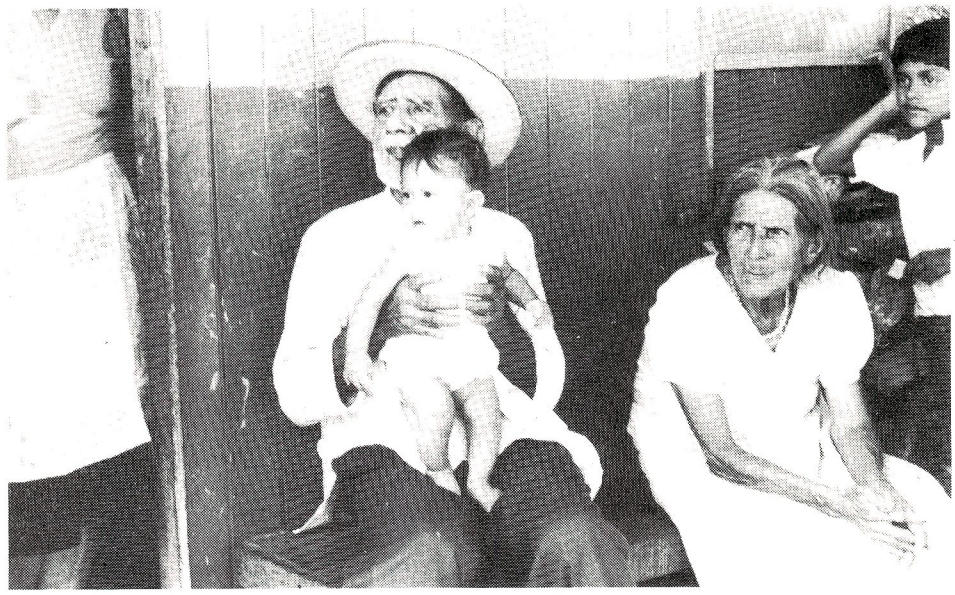
Television cameras rolled, newspaper and radio reporters and photographers crowded around when Prime Minister Trudeau and the provincial premiers met with native leaders in Ottawa on March 15 and 16, 1983, to discuss how the rights of the aboriginal peoples should be defined in the Canadian Constitution. It was the first time in history that native leaders had taken part in such a conference, and from the viewpoint of most of those attending, both native and white, the results were not entirely satisfying.

When Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister Trudeau signed the Constitutional Act under cloudy skies on April 17, 1982, native rights were defined as follows:

Section 25 of Part I guaranteed "any rights or freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of 1763" and "any rights or freedoms that may be acquired by the aboriginal peoples by way of land claims", while Section 3 of Part II affirmed the "existing aboriginal

(See HISTORY, p. 14)

CONTENTS



An elderly couple who fled from El Salvador three years ago play with their young grandchild. They have settled in the UN Camp in Costa Rica near the Nicaraguan border.

Dakota-Ojibwe pledge help to Guatemala refugees

Story and photos by Maureen Brosnahan

A delegation of Manitoba leaders who spent a gruelling nine days in Central America in May assessing the Indian refugee situation there have returned home exhausted but determined to mount a nation-wide campaign to garner support for the refugees and provide them with food and clothing.

The group of eight chiefs and councillors from the Dakota-Ojibway Tribal Council, which represents four Dakota and four Ojibway bands in southern Manitoba, made the journey at the invitation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples which represents aboriginal people around the world.

Chief Ernie Daniels of the Long Plain reserve and vice-chief of the Assembly of First Nations who led the delegation, said the trip stemmed from the World Assembly of First Nations Conference in Regina last summer which was attended by thousands of people from around the world. At that asssembly, a number of resolutions were passed which pledged support for the Indian people struggling in Central America. Daniels, who is also chairman of the DOTC, said the tribal council decided to put those resolutions into action.

The group that made the trip included Daniels, Chief Ernie Smoke of Dakota Plains, Chief Angus Starr of Sandy Bay and councillors Johnny Meeches of Long Plain, Don Daniels of Swan Lake and Stan Nelson, former chief and councillor at the Roseau River reserve. Gerald Kubb and Tim Maloney, two of the tribal council's program directors, also accompanied the group.

During the nine days the group met with dozens of officials from Indian organizations, the Catholic Church south of Comitan, Mexico and the

(See HELP, page 15)

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Church fully involved in Leadership Institute

The Amerindian Christian leadership institute will be held this July 17-22 at Thunder Bay, Ontario. In the past five years leadership, faith, church, community and family have been dealt with. This year, the theme is "Be not afraid."

This Institute has been quite successful in the past years and it has now gained the support of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as that of the Canadian Religious Conference. This official patronage shows that the Catholic Church in Canada is assuming to a fuller degree its collective responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the native peoples.

The objectives of the Institute will bring together Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Brothers, Sisters and lay people in search for the integration of Faith and Native Culture, for the development of the identity of communities and persons and to find light, guidance, courage and strength for everyone to fulfill their respective responsibilities in respect to the native people of Canada.

In a time of demands for land rights and cultural claims we all need to overcome past and present fears of differences in race and culture. Hence, the theme of the Institute is "Be not afraid."

The organizers of the Institute hope to initiate a dialogue between the missionary workers and the native people so that they can react clearly to the message of the gospel.

"Since we do have our native soul and our native vision, then there must be a native way of seeing Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, a christian community. There must be a native version of it, a version based on the Gospel, not the Canadian or European version," according to the Institute directors' announcement.

The experience of Bobby Woods and of Marlene Castilano will prove invaluable in identifying the spritual development on the native people based on their own life experiences, while Fr. Achiel Peelman, OMI, will show how various nations have tried to draft a blueprint of Christian life through their specific cultures. He will then show the need to revise and adapt the traditional teachings of Christ by confronting them with the native cultural traditions.

If a truly Christian image emerges from the Institute it will be a Christian vision grown out of the life and experience of the native people on the reserve and in the city.

"What it means is a willingness to search honestly for that Christianity and to be open to Native cultures; to bring Christianity and Native cultures together and see what happens, if anything happens; to see what emerges, if anything can emerge, without knowing what the end result will be." (Donovan)

Taking the first step

The mere holding of a first minister's meeting on native rights March 15 and 16 will fulfill the main promise which Canadian Governments made to the country's Indians, Inuit and Metis in the 1981 constitution-making exercise. There is no sign yet that the meeting will produce an agreed, exhaustive definition of aboriginal rights. There is no sign that the country or the native peoples are ready to write such a definition - or that they need to.

Status Indians may have a lot to lose through precise definition of their rights. They have just now some prospect of eventually asserting and winning respect for wider self-government and control of land and natural resources than they now enjoy. But if the federal and provincial governments were required now to write into law their views on status Indians' rights in those domains, the resulting definitions would probably be highly unfavorable to the Indians. No one can talk usefully of the rights of Metis people until some agreement is reached on who the Metis people are, or at least how it will be decided who they are. The country is a long way away from being ready to do that.

The structure of the first ministers' meeting, at which representatives of native peoples will speak, suggests that native people are expected to speak with one voice. The proposal that native people's rights should not be changed without their consent also treats the native peoples of Canada as one people with one interest and one will. White people and provincial governments and political parties are allowed to disagree, simultaneously expressing many views and serving various interests. But the native peoples are supposed to be unanimous; disagreement among native spokesmen is held to show that they are all in error or that they are not worth listening to. Indian political leaders fall into that habit of mind quite as much as white politicians, looking for a monolithic, strait-jacketed unity of native peoples' views when there is no real reason to expect it.

The conference will provide a high-profile platform from which Indian, Inuit and Metis spokesmen can try to raise the pride and political consciousness of native people in the country and rally their suppport behind a reasonably coherent program of political development. It will offer provincial premiers an opportunity to begin spelling out their views on aboriginal rights, though it puts them under no real obligation to go beyond mouthing platitudes. The premiers' quest for a meeting on economic policy suggests where their minds will be during the native leaders' remarks. If the meeting produces a shared understanding of what the major issues are and how they ought to be tackled, that will be important progress. It is unlikely to accomplish more than that.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

Micmacs claim reserve as ultimate solution

by Joan Weeks

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld — Dissention between Newfoundland Micmacs and the provincial government has continued to increase since the Indians filed their landclaim last year. The latest dispute has caused almost $1 million in funding to be withheld from the 580-member Conne River Band.

Marilyn John, a band council member, says the community is $280,000 in debt, and anger and frustration are at dangerous levels. Conne River suffers 85 per cent unemployment and the Indians have been forced to hide partly paid for heavy equipment, and block their roads against Hydro crews who tried to shut off the village's power.

Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, Joe Goudie, says funds will only be released on a "life and death" basis. Discounting claims by the band that their condition is desperate, Goudie says, "There's no one starving or freezing in Conne River. I have a clear conscience in this matter."

Many of the problems arise from the fact that the Newfoundland Micmac were never registered as status Indians when the province joined Confederation in 1949. They didn't receive any federal aid until the early 1970's when a federal-provincial agreement was signed. Ottawa supplies 77 per cent of the funding but the provincial government administers it.

The Newfoundland Indians have accused the province of "paternalism and meddling." Disagreements over how the money should be spent led to the funding breakdown. The Indians feel they should administer the funding themselves.

The province wants to administer a $60,000 charge for managing the funds. This would pay the salaries of two provincial administrators, one of whom would monitor the situation in Conne River. John feels the government shouldn't be allowed to pay the salaries of rural development department employees from money allocated to the band council.

The provincial government has also questioned a number of band expenditures including $1,371 for saw mill operations, $10,000 partial payment on a $35,000 lodge, $816 for insurance on a backhoe and a $16,791 payment for a van budgeted at $7,000.

John points out that band council budgets have been audited yearly since they began receiving funding in 1973. "We've always had a favorable audit." Some items ended up costing more than had been budgeted because they were underbudgeted in the first place.

The provincial minister also disagrees with a request from the band to change $22,500 home building grants to $40,000. As well, he says, the Indian band is proposing to build cabins in the countryside and the government believes they have not received approval for building on Crown lands.

Jerry Wetzel, band administrator, says the Indians want to upgrade facilities at two hunting and fishing lodges for which they have the proper permits. The lodges are used to attract tourists and supply work for guides.

Band council representatives have asked Goudie to release funds which are not in dispute, about $700,000. "We want to put people back to work," explains Wetzel. The provincial legislature has agreed to release emergency funding, however, only one such payment, of $4,000, has been made.

The Indians have also approached the federal government for help, asking to be registered as status Indians. If the Indians were registered they would be eligible for reserve land and for federal government financial programs for education and development. Federal Indians Affairs Minister John Munro refuses to say why he hasn't acted on the bands request.

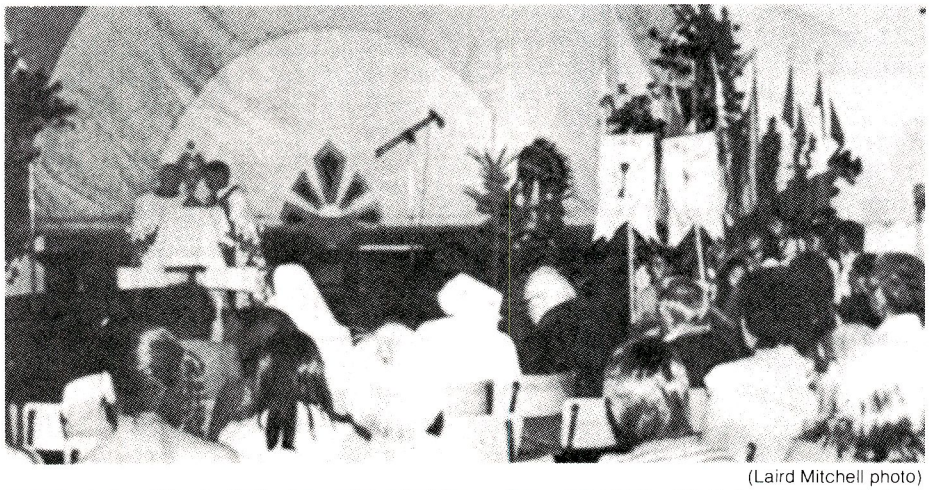
In late December, Munro asked for a meeting with his provincial counterpart to discuss what he called "the critical situation in Conne River." He then cancelled the meeting with a telex from Ottawa, minutes after it should have begun. The band council feels Munro's actions made the already situation worse.

Munro later rescheduled the meeting for Jan. 21. After meeting for over an hour, the two ministers emerged saying that an interim agreement on funding for the band had been reached. According to Munro, the band has agreed to compromise on some issues.

A provincial administrator will still be hired by the government but he must receive the band's approval. The band also decided to accept less than $40,000 apiece for the home construction grants. Community and social development funding requests have yet to be discussed, as well as housing and education.

Band Council Chief Joe said the meeting went better than they had expected but added that the council is still looking for a "long-term solution." In December, the band launched an action in the Supreme Court of Canada to have the 650 acres of the province they occupy designated as an Indian reserve.

In spite of two provincial announcements in January saying that the Micmac will receive their funding pending cabinet approval, the Indians have yet to see a cent. "The only reason no one is starving or freezing" (in Conne River), Chief Joe says, "is because we know how to live off the land. Through this whole thing we have continued with our traditional way of life." □



(Laird Mitchell photo)

Saddle Lake, Alberta Catholics celebrated three days of prayers with Father Haskell in May.

James Bay mission area is skidoo testing ground

LANSDOWNE HOUSE — Maurice Ouimet and Joseph-Armand Bombardier were boyhood chums in Valcourt, Quebec and while the friendship remained close until Bombardier's death, the goals they eventually chose to pursue were distant.

Ouimet became a Catholic priest of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Bombardier invented the snow machine and through his Bombardier and Ski-Doo machines built an empire and changed the face of travel over much of the world.

But the hands that would bless the dying and lift the host on high in wilderness Masses were also good with a wrench. So when Bombardier wanted to test his earliest Ski-Doos in the late ' 50's, he had Ouimet do it.

The Oblate priest had come to Moosonee in 1938, got to know the west-coast James Bay area like his backyard, spoke Cree and Ojibway besides French and English and remained a good all-round handy man. He got his first snow machine from Bombardier in 1959 and was glad to give it a try after 20 years of driving dog teams. Every year, he would write a detailed performance report with recommendations, send it back to Bombardier and get a new model. He still gets a new machine annually, although he keeps two Ski-Doos now, one for backup.

Lansdowne House is an Indian settlement in north-central Ontario, accessible only by air; the nearest road is 200 miles away.

The 71-year-old priest has made it his headquarters since 1950. He is the only Catholic priest for five of the parishes in the Diocese of Moosonee, an area more than twice the size of France.

Last year, he logged 8,256 Ski-Doo miles visiting his 625 parishioners. In one settlement, he only has one family, but that's better than no families, so he goes.

On rare occasions, he has travelled the bush alone, but that ended in 1966 when he went through the ice and lost his Ski-Doo and all his gear. He managed to pull himself onto the ice but couldn't get a fire going because his matches were soaked. And he was freezing and he knew it. He started to walk, his heavy clothing sluggish, beginning to stiffen. Before he finally made it back to his mission, he had walked and stumbled for 30 miles.

The next day he became quite ill and tuberculosis was diagnosed and he spent more than a year in a sanitorium in Montreal.

Nonetheless, he continues to find the North a beautiful place. Every day is a new adventure and everyone is his friend. He could not live in a city.

But after almost 45 years as a priest, does he have any doubts? "Oh no . . . well, not yet anyway."

(The Sun, Toronto)

Father Maurice Ouimet, OMI, over 30 years In Lansdowne House, Ontario.

Summer institute on Christian leadership

THUNDER BAY, Ont. — The 6th Annual Institute on Amerindian Christian Leadership will be held July 17-22 here at the Confederation College. The sponsoring committee includes Theresa Hall, Marie Lou Iatail, Charlie Fisher and Joyce Courchene, all elected by the native representatives of last year's conference; also representatives of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Canadian Religious Conference and the Oblate Conference of Canada.

Planning committee chairperson is Bernice Desnomie with Gene Bannon, Joyce Courchene, Mary Davis, Charles Fisher and Theresa Hall. Consultants are Fr. Dominique Kerbrat, OMI and Brother E. Aubry, OMI. Resource people are Bobby Woods and Rev. A. Peelman, OMI, of St. Paul's University of Ottawa.

The theme of the Institute is "Be not afraid." Invited to participate are the local leaders and those involved in leadership development at all levels, trainers and trainees in programs of ministries and service in the Church and pastors and pastoral workers in the Native parishes and mission centres across Canada.

(A report on the Institute will be published in the Fall Issue of the INDIAN RECORD.) □

S. Cuthand defines native values.

by Kathleen Mazur Teillet

One of the featured speakers at the panel discussion called 'Native Voices' held March 2 at the University of Winnipeg was Rev. Stan Cuthand who discussed the ways in which Indian culture has been adversely affected by white culture.

In explaining the way in which Indian beliefs have been undermined, Mr. Cuthand said, "I was brought up in an Anglican school, and I sang *God Save the King,* and *O Canada,* and *The Maple Leaf Forever;* I learned about the British Navy and the saints of Britain, and the British flag; I was taught traditional British values and became British."

He then asked how native people brought up that way could have any real understanding of or reverence for their own traditional values and even how they could hang on to them.

'If you want people to retain their culture, you must make sure they are taught by people from that culture," he said.

Mr. Cuthand said that Indian values had been clearly defined in the past, and he listed them as: honor, independence, active participation in the affairs of the community (tribalism), pride, self reliance, initiative, self-discipline, humility. These values arose from Indian religious beliefs, he said , and because of this, the Indian found it easy to believe in the Son of God. Parallels between Jesus and the Christ-like characters in Indian stories, made Jesus easy to accept. As well, Indian creation myths were not

so different from Christian ones. But transferring Indian belief to Christian religions meant losing some of the Indian heritage.

Mr. Cuthand pointed out that despite similarities between the stories of their forefathers and those of the Christian missionaries, Indian belief incorporated many things that could not be understood by the white mind and were not found in Christian culture. Mr. Cuthand noted that in Indian lore there is a profound respect for nature, a perceived spirituality in nature that defines the Indian's relationship to the world around him.

He said that technology has affected this relationship. For example, when the axe came and a market existed for wood, the Indian sold wood even though he had been taught to respect the spirit existent in each tree. This created a cultural dilemma for him back then and it is still a problem today.

"How can you integrate Indian values into today's world?" Mr. Cuthand asked.

Rev. Stanley Cuthand

Another way Indian values were dissipated had to do with loss of language. Mr. Cuthand said it was and is presumptuous of white society to teach native children without even a pretense of learning native languages and with no effort to examine cultural beliefs. Mr. Cuthand believes this particularly detrimental among urban Indians where a diversity of tribal groups creates a further language problem.

While Mr. Cuthand did not pretend to have all the answers to preserving Indian culture while also fitting the Indian for life in an industrial society, he did suggest that caring white people should try to understand the Indian. He said that analyzing the native languages would further such understanding and he demonstrated, through storytelling, how the folklore of a people will show how that people thinks, acts, and believes.

"What are traditional values?" Mr. Cuthand asked. "What do people read, talk about, bow to, salute, think about, to whom do they pray? Know those answers and you know their values."

He left his audience (largely white) feeling that the white man has a long way to go before he can understand his Indian brother. □

Native rights mark installation of Tekakwitha parish

By Lomer Laplante, OMI

WINNIPEG, Man. — Archbishop A.Exner, OMI, of Winnipeg appointed Fr. Dominique Kerbrat, OMI, pastor of Kateri Tekakwitha Parish which numbers 15,000 to 20,000 Catholic natives living in the City of Winnipeg.

On January 16th of this year Fr. Kerbrat was invested in the Sacred Heart Church Parish Hall.

The ceremony, which lasted one hour and a half was conducted by medicine man, a spiritual leader from the Roseau River reserve. 250 Indians and Metis took part.

Following the native tradition the men sat on one side of the hall and the women on the other side. The Native medicine man sat on a blanket with one assistant sitting on each side.

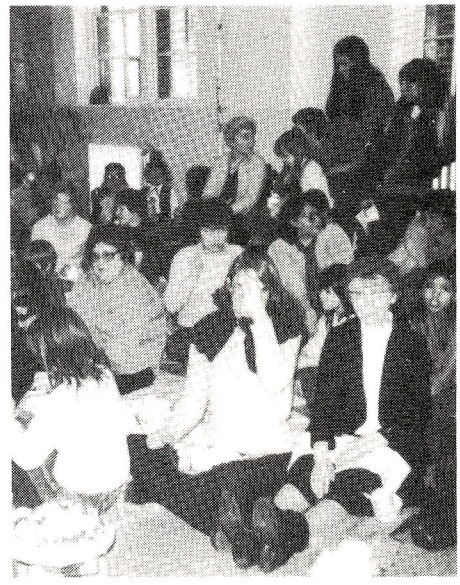
To the medicine man's right a peace pipe and a sweet grass in a leather case were placed. In front of the blanket were four folded blankets and a tobacco jar which were the gifts of the parish to the spiritual leader. In the middle of the hall, on the floor, were placed 60 containers of food, bannock and drink, placed in circles for the meal that would follow.

The ceremony began with the rite of purification of the medicine man, his assistants, the leather case, the tobacco and the blankets. This consisted in spréading the sweet grass smoke as done with the liturgical censer: as smoke reaches the faithful the people wave it over their heads. The purpose of this gesture is to destroy everything that may break the harmony between the people and the universe.

Then the medicine man's assistants purified the food and the beverages. The medicine man then began a long prayer to the Kitci-Manito in Ojibway. After this the medicine man smoked the peace pipe again, passed it on to his assistants, then to Fr. Kerbrat and to Fr. A. Gervais, provincial superior, and to selected natives.

This ceremony symbolizes the recognition of belonging to the native community. At the request of Mary Davis, who spoke in the name of the parish, the medicine man sent one of his assitants to purify the moccasins and the beaded necklaces which will be worn by Fr. Kerbrat when celebrating Mass.

The meal was then served by the men to the people.



(Denise Moguet photo)

Sharing a meal in the parish hall

The Kateri Tekakwitha community began in 1979 under the pastoral care of Frs. Gervais and Kerbrat, when Sacred Heart Parish opened its doors to the natives of the City. Now the church, offices and meeting rooms of the parish are used to house the native pastoral centre.

Since 1950 a native community has been growing around the St. John Bosco Centre; this name was changed officially to that of Kateri Tekakwitha in 1980. The Oblate priests who pioneered in this work are Frs. J. Lambert, D. Ruest, A. Lacelle, A. Carrière and Guy Lavallée. □

Native nurses promote health concerns

by Andrea Lang

The Manitoba Native Nurses Association was formed in 1979 to encourage Indian control, involvement and decision-making in health care in order to promote better health among Manitoba Indian people.

To achieve these aims the association concentrates on five main areas: development of a registry of Indian Registered Nurses, recruitment of new members, resources for education of both Indian and non-Indian people, research in specific areas of health needs of Manitoba Indians and recommendations for proper solutions to these needs.

"In simpler terms you could say that the association's founding was a direct result of the need for communication with our people in the area of health," says Grace Easter, current president of the M.I.N.A. and founding member of the group.

"The main barrier to communication is language. For many it is difficult to understand everyday English; when a doctor or nurse is trying to give a complicated medical explanation the meaning becomes completely lost.

"For others it is a need to be understood for their culture and their beliefs; they are more comfortable with someone who comes from a background similar to their own."

There is an acute shortage of native Registered Nurses in Canada. With only 157 native R.N.'s nation wide, they comprise only .0011% of the total complement of nurses in the country.

The Manitoba group is the most active with 55 members so it was natural that this city was chosen as the national headquarters of the Registered Nurses of Canadian Indian Ancestry. It is located at 650 Burrows Avenue.

With two staff and a permanent office funded by both government and non-government agencies the group is attempting to overcome the barriers of geographic distance and small numbers to make themselves a vocal minority.

"At present we spend a large amount of time seeking operating funds to keep us going," says Ms. Easter. "There are large amounts of money needed just for transportation in bringing our members together to discuss common concerns."

The M.I.N.A.'s last provincial meeting concentrated on fund-raising but Grace Easter would like to see these problems resolved so that the association can turn to the more important issues.

"One of our major concerns is the recruitment of people into the health care field. We are active with programs such as Red River Community College's northern nurses course which operates out of Winnipeg and Thompson and Brandon University's Mature Nursing Program but this is not enough. The focus on promoting health careers should start within the regular school system at an early age. If we can graduate enough Indian nurses and other health professionals we can guarantee that the health needs of Indian people can be better met."

It was the concern for the poor health of their people that prompted the first meeting to form an Indian nurses association in 1974. Though Indians living a traditional lifestyle of the advent of western colonization were considered to be of excellent health and strong physique, their general health level has declined rapidly in the society in which they now live. Dependent upon ever-shifting federal policy and demoralized by living a life beyond their control, many Indians become trapped into a pattern of social ills such as alcohol and drug abuse, family breakdown, suicides, accidents and violent deaths. Statistics compiled by Indian Affairs in the book titled "Indian Conditions: A Survey" paint a grim picture of the present and not much promise for the future if present trends continue.

"Perhaps we, by educating our people and others of the importance of Indian health care professionals to treat our own people, can do something to reverse this trend." □

Grace Easter, President of the Manitoba Native Nurses Association

New service for children

THOMPSON, Man. — Indian authorities here have been delegated responsibility for delivery of on-reserve child welfare services in the north. This came under an agreement signed February 22 by the federal and Manitoba governments with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Incorporated, an organization representing 25 northern Indian bands. The federal department of Indian affairs will provide funding for the creation of the new agency, which will employ 16 professional staff.

Natives to adopt their own children

WINNIPEG — The Kimelman inquiry's interim report on Indian and Metis child adoptions and placements is promising — but promise is not enough, a spokesman for the Coalition on Native Child Welfare said recently.

"The native people have been asking for help for 10 or 12 years," said lawyer Larry Allen. "There's a strong feeling in the native community that this (report) may be too little, too late."

In a report released May 27, Judge Edwin Kimelman called for a major overhaul of Manitoba's child welfare services to "ensure that services are sensitive to the cultural and ethnic composition of local communities."

Recommendations included:

- Replacing the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg with five or six community agencies staffed by community residents.
- Maintaining Manitoba's current ban on out-of-province Indian and Metis adoptions, except in special cases.
- Setting up a Manitoba Child Placement Committee, including representatives from the province's Indian and Metis Communities, to step in when an agency can't find a suitable home for a child within "a reasonable period." □

Court Communicators untangle legal system

by Andrea Lang

A young native man, recently arrived in Winnipeg, attended a wedding of a distant relative in a local community hall. When leaving the hall he was accosted by six men who beat him viciously for remarks he had made in the hall. During the melee, the victim pulled a knife and stabbed one of his assailants. When the police came they charged him with possession of a dangerous weapon and attempted murder. He was put in jail over night until charges could be formally laid.

When up before the court the next morning, the man's first impulse was to plead guilty and take the consequences. It seemed easier than trying to plow his way through the maze of English and legal terminology that confronted him and there was no way he felt the confidence to speak up before the sea of white faces around him. And after all, the judge was asking him if he had pulled a knife and if he had stabbed a man. To his way of thinking, "guilty" was the proper plea.

Fortunately this offender was counselled by one of twelve Native Court Communicators working in Manitoba before he gave his plea. The Communicator explained to him, in his own native language, the possible consequences of such a plea and his chances of being found not guilty due to mitigating circumstances.The Communicator also counselled him to seek a lawyer to defend him and assured him that the cost could be covered by Legal Aid or other sources. He offered to go with the man to enter his plea and later to his court appearance to both translate and explain the procedures. For the young man it was like seeing a light at the end of a tunnel. Whether or not he would be able to beat the charge entirely was not the important issue though he could certainly hope for a reduced sentence. What was important was that he had found a friend, someone to lean on when he was down and out.

The Native Court Communicator program began in 1971 to help native people gain a better understanding of their rights, interests and responsibilities in relation to the criminal justice system. It arose, explains Chief Court Communicator Al Chartrand, out of provincial concerns over the high proportion of Manitoba's native people involved in the justice system.

Al Chartrand, Chief Court Communicator

"Sometimes the offender was not able to explain himself because of his poor use and understanding of English. Sometimes it was the difference between his upbringing in a remote, close-knit community and the cultural shock of the city; sometimes his almost literal translation of the issue. He was asked if he stabbed someone and he did; ergo he is guilty. No one asked him about self-defense so he didn't tell them. This sort of occurence is very common."

Chartrand, who is himself of Metis heritage and grew up in The Pas, has an obvious sympathy with those he is there to help. He cited the case of a man charged with break and enter to a Brandon home. "The man lived in a house peopled by several families. It was noisy and congested. When he wanted to make a private phone call he simply walked into the house next door to use the phone. He never knocked. People in the remote communities of the province don't lock their doors and rarely knock for entry. It is accepted that everyone is welcome; shelter and food are never denied."

Chartrand cited similar cases of men charged with "public exposure" who had simply urinated outdoors as they would in the bush surrounding their own home communities; of men and women entering houses or public buildings for shelter on a cold night and being charged with loitering or break and enter.

"Of course not all of the people we help are innocent. Some are hard-core offenders who have been through the criminal justice system many times. Yet, even if they are guilty they are entitled to a full understanding of their charges in a language that they are at ease with."

Among them the native Court Communicators speak all Indian dialects indigenous to Manitoba and a few common to other locales. Though the headquarters of the agency is located in Winnipeg, the communicators themselves are found throughout the province in Thompson, Fort Alexander, Island Lake, Grand Rapids, The Pas, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin, Brandon, Cross Lake, Oxford House, God's Narrows and Pukatawagan.

There is often a difference between the needs of the accused in the city and those in remote communities. In the city it is often a case of providing a bridge between two cultures. In the remote areas, it is usually a language barrier."

The Court Communicators visit the jail every day, often as early as six o'clock to get there in advance of the first scheduled court appearance. They go through the docket of new prisoners and their charges and then see them individually. Starting with mundane matters to set them at their ease (e.g. name, address, age) the communicator then tells them what to expect in court, explains the law they have broken and recommends the service of a lawyer if there is a need for one. He also connects the prisoners to other agencies for specific needs, i.e., Legal Aid for hiring the lawyer.

"Our assistance is fully accepted by the criminal justice system. At the jail we are expected and reports are ready for us. Some judges will postpone a hearing until the accused has talked to a Court Communicator. In the remote areas this might mean a wait of several days since our people have to cover a large territory up north."

The communicators themselves are often from the community they represent. Though the department does prefer them to have some background in the legal or social service field, Al Chartrand maintains that language and an empathy with people are the main requirements. The training consists of being placed with a senior communicator for 1 - 1 weeks and then working under supervision in their own territory for

another few weeks. "Obviously independence is the greatest asset they can possess. We can introduce them to the authorities in their area but it is up to them to act on their own afterward."

The Manitoba Court Communicator program is provincially funded within the Attorney-General's department, the only such program in Canada not cost shared with the federal government. Independence from government is maintained by having a program answerable to the chief provincial judge.

Though often the communications problem arises because of the complexities of the justice system itself, sometimes the situation is compounded by the jurisdictions of the Band Councils on each reserve. Allowed to be self-governing to a certain extent the reserve may rule that a member is a trouble maker and banish him from the community for a set period of time. He then has no choice but to drift into the city, without available funds and with no job prospects. The scene is set for crime.

"This method of segregation, though understandable, can lead to tragic circumstances," adds Chartrand. He cited the case of a man of nineteen banished from his home community for six months. In Winnipeg he began a series of public fights and petty vandalism. He was finally arrested when he shot a firearm through the walls of a school late one night. He was sentenced to sixty days in jail and sent to Headingley Correctional Institute. At that time Headingley was overcrowded with more serious offenders and provided him with a ticket home. Once home he was charged with violating his probation, yet he had been ordered not to return to the city. What could he do?

Luckily the solution to his no man's land status was found in another project originating with the Court Communicator program. He was sent to project Rene, a work camp and rehabilitation centre for offenders in The Pas. There he had the opportunity for further counselling and to learn a trade to help him find employment at the end of his sentence.

"Early in the program we realized it wasn't enough to assist the accused through the period of hearings and trials. They needed continuous support while they were in jail and after their release." Project Rene is one of the outreach programs designed to fill this need. (See *INDIAN RECORD, Winter 1983*).

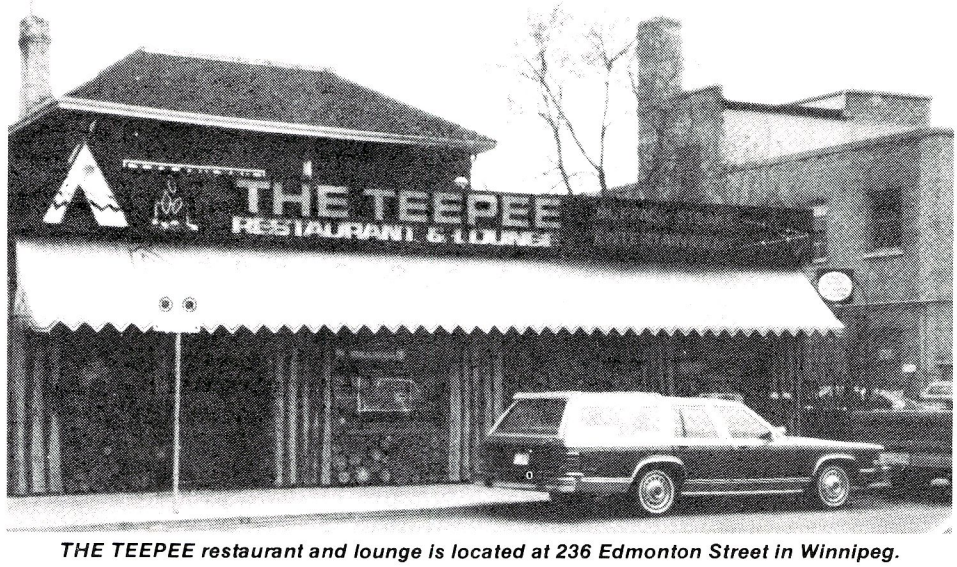
Another is the Native Clan organization which has established rehabilitative programs within the jails. And a native halfway house on the outside. The Native Clan considers itself a facilitator, rather than a care agency. Its primary objective is the increased involvement of native inmates in existing institutional programs and in the development of others tailored specifically to meet their needs. In other words, brother helping brother. Within the Native Clan, project Rene and the Court Communicator program itself it is plain to see that both men and women are providing this bridge to greater understanding. □

THE TEEPEE : A Native business venture

Story and photos by Beatrice Fines

The Teepee Restaurant in downtown Winnipeg offers patrons an assortment of native foods in attractive surroundings reflecting native culture. In a city that has numerous 'ethnic' restaurants — Greek, Italian, French, Chinese, German, Jewish, Ukrainian **etc. — The Teepee stands out as the** only one of its kind. Indeed, Mary Richard and Yvonne Monkman, the co-owners, know of only one other such native restaurant, The Tribe, in Edmonton.

The two women opened the restaurant in April, 1981, under the name 'Bungees', from the Ojibway word meaning ' a part of something', a 'little bit'. The word was not familiar to most people and many, hearing about the 'new Indian restaurant' presumed the cuisine was East Indian. So this year Mary and Yvonne changed the name, choosing a word which is familiarly associated with Indians all over North America.



THE TEEPEE restaurant and lounge is located at 236 Edmonton Street in Winnipeg.

The decor of the Teepee is unusual. The front outside wall and some interior walls are covered with the end pieces of logs of all sizes cut from native Manitoba trees such as spruce, pine, birch and ash. They are fitted together in somewhat the same way as stones are placed to form a stone fence or wall. Other inside walls are of peeled logs laid horizintally in the traditional fashion of a log house.

A large, mounted buffalo head, paintings and drawings by Indian artists, photographs and Indian artifacts add to the decor. Some of these things have been donated to the Teepee; others are on loan.

The restaurant has two rooms, one with red-checked oil-cloth covered tables, the other in a more formal, elegant style. There is also a small lounge and bar. The menu includes buffalo steaks, pheasant, partridge, quail and sometimes rabbit and duck. Buffalo meat is purchased from a private herd belonging to a farmer near Miami, Manitoba. Government restrictions make it impossible to include wild meats such as cariboo,

Mary Richards is co-owner of THE TEEPEE

moose or elk. Bannock, pemmican, blueberries, saskatoons and wild rice, all traditional native foods, are on the menu at all times. The Teepee bought blueberries from pickers in the Kenora area, but Mary Richard picked the saskatoons herself. The fruit was frozen and is cooked as needed.

Mary and Yvonne met while both were employed at the Friendship Centre in Winnipeg, Yvonne as Director and Mary as Assistant Director. Mary is originally from Camperville, Manitoba. After finishing school there, she took a barbering and hairdressing course in Winnipeg and worked as a hairdresser before going to the Friendship Centre. Yvonne is from Manigotagan, Manitoba, and attended the University of Winnipeg. She taught school in the city before she began work at the Friendship Centre, and is one of the founding members of the 'Little Ones School' at the Friendship Centre, a kindergarten for native children.

The idea of opening a native restaurant grew as the two women worked and talked together. When the **INDIAN RECORD** asked, "How's business?" Mary replied, "Well, it could be better." She and Yvonne realize that these are tough economic

Customers enjoying traditional native food

times, but they are confident that The Teepee will survive them.

As more and more people become acquainted with the unusual decor and the unique menu, The Teepee will very likely become a place to go to entertain guests and for family celebrations. □

Northern chiefs voice support for pro-lifers

Pro-life marchers at the Morgentaler clinic received an unexpected boost May 24, while pro-choice supporters delivered an attack on the Crown's defence of Canada's abortion laws.

In a telephone call to the picket line trailer at the clinic, Chief Joe Guy Wood of St. Theresa Point Indian band echoed the sentiments of four Manitoba Indian communities.

Wood told pro-life leader Joe Borowski he was sending along a petition and $350 collected by his people. "As far as we know, every single adult among our 700-member band signed the petition and people were willing to give what they could to help," Wood said.

Borowski called the gesture "a fantastic boost after three weeks of picketing."

Chief J. J. Harper of Wasagamack Indian band, Chief Dennis Whitebird of the Rolling River Indian band and Chief Jim Bear of the Brokenhead Indian band also supported Borowski, saying their people had signed similar pro-life petitions.

"Abortion is a very serious matter to us. According to our teaching and tradition, children are a gift of the Creator. They are on loan and we can never justify killing a child at any point in the pregnancy," Bear said.

In a letter to Borowski, the St. Theresa band council wrote: "We totally reject any means of abortion, as man has no business interfering with life — only God has that right."

Wood said abortion was the subject of a talk show on a community television station.

"Our people, some of them who could not read, were very concerned. They were worried about where killing would stop. It could be extended to handicapped and older people who are not wanted, they feared," Wood said.

Borowski launched a court challenge of Canada's abortion laws hoping to strike down a 1969 amendment that allows abortions under certain conditions. He's fighting the battle on the grounds that a provision in the Constitution guaranteeing an individual's right to life includes the fetus. (Winnipeg Free Press)

Bernelda takes to the stage

Readers of the INDIAN RECORD who have missed Bernelda Wheeler's regular column in these pages lately will be pleased to learn that a venture into a new field has been occupying much of her time. On April 13, Bernelda appeared in the Manitoba Theatre Centre Warehouse opening of Alf Silver's play, *'Climate of Our Times'*.

Silver approached Bernelda in January and asked her to read for the part of Ida, manager of the Northern Manitoba hotel which is the setting for the play.

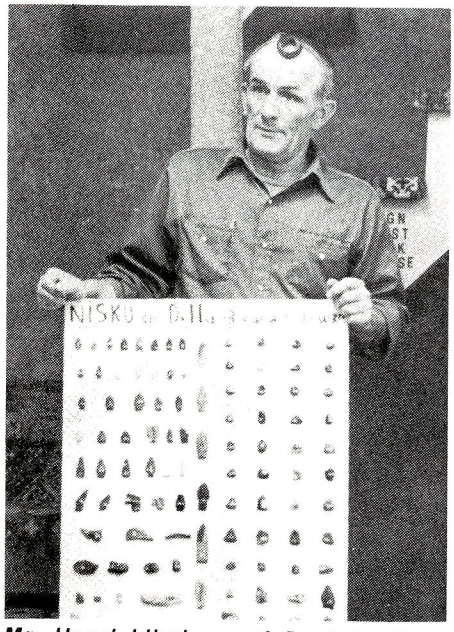
Bernelda confessed to being nervous prior to opening night, but said, "I think it is important that native people go into all the fields where they can have some kind of effect on the Canadian mosaic."

Bernelda herself has been active as a writer, a broadcaster and a counsellor. "I guess the most important thing is my writing to profile indigenous people and the magnificent, incredible ancestral heritage that I have. Nobody will ever convince me that it was not the greatest civilization that ever lived — not technically, but spiritually, physically, philosophically. And we know so little about it," she said.

—B.F.

Collecting arrowheads — a thing of the past

by Tanya Lester



Mr. Henri Liboiron, of Ponteix, Sask. showing part of his arrowhead collection.

Henri Liboiron grew up at Ponteix in southern Saskatchewan during an era when collecting arrowheads was a "natural" pastime for children. But, in Liboiron's case, hunting Indian artifacts was and still is more than a hobby.

"My father sold arrowheads so we kids could (afford to) go to school," he recalled.

Despite his family's financial problems, Liboiron, as a boy, was still able to attach more than a monetary value to the arrowheads he was finding. When he made his feelings known to his father, the arrowhead sales stopped and Liboiron's collection began to develop.

"It spells one thing — MAN," Liboiron said in reference to collecting arrowheads and archeology in general. "The history of man. That's why it ties in."

After 40 years of collecting and having registered the discovery of over 150 Indian artifact sites with the Museum of Natural History in Regina, Liboiron is still persuading people to value the remains of the Indians' ancestors.

Now, however, he is more likely to be found convincing government officials rather than his family. Just recently, when Liboiron discovered the Department of Highway's plans to straighten a section of Highway No. 13 would cut through and destroy one of these sites he alerted the proper government authorities.

Professional archeologists came out to explore the site and because their initial studies showed the site could well be of special significance, plans to alter the highway have been delayed until further investigations can be made.

The site was named the Nisku Site by Liboiron, as is the finder's privilege, and means "big goose" in Cree. The site could also turn out to be a big find as the artifacts it contains, known as Cody complex remains, appear to be very old and undisturbed.

While Cody complex remains have been found throughout Saskatchewan, the artifacts including arrowheads, knives, bones and tools which Liboiron has collected over the years and those still to be uncovered at the Nisku Site, could turn out to be over 8000 years old. If further excavations concur with the archeologists' superficial explorations, Liboiron could be credited with discovering the earliest undisturbed Indian inhabited area in the province to date.

It seems incongruent that the Nisku Site should be classified as being "undisturbed" when Liboiron has been collecting from the site for years. But he has never disturbed the site because he knows the role he has to play as an amateur or avocational archeologist. He has never tried to "dig" or excavate the sites he finds but leaves that up to the professionals.

Liboiron depends on soil erosion to help him make his discoveries. "The easiest way to find them (the artifacts) is still after a windstorm," he said. "I just pick them up on the surface. People say I can smell them out."

That the Nisku Site has been left as undisturbed as the ever-blowing Saskatchewan winds allow, is valuable to archeologists for several reasons. Some of the organic and animal materials found at the sight might be used for radiocarbon dating or to better estimate the date when these prehistoric Indians lived in the area.

Other materials could even help to determine the lifestyle of these native ancestors. The findings could better etch out a picture of the past by defining where the hearths in the campground or Indian village were located and where other activities, such as butchering animals and making stone tools, took place. The food diets of these peoples could also be determined.

But it is ironical that if Liboiron had tried to save his Nisku Site 25 years ago, he probably would not have received the same support from archeologists.

Until the 1960's, although Liboiron already owned arrowheads and other materials "older than the pyramids", archeologists were mostly interested in artifacts found in the ancient Biblical and Egyptian countries.

Unfortunately, in the Ponteix area, while as Liboiron said "every second farmer had a collection of arrowheads" in the past, only two of these collections are left. The majority of the farmers sold theirs over the years.

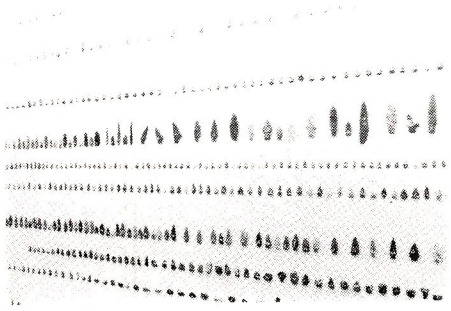
Perhaps, for this reason, Liboiron has strong feelings for preserving what he has of the native past. He is careful to do it right.

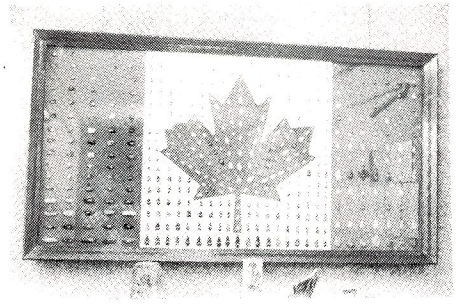
By chance, Liboiron started to keep the records, which he would later need to register his sites with the Museum of Natural History, long before he was aware of the registering process. "Finding so much material, I wanted to make sure I remembered where it was," he said.

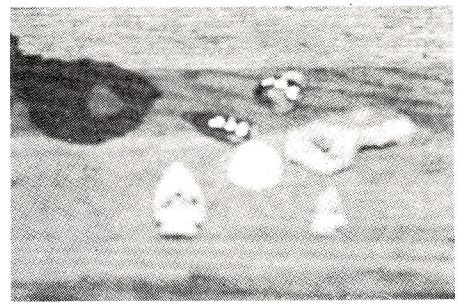
Liboiron's personal collection, kept in his basement, is set up behind glass much like a museum display. He has painstakingly numbered each artifact with white shoe polish coated with clear nail polish. The number on each artifact coincides with his typed records.

When he marks the sites he finds, Liboiron uses flour and water because it can be removed easily and does not damage his findings.

Liboiron is able to determine a certain amount of information concerning the Indians' past way of life by merely examining each arrowhead. For example, he said, the sharpness of the point on an arrowhead can define how often it was used or how durable the stone materials used to make the arrows were. The stone arrowheads were all designed by other stones used as tools.







Henri Liboiron's arrowhead collection

Liboiron has formulated some of his own theories, too. For instance, he thinks the smaller arrowheads he has acquired were made for children just learning to hunt with a bow and arrow.

Beside the authentic arrowheads in Liboiron's collection are ones he has fashioned himself over the last 20 years. Some were cut out of the white glass from coffee mugs. Others have been made from the blue glass of a Milk of Magnesium bottle.

Liboiron is not seeking fame or fortune through his avocational archeological work. He actually laughs at this professional term used to denote amateurs in the field. He modestly thinks it is like "calling a garbage collector, a sanitary engineer."

But Liboiron takes his collecting arrowheads and hunting out sites seriously. Through his work, he is still trying to satisfy the curiosity he developed as a boy for the ancient people who once resided on the Prairies. In this way, the everyday experiences of the past can be linked with the everyday experiences of the present. □

1,000 Blood Indians walk longest Way of Cross

by Dale Boissonneault

On Good Friday this year a light, cold wind fell out of the distant Rockies and swept around a procession of people which was nearly two miles long.

More than 1,000 residents of the Blood Reserve in southern Alberta took part in what may be the largest, longest, oldest and least known Way of the Cross in Western Canada.

On many of the faces both old and young was the smile of joy, the work perhaps of a warm spring sun. Behind these happy expressions lay firm determination.

The purpose of this twice annual 18-mile walk cannot be measured in terms of dollars raised for the annual Share Lent campaign. Nor could most participants explain this purpose — it is something only the heart sees clearly.

This march was simply a way in which the people of Canada's largest Indian reserve express their oneness with the victimized, the poor of the world. It is also the way Jesus expressed his oneness with the victimized of the world almost 2,000 years ago. It is the Way of the Cross.

As the provincial animateur for Development and Peace, I was invited to come and join in the walk. I was keenly interested for a variety of reasons. One involves the connection between Development and Peace and this Way of the Cross.

Through this walk the people of the Blood Nation, a people themselves victimized by our society's racist undertones, raise money for the poor of world.

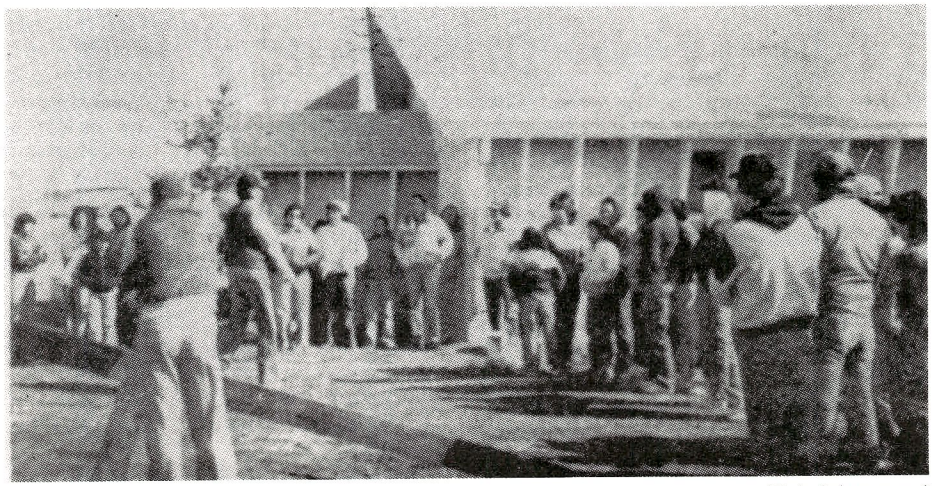
It began in 1972 and has gone on twice during Lent each year since that time (on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday). The residents raise funds for Share Lent by seeking sponsors for the Ash Wednesday walk. The Share Lent contribution is then collected at the time of the second walk on Good Friday.

Neither procession is what you might consider a typical Way of the Cross. The procession consists of three groups starting out from three different points on the reserve and converging at the central church and high school, St. Mary's.

I was fortunate enough to be taking part in the group leaving Standoff, Alta. With a prayer of blessing and the promise of sunshine, about 400 of us started out on the 22.5 kilometre trek south.

The entire community was taking part: children, the elders, parents, young men and women, teenagers. I felt certain a member of the reserve police would much rather have joined us walking instead of driving along as escorts.

I am also sure many of the motorists who traveled Highway 2 that



(Dale Boissonneault)

Young and old — 1,000 strong — from southern Alberta's Blood Nation Indian reserve walked 18 miles on their annual Lenten Way of the Cross to raise funds for the Development and Peace Share Lent campaign.

Friday were perplexed at the sight of so many people carrying crosses.

I wonder how many of those bewildered motorists out to enjoy the holiday weekend would grasp the religious significance of this community's activity.

About a dozen of us took turns carrying the timbers crudely fashioned into a cross. We walked along in silence, living the moment in each step taken. The sound of quiet conversation on the wind filtered in and out.

Only the children laughed and shouted, first running up ahead in groups, then tired out and dropping back, only to have another burst of energy to carry them up front again.

Four and a half hours later as we neared St. Mary's our length had stretched out over two miles. There were many pairs of sore feet which had spent the last five miles dodg ing chunks of gravel. Fatigue and sweat lined the brows of many faces. Yet not a single person uttered a complaint.

The Good Friday service was held at 3 p.m. at St. Mary's as it was throughout the province. Yet upon the Blood Reserve under the eyes of the Rockies is found a quality often missing in most Good Friday liturgies. Here the people lived a solidarity with the victimized of our world. It was this aspect of their lives they celebrated.

I can only believe that the victim of the original Way of the Cross treasures these people seeking to be one with him. *(Prairie Messenger)*

Maria Campbell's "Jessica" describes oppressed natives

by Wendy Roy

When Sam first meets Jessica, he asks a rhetorical question: Why are native people still opressed and why don't they fight back?

"Because they're listening to the sound of drums?" Jessica answers tentatively.

Sam has his own theories, and he isn't really listening to her answer. Even if he were listening, he wouldn't understand, because he has given up the spiritual legacy of his native grandmothers that Jessica still possesses but has, through her years on the street, tried to deny.

Jessica and Sam are characters in a play. The play, called *Jessica* is Maria Campbell's often painful exploration of her own spirituality, and her struggle to reconcile it with her work as a writer in the white man's world.

Like the character Jessica, Campbell has discovered stability in the old religion, her grandmother's religion.

"I've always had it but for a long time I ignored it; I chose to ignore it. I felt that there was no place for it. But in the last 15 years it's been part of my every day, and it's helped me."

Although Jessica came from Campbell's experiences, "Jessica is not Maria." Instead, she is a character with some similarities to Campbell: a young mixed blood woman who must reconcile her life and work in the city with the spiritual powers of her ancestors.

In *Halfbreed* Maria Campbell told her own story, minus her spiritual experiences.

She was born on a trapline in northern Saskatchewan during a spring blizzard in April, 1940. She grew up near Prince Albert National Park, where her father made a living trapping and hunting.

In spite of the fact that they were poor, Campbell's young life was a happy one — except when the men went into town, and stayed to drink and fight.

The biggest spiritual influence on Campbell's life was her great-grandmother, who was a niece of Gabriel Dumont and whom Campbell always called Cheechum.

Campbell's Cheechum could see the future, and believed in the little people.

Campbell's life changed when her mother died giving birth to her youngest brother. Her family then lived in fear that the relief people would come to take her little brothers and sisters away.

Abandoned with child

When she was 15 Campbell married a white man whom she thought could take care of her family and keep it together. Her brothers and sisters were taken away and put in foster homes anyway, and Campbell found herself a few years later abandoned by her husband in Vancouver with a small baby to take care of.

During those years, when she became a prostitute to support her child, became addicted to heroin to deaden her despair, and then struggled to overcome that addiction and straighten out her life, the spiritual legacy of her grandmother kept her alive.

"It was what pulled me through the drugs and helped me out. If it wasn't for that I'd never have made it. I'd have probably died on the street."

Campbell felt it was important in *Jessica* to tell the story of a woman who has been on the streets, because people see only a prostitute; "they don't know what's happening at home and what that woman is going through."

Campbell said what that woman is doing may not be considered honorable in this society, "but when your babies are hungry you've got to do it."

Critics say too much happens in the first act of the play, with Jessica being raped, marrying and being left on the streets with a baby to support, becoming a prostitute and a drug addict, going straight and then having a mental breakdown. Campbell defends the fast pace of the play.

"Some women live through all those experiences in a matter of months," she said.

Later, in the second act of the play, Jessica is able to understand the women in the halfway house she runs, because she has been through it all.

Maria Campbell, too, helped run a half-way house in the 1960s. She had by that time straightened out her life and had become involved with other native people who were trying to find political solutions to their problems. She understood, then, that there had been alternatives in her life; she just hadn't seen them.

Prolific writer

Since *Halfbreed* was published Campbell has written three children's books, including *Riel's People* and *People of the Buffalo*. She has written the screenplay for three documentaries, and she has been writer in resi-

dence at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and at the Regina Public Library.

Jessica is the first play she has written, but last year she directed a play called *Flight,* which was the story of traditional and contemporary native artists written by Shannon Two Feathers.

Cambpell is now working on a historical novel. It is "Canadian history told through the eyes of the women and children rather than the men."

Two years ago Campbell moved from Edmonton, where she had lived for 14 years, to Gabriel's Crossing in Saskatchewan. Just south of Batoche, the crossing is where Gabriel Dumont ran his ferry during the 1870s and 1880s.

Campbell's family came from the Batoche area, and she finds the land has good spirits; it is gentle, with rolling hills, and it is close to the prairie and to the bush. She had been trying to buy the land near Gabriel's Crossing for the past 15 years; she succeeded three years ago, and said, "I'm not moving again." She lives in the old ferry house with two of her daughters and her two grandchildren. Another daughter lives in Edmonton and her son lives in Regina.

Curriculum includes native culture, history

by Jim Hodgson

PENTICTON, B.C. — Native and white school children at elementary grade levels here are getting a broader look at native culture and history thanks to the Okanagan Indian Curriculum Project.

The project was conceived by the Okanagan Tribal Council in 1979 and involves seven Indian bands in B.C.'s southern Interior.

It was born out of concern about problems Okanagan Indian children face in public schools — underachievement, high dropout rates, lack of self and cultural identity, and suicides.

The Tribal council's education committee's consensus at the time the project began was that the skills of native students were latent. They felt supplemental social studies units on their own history and culture taught alongside the history and culture of white students would enhance pride, a sense of belonging and the motivation to learn.

In Don Quaglia's class at Snowdon elementary school, grade seven students have been studying native legends as part of their language arts program.

Recently, they presented two short puppet shows to other students and observers from the University of B.C.'s native teacher education program.

One of the plays was an Okanagan Indian legend about how food was given to the people. According to the legend, plants and animals were concerned that once humans were created, the humans wouldn't have anything to eat. Thinking not of themselves but of the people-to-be, the plants and animals gave themselves up to be food for the people.

In dying, they were restored to life. The lesson of the legend is that plants and animals are aware of the balance and harmony of nature and that humans in return are aware of that balance. By working together, things can be better for all.

In classroom discussion, children compared this legend to others from the Yakima area in Washington state and B.C.'s north coast. They noted the strong similarities between these legends and Biblical stories, all of which stress co-operation and concern for others.

Quaglia and the curriculum's developers say the project can also be integrated into other areas of study.

Quaglia plans to use native themes while discussing the life cycle of the salmon in science courses.

The project is being integrated with regular provincial curriculums in classes in Penticton and the five other school districts in the Okanagan and Similkameen valleys.

Jeff Smith, director of the program, was on hand for the visit of the UBC students to Snowdon. He said he and his co-workers — many of them volunteers — are working on a secondary level curriculum.

But while the program is developing satisfactorily in the Okanagan-Similkameen, Smith said it isn't as far advanced yet in the rest of the province. □

(Jim Hodgson photos)

The legend of the mosquito monster, passed down through generations of Yakima Indians, is one of several native legends being studied by students in some B.C. elementary schools. Kevin Gabriel (third from right), a student at Penticton's Snowdon elementary school, is shown here holding the mosquito monster puppet used in a puppet show he and other students presented for visiting students from the University of British Columbia's native teacher education program recently. Five members of the group — Shirley Tutt, Audrey George, Janice Jules, Janice Peters and Colleen Seymour — toured Penticton schools to observe the operation of the locally-developed Okanagan Indian Curriculum Project. Other students in Don Quaglia's class presented another puppet show, the Okanagan Indian legend about how food was given to the people.

(HISTORY, from page 1)

and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples", who were named as the "Indian, Inuit and Metis people of Canada".

Section 37, Part II required the Prime Minister to convene a meeting of first ministers on constitutional matters directly affecting the aboriginal peoples within a year.

In the desperate effort to get the provinces to agree on the wording of the Constitution in 1981 native rights were sacrificed when a section on aboriginal and treaty rights was deleted. This prompted such a public outcry that three weeks later, the sections given above were inserted, but they in no way satisfied native leaders. They wanted the Constitution amended to guarantee them special status with rights different from those of other Canadians. Many advocated a form of self-government — a nation within a nation. The stage was set for conflict.

Constitutional amendment requires the approval of Parliament plus the approval of seven of the ten provinces which total 50% of the population of Canada. During the conference in March, the provinces could not agree among themselves and neither could the native leaders. As is typical in such circumstances, the result was a compromise.

Native women won victory

Native women achieved a long sought goal when equality between men and women was enshrined in the Constitution. Under the Indian Act of 1869, native women who married white men were denied their aboriginal and treaty rights, while native men who married white women continued to enjoy theirs.

Women married to white men and their children could not be educated or even buried on the reserves. The agreement to change the 1869 law came after heated discussion on the final day of the Conference. At one point Prime Minister Trudeau said, "We've been trying to be just in our time. Don't ask me to repair what's in the past."

George Erasmus, leader of the Dene Indian Nation said, "Don't throw this back on us. We didn't write the Indian Act."

"You didn't write the Indian Act —I didn't write the Indian Act," Trudeau replied. "I proposed the abolition of the Indian Act in 1969 and your people disagreed."

At that time the Indians feared the loss of special status if the Indian Act were abolished.

The change in the Constitution assures that Indian women married to white men will not lose their status.

The self-government question

The key native demand for the right to approve future constitutional changes affecting them, (in fact the right to veto), was rejected by the premiers and the idea of native self-government was largely ignored at the Conference table. Prime Minister Trudeau said that the Canadian system is based on inter-dependence and co-operation and that an aboriginal government in whatever form or model would have to fit into that system

David Ahenakew, president of the Assembly of First Nations argued that the Indian nations are unique and should not be called unrealistic for seeking sovereignity for themselves, if Prince Edward Island, with half the land base and population of the country's status Indians could have it.

(Even population figures are in dispute. Media reports gave the total population of status and non-status Indians, Inuit and Metis as 1.5 million or 6% of the population of Canada, but Statistics Canada, using figures from the 1981 census, says there are only about 500,000 or 2% of the population, and adds 'as generations pass and descendants associate more with one culture than the other, persons of mixed ancestry may consider themselves either as Indians or some non-native group such as French or English'.)

When Indian spokesmen used words like sovereignty, it suggested that they had something differrent in mind from municipal governments or boards of education, and when the Premiers asked them exactly what they meant they were puzzled by the answers.

Ahenakew said Indians did not want to establish their own armies or foreign relations, but wanted control of their own lives, the land they live on and the resources it contains. He said the billions of dollars spent on native affairs have not solved the problems. Natives still have above average infant mortality, high unemployment, suicide and accident rates.

The provinces have two fears regarding self-government for native bands. One is that they will have to finance services that are presently financed by the Federal Government; the other that more of the people and more of the land of a province will be removed from provincial control.

Already provincial game laws do not apply to status Indians hunting on unoccupied Crown land, provincial tax laws do not apply to property on Indian reserves, many band communities are governed by Indian chiefs, and Indian-run education and child welfare agencies are on the increase.

Principles to be entrenched

Prime Minister Trudeau presented a series of principles that he said could be entrenched in the Constitution and used as a guide to further negotiations, eventually leading to an aboriginal charter of rights. His treatise recognized "that the aboriginal peoples of Canada occupied the forests, plains, arctic ice, mountains and sea coasts of the vast territories now known as Canada" and "the rights of Indians to use the resources of their lands, the preservation of their culture, religion and languages" and provided for the "institution of various forms of aboriginal government within the Constitution of Canada".

Premier Howard Pawley of Manitoba came forth with a more precise statement of principles, stating that the Federal Government must cover the costs of native institutions, (with the provinces perhaps helping out with the Metis) and that legislative powers must remain with Parliament and the Legislatures while administrative responsibilities could be transferred to native institutions.

When the time came to sign an agreement on the principles, Premier Rene Levesque who has not accepted the Constitution of Canada, refused to sign because his signature might indicate approval of the whole Constitution. Premier William Bennet of British Columbia also did not sign, while the Premiers of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island were reported to have signed with reluctance.

Who owns the land?

Discussion moved to the question of land entitlement. The Indians contended that they were always in North America and in reality owned everything. The coming of the whites was an accident, based on Christopher Columbus getting lost on his way to the Far East. They argued that during the Second World War no Frenchman would have accepted that occupied France belonged to Germany and therefore they do not accept that whites own the land. Prime Minister Trudeau replied that the history of the world is a series of ever-changing boundaries.

If nothing else, the Conference focussed attention on the Indian, Metis and Inuit people, their aims and desires, their problems and their

diversity. It established that three more conferences are to be held during the next four years and set an agenda that will be followed. Past land claims, such as the one covering the James Bay region have been affirmed. Metis and non-status Indians were made equal partners with status Indians and the Inuit in the negotiations with the government, a place they have not held before.

Some of the native leaders became instant television stars and media personalities. The colour and drama of native ceremonials were eagerly photographed and reported by the army of journalists, each with his own view of the events.

During the CBC program *The Journal*, on the Grassy Narrows reserve in north-western Ontario, Keith Morrison said the white man 'stupidly and callously robbed them (the Indians) of a purpose for living, sold them all the alcohol they could consume, paid them to do nothing, then having killed them in spirit, poisoned them with mercury . . . ."

To this, Barbara Amiel, writing in MacLean's magazine said, "Doubtless there have been error and bungling at the Grassy Narrows reserve, but what seemed to elude reporter Morrison was that a great deal of the undeniably difficult conditions Indians face today are the product of people like him who seem to imply that it is possible to sustain an almost Stone Age culture in the middle of the 20th century . . . to try and sustain that culture within a welfare structure . . . has turned out to be an abject failure. The displacement the Indians feel is totally understandable and will never be solved as long as we — or the Indian leaders — try to treat Indians as 'different' or separate them from modern technological society."

Not all supported conference

The native peoples were far from total agreement on the value and importance of the Conference. A large group of dissidents opposed it entirely. The Peguis band of Manitoba, led by Chief Louis Stevenson, broke away from the Assembly of First Nations a week before the Conference on this issue and demonstrated both in Winnipeg and in Ottawa. Some 200 marched on the Manitoba legislature carrying placards that said "Provinces Keep Out" and "We believe in our Treaties".

Other bands from British Columbia, Alberta, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island shared their view that the Indians made treaties with the British Crown and any deals should be between the Indians and the Federal government. They fear that provincial governments opposed to the government in Ottawa will allow Ottawa to abandon its responsibility to the Indian.

There was general agreement on one point, however. Changes must be made. George Watts, president of the Nuuchah-nulh Tribal Council on Vancouver Island is pessimistic enough to say "If we don't get anywhere there is a very dangerous generation out there which is soon going to lose patience and resort to violence".

An official of the social development ministry in Ottawa, quoted in MacLean's magazine, but not named, is more optimistic. "It is a matter of recognizing the natives' legitimate place in society as the people who were here first, but it would be wrong for white people to see this as a guilt trip" he said, adding that the native leaders do not frame their demands in terms of righting moral wrongs, but rather as gaining economic rights and compensation for violated treaties.

(HELP from page 1)

United Nations High Commission for Refugees. They also toured refugee camps along the border of Mexico and Guatemala where about 70,000 Guatemalan Indians fled after government troops burned their villages and killed their families.

On the Guatemala border

They were told by refugees of how the Mexican government appears to be isolating them by not allowing them contact with people outside the camp areas and how their food rations were insufficient. The Manitoba delegation met with many of the refugees who are living in stick huts with thatched roofs. For most, their wardrobes consist only of the clothes on their backs.

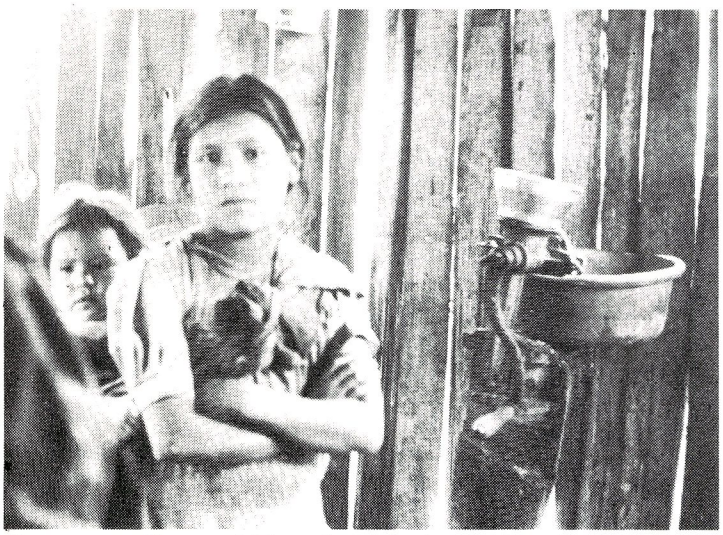
Eleazar Lopez, a Catholic priest and an executive member of CORPI, the Indian organization which reprsents 23 million Indians throughout Mexico and Central America, said the Guatemalan refugees are suffering the most. He said even those in the Mexican camps live in fear of Guatemalan troops who have made periodic raids across the border into the camps because the Mexican government cannot afford to patrol the area.

The Manitoba delegation was told shocking stories by the refugees of how the government in Guatemala has embarked on a campaign to "simply eliminate them" because their language and traditional culture pose a threat to modern development. Lopez and many of the refugees blamed American influenace in Central America for the problems.

The group was moved by the many first-hand accounts of the torture and tragedy the refugees faced during the past three years when fighting between the various political factions has escalated. In many of the camps, which are occupied mainly by women and children, refugees said their people have been forced to take up arms rather than continue to passively resist change which they had done for years.

One woman told of how she and her husband were escaping from their burning village when they were confronted by soldiers on the road. Her husband and the child he was carrying were shot and killed. She was

The United Nations model refugee camp in northern Costa Rica where refugees from El Salvador have settled during the past three years.



Two young Mayan children from Guatemala in refugee camp in Southern Mexico; their father was killed while fleeing to Mexico and two of their younger brothers.

L. to r., councillor Don Daniels, Swan Lake Reserve; Councillor Johnny Meeches, Long Plains; Chief Ernie Smoke, Dakota Plains; Councillor Stan Nelson, Roseau River Reserve.

shot twice and one of the shots passed through her shoulder and killed her infant son whom she was carrying on her back. She was left for dead but other refugees who found her carried her across the Mexican border where she recovered.

Another young man, the only survivor of a massacre in his village where 380 persons were killed, told of how soldiers entered the village, asked to meet with the community leaders, lined them up and shot them. He said they then separated the men, women and children under 10 years into three groups. The women were locked in the church and the men in a community hall. Soldiers then threw bombs into each of these buildings. The survivor said the children were then taken and skinned and thrown on a bonfire, some of them still alive. He and another villager were the only ones to survive. Both tried to escape but the other man was spotted and shot by the soldiers.

"The situation is like that of the Jews in the Second World War. It was never to happen again and here it is happening to our people,"said Chief Daniels.

"The conditions that these people live in, I can't help but feel emotional for them. It's hard not to break down," said Chief Ernie Smoke. "I don't think I could ever forget about that, the way they live, not even knowing if they are going to live one day to the next . . . People who complain about housing and programs on our reserves, they should see the way people live here, " he said.

"We're so far advanced, so far ahead of what's happening to Indian people here that as a people with a conscience we have to take some action," Daniels said.

The Manitoba leaders also met with Bishop Samuel Ruiz of the diocese of San Cristobal de las Casas in southern Mexico. He told them that the immediate future for refugees in camps in the area is not bright. He said attempts are being made to discredit even the Church, one of the few organizations that provides direct aid to the refugees. But he said this will not discourage the committee in the diocese which supplies food and clothing to the refugees as well as one full meal a day to the children in the camps. "We will continue to go," he said. "It is the right of the refugees to be attended."

In Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, the Manitoba group visited a refugee camp on the Costa Rica-Nicaragua border, 20 kilometers north of Liberia, where refugees from El Salvador have been sent by the Costa Rican government and the United Nations. The camp is only a few kilometres from where Nicaraguan guerrillas are fighting.

They travelled to the camp with Jose Carlos Morales, president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples who urged the Canadians to use their influence to try and put an end to the strife in the area, which is growing because of U.S. interference. He said Indian people throughout the region are being caught in the middle of complex political situations and are fighting for their lives, their traditions and their culture.

"If the Indians of Canada, the United States and the Inuit spoke as one voice, that would have a tremendous impact on the international scene," Morales said.

More photos on page 24

While Daniels initially thought the tribal council could help some of the refugees by sponsoring them to come to Canada, he said that after speaking with them and Indian leaders throughout Central America, he realized that they do not want to leave their countries. They would rather stay and fight for their language and culture identity with the hope of one day returning to their homes.

"For them to come to Canada is not culturally appropriate. They would be even more displaced," he said. Instead he told Morales the tribal council can play a role by generating support within Indian communities in Canada and the United States.

He said he would recommend such a cause be taken up by the Assembly of First Nations at the next executive meeting this summer. "Our responsibility now is to relay what we learned as soon as possible to groups in Canada and the United States, insisting our people help," he said.

"Our tribal council took a step forward in coming here," he said. "If we can help, we are willing."

Meanwhile, the individual members of the group came home deeply moved by their experience. "I was very overcome, especially by looking at the small children. They are the ones who are most affected by this. It really was a very moving experience for me," said Don Daniels of the Swan Lake reserve.

"What we saw up in those camps compared to what we have at home, we have a lot to be thankful for," said Stan Nelson of the Roseau River reserve. "I don't think I can ever go back home and fully explain what I've seen in Central America to my people, but I'll do my best." □

FICTION

The Spy

by Lloyd Holman

Lloyd Holman

The first warm days of spring had arrived, bringing with them melting snow, strong winds and rebellion. It was the tenth of March in the year 1885.

Running Man, cousin of Wandering Sprirt, (war chief of the Cree Indians) was making his way slowly and carefully down the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. One-half mile to his right lay Fort Carlton, the object of his attention since daylight. So intently was he watching the fort that he failed to notice an outcrop of loose rock. His next step sent him bouncing, crashing, down through the bush and trees, into the ice-choked Saskatchewan. He was sure that everyone in the fort must now be aware of his presence. Crouching low, he waited until he was sure no one was coming.

At Seventeen years of age, Running Man was filled with the pride of youth, the fear of man. His thoughts were on the words of the Metis leader, Louis Riel, the man who had sent him on this important mission. Only two days ago he had stood before Riel, and the Exovedate * council, listening to the great man's words.

"You will be my eyes, my ears, at Fort Carlton," Riel had told him. "You will watch and report to me what you see, what you hear. Foremost, you will count the cannons that are in the hands of Crozier and his Mounted Policemen. Remember the work you are about is the work of the Almighty. Return to me in one week with the words of what you have seen." That said, Riel turned back to the men of the council.

Strengthened by the memory of Riel's words, Running Man stole away from his hiding place and approached to within hearing distance of the men carrying bundles and wooden boxes from the river to the fort. Fear made his body tremble. He had seen white men before in his village, but never had he encountered so many and in a place that was not his own. He had listened closely to their strange words and knew only that they called it 'English.' Now he must walk into the place where they lived and spy upon them.

Moving with great care to keep the willow trees between himself and the labouring men, he crept closer. Plainly now he could see their faces and their dirty, worn clothing. Looking down at his clean new buckskins so lovingly stitched by his mother, he smiled.

"I will stand out like a black bear in the snow, dressed in these." He picked up a handful of mud. "No!" he thought, "I cannot bear to streak this awful stuff on my beautiful clothing."

Washing his hands in the cold river water he looked for some other way to become less conspicuous. Several minutes passed before he saw the answer to his problem. A coat or jacket lay on a pile of logs, cast there by one of the labouring workmen. How to get it without being seen became the amateur spy's next problem. Suddenly his eyes caught a movement, a flash of bright colour at the gate of the fort. Two scarlet-coated Mounted Policemen sat astride the most magnificent matched black horses he had ever seen. Their polished livery shone brightly in the sun. Something stirred in him at the sight. Like most of his people he held a great loyalty to the English Queen. These men, he knew, dispensed her laws. He realized quickly that the appearance of the riders at the gate had not only caught his attention but also that of some of the labouring men. Quickly he slipped out of his place of hiding and ran to the log pile pulling on the coat in a single motion. There was little doubt that the man whose coat he was stealing was at least six inches taller than his six feet, a hundred pounds heavier than his hundred and seventy pounds.

With the coat dragging at his heels, he made his way to the line of men who were returning form the fort to the river. In turn each man picked up a burden from the pile of supplies and returned with it to the fort. Running Man did the same. His burden proved to be a very heavy wooden case. As he entered the fort he was stopped by a man who had many papers fastened to a board. Pulling roughly at the heavy box he looked at the end of it made a little check on his paper, then pointed to a door indicating that Running Man was to carry the box inside.

Staggering now from his load Running Man entered the room and dropped the case he carried onto a pile of like-sized cases. He started back out the door, only to find his way blocked by a massive man. Looking up into a black-bearded, prespiring face, Running Man knew he was facing the owner of the coat he wore. A very large hand hooked his neck and Running Man was propelled out of the room and across the square while the irate owner of the coat screamed a barrage of words. In minutes they stood before a Policeman, who wore three gold stripes on his sleeve. The angry words of the coat owner brought the eyes of the sergeant to Running Man's face.

"This man is telling me that you have stolen his coat," the Sergeant said in the soft language of the Cree, "Did you?" "I was cold," Running Man replied, pushing the big man's hand away from his neck, his voice filled with anger.

The Sergeant turned again to the black-bearded man and spoke to him in English. After much yelling and waving his arms about the bearded man finally stood quietly. "You will give this man his coat back and then come with me," the Sergeant ordered in Cree. Running Man handed the coat to the bearded man who pulled it roughly then turned away mumbling to himself. Next, Running Man found himself before a Policeman seated behind a large desk.

"This man stole Jake Walker's coat, Sir," the Sergeant reported. "You say he stole Jake Walker's coat?" Superintendant Crozier asked, more than a little surprised at the young man's brashness.

"Yes, Sir! I got Jake to agree that a night in a cell would be sufficient

punishment for the crime, if you will agree."

"I agree," Crozier said, looking at Running Man. "He understands English?"

"No, Sir, he doesn't seem to."

"Walker is a dangerous man," Crozier said. "Does this boy know that Walker hates Indians?"

"No, I don't think so, Superintendant."

Crozier rose and walked around the desk and spoke to Running Man the way a father would to a son.

"This man whose coat you stole is a very bad, a very mean man. He will not forget what you did and will find a way to get back at you. You must leave the fort in the morning. Return to your people. Do you understand what I'm saying?" Crozier asked in halting Cree. Running Man shrugged his shoulders.

"Take him to a cell," Crozier said, returning to his chair. Running Man's day as a spy had ended in disaster. With darkness filling his cell he sat looking through the barred window at the river. Heavy footsteps frightened away his thoughts of Riel, of home and his mother.

"Running Man, are you awake?" Sergeant Miller called into the darkened cell hours later.

"I am."

"Superintendant Crozier has ordered me to release you now. He fears that Jake Walker will lie in wait for you if we release you as planned in the morning. Come!" Miller said, pushing open the cell door.

An hour later Running Man was walking on the moonlit prairie, cold, frightened and excited by his day in the hands of the white man. Finding a place under a growth of willow trees he lay down listening to the sounds of the night. Close at hand an owl hooted its haunting cry. Suddenly the deep low, grunting cough of a bison filled his ears. Silence followed. Running Man drifted into a deep sleep, not hearing the screaming wild cry of the hunting hawk, as its sharp claws found a victim.

Dawn brought with it rain and a mixture of hail and snow. Running Man made his way back to the river, crossed it on a floating bridge of ice. Two days later he was back in Batoche, standing before Louis Riel and the Exovedate.

"Your report!" Riel said.

Running Man's story brought laughter from several of the men seated at the table. Even the very serious Riel smiled.

"There will be other times for you to prove yourself," was the only comment.

For the next month Running Man remained in the settlement at Batoche waiting for a new assignment from Riel. None came. Disheartened he prepared to return to his people. Unexpectedly Gabriel Dumont, the fighting general of the Metis, took an interest in him and Running Man's life took a wonderful and wild turn. In the company of Dumont and Riel, he met the force of Superintendant Crozier at Duck Lake and shared in the victory. For his bravery he received a fine rifle from Dumont. From Riel he received a Bible and crucifix.

On April 8, word was received at Batoche that General Middleton was marching with a large force from Qu'Appelle. On April 17, Running Man watched with Metis scouts a large formation of the Royal Grenadiers joined with Middleton's marching column at Clark's Crossing. On April 23, he again rode with Dumont in a battle that halted Middleton's march. On May the ninth he was back on the banks of the Saskatchewan River helping in the struggle to run the steamer Northcote aground. Then Middleton attacked Batoche in force. The uneven battle lasted for three days. On April 12, the rebellion was crushed.

On the afternoon of April 12, 1885, white flags flew from every building in the Batoche settlement. The fighting was over, Running Man, with Riel and Dumont, left the settlement and slipped into the safety of the woods. At Dumont's urging Running Man took a horse and began the ride back to Battleford and his family. High on the river bank he stopped for one last look.

It was a picture that even the finest artist would fear to attempt to capture on canvas, so great was its beauty. The flaming sun, low in the western sky, turned the near banks of the river a deep purple, the surface of the river to glass. High on the western bank and Indian boy, astride his pony, was silhouetted darkly by the failing sunlight.

"Crack!" Like violent, rolling, thunder, the sound filled the valley. Time stopped. For one frozen instant, Running Man sat bolt upright. His eyes rolled back. He fell in death to hug the land of his forefathers.

Jake Walker slowly lowered his rifle, spat on the ground and, like a night shadow, vanished into the bush. □

In my opinion

Land development needed for survival

by Dennis Gruending

One hundred and sixteen years after Confederation, the Nishga Indians still have not been able to convince the British Columbia government that Indians have any title to land occupied since time immemorial and never surrendered.

On the prairies the Metis, twice defeated in 19th-century wars with Canada, are scattered and poor. They are landless, and at the same time unwanted in the cities.

In the past several hundred years, first European, then home-grown Canadian colonizers "discovered" and claimed land which had been occupied by Indian people. The assumption was that Indians were primitive and uncivilized, that they had no legal right to the land and did not make good use of it.

Although the Royal Proclamation in 1763 instructed that lands should not be seized from Indians without making treaties with them, most of the white treaty makers were simply pursuing the expedient course. They never really believed there was anything legal involved.

Indians were pushed to the edge of the white civilization and consciousness. The results of years of paternalism and racism are well known to all of us: poverty-stricken reserves; shocking rates of infant mortality, violent death, alcoholism and incarceration; and a persistent discrimination by whites against Indians.

Yet in the words of Mr. Justice Thomas Berger, the West coast judge who headed the Mackenzie Valley pipeline inquiry, "Canada's native peoples are re-entering Canadian history."

The constitutional conference on aboriginal rights in March, 1983, was historic, and it was symbolic of the "re-entry" which Berger mentions. After years of neglect, Indian and native Canadians are forcing themselves back into our politics and psyche in a determined manner. They refuse to be destroyed.

As recently as 1969 Pierre Trudeau was saying, "Our answer is no. We can't recognize aboriginal rights because no society can be built on historical 'might-have-beens.'" But in March of this year Trudeau chaired a conference attended by Indian, Metis and Inuit leaders to discuss the meaning of Section 35 in the Constitution Act, which says in part, "The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."

There are more that a million Indian people in Canada — treaty and status Indians, non-status Indians, Inuit and Metis. It's far too early for them to claim victory.

Victory means more than matching wits with the prime minister on national television. In fact the conference which was supposed to make progress in defining exactly what is meant by "aboriginal rights" never really got to that point on its agenda.

There is every reason to suspect that federal and provincial governments, and a good section of the public, will be characteristically intransigent once the discussion passes from platitudes to the hard issues of money, land and political power.

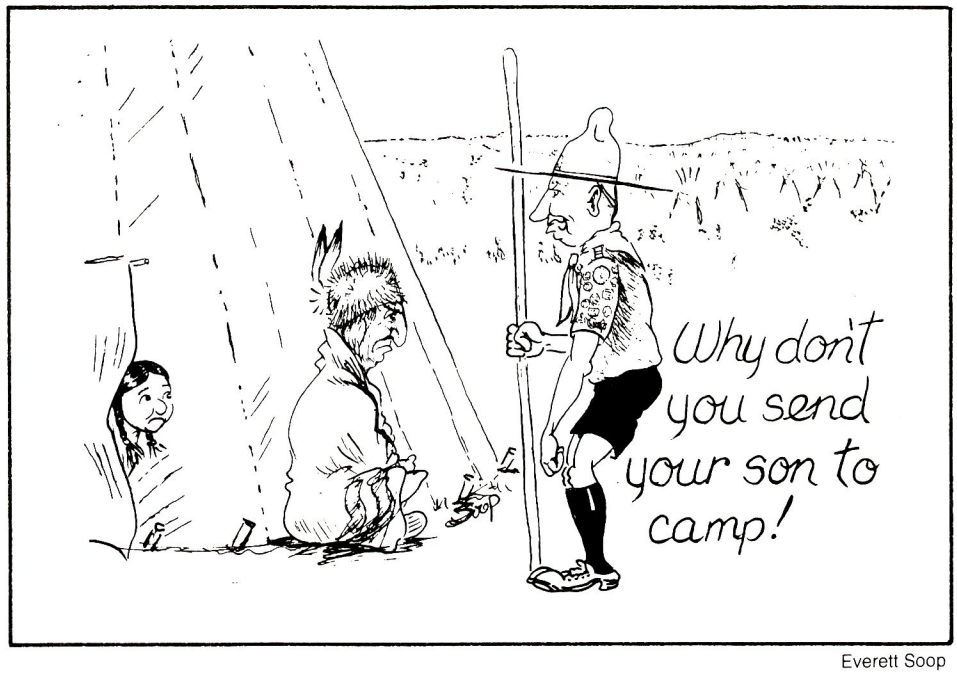
But at least Indian and native people were there, before all Canadians, to negotiate rights which the new constitution affirms are theirs.

Taken without compensation

How did they get to that table? When Trudeau and the premiers finally agreed to a Constitution Act in November, 1981, they neglected any positive reference to protecting aboriginal rights. The reaction, fast and furious, from Indians and natives, women's groups (a clause on sexual equality had also been neglected), and other sectors of society, was powerful enough to have the aboriginal rights clause reinstated.

The fact that the country's most powerful politicians had even considered admitting that Indians, Inuit and Metis had aboriginal rights was no accident of history. Rather it flows from stormy political and legal precedents established during the preceding 15 years.

As mentioned last week, the Trudeau government, in 1969, publicly announced its intention to do away with "special status" for Indian people. The goal was outlined clearly — assimilation. The response from Indians was an angry one.



Everett Soop

They would never accept forced assimilation, and they intended to hold the federal government to its responsibilities.

Then in the early 1970s, after a hundred years lobbying, the Nishga Indians went to the Supreme Court to claim that they had "aboriginal title" to land which they had lived on for thousands of years.

They had never been invited to sign treaties. Most of their land had been taken from them without compensation.

When the court ruled in 1973, the Nishga lost their case on a technicality. But six of seven judges agreed that Nishga occupancy and use of the land constituted title. It was a moral, if not a legal victory for the Nishga and other Indian people who found themselves in a similar situation.

As Canada entered the decade of megaprojects in the 1970s, there were tremendous pressures upon Ottawa to clear the way for resource development, especially in the north. Those pressures, combined with the Supreme Court judgment, induced Ottawa to begin land claims negotiations.

Broken promises

The government began to negotiate "comprehensive" land claims in regions (like James Bay and the territories) where treaties had never been signed. As well, it prepared to negotiate "specific claims" where treaty Indians had never received all the land promised them. For example, Saskatchewan Indian bands have about one million acres owing.

One other event was crucial to the development of consciousness about aboriginal rights, for both Indians and whites. In 1977, Mr. Justice Thomas Berger made his report to the government about proposals to build a natural gas pipeline along the Mackenzie Valley, through the homeland of the Dene and northern Metis.

The Berger inquiry became a national educational seminar on a fundamental question which had never been resolved: How does industrial development relate to aboriginal rights?

In this case Berger's recommendations were quite simple. There should be no development until land claims had been negotiated. Indians must also be given the opportunity to create political structures to ensure their survival.

The negotiations between Ottawa and various Indian people have not gone smoothly in the north. The federal government was not prepared to talk about political formations or even limited self-government.

But that is precisely where Indian and native groups have been moving, because they recognize that the ownership or use of land will not of itself allow them to survive. They must have some degree of control over the use of the land and its resources if they are to benefit and prosper.

Prairie Messenger

(To be concluded)

Dennis Gruending is a free-lance writer based in Regina.

Encounters that touched me

by Irene Hewitt

Away on holidays, I attended Ash Wednesday Mass in a little prairie town. An Indian woman came to sit beside me. The priest was explaining a special ceremony that was being held, and she whispered, "I can't hear very well. Will you explain that to me?" And I did.

On slips of paper we would write down the problem or character defect that bothered us the most, the one we felt we should work on this Lent.

We would also write down the area in our life most in need of healing. The slips would then be burned and the resulting ashes, which represented the community's burdens and unhealedness, would be used to mark our foreheads.

Not knowing her name, I've come to think of this woman as Pauline. "I can't write," she whispered.

"That doesn't matter," I assured her. "Our Lord knows what is in your heart. Just fold the paper and turn it in."

"No, I'd like to have those things set down. Can't I tell you and then you write them down for me?"

And with me, a complete stranger, a member of a race many of her own people distrusted, Pauline shared the deepest secrets of her life. And when I came to be marked with the ashes, I felt I was marked with Pauline's hurts and anxieties and I felt the rightness of this.

Every now and again Pauline comes to my mind and I'm always warmed by the remembrance of her trust in me. Thank you, Pauline.

* * *

Recently another Indian woman touched my life, also, although it was only after her death that I learned about her.

A fire in Channing (a subdivision of Flin Flon) has destroyed the shack-like building near the lake that housed a store and living quarters. Three deaths had occurred — Mrs. Leonie Guilbault, the owner, and the two Indian women staying with her never had a chance. All were in their late seventies and the building had been a fire-trap.

My phone rang. "Will you play for Mrs. Guilbault's funeral? She wasn't a member of our church, but the family have asked that she be buried from St. Ann's."

An elderly Indian woman not known to the parish — I expected only a small congregation, but the church was almost filled and most of the people here were young and white. "It looks like nearly all of Channing has turned out. Mrs. Guilbault must have been someone quite special," I thought.

And indeed she had been. Our priest explained that he had chosen the reading, Matthew 26: v. 31 to 46 especially for her. He hadn't known Leonie personally, but from what he kept hearing over and over from those who had, he felt this gospel summarized her life, and so we heard, "I was hungry and you fed me — homeless and you took me in."

"Here's another Granny Cadotte," I marvelled and I thought back to the funeral of Granny, herself a very special old lady. Though poor, she had shared herself and all she had with others. Our priest, then, had indicated that Granny (and now I could see Leonie) had been one of those special people chosen by God to show us how to live. He told us that we should thank God she had lived amongst us and that we should pray we might be enabled to follow her example. Granny hadn't been the only light in our community; we'd had Leonie as well. The large congregation present showed that this light had been appreciated — what a tribute they were to Leonie.

Living out the Gospel in our lives. Two Indian women had shown us that this could be done. Granny and Leonie would have helped and inspired so many.

* * *

Another tragic accident and another funeral. Dale's life had shown such promise, but then he'd gotten caught up in alcoholism. Intoxicated, he'd passed out at the wheel of his truck and died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Dale, as a child, had been removed from his alcoholic home environment and raised by a white family who had accepted him as one of their own. All the funeral arrangements had been made by this family. Seemingly no thought had been given to his natural mother, Metis Rosie. On her own she had had to phone the funeral parlour and ask if she might attend the wake and the funeral. "As long as you're not drinking," she was told. "As long as you are sober," and she was.

At the graveside she was completely overcome, sobbing loudly and crying out for her son. Immediately Margaret, the white foster mother, moved to comfort her. Dale's two mothers clung to one another. "It's O.K., Rosie," Margaret assured her. "Dale's gone where he'll be happy now, where there will be no more pain or hurt. He's O.K. now, Rosie." She continued to sob momentarily, but you could see Rosie was comforted.

Later I told Roy, Dale's foster brother, how I'd been so touched by Margaret's embracing and comforting Rosie. "Rosie must have created such problems for Dale and your family. I marvel that your mother wasn't bitter towards her."

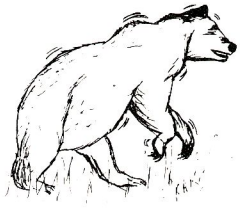
"Oh, she was bitter all right," Roy told me. "She's always been, but the priest got to her with what he said at the wake. She sees things differently now. We all do.

"Funny, this funeral and all that has happened made me start thinking about the advisability of placing native children in white homes. We always loved Dale, but was this the right thing to do?

"I'm glad my mother had such a change of heart, but I think Rosie's the one we should be looking at here. Considering what she must have felt our family did to her, taking over her son as if he were ours, it's a wonder she didn't turn on my mother. I see her giving here as greater than my mother's. She must be a very forgiving woman. Do you know, it was a very healing thing for my mother, being close to Rosie at a time like that?"

If Roy hadn't pointed me towards Rosie, I'd have seen only Margaret here. Rosie's alcoholism had stopped me from seeing the real Rosie. And now I can see something deeply spiritual here. Rosie had lost her son and been terribly humiliated by the white community ("You can come only if you're not drinking."), but even in the midst of her anguish, she was able to reach out and bring forgiveness and healing to the woman who'd usurped her place as mother.

I have much to learn from Rosie, Pauline, Leonie and Granny. I am grateful for these encounters; they have enriched my life. □



How Spring came to the Shuswap

The Grizzly and the Coyote

by Maara Haas

As it lives in the dream memory of an ancient Salish grandmother whose spirit moves my lips to tell the story, the legend of Spring took seed in a time of no beginnings and no endings, when the land of the Shuswap — their neighboring cousins, the Lilooet, the Thompson and the Okanagan — fell under the spell of Grizzly and Coyote.

Grizzly had the power of a spiritual force in the shape of a dance and the power of a song, especially his own.

Coyote had the power of a spiritual force in the shape of a dance and the power of a song, especially HER own.

When Grizzly sang and danced, the world was Winter.

When Coyote sang and danced, the world was Spring.

It was true that Grizzly's extra fat gave him the energy to stretch Winter. All the same, skin-and-bones Coyote, feverish with life-pulsating Spring, could dance around Grizzly, enough to give him a cross-eyed headache that slowed him down.

Yearning with hope, Coyote's yodelling song stretched over the sky and beyond the peaks of Painted Mountain:

"Morning star my spirit sings
flowing free all living things.
In the strait, herring frets,
free the Fraser, loose the nets.
To your nest, Eagle, take.
Sleepy porcupine, awake.
OOOOO YYYYY OOOOOO
Spring . . . Spring . . . Springgggg."

At the first tremor of Coyote's voice, the earth turned green. UP through the ground poked the first green finger of the Camas lily. UP from their underground houses came the People, eager to build their green-rush tents on a new Spring campsite.

It was hardly worth the effort.

Quicker than the turn of a blanket in a new bride's tepee, daylight changed to midnight in a swirling black blizzard, echoeing the heavy, drum-drum rhythm of Grizzly's padded feet:

"Winter is the heart of darkness.
Winter is the heart of sleep.
Winter is the house of beaver,
Winter dark
Winter deep.
Heya-Hye-Hye Heya-Hye-Hye
Winter dark, Winter deep."

Dancing and singing, dancing and singing, Coyote and Grizzly got wilder and wilder.

The wilder the dance, the wilder the song, the closer the seasons merged together.

The sun rose, the sun set; the river froze, the river unfroze, fasterfaster fasterfasterfaster. The salmon ran upstream, the salmon swam downstream. Frozen mid-stream in their canoes and their short, deerskin summer britches, the People were held by the ice of Grizzly's breath, as if in a trance.

The Elders of the tribes became desperate: "This lunatic singing and dancing can't go on. We must have some kind of order in the land. Only last week, the Shaman cured a child of whooping cough with his wild turnip incantation. HE should have the magic to break the spell of Grizzly and Coyote.

The Shaman agreed to do what a Shaman does.

Three times, he threw himself naked, into the icy Fraser.

Three times, he steamed himself in a red-hot steambox.

Slightly overcooked but purified, he went to a secret place in the forest and there he sat, chanting, waiting for the arrow of lightening revelation to shiver his heart.

Of course, nothing happened, for the Shaman knew and the People knew there was no way of changing the power of a wild forest creature endowed with the power of the great god, Manitou.

For two moons of total chaos, Coyote and Grizzly sang and danced. Quietly awaiting the end of the world, the People gathered themselves together and sat in the spellbound circles of their dead fires.

On the third moon, the earth shook with a great thud coming from the topmost ledge of Painted Mountain.

"Stop," cried Grizzly, the great thud coming from the topmost ledge of Painted Mountain, as he threw himself to the ground. "The soles of my feet feel like red-hot stones in a cooking fire. I'm sick to death from all this dancing. It has to end."

"I could dance forever," Coyote replied, "but I'm sick to death of all this singing. My throat feels like a dried-out root with the ooliken oil sucked out of it. Let's draw up a treaty, dividing power over the earth, half and half."

"Half and half?" protested Grizzly. "You call that fair? According to size, a skinny Coyote can't match the power or the size of a big, fat Grizzly. One quarter of the earth's power should go to you. Three quarters of the ruling power with nice, cold Winter three quarters of the time, should go to me."

And so it went, until the earth and its People floated in Time on a grey thread suspended between the shadowy realm of sleeping and waking.

Arguing, arguing, Grizzly and Coyote finally reached a compromise. Coyote would rule the time called Day; Grizzly would be the ruler of the Night.

"Now," said Coyote in her snippy, naggy voice, "Equal being according to the moons, what number of moons or months do you think we'll need for the New World calendar? Four? Six? Twenty? Fifty-six?"

"Who cares," yawned Grizzly. "I'm aeons and aeons behind in my sleep. I want to sleep. Let that red-winged Flicker, flying by, decide the moons. He's got twelve feathers? Good. So it will be. We'll have twelve moons in a calendar year. Goodnight."

"We're not done yet," said Coyote. "We must decide on the month of the year, the EXACT day and the name of the moon to mark my arrival, the glorious coming of Spring, to the New World."

Lazily picking big black ants from between his sweaty toes, Grizzly scarcely heard Coyote's demands. Counting aloud, "Nine, fourteen, TWENTY-ONE," he scurried the ants in all directions: "MARCH."

"March 21st, the first day of Spring?" cried Coyote. "Yes. I like it. How clever you are, old, dish-faced Grizzly. Then it's agreed."

"Grunt," said Grizzly, blissfully sinking into hibernation. □

History of the Penticton Indian Band

by Barbara Etter

The Penticton Indian Band hopes to "become a showcase Band," states Chief Stewart Phillip, adding that the Band's ultimate goal is total self-government.

Stewart Phillip, who was elected chief in May 1982, when former Chief Morris Kruger resigned after fulfilling his stated mandate to settle the Band's cut-off claims, has many far-reaching plans for the reserve, a number of which are already under way.

If Phillip's goal is realized the people of the band will, in a sense, have come full circle.

They will, once again, manage their own social, political and economic affairs as they did in the days before the white man came and settled on their land.

There is no written history of the Okanagan people. What is known has been passed on by word of mouth.

Marie Houghton Brent, born 1870, whose great grandfather was Chief N'Kwala, chief of all the Okanagans and Colvilles, wrote, "In an Indian tribe they pick one sober child with a good memory and train them to remember the story of their family and their ancestors."

For example, it is unclear whether Capot Blanc or Sorimpt was the leader of the local Band when the fur traders first arrived in the Okanagan early in the 19th century.

Both Sorimpt's and Capot Blanc's presence in the area is well documented. Indeed, it is recorded that in 1859 Capot Blanc, as Chief, tried unsuccesfully to prevent Father Charles Pandosy, an Oblate Missionary, from settling in the valley.

However, Capot Blanc's position as chief is doubted by the Indian people of the present and they speak of Sorimpt as the leader before Francois, his son, became Chief in 1864.

Francois, who was chief of the Penticton Indian Band from 1864 to 1907, dying at the great age of 106 in 1908, undoubtedly witnessed a number of startling changes in the Okanagan and the life style of its native inhabitants during his lifetime.

The traditional life style of the Okanagan Indians was based on a migratory pattern. They were self-sufficient, moving from summer to winter camps, hunting, fishing, digging for roots and picking berries. They respected the land and practiced natural conservation habits, taking only what they needed and allowing the land to lie fallow when necessary.

The people lived together in family groups or Bands. Their political structure consisted of a hereditary Chief, a Council and Elders.

Religion or world view was based on a religious and material culture working together to create a healthy balance in the environment.

Children were educated by the elders. Legends, many of which related the activities of "Coyote" who was sent by "Yi-Yha-Xha" (the most sacred one) to make the world habitable for man, helped teach the Indian people history, morals and values.

Life, peaceful and well-ordered, changed for the Okanagan Indians when Pandosy, followed closely by settlers and miners, arrived in the Okanagan in 1859 and built a mission house, church and school at the Okanagan Mission near Kelowna.

CHIEFS OF THE PENTICTON INDIAN BAND

Sorimpt, before 1864
Francois, 1864-1907
*** Edward, 1907-09**
Michel Jack, 1909-49
Gideon Aeneas, 1949-55
Jack Alex, 1955-69
Archie Jack, 1969-71
Ernest Lezard, 1971-73
Adam Eneas, 1973-76
Morris Kruger, 1976-82
Stewart Phillip, since 1982

** Chief Edward was the last hereditary Chief. Michel Jack was appointed. From 1949 to the present the Chiefs were elected serving two-year terms until Chief Adam Eneas changed it to four years.*

Pandosy travelled throughout the valley baptizing, marrying and converting the "sauvage" to Christianity. In this venture he met with great success. Two years after his arrival it is reported that one-third of the Indians had been converted to christianity.

Attempts made by Pandosy to educate the Indian people were not as successful. Within 6 months from the date classes began not one Indian child was left in the log school house. The Oblates had to be satisfied with teaching the children of settlers.

Life for the Okanagan Indians during this period was in a state of flux. Their religious, economic, social/cultural and political structure was changing rapidly.

Encouraged by the missionaries they were beginning to pursue agricultural activities and slowly abandoning their migratory life style. Christianity and its accompanying value system was replacing their traditional beliefs.

Although conversion to christianity undoubtedly had a most profound impact on the Okanagan's traditional life style, education in the form of residential schools run by the Oblates probably places a close second.

Kamloops Industrial School which opened in 1890, was taken over by the Oblates three years later. St. Eugene's Residential School in Cranbrook opened in 1890 and St. Mary's Mission in Omak opened a school at approximately the same time.

Indians from the Penticton Reserve attended all three of these schools until the late 60's when the Kamloops and Cranbrook schools were closed.

Although the basic three R's were taught, the emphasis was on religion with training in trades and agriculture for the boys and domestic training for the girls.

Children, who often attended these schools at a very young age, were not allowed to speak in their native language or practice their traditions, thus the schools helped to weaken the Okanagan culture.

The Okanagan Indians' life style changed further when the first reserves were laid out followed by continual changes in land allotments, most of which were detrimental to the Indians economic well-being.

The first reserves in the Okanagan were formed in 1863. They were laid out by Magistrate Wm. G. Cox under the instructions of Governor Douglas. Douglas instructed that the Indians be consulted, their wishes respected and compensation given for their land. Consequently the first reserves, known as the Cox Reserves, were fair although compensation was never given and their wishes never recorded in treaty.

In 1864 there was an abrupt change in the Indian land policy in the person of Joseph Trutch who became Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works.

His attitude, the antithesis of Douglas', is well illustrated in a 1875 report in which Trutch writes, "The Indians really have no right to the

lands they claim, nor are they of any actual value or utility to them . . . ."

Judge Haynes, under the auspices of Trutch, reduced the Penticton Reserve in 1865 to 842 acres which left the band with only the land west of the river channel, excluding the mountainous region.

During this period many settlers were pre-empting land and becoming less concerned with the rights of the Indians. Reductions continued which in some cases meant 10 acres per family (a remarkable change from Douglas' 320 acres per family). Petitions to Governor Seymour went unanswered as the Governor left the "Indian problem" in Trutch's hands.

Faced with the prospect of rebellion, Ottawa was finally forced to act and on November 10, 1875 a Joint Commission was set up.

Alexander Anderson and Archibald McKinley were appointed to represent the federal and provincial governments respectively. Gilbert Sproat was appointed by the provincial government to represent both sides.

Lack of co-operation and procrastination by the provincial government made the commission's work difficult. However, the Penticton Reserve was able to recover some of its resources. A great deal of mountain land from Penticton to Summerland and Trout Creek as well as land to the south was added to total nearly 50,000 acres.

However, the fertile bottom land set out by Cox was not returned, nor was compensation made or access to resources contemplated by the commission as identified in the original terms of the chiefs.

By 1878 the commission dissolved with Sproat left to carry on alone. A champion of Indian rights, Sproat was unpopular with settlers and government alike and it is not surprising that most of his recommendations were ignored.

During the next 30 years reserve land was reduced further by settlers and government both of whom felt Sproat had been too generous. For example, common grazing land set up by Sproat in 1877 was gradually lost and by 1884 this land between Kalamalka and Okanagan Lake was opened to settlers.

When the McKenna-McBride Commission met with the Penticton Indian band on October 8, 1913 to settle the land question, the position of both sides was clear — the Penticton Indians did not want land cut-off and the commission could not take land without Indian agreement.

What occured to enable the cut-offs was a combination of local business groups claims, testimony of Indian Agent J. Robert Brown and water rights dispute. The underlying attitude was that the Indians had more land than they could use. (The reason for its lack of use which was the result of settlers taking water rights and government law prohibiting Indians to sell timber, was ignored.)

As a result the commission reduced the Penticton Reserve cutting off 14,060 acres from P. R. No. 1. Both Timber Reserve No. 2 (321 acres) and Timber Reserve No. 2A (194 acres) were cut-off.

The commission headed by J. A. J. McKenna, appointed by Ottawa, and Richard McBride, premier of B.C. from 1903-15, was meant to settle Indian Land claims once and for all. Instead it simply created more unrest among the Okanagan Indians. □

(To be concluded)

BOOK REVIEW

The First Sioux nun

by Sister Mary Ione Hilger, O.S.B.
Illustrated by Sr. M. Kaliher, O.S.B.
Bruce Publishing Company 1963
(157 pp.)

Sister Hilger tells the colorful history of a full-blooded Sioux Indian girl who was the first of her race to become a Catholic nun. She was born on the James River in 1858, daughter of Swift Eagle, in Dakota Territory and was given the name "Anpao" (Little Dawn). She belonged to the Sisseton tribe of the Sioux. She came to St. Boniface with her parents from the James River on the Nebraska boundary. She was baptized Marie-Josephine Nebraska in St. Boniface by Fr. J. J. Lestanc, OMI, in October 1860.

She came under the protection of the Grey Nuns of Montreal in St. Boniface and entered Taché Academy in May, 1866 which she attended until 1874. She became fluent in English and French.Then, she donated her services to the Church under the guidance of the Grey Nuns of St. Boniface. She sought permission from Archbishop Alexandre Taché, OMI, in 1881 to enter the Grey Nuns. Permission was granted by the Superior General of the Grey Nuns in 1884 and on October 25, 1884 she took the postulant garb at the Grey Nuns provincial house.

On May 14, 1885 she began her novitiate. On May 31, 1887, Vicar-general Father Joachim Allard, OMI, received her first vows in the Congregation of the Grey Nuns.

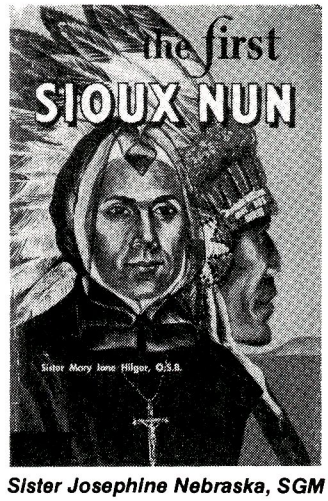
She was appointed sacristan at the Mother House. She was then sent to St. Michael's Mission at Fort Totten in North Dakota in 1889.

She returned to Canada in 1892 where she spent six months teaching school. She took ill March 29, 1894 and returned to the Mother House where she died of tuberculosis April 3, 1894.

Bishop Vital Justin Grandin, OMI, Bishop of St. Albert returning from Europe, celebrated her funeral Mass at the Cathedral and she was buried in the Sister's lot in the shadow of the Cathedral.

She was the first native religious in all of Canada. Her superiors testified that she had always been a model religious and that in spite of her poor health, she gave service up to a few days before her death

Sister Hilger narrates Sister Nebraska's life in the style of a novel giving many interesting details on the life and customs of the Sioux in Canada from 1860 onward.



Sister Josephine Nebraska, SGM

This is the gripping story of an Indian family, peaceful, naturally virtuous, striving for happiness in days of Indian wars and turmoil in Dakotas and western Canada. The safest place seems to be St.-Boniface Mission and it is to this establishment that this unusual Indian family finally migrates. Anpao's mother and all her brothers and sisters are baptized, thus fulfilling the wish of their father who thought himself unworthy of the "saving waters." But it is only Anpao who searches for more.

G. Laviolette.

exc

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ADDRESSEE

Dakota — Ojibwe pledge help to Guatemala refugees.

Left: (l. to r.) Chief Ernie Daniels, DOTC chairman speaks with Chino, a younger Salvadorean leader in the refugee camp. Roger Justus, (right) a consultant for the World Council of Indigenous peoples, helps with translation.
Right: Mayan refugees from Guatemala in refugee camp in Chiaps, Southern Mexico.

School control helpful

WINNIPEG — Indian control has helped bring about a dramatic turnaround in the dropout rates among Indians attending Winnipeg high schools. Lorna Nanowin, an Indian education counsellor, said last year's dropout rate was 10 per cent compared with rates of more than 50 per cent in previous years.

DOTC program director, Tim Maloney and reporter Maureen Brosnahan meeting with Indian leaders from Central America in Costa Rica.

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