INDIAN RECORD

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

Indian Record suspends publication

WINNIPEG, Man. — We regret to announce, that at the end of its 50th year, the INDIAN RECORD is suspending publication with this issue. Your editor has been formally advised, November 10, by the Provincial Superior of the Manitoba Missionary Oblates of this decision:

"The Provincial Council has decided October 28, 1987 to suspend publication of the INDIAN RECORD.

"There is probably a need for intervention in the media by the Oblates. I am setting up a commitee to study ways and means of contributing to the discussions that are taking place in our country concerning the Natives. I am happy to know that you are available for this project.

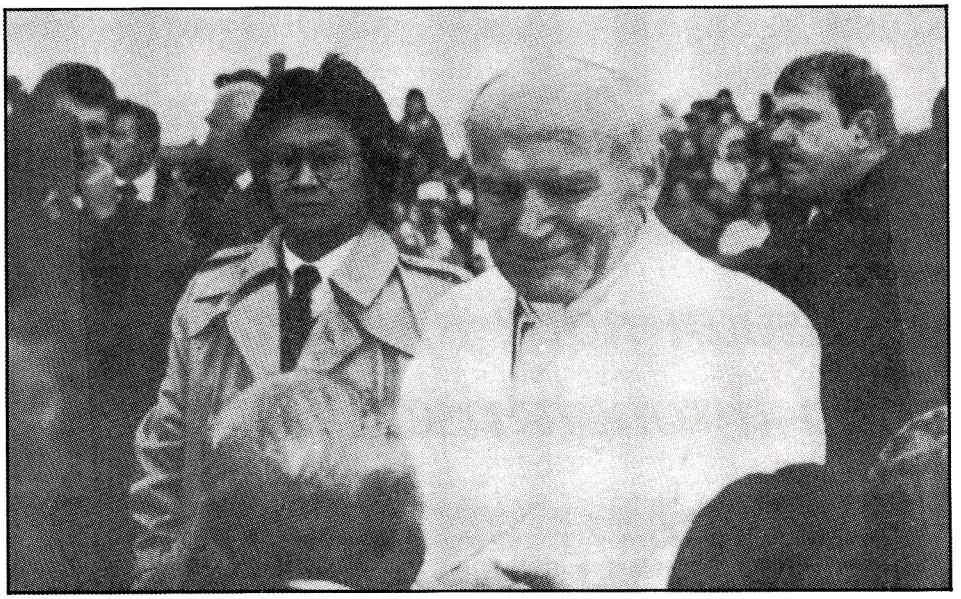
"The Provincial Council and I admire your missionary work and thank you warmly for the work you have done during the past 50 years as editor and co-ordinator of the editorial board."

Factors that have motivated this decision are the difficulty in obtaining sufficient funds to meet the ever increasing publishing expenses and the falling number of subscribers despite regular efforts to increase it.

Continued on Page 8

Project North ends

TORONTO — Project North, an ecumenical coalition supporting the rights of Canada's native people, is going out of business at the end of the year. A report in the *United Church Observer* magazine cited internal staff problems and differences among the church partners over the project's work as factors. In operation for 12 years, the coalition included representatives of the country's three main Christian traditions — Anglican, United and Roman Catholic — as well as other denominations. □



Pope John Paul II with Native leaders at Fort Simpson.

Pope supports Native self-government

FORT SIMPSON, NWT — Last minute intercession by aboriginal leaders persuaded Pope John Paul II to reinforce his stand in favor of aboriginal right to self-government, during his visit to Fort Simpson, last month.

The initial text of the Pope's Fort Simpson speech seemed to back away from some of the firm statements he made during his trip to Canada three years ago.

"We were afraid the public perception would be that he was backing off his previous commitment to these important issues," said AFN National Chief Georges Erasmus.

Chief Erasmus says the Pope told the representatives of the AFN, Inuit Tapirisat, Metis National Council and Native Council of Canada that he had never intended to soften his earlier recorded statements.

The speech that resulted from the leaders' appeal reiterated the Pope's call for simple justice for the aboriginal peoples of Canada.

"Once again," he said, "I affirm your right to a 'just and equitable measure of self-governing,' along with a land base and adequate resources for developing a viable economy for present and future generations.

"I pray with you that a new round of conferences will be undertaken as beneficial and that, with God's guidance and help, a path to *a just agreement* will be found to crown all the efforts being made."

Former Dene Nation head Steve Kakfwi, who travelled extensively to organize the September visit of the Pope, says the pontiff "tried to be much stronger than his speechwriters intended him to be."

National Chief Erasmus says the pontiff's speech "will be a great help because it will focus the attention on the condition of native people."

The Pope made mention in his speech of the attention of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, focussed on aboriginal peoples by his statements three years ago. □

(Assembly of First Nations bulletin)

Pope says Church must adapt

The rain stopped. the sun broke through the clouds, and a rainbow appeared in the sky minutes before Pope John Paul II arrived at the historic meeting with the Dene, Metis and Inuit on the bank of the Mackenzie River.

TV commentator Sister Mary Jo Leddy remarked that without reading too much into the abrupt change in the weather, the rainbow is a biblical sign of a covenant with God. The Pope's visit, three years and two days after fog prevented him from a meeting with northerners, had kept a promise in a land of promises broken many times by federal governments in more than a hundred years.

The pope listened to the representatives as they sat together in the great white teepee. He strengthened his speech in favor of native claims, urging the federal government to begin a new round of Constitutional talks with the native peoples.

The pope reminded them that religious and cultural values must not be sacrificed to material well-being, that the missionaries were their true friends. But many young native people are reluctant to forgive attempts by missionaries to replace the native culture and languages with their own to save them from annihilation.

The Pope and the Church in the North have recognized the native people's attempts to reclaim what many had lost. The priests, sisters and brothers who serve them, are among their strongest supporters. But like the native peoples, the Church is struggling. Few are coming forward to replace the aging priests and other workers. Just as in southern parishes, lay people are taking a more active part in the Christian communities. This is all to the good. But priests and religious must be found, if the Church is to survive. They must come from the people.

Bishop Denis Croteau has suggested the solution lies in a married clergy. Celibacy is foreign to the culture of the native people. A married clergy is not a new idea in Canada. It has been suggested before. It is not a new idea in the Church. To a limited degree Ukrainian Catholics have married priests.

It is time the needs of the Church in the North were more fully assessed. Life is changing rapidly in the North. The Church must adapt in order to ensure that it will be there in Pope John Paul's words, "to proclaim your dignity and support your destiny."

Roman Catholics in the provinces should turn their interest to the northern church, not only to see how they can be of help by supporting native rights, but to learn how to renew their own Christian communities, suffering from similar cultural and technological upheavals.

For a variety of reasons, Christian communities in the south have turned their backs on the Territories. We have made a choice largely to send our resources and people to work in the missions of Latin America, Asia and Africa. And all to the good. At the same time we should not forget communities in our own country.

Pope John Paul went to Fort Simpson to listen and pray with the native peoples. He has given us a powerful example — one we should begin to follow.

(Western Catholic Reporter)

Project North must not die

Word that Project North will disband at the end of the year comes as a jolt to those interested and actively working for the survival of Canada's native people. Apparently, the consortium of eight denominations, including Roman Catholics, has internal problems it can't resolve. As a result, it has decided to look for a new way to work with native people.

Project North has been one of the main instruments of ecumenical activity in Canada. It was formed 12 years ago to battle for native rights at the time of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline debate and helped to win a major victory in gaining a 10-year moratorium on construction.

Pope John Paul's historic visit to Fort Simpson in September gave native rights worldwide publicity and recognition. Suddenly, the church-sponsored organization which worked so effectively to further that cause is going out of business. Several groups, including the Edmonton Interchurch Committee on the North seem to have been caught by surprise with the decision to disband Project North.

It comes at a time when native people are facing severe challenges through the Meech Lake accord, which ignores northerners. The Dene will be involved in a major land claims settlement next year. Alberta's Lubicon Band is fighting for a reserve and rights to rich oil lands. The churches have been involved in all of these issues, largely through Project North.

The question now: What will replace this organization?

It is inconceivable that the churches will not find some way to carry on their involvement, providing support and service to the native people. But valuable time may be lost in building a new organization to continue the work.

Much has changed among native people. They are taking more responsibility for their own lives. They are articulate spokesmen for their own causes and don't need other Canadians and organizations to speak for them, no matter how well intentioned they may be. However, native groups can gain strength from the support and expertise church groups can provide in disagreements with the federal groups government over land rights and other issues.

Native rights have been a priority of the churches in Canada. This is not the time to withdraw from the fight for justice for aboriginal peoples. □

(Western Catholic Reporter)

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Photo by Sylvain Lavoie, OMI, Ile a la Crosse

The morning begins with catechetics class. On the left, with headband, is Carl McCallum an adult volunteer from Ile a la Crosse. Bill Reid from Toronto is at right.

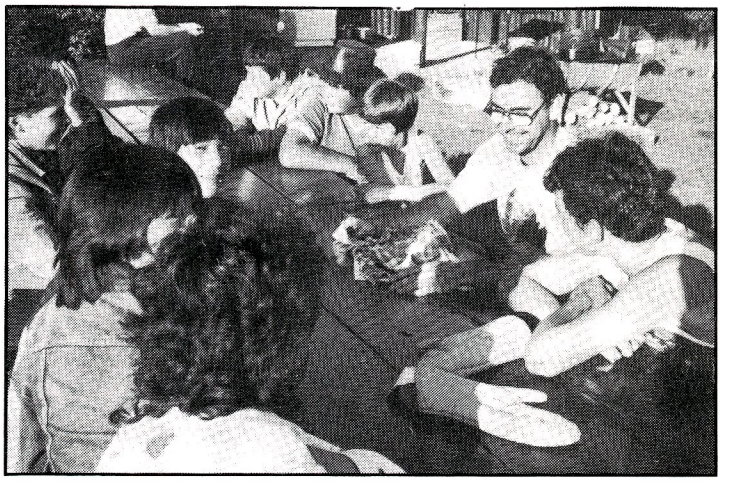

Photo by Sylvain Lavoie, OMI, Ile a la Crosse

Jim McClaughlin from Kitchener, and campers from Ile a la Crosse and Pine House, wait for lunch.

Native and Christian spirituality integrated

by Marikay Falby

SOUTH BAY, SK — The incorporation of the sweat lodge into the first interparish summer camp for native children "brought the kids in touch with their roots, and an expression of their Christian faith in a way that was in harmony with their culture," said Father Sylvain Lavoie, OMI. The summer camp brought together children from the north-west sector of the Keewatin diocese, from the communities of La Loche, Ile a la Crosse, Jans Bay, Canoe Lake, Cole Bay, Beauval, Patuanak, Pinehouse and Green Lake. Campsite was South Bay, about 45 minutes by car south of Ile a la Crosse. The aim of the camp was to give young people a balanced presentation of faith, nature, community and culture. Almost 90 children benefited from the three-week-long camps.

There were three directors for the camps: Fr. Lavoie, OMI, spiritual director; and Alex Bouvier and Marie Mihalicz from Ile a la Crosse. In addition, there were six full time volunteers: Mickey Anderson, a volunteer from New York; Bill Reid, a lawyer from Toronto; Jim McClauglin, a teacher from Kitchener; Tom Polanic and Peter Reitzel, students of McClauglin; and Ken Wood from Saskatoon. The men from Eastern Canada and New York are members of Via, Veritas, Vita — a lay missionary program that sends volunteers into the north to share their faith. It is funded by the Catholic Church Extension Society and the Archdiocese of Toronto. Sister Virginia Nelson, one of the directors, was responsible for the choice and the training of the men, as well as financial coverage for most of the food, transportation and sundries of the camp.

Fr. Sylvain Lavoie felt there was a good integration of native and Christian spirituality, and stressed the sweat lodge. This was made from branches and blankets, with a hole in the center filled with red hot stones, to which is added water. The resulting steam caused the 20 occupants to sweat profusely, getting rid of evil spirits and cleansing the mind and body. The volunteers had prepared for the camp by spending time in a "sweat" Sunday evening in Ile a la Crosse. In addition, each day began with the lighting of the sacred fire, which then burned for the duration of the camp.

During the second week, seven of the counsellors went to the pilgrimage at Lac Ste. Anne. Thousands of native people were there, praying and singing. But the highlight of the pilgrimage for one of the camp counsellors, Ken Wood, was the blessing of the waters of the lake on the second last evening of the week-long pilgrimage. "The bishop (Roy) blessed the water, and all the people walked into the lake fully clothed. It was a profoundly moving experience; the old, the lame, people carrying babies and children — they all walked into the blessed waters to be healed. I saw an old woman being held up by two young women. The water was very, very cold, yet she stayed there in the biting wind and prayed the whole rosary. The experience was shattering. The strength of these native people, all encouraging each other. Thousands of people, and the common bond was faith."

The summer camp was a very positive experience for the children. "It was amazing to see the growth in the kids," said Wood. "They came in unsure of themselves, and in a day or two they were water skiing! They learned that we adults were there to give them love, lots of love, and it took a day or two for them to accept that. The relationships that were formed will stay in our hearts forever. They've touched our lives." □

Children's book news

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR MOCCASINS? by Bernelda Wheeler, illustrated by Herman Bekkering, Pemmican Publications, $5.75, paper.

"This is the most accomplished of Bernelda Wheeler's picture books and should be popular with children from a variety of cultural backgrounds. The language is simple but the story will capture the attention of a range of readers. Most importantly this is a good example of the slowly increasing number of native Canadian stories for children which have been written and published by native people themselves. The attractive black and white illustrations add a good deal of interest to the simple story. The book is recommended for pre-school and kindergarten children.

"Each year the Canadian Children's Book Centre chooses titles published during the previous twelve months which deserve special attention from teachers, librarians, booksellers, parents and children. This year Bernelda's book was one of those chosen." □

Pope's message

Build up Church among your own people

After blessing the land, fire, air, water, animals and the four sacred directions of the medicine wheel, Pope John Paul II blessed the people.

"God of all peoples, Great Spirit, Holy One, listen to our prayer. We ask you to give your blessing this day to the aboriginal peoples of Canada. Guide their elders and all their people, and give them your wisdom and your strength."

The Pope was addressing about 4,000 Dene, Metis and Indian people in Fort Simpson, NWT. It was the largest gathering of northern Dene and Metis ever. They travelled by boat, bus, plane and car to the community at the confluence of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers to see and hear the man the Dene call Yahtita, or priest of priests.

Pope John Paul was fulfilling a promise he had made years before, when fog prevented his plane from landing at Fort Simpson in 1984. It was the Pope's last stop on a busy North American tour. And for many of the people gathered at Fort Simpson, it was the spiritual event of a lifetime.

This is the text of Pope John II's homily to the native peoples at Fort Simpson.

* * *

Dear brothers and sisters,

We have waited a long time for this moment. Almost exactly three years ago my visit to Denendeh was prevented by weather conditions. Now, at last, God has brought us together and gives us the privilege of celebrating the Eucharist of the 25th Sunday of the year.

I greet my brother bishops, especially Bishop Denis Croteau, bishop of this diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. I also greet the priests, religious women and men, and the lay people. I thank Her Excellency, the governor-general, for coming here as well as the representatives of Canadian civil authorities. I am particularly happy to meet members of tribes and peoples who are descendants of the first inhabitants of this country and who many times expressed the wish that I come here and who are now gathered in such numbers in this festive setting.

I wish to thank the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the Native Council of Canada and the Metis National Council for their collaboration in organizing this visit.

I greet everyone in the love of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Once again I proclaim your dignity as human persons and as Christians. You have my support in your efforts to fulfil your temporal and eternal vocation.

"Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near" (Is. 55:6). These words from the first reading are a pressing invitation to raise your thoughts to the Father, from whom all good gifts come, that he may continue to guide your destiny as aboriginal peoples along the right path of peace, in reconciliation with all others, in the experience of an effective solidarity on the part of the church and of society in attaining your legitimate rights.

For untold generations you, the native peoples, have lived in relationship of trust with the Creator, seeing the beauty and the richness of the land as coming from his bountiful hand and as deserving wise use and conservation. Today you are working to preserve your traditions and consolidate your rights as aboriginal peoples. In this circumstance, today's liturgy has a deep application.

The prophet Isaiah is speaking to a people experiencing the sufferings of exile and yearning for rebirth, especially a renewal of the spirit through the rebirth of their culture and traditions. He seeks to console them and strengthen them in their task by reminding them that the Lord is not far from them (cf. Is. 55:6-9).

But where is he to be found? How can we live in God's presence? The prophet indicates three steps for unveiling the presence of God in our personal and collective experience.

First, he says: "Call him." Yes, in prayer we will find the Lord. By calling upon him with trust you will discover that he is near.

But prayer must come from a pure heart. Consequently, the prophet launches a call to conversion: "Turn to the Lord for mercy . . . to our God, who is generous in forgiving." (Is. 55:7)

And finally, we are called to transform our lives by learning to walk in the ways of the Lord: "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts" (v.9). The covenant between God and his people is constantly renewed when they invoke his merciful forgiveness and keep his commandments. God is our God, and we are more and more his people.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus speaks of the owner of an estate who goes out at different hours to hire workers for his land (cf. Matt. 20:1-16). The parable portrays the unlimited generosity of God, who is concerned about providing for the needs of all people. It is the landowner's compassion for the poor — in this case, the unemployed — that compels him to pay all the workers a wage that is calculated not only according to the laws of the marketplace, but according to the real needs of each one.

Life in God's kingdom is based on a true sense of solidarity, sharing and community. It is our task to build a society in which these Gospel values will be applied to every concrete situation and relationship.

Today, this parable of cultivating the Lord's vineyard presents a real challenge to aboriginal nations and communities. As native peoples you are faced with a supreme test: that of promoting the religious, cultural and social values that will uphold your human dignity and ensure your future well-being. Your sense of sharing, your understanding of human community rooted in the family, the highly valued relationships between your elders and your young people, your spiritual view of creation, which calls for responsible care and protection of the environment — all of these traditional aspects of your way of life need to be preserved and cherished.

This concern with your own native life in no way excludes your openness to the wider community. It is a time for reconcilation, for new relationships of mutual respect and collaboration in reaching a truly just solution to unresolved issues.

Above all, I pray that my visit may be a time of comfort and encouragement for the Catholic communities among you. The pioneering efforts of the missionaries — to whom once again the church expresses her pro-

Michilimackinac Indians remembered

by Beatrice Fines

Mackinac Island near the straits of Michilimackinac between lakes Huron and Michigan has become a mecca for tourists fascinated by its beauty and its history, but long before the white man discovered it, Chippewa Indians knew the island as a place to grow food and bury their dead. Pottery, copper arrowpoints and other artifacts from their early occupation still turn up on the island.

They called the place 'Michilimackinac' meaning large turtle because of its rounded shape with high central hills sloping to the water. Fr. Claude Allouez, S.J., gave the first written description of the place saying, "We left behind us a large island called Michilimackinac, famous among the savages."

In 1670 Fr. Claude Dablon, a fellow Jesuit, spent a winter there in a bark building erected for him by the Indians. Today a replica of it, known as the bark chapel, stands in Marquette park near a statue of Fr. Jacques Marquette who established a mission at St. Ignace on the nearby mainland. Fr. Marquette later gained fame when, with Louis Jolliet, he discovered the headwaters of the Mississippi river.

Apart from the missionaries and traders with the American Fur Company, the white man showed little interest in the island until the American Revolution. In 1779 Patrick Sinclair, Lieutenant-Governor of Fort Michilimackinac on the mainland decided he could defend his position against the Americans more easily from the island. Here there was a deep water harbour for his ships and a high cliff overlooking the straits for a fortress. The treaty ending the Revolution awarded the island to the United States, but the British, allied with the Indians, took it back during the war of 1812. After peace was declared, the island was once again turned over to the Americans. The restored fort is now a major tourist attraction

When the Indians gave up their land rights to the United States, the government agreed to erect a building where they could stay while visiting the Indian agent. A large, square clapboard building was constructed in 1838 and from it Henry R. Schoolcraft, the Indian agent, doled out treaty money, food and other necessities to the tribal leaders. This building, known as the Indian Dormitory, is now a museum.

Schoolcraft listened to the Indians, questioned them about their beliefs, their hunting and fishing techniques and wrote an exhaustive account of his findings, "History and Statistical Information of the Indian Tribes of the United States" which is still considered one of the best references on eighteenth and nineteenth century Indian life. Schoolcraft's writing is said to have been the inspiration for Longfellow's narrative poem "Hiawatha".

The island has many natural wonders and as may be expected these have inspired Indian legends. One of the most scenic spots is Arch Rock, a perfect arch 146 feet above the blue-green waters of lake Huron. The Indians say the arch was formed by the tears of an Indian maiden. In her daily gathering of wild rice she met and fell in love with a handsome brave, the son of a sky spirit. She was forbidden to marry this non-mortal boy by her cruel father who tied her to a rock high above the water. Her tears washed away the softer porions of the rock, leaving the perfect arch of harder rock. Sugar loaf, a stack of the same hard rock, was so named because according to Indian legend it was filled with honey and was the home of the great spirit of the island.

In 1763, before the fort was built and white men became permanent residents, one white man had reason to be glad that the Indians were familiar with the place. He was Alexander Henry, a British fur merchant. During an Indian uprising, he became one of the few British survivors due to his friendship with an Indian who hid him in a cave on the island. Henry spent an uncomfortable night trying to sleep on what he thought was very stony ground. In the morning he discovered he'd been sleeping on human bones. The cave was an Indian burial place, a place his friend knew no Indian would enter and therefore, safe. Now known as Skull Cave, its grim entrance can be seen from the roadside, but it remains undisturbed.

Today Indian presence on the island seems almost non-existent, although the visitor who hires a horse-drawn carriage to view the sights (automobiles have been banned since 1912) may find that his driver is of native heritage and proud to tell him so. □

Pope's address:

found and everlasting gratitude — have given rise among you to living communities of faith and Christian life.

The challenge is for you to become more active in the life of the church. I understand that Bishop Croteau and the other bishops of the North are seeking ways of revitalizing the local churches so that you may become ever more effective witnesses of God's kingdom of love, justice, peace, forgiveness and human solidarity.

My dear Indian, Inuit and Metis friends. I appeal to all of you, especially the young people, to accept roles of responsibility and to contribute your talents to building up the church among your people.

I ask all the elders, leaders and parents to encourage and support vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In this way the church will become ever more at home in your cultures, evangelizing and strengthening your traditional values and customs.

I have come today, dear brothers and sisters, to proclaim to you Jesus Christ and to proclaim that he is your friend and your savior. In his name, with the love of the Good Shepherd, I repeat the words of the second reading: "Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ." (Phil. 1:27) By doing this, Christ will be exalted in all your actions (cf. v. 20), and his peace will reign in your hearts.

We are about to renew our baptismal promises. This is a solemn moment. By rejecting sin and evil, and by renewing our trust in the power of Christ's saving mysteries, we are, in fact, reaffirming our covenant with God. He is our God, and we are his people.

As we commit ourselves further to God's ways, may we be filled with the spiritual joy of Mary, the mother of the Redeemer and our mother in the faith. May her words express the deepest sentiments of our own hearts:

"My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit finds joy in God my savior . . . God who is mighty has done great things for me, holy is his name." (Luke 1:46-47, 49) Amen. □

Chief Henri Membertou

by John Steckley

Often, when the story of a Native group or individual is written, lack of understanding of the culture involved has led historians to negatively bias the record. Much has to be looked at anew.

This is certainly true of the story of Henri Membertou, the first Native to be baptized in Canada. When we initially hear of this Micmac of the 16th and 17th centuries, he had, according to one source, "the reputation as being the worst and most treacherous man of his tribe." While 19th and 20th century historians have often used this quote, the writer, Samuel de Champlain, found that this Micmac leader never lived up to that ill fame.

The two men met each other some time in 1605, when the French, under the leadership of Pierre de Gua, sieur de Monts, first established themselves at Port Royal (now Annapolis Royal), in Membertou's home territory on the west coast of Nova Scotia. In 1606, these visitors to a land they called Acadia had to leave the fledgeling settlement in the care of two Frenchmen, La Taille and Miquelet. Champlain wrote that Membertou:

". . . promised to look after them, and that they should be no more unhappy than if they were his own children. We had found him a good Indian all the time we were there, . . ."

Which was more real, the reputation, or what was directly experienced by the man often called the Father of New France?

One must understand the nature of Micmac leadership at that time. They had no chiefs, that is no leaders who had absolute leadership over those under their wing. They had sagamores, men who exercised a light, but highly-respected control over single and multiple kin groups within their local area during the winter and spring. In the summer, when a number of these local groups gathered to exploit the riches of their marine resources:

". . . several Sagamores come together and consult among themselves about peace and war, treaties of friendship and treaties for the common good . . . /If there is some news of importance, as that their neighbors wish to make war upon them or that they have killed someone . . . /then messengers fly from all parts to make up the more general assembly /where/ they resolved upon peace, truce, war or nothing at all, as often happens in the councils where there are several chiefs, without order and subordination."

In the thinly-veiled disdain contained in those last words we see part of the reason for Membertou's bad reputation. Micmac sagamores were roughly equal in authority, and careful not to transgress on the authority, independence and dignity of their peers. The French were accustomed to a rigidly-stratified political hierarchy, and tended to treat Native Peoples as if they, too, possessed that kind of hierarchy. They would often honour a local leader with kingly courtesies, firing salutes and throwing feasts for him, and lavishing him with gifts. It would only be natural that other leaders would feel jealous and would want to spread stories that would undermine this new inequality. Unscrupulous traders sometimes would increase the potential for such rivalry by playing one leader against another in order to exert more control over groups showing unwanted independence.

As the sagamore of the area in which the French settled, Membertou was in an enviable position that could be resented by former equals. A rival soon appeared out of the woodwork. Chkoudan, another sagamore, accused Membertou of plotting against the French. When they sent for him, he appeared without hesitation, alone and innocent.

The French left Port Royal in 1607, leaving Membertou to take care of what remained until June of 1610. This time there was a priest with them, Father Jesse Fleche. On June 24 Henri Membertou and 20 members of his family were baptized.

That year Membertou's life was saved by his friendship for Poutrincourt, the new French commander, and by his belief in the god of that friend. The situation surrounding it is such that it has been easy for historians not versed in the conditions of Micmac life to condemn directly or indirectly the culture of the people, and to use that condemnation of a Native custom to indirectly praise by contrast European culture.

That winter Henri Membertou was very sick and had been given up to die in a particularly Micmac way that needs to be understood in context before it is judged.

If an autmoin or curer declared that he thought someone would die, that person would not be provided with food. The invalid was to face death with courage, wearing the finest of robes, and singing a specially-composed death song. If death did not come when expected, it would be hastened by soaking the dying person with pails of cold water.

Consider the context. The 17th century Micmac probably never spent more than six weeks in one place, using each rich resource of moose, fish, and shellfish in its natural turn. It was satisfying, rewarding life for the strong and mobile. If, however, a person became seriously ill, unable to leave, there were only two choices available. The person could be left behind to suffer and die alone, unburied, the possible victim of wolves or other predators. The alternative was a relatively quick and merciful death, with proper, respectful burial performed by friends and relatives: a hard choice, but the better of the two.

But autmoins, like curers everywhere, make mistakes. Such was the case with their diagnosis of Henri Membertou. His family, filled with sadness, had stopped bringing him food. He sang his death song, unafraid to die.

But Poutrincourt, who had been away, returned to Port Royal to convince his friend that if he ate he would survive. Henri believed his friend as he knew the Frenchman spoke with the knowledge of the Christian God. This saved his life. Membertou was quick to credit his saved life to this god, and spread the word among his people.

In what remained of his life — he died on September 18, 1611 — Henri Membertou, a traditional autmoin or shaman before he met the French, seems to have successfully combined his people's beliefs with the new ideas he heard from the missionary. This formed the seed of a rich, new culture of beliefs that was to help his people achieve what no other Atlantic coast Native group was able to do: survive with a dynamic culture in the homeland of their ancestors. To understand the nature of this unique achievement, writers of Micmac history must look afresh at the circumstances of the groups and individuals that made this possible. □

Pontiac — allied with the French

by John Steckly

Pontiac's Ottawa in the 18th century were a people fighting to survive with independence and dignity. But they were only bit players in the drama in which the English and French were leading men.

During the first half of the century the Ottawa, like most Native peoples, were closely connected with the French. For the French lived and worked with them as traders, blacksmiths, missionaries and farmers. French forts formed a thin crescent from Lake Ontario down the middle of the continent to Louisiana, while the English clung to the shores of the Atlantic, rarely venturing far west.

The war in the 1750s and 1760s between English and French was aptly called the French and Indian War by the Americans. Although the English outnumbered the French 1.5 million to 80 thousand in 1763, this was not the case in the interior. There the combined guerilla forces of the Canadiens (French Canadians) and Natives were almost unbeatable. This was made evident when General Braddock set out to capture Fort Duquesne (later Ft. Pitt, then Pittsburgh) with 2,200 crack British troops and American colonial forces. In the summer of 1755 they were beaten by approximately 250 French troops and Canadien militia and 600 Natives, with a significant Ottawa contingent probably including Pontiac. Two-thirds of the English were captured or killed, while their opponents had only 23 killed.

While Pontiac's first recorded speech, at Fort Duquesne in 1757, was pro-French, he and his people were not merely dependent allies. They still felt free to choose the side that would best guarantee their survival and preserve their independence.

During the late 1750s the French began to lose. This was in no small part due to a newly-arrived General Montcalm, overly-cautious, and too much of an aristocratic officer to trust the Canadiens and Natives. In 1759 the English had Ft. Frontenac (Kingston) and Ft. Duquesne, and took Ft. Niagara, and, at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, Quebec. In November, a group of Ottawa decided that survival meant allying themselves with the yet-untested reliability of the English. Only about 200 Ottawa, including Pontiac, remained near Detroit, on the side of the French.

Major Robert Rogers was sent to take over Detroit for the English in September 1760. He met with Pontiac and an embassy of Detroit area Natives in November. Pontiac was trying to learn what this new power in his country would be like. The first signs were not too hopeful. British General Amherst, a match for Montcalm in ignorance of the colonial situation, wanted to discontinue the French policy of giving gifts and much-needed credit to Native trading partners.

By the spring of 1762 the Ottawa and their Native neighbours suffered from a serious lack of much-needed gunpowder, lead and other supplies. But Amherst stubbornly refused to extend credit. At that time a prophet appeared, with a revolutionary vision said to come from the Great Spirit. It combined a call to traditional ways, monogamy and refraining from socially-destructive sorcery, with an exhortation to drive out the English and support the French.

In April 1763 Pontiac used this as a rallying cry to the Ottawa, Ojibwa, Potawatomi and Wyandot. A short time later he encouraged local Canadiens to take up arms along with their Native brothers to drive out the English intruder. In this speech Pontiac reminded them of what the Ottawa had done for them:

> *"It is not seventeen years since the Ojibwa of Michilimackinac, combined with the Sacs and Foxes, came down to destroy you. Who then defended you? Was it not I and my young men? Mickinac, great chief of all these nations, said in council that he would carry to his village the head of your commandant, that he would eat his heart and drink his blood. Did I not take your part? Did I not go to his camp and say to him, that if he wished to kill the French, he must first kill me and my warriors? Did I not assist you in routing them and driving them away? And now you think that I would turn my arms against you! No, my Brothers; I am a Frenchman, and I wish to die a Frenchman . . ."*

Eventually about 300 young Frenchmen responded to his call.

The Detroit Ottawa and their neighbours were not the only ones to feel a grievance against the English. The Delaware, Illinois, Kickapoo, Mascouten, Miami, Seneca and Shawnee captured a series of English forts. The Delaware, Seneca and Shawnee joined forces and laid seige to Ft. Pitt, so the English sent 460 soldiers to relieve the defenders. When General Amherst heard of how that force was easily defeated by the Natives, he issued his most infamous statement:

> *"Could it not be contrived to send the smallpox among the disaffected tribes of Indians? We must on this occasion use every stratagem in our power to reduce them."*

Fortunately, he did not follow through with this horrendous threat.

News of the Treaty of Paris (February 1763) declaring peace between the English and the French was trickling into the interior. Tribe after tribe saw the futility of postponing the inevitable. Pontiac, however, kept up the fight. In 1764, exasperated by the neutrality of the Illinois, threatened them by saying he would "consume your tribes as the fire consumes the dry grass on the prairie." That remark may have cost him his life.

In 1765, Pontiac too saw that resistance was hopeless. But he did not feel that that meant subservience to a new power. In a preliminary agreement he agreed to peace, but stipulated that the English should not consider that the surrender of French forts gave them the right to own the whole country. He stressed that the French had settled it only as tenants, not owners. This stand was reiterated when the final treaty was signed in the spring of 1766.

And Pontiac proved to be a man of his word. When dissidents sought his help during the next year, he refused, and later was banished from his own village. Without a home, Pontiac made his way south to St. Louis near an Illinois village. Probably considering him a menace to the newly-achieved peace, and possibly remembering the pride-stinging threat he had made a few years before, the Illinois killed him. He was quickly buried by the English, who feared repercussions. To this day, the great leader's burial place remains a mystery. □

Native culture enriches church

The Pope was presented with a sacred feather in Phoenix, AZ.

by Agostino Bono

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The church blundered in its initial contacts with native Americans and contributed to their oppression by European colonizers, said Pope John Paul II.

"The cultural oppression, the injustices, the disruption of your life and of your traditional societies must be acknowledged," he told 16,000 participants at the Tekakwitha Conference for native peoples.

But the church also has historically defended native American dignity and regards native American culture as enriching the Catholic Church, he said at a Sept. 14 meeting at which he watched a rendering of the Our Father in sign language.

"It is clear that stereotyping, prejudice, bigotry and racism demean the human dignity which comes from the hand of the Creator," the pope said.

The pope also participated in a smoke blessing, a traditional ceremony in which a feather passed repeatedly through smoke was used, and invited native Americans to consider entering the priesthood and religious life.

"Your encounter with the Gospel has not only enriched you; it has enriched the church," the pope said.

"This has not taken place without its difficulties and, occasionally, its blunders," he added.

The European colonial period during which Christianity was introduced into the Americas "was a harsh and painful reality for your peoples," the pope said.

But it also produced "many missionaries who strenuously defended the rights of the original inhabitants of this land," he added.

The pope also praised Franciscan Father Junipero Serra, a Spanish missionary, for his "frequent clashes with civil authorities over the treatment of Indians."

Of all the events in Phoenix, he said, the pope remarked about his meeting with thousands of native Americans, saying it was a unique experience and he was touched by their gift of an eagle feather, symbolizing strength and honor. *(NC)*

From Page 1

The editorial board realizes that the INDIAN RECORD no longer fulfills an essential role in bringing the Church's message to Canada's native peoples, We regretfully bid adieu to our readers!

G. L.

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Subscribers who have paid for two and three years subscriptions beginning January, 1987 will be refunded at the rate of $3.00 for 1988 and $6.00 for 1988 and 1989.

All our subscribers will be advised when we resume publication of the INDIAN RECORD or replace it by another news and editorial medium. □

Cable TV in N. Ontario

MOOSONEE, ON — The Mocreebec Development Corporation, a native company in northern Ontario, was given an Ontario government grant of $143,684 to start a cable television service by September 1987. □

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