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Volume 30 No. 12 • March 2013

# Wind speaker



Inform. Impact. Inspire. Independent. Indigenous.

**RCMP slammed  
with report on rapes,  
violence in B.C.  
Page 8**

**John Duncan resigns  
as Minister of  
Aboriginal Affairs  
Page 10**

**Canadians  
would stand up if  
they knew the truth  
Page 11**

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Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA)

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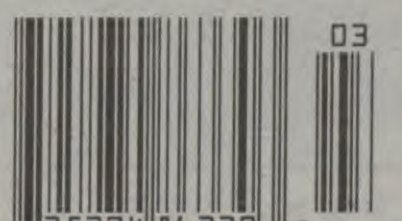
## Women's Marches demand justice for the disappeared

Marches were held February 14 to demand justice for the many missing and murdered Aboriginal women throughout Canada. This march was in Vancouver.

Please see more of our coverage on pages 8 and 9.

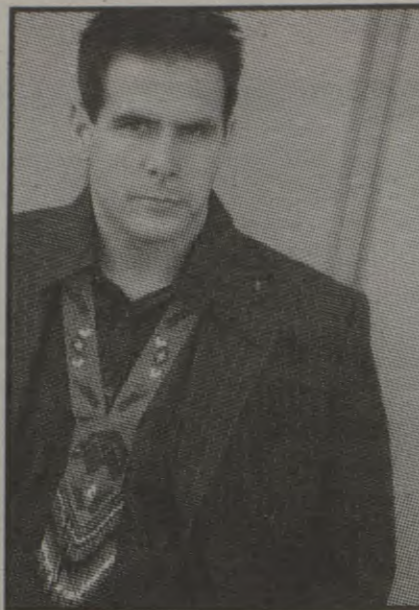
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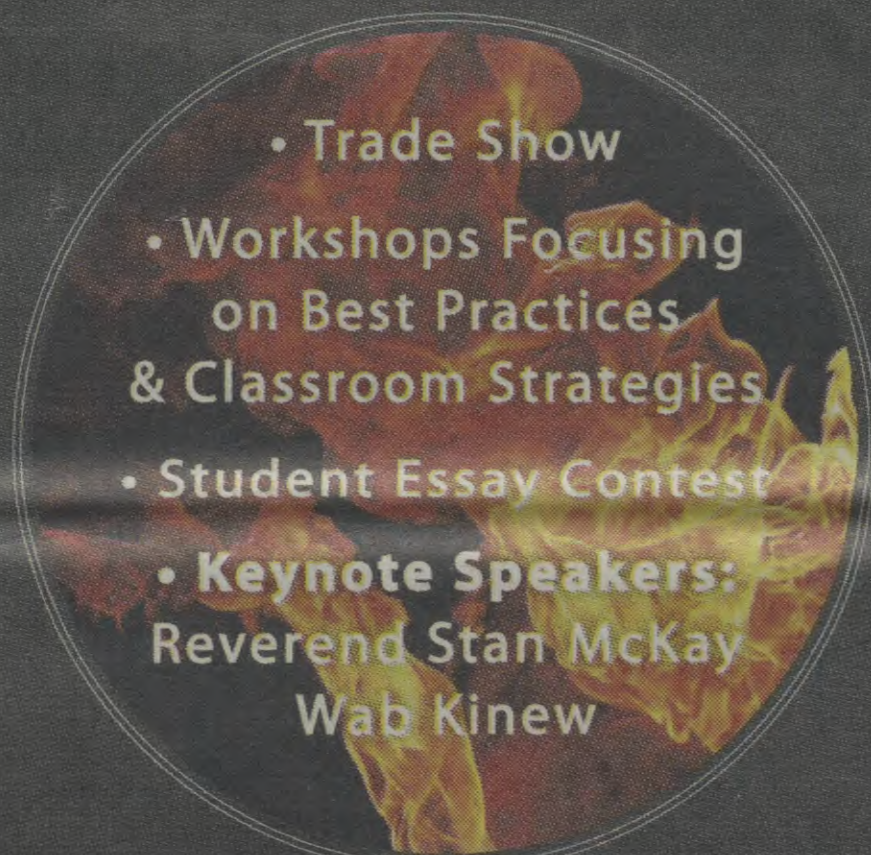
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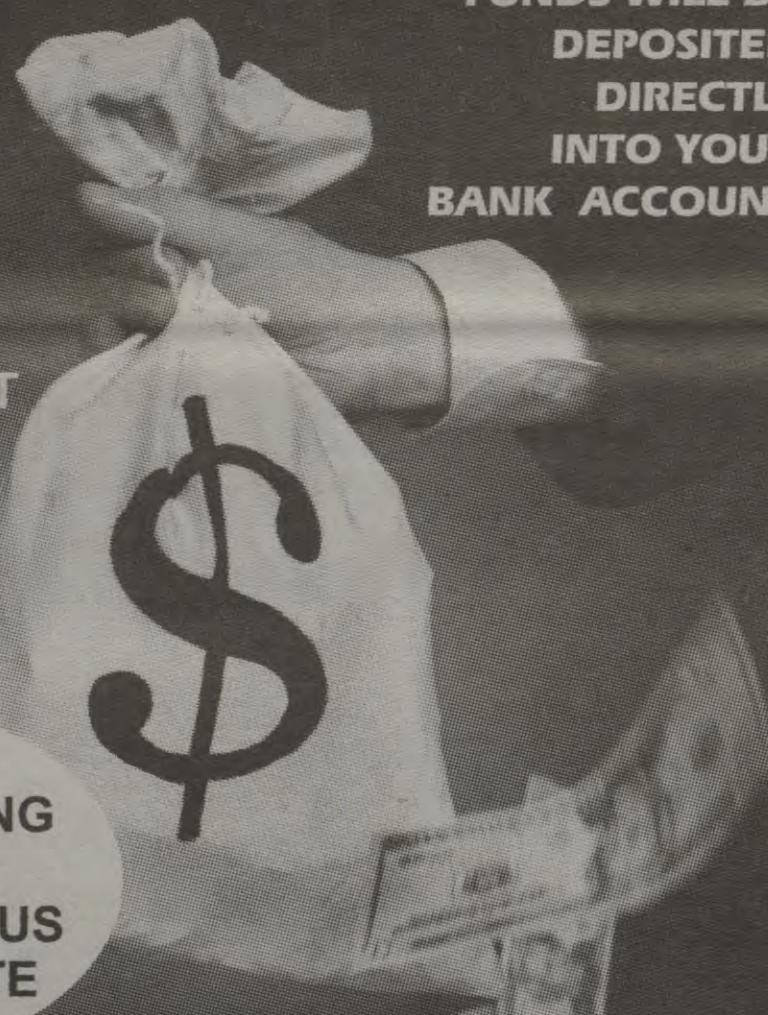
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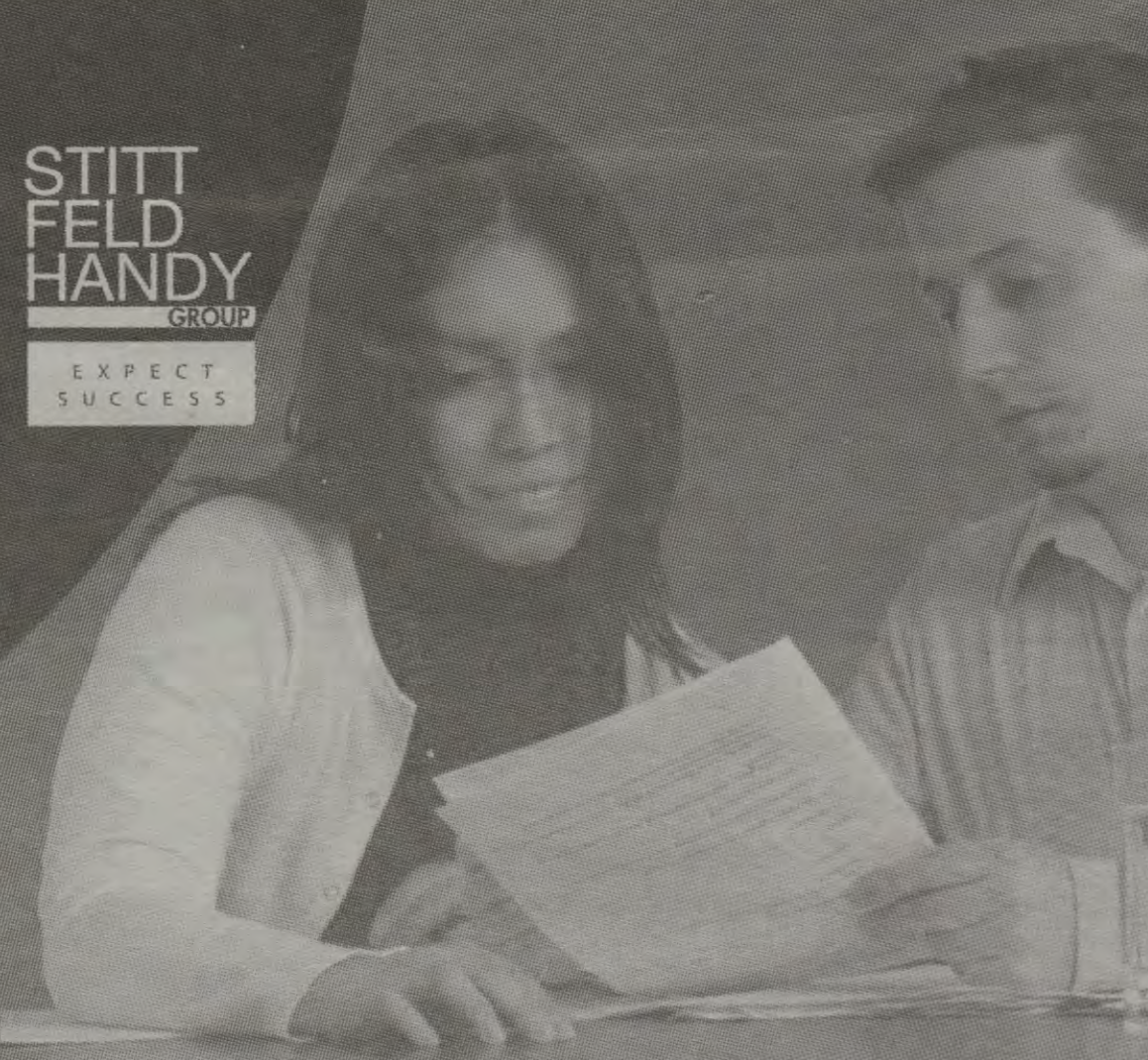
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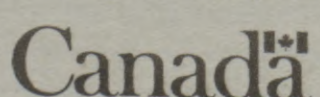


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**Features**

**RCMP slammed with report on rapes, violence  
in B.C. 8**

Canada's national police force insists it is taking  
seriously allegations of widespread police  
misconduct and abuse against Native women,  
including several rapes, death threats and  
violence, brought forward by the U.S.-based  
Human Rights Watch (HRW).

**Violence Against Women Act moves ahead in  
U.S. 8**

As violence against women dominates  
discussions among Aboriginal and human rights  
groups in Canada, south of the border the long-  
sought Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was  
passed by the U.S. Senate on Feb. 12.

**Women's Marches demand justice for the  
disappeared 8**

Long-time women's advocate Gladys Radek  
wasn't surprised when the Prime Minister didn't  
answer the door of his Parliament Hill office on  
Valentine's Day when missing women's family  
members called hoping for a meeting. It was in  
the wake of a blistering Human Rights Watch  
report, which alleged police were themselves  
among the perpetrators of violence against  
women.

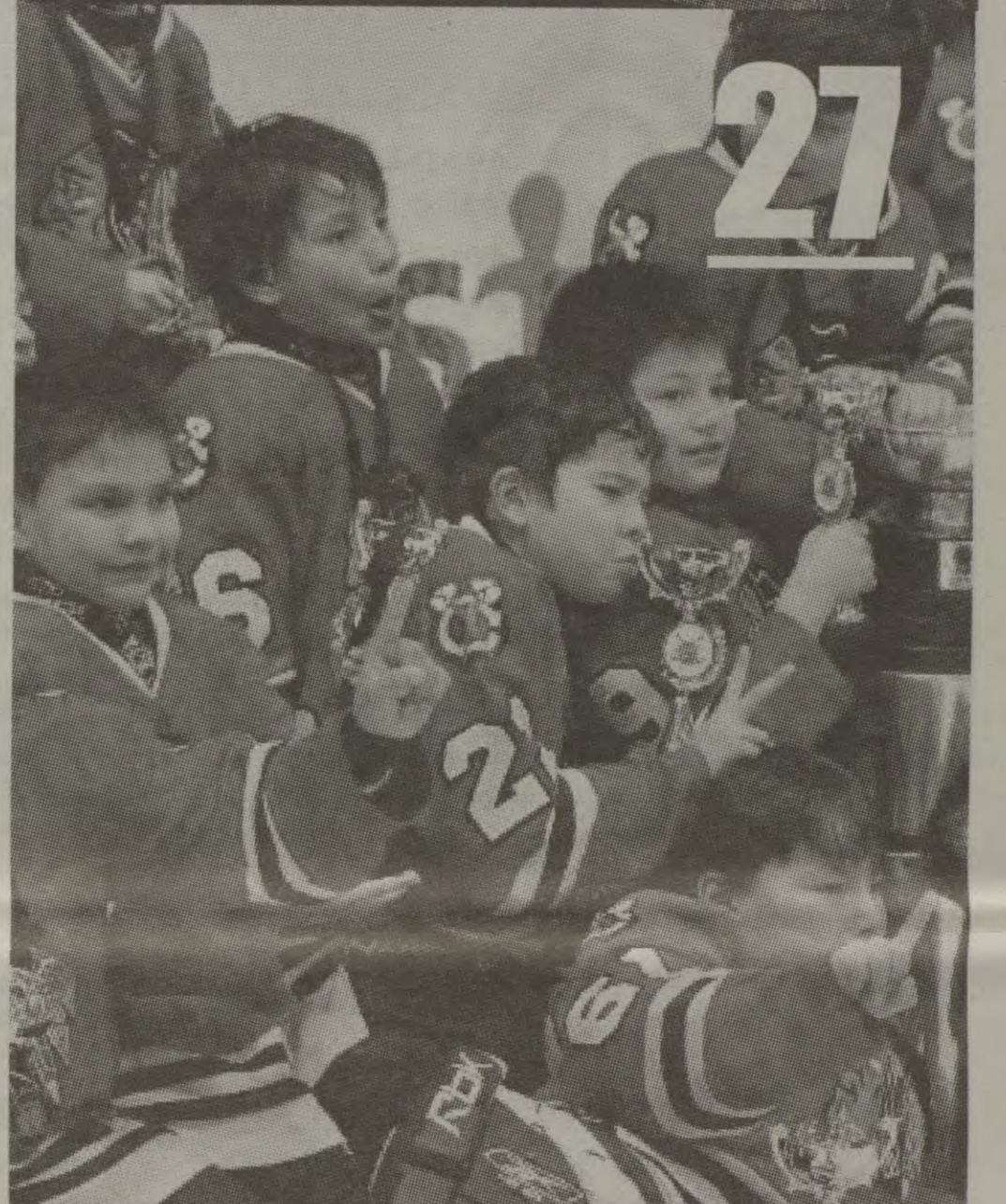
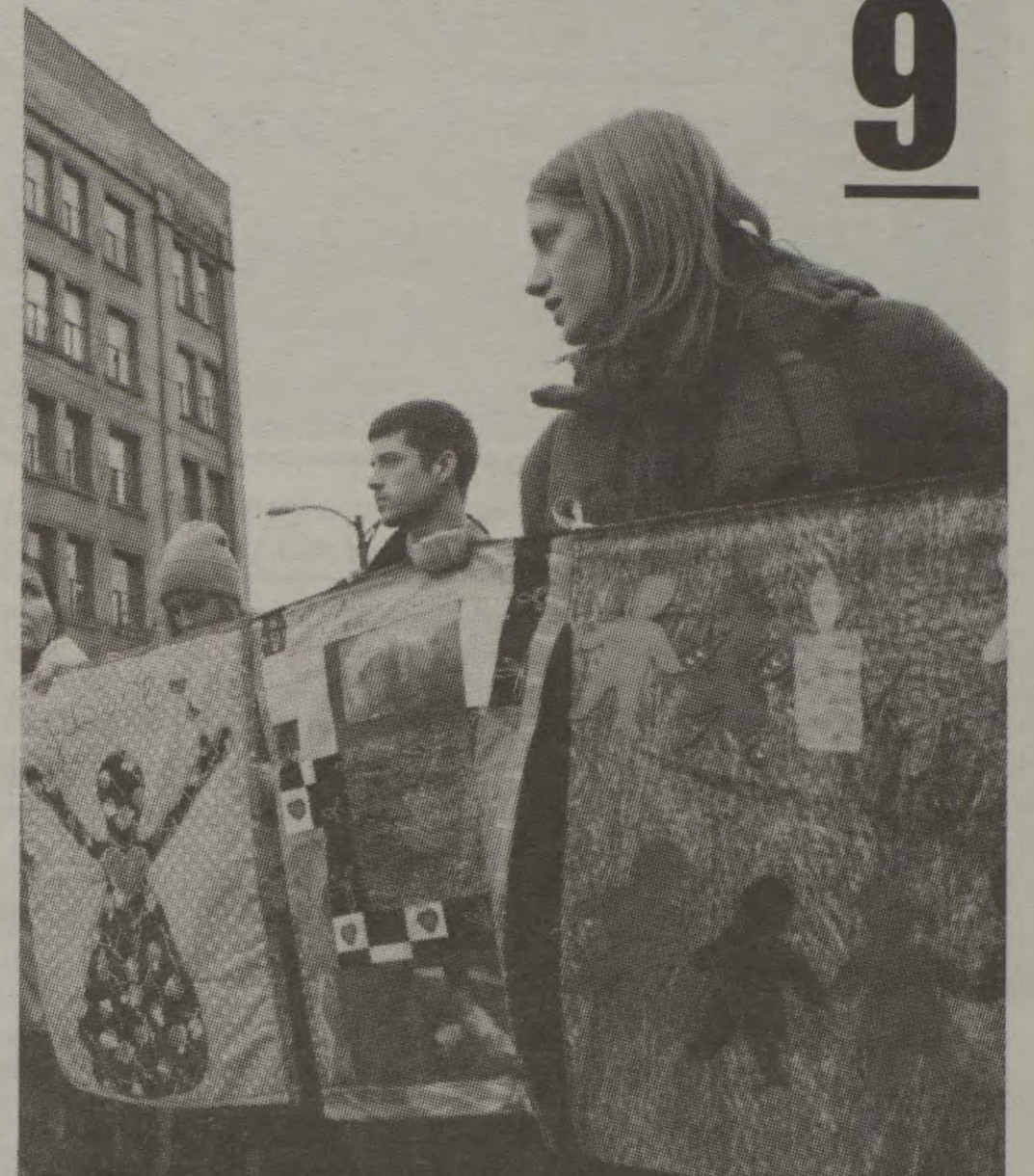
**Duncan takes his leave of Cabinet post,  
remains MP 10**

John Duncan has resigned his position as  
Canada's Aboriginal Affairs and Northern  
Development minister, but it is not because of a  
near-riot in Saskatoon at the hotel hosting  
Duncan at his second First Nation Education Act  
consultation meeting on Feb. 8.

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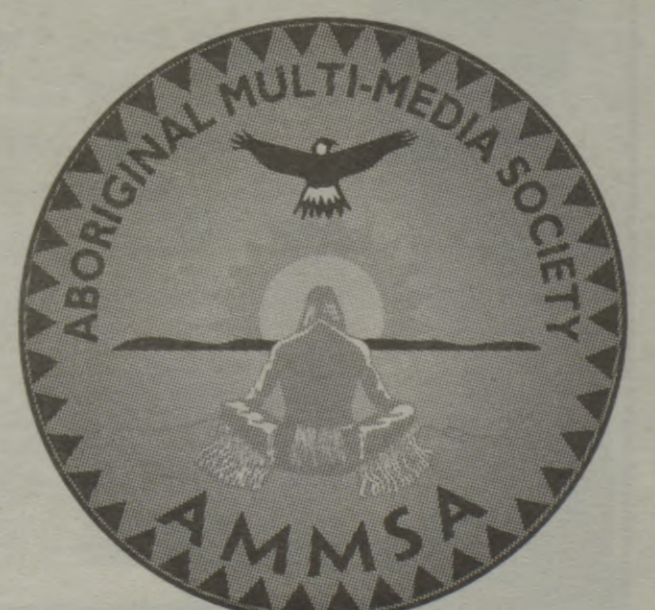
Juno award-winning singer, songwriter and actress  
Mishi Donovan searched for family all her life and,  
ironically, was laid to rest on Feb. 18, Family Day in  
Alberta.



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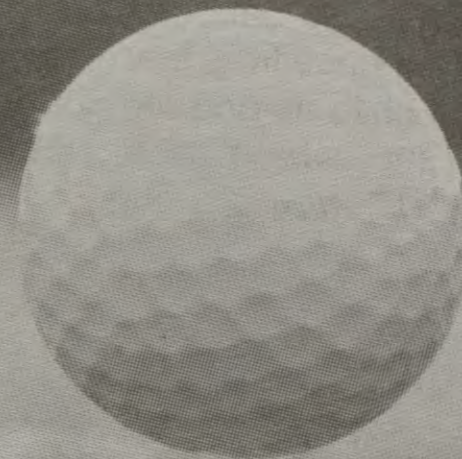
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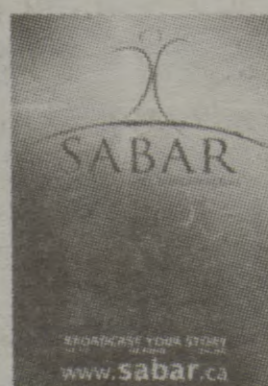
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## When the police aren't the good guys anymore

It's been a few years of increasingly disturbing news and, from all that we've learned during this time, we can safely conclude that many of the police services in this country have lost their moral bearings; they have lost their humanity; and lost perspective on what is right and good, which is, at its core, the most important thing of all.

When a mother calls the police station to report that her 18-year-old daughter has been raped, is the correct response from law enforcement to pick the wounded child up and throw her in cells... for five days? That's what happened in Edmonton in mid-February. The young woman was 'bloodied and bruised' and missing a front tooth when the Edmonton Police Service retrieved her from a downtown motel where 'friends' beat and sexually assaulted her.

Not even the rape kit necessary to collect evidence against her assailants was done until days later. She slept in an overcrowded remand centre on the floor, no counselor to help her through the trauma of the experience, no one to patch her up; to treat her bleeding.

Where is the compassion that should have been afforded this girl?

She had an old warrant from her days as a minor, you see. She hadn't done her community service. Hadn't written a letter of apology. How does that trump investigating a violent crime against her? It doesn't, or, at least, it shouldn't. All her suffering was exacerbated by the EPS's blindness to their responsibility to her; a victim in that moment, not an offender.

EPS said the girl never told police she had been raped until days after she had been arrested, that proper police process was followed. They are investigating them, the EPS themselves. Sorry, but unless a truly independent investigation of this incident is done, we will remain suspicious.

The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network talked with the woman's lawyer. He will be filing a complaint on her behalf regarding the treatment she received, he said.

We are saying, however, a complaint is just not enough. The inhumanity of the treatment of this young woman by police is altogether appalling, and, we are beginning to understand, it's indicative of law enforcement's treatment of Native women in many parts of the country.

Human Rights Watch, a New York based organization, levels against the RCMP in northern British Columbia the charges of brutality, rape and intimidation of Native women.

Two researchers spent time in communities along the Highway of Tears—Prince George to Prince Rupert, so-called because of the many girls to have gone missing along this route—to hear claims of mistreatment at the hands Canada's police force. They heard stories about police pepper-spraying and tasing young girls, of women being strip-searched by male officers, aggressive behavior and insensitivity to victims.

The newspaper The National Post has said some of the claims in the Rights Watch report, entitled *Those Who Take Us Away: Abusive Policing and Failures in Protection of Indigenous Women and Girls in Northern British Columbia*, 'strain-credulity.' We say, not looked at through this lens of Edmonton. Not in light of the tasing of an 11-year-old child in a care home in Prince George.

Mary-Ellen Turpel-LaFond, BC's Representative for Children and Youth, reported on the Prince George youth tasing incident in February as well. "This case is among the most difficult we've reported on," reads her press statement on the release of *Who Protected Him? How B.C.'s Child Welfare System Failed One of its Most Vulnerable Children*.

The taser seems to be a very favorite weapon in the RCMPs arsenal still, even since the 2007 Vancouver Airport taser killing of Robert Dziekanski. And if a police force is willing to deploy a taser on a child with special needs, as they did in Prince George, we can fully believe that tasing young Native girls would not be out of the realm of possibility.

It's easy to criticize, we know, from a soft, cushy armchair far away from the drama and tensions of the street, but evidence continues to mount that something is severely off the rails with the protection we expect from law enforcement agencies in this country. They are becoming increasingly indistinguishable from the bullies and the bad guys.

It's time to get a real look behind this wall of blue. Have the courage Canada to get to the bottom of this seemingly endless abusive behavior.

**Windspeaker**

[ rants and raves ]

## Page 5 Chatter

### On Minister John Duncan's Resignation...

"Tseshaht is not sorry to see him go," said Chief Councillor Hugh Braker of the Tseshaht First Nation on Vancouver Island, B.C. While the sudden resignation of John Duncan from Aboriginal Affairs was described by some as a shock, few lamented the sudden departure of the now former minister. "Regretfully, Mr. Duncan has not been effective in the past year," said Braker. He questioned Duncan's handling of a number of files, including Aboriginal education, Attawapiskat, Idle No More issues, Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike, changes to the Indian Act without proper consultation. "All showed his lack of leadership and lack of willingness to consult," said Braker. Duncan remains MP of North Island-Powell River, B.C.

"(John Duncan was) a very nice man, a very honourable man, but what files have been moved in terms of education, or housing, or dealing with treaty entitlement, or reserve creation, or even water," wondered Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde. Duncan tendered his resignation late on Friday afternoon Feb. 15 stating he had inappropriately written a letter of reference for a constituent to the Tax Court of Canada. This meant he had to go, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper accepted the resignation saying "I would like to thank Mr. Duncan for his many contributions as minister and for his service to the people of Canada."

"What has he accomplished in his term as [Aboriginal Affairs] minister besides confusion, anger and distrust in government," said Grand Chief Stan Louttit of the Mushkegowuk territory. On Twitter there was at first surprise and then suspicion. Janice Makokis of @bearclannation said it was no coincidence that Duncan resigned now. "It's called politics of distraction. Let's keep them busy from addressing real issues!" Pam Palmater @ Pam\_Palmater, who came second to Shawn Atleo in the Assembly of First Nations election for national chief, said "Min Duncan was poor choice 4 INAC to begin with. He was staunch opponent of what he termed 'race-based' native fishing rights. Harper knew." Many complained that Duncan was largely missing in action on the Aboriginal Affairs file leaving Jacki McLenaghan @ jackimclenaghan to quip: "Who's #JohnDuncan?"

Prime Minister Stephen Harper replaced Duncan with New Brunswick MP Bernard Valcourt, who was an associate minister of national defence in charge of buying equipment for the Canadian Forces. Remember the F-35s that caused the government so much trouble? The Assembly of First Nations was quick to give Valcourt the thumb's up. "This cabinet change comes at a unique time for First Nations and Canada, a true moment of reckoning," said Atleo. "We hope that Minister Valcourt will work with the First Nation leadership directly to advance priority areas to achieve transformative change for our peoples."

Bellegarde said Valcourt's experience with economic development and in Fisheries was a big plus. He was even at one time Secretary of State for Indian and Northern Affairs. Where did Valcourt get all of this experience? Well, he served in Cabinet first under Brian Mulroney beginning in 1984. That's almost 30 years ago. Mulroney was the big cheese that gave us the BC Treaty Process. At the time, Mulroney declared that the land question in the province would be settled by the year 2000, but it's hard to keep to a schedule on these things, especially since First Nations weren't prepared to relinquish their lands for just cents on the dollar and something called extinguishment.

During his time under Mulroney, Valcourt was in a serious drunk driving motorcycle accident, and he paid a big price. He lost the sight in his right eye, and his cabinet position. He was returned to cabinet though seven months later and was given the Fisheries portfolio in 1991. After the cons were destroyed by the Liberals in '93, Valcourt was off the federal scene for 18 years, until May 2011 when he was elected and returned to the Hill.

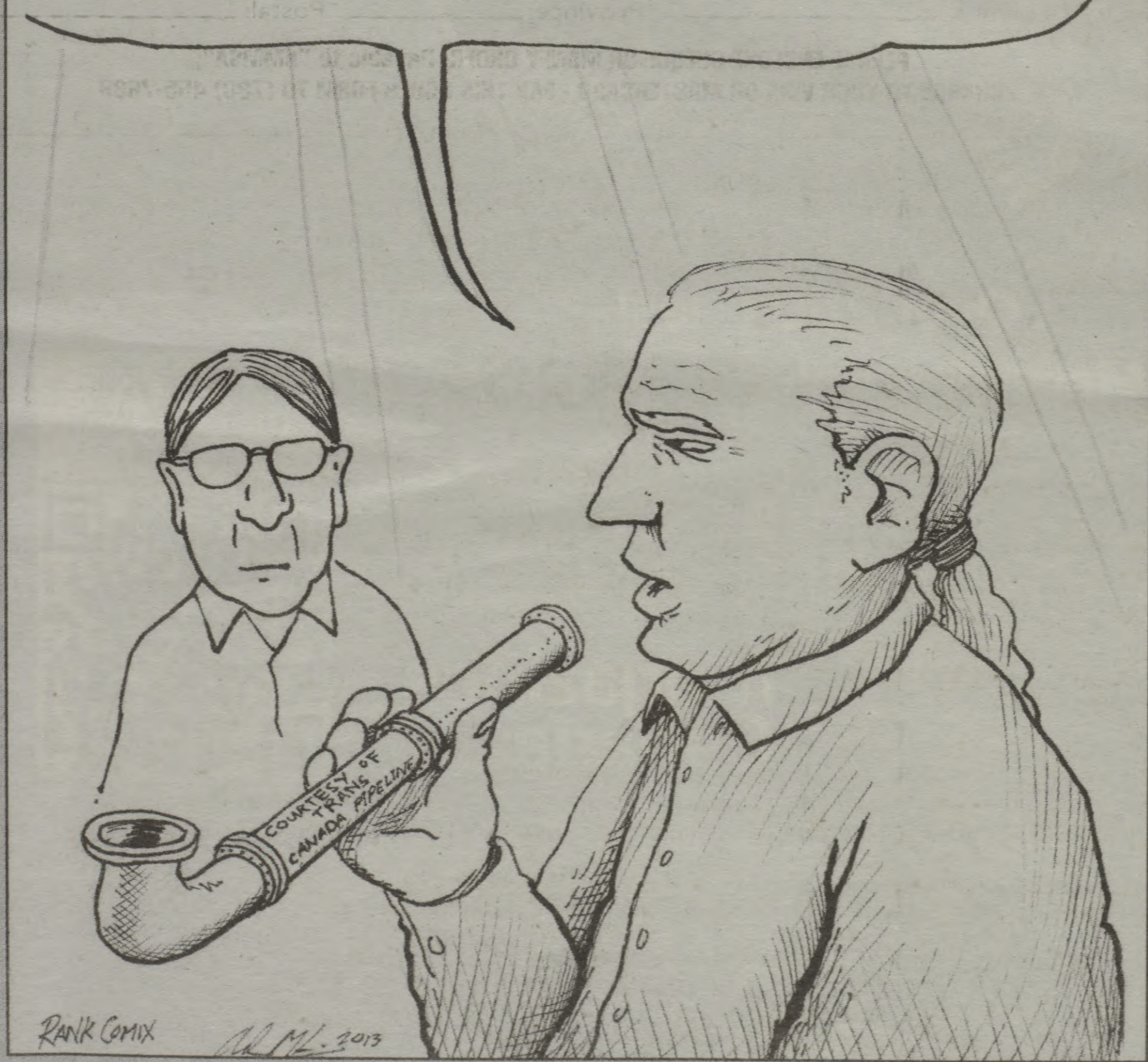
Don Martin, host of CTV's Power Play, called Valcourt "an interesting choice." Valcourt is "going to go to the frontbench and be given the big headache of this very contentious portfolio."

Twitter has been a very quiet place on the Valcourt appointment, but not silent. Christine Cameron @life\_lite said that when a chief asked Valcourt recently about Bill C-45, the MP is reported to have replied, "I don't know & I don't care." EmperorStephenHarper @RobertJensen encapsulated the situation by Tweeting "#Duncan resigned from cabinet for breaking the rules. #Valcourt resigned from cabinet for drunk driving. Harper picks another winner." Valcourt was sworn into Cabinet in a private ceremony, prompting I.Giraud @BlueShoes55 to Tweet "Why does it always have to be 'secret' w these people?!"

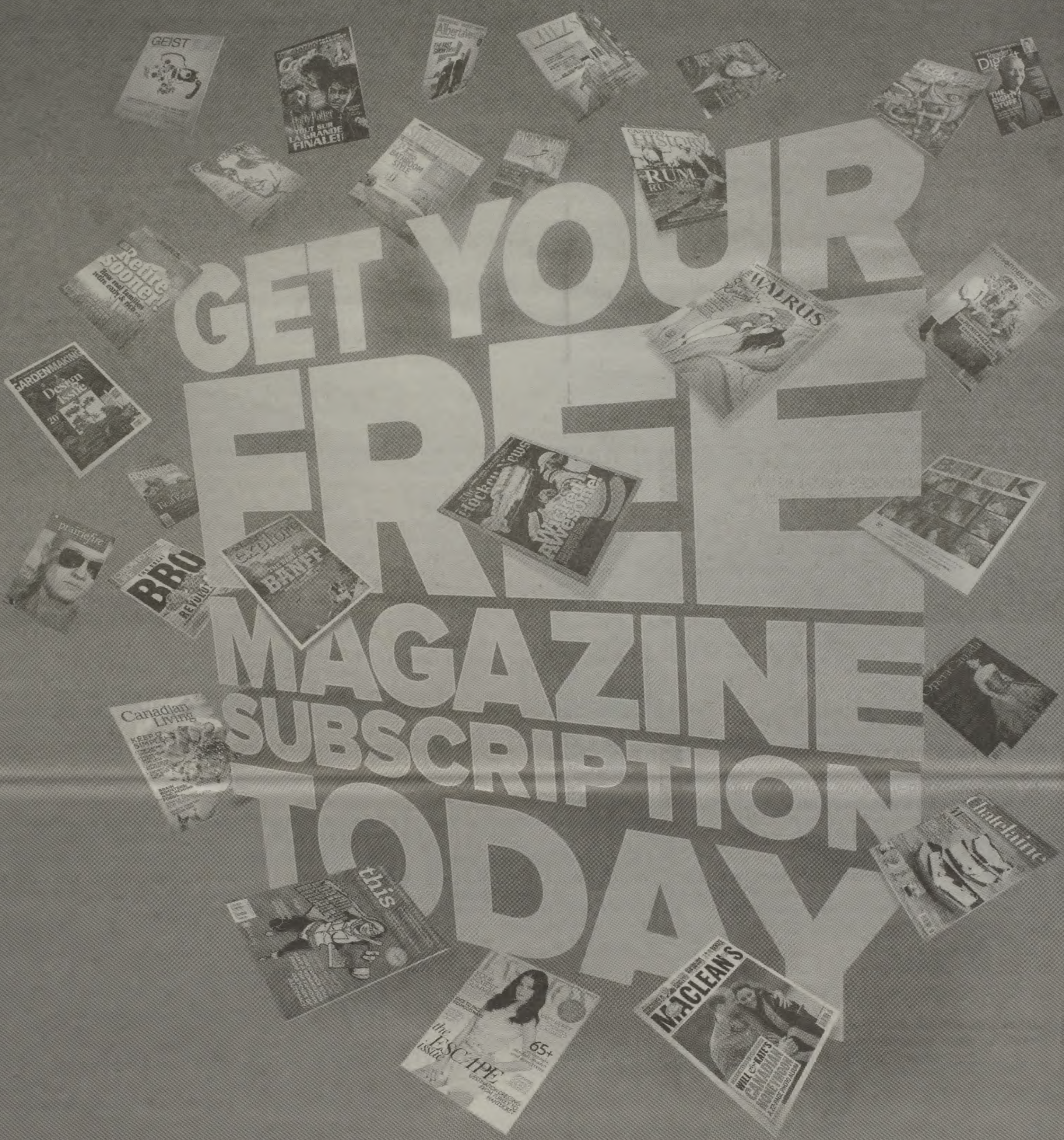
## Rank Comix

by Adam Martin

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# RCMP slammed with report on rapes, violence in B.C.

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

## VANCOUVER

Canada's national police force insists it is taking seriously allegations of widespread police misconduct and abuse against Native women, including several rapes, death threats and violence, brought forward by the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch (HRW).

In its Feb. 13 report entitled "Those Who Take Us Away," the group documented dozens of allegations from more than 50 interviews in 10 northern B.C. communities.

"The stories shared in this report are heart-wrenching and absolutely appalling, particularly given this is only a small sample of the conditions and experiences of Indigenous women, girls and families across our territories," said AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo in

a statement. "I commend the courage of all those who've shared their stories, and continue to urge others aware of violence or misconduct to speak up.

"We cannot accept violence against or among our peoples. We owe it to the families who've lost loved ones, and to our children and future generations to achieve safe and secure communities for our kids to learn, grow and thrive."

Meghan Rhoad, a researcher for the report, told Windspeaker she was "deeply troubled" by the allegations, not to mention the significant "level of fear" witnessed amongst complainants that police would retaliate if they stepped forward.

"In too many of the cases we heard described, there was impunity for the violence committed against them," said Rhoad.

"I would like to see... the government and police look

seriously at what they can do right now to set a new path, in terms of their relationship to Indigenous women and girls."

RCMP Chief Supt. Janice Armstrong released a statement soon after the report's release, promising the force would examine the accusations carefully but only if alleged victims' identities were released or filed formal complaints.

"The RCMP takes the allegations enclosed in the Human Rights Watch Report very seriously," she said. "The unimaginable loss and pain felt by families and loved ones of missing and murdered persons is also felt across our communities. The RCMP looks forward to working with our government and non-government partners, as well the communities we serve to provide Canadians with the professional and accountable police service they expect and deserve."

Without named victims,

Armstrong cautioned, little could be done. But with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) continuing to push with other groups for a national public inquiry into more than 600 missing and murdered Aboriginal women across the country, the group dismissed RCMP demands for victims to go public—and police comments questioning NWAC's missing women numbers themselves—as a form of intimidation.

"It appears now that the RCMP has chosen aggressive bullying tactics to re-direct public attention away from its own internal issues," said Michele Audette, president of the NWAC in a statement. "This is another justification for NWAC's call for a long-overdue national public inquiry that will, once and for all, look at the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, including the attitude of the

police forces that should be there to protect them and not discredit the organizations that are trying to shed light on this matter."

The president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs said the global attention to Canada's missing women crisis could force a change in the RCMP and other police forces. But those efforts—and calls for a national inquiry—require continued public pressure from rights and Aboriginal organizations.

"We need to keep the pressure up," Grand Chief Stewart Phillip told Windspeaker. "The campaigns are encompassing the entire global community, but the RCMP are a very rigid paramilitary organization with deep colonial and neo-colonial roots. They're rigid to the point of being brittle, and I think it's going to take some very serious charges before they actually begin to make some real, meaningful changes."

# Violence Against Women Act moves ahead in U.S.

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

## WASHINGTON, DC

As violence against women dominates discussions among Aboriginal and human rights groups in Canada, south of the border the long-sought Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was passed by the U.S. Senate on Feb. 12.

Bipartisan support for the bill led to 78 senators voting in favour of the bill, which includes controversial provisions to extend tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians on reservation lands. Twenty-two senators—all Republican men—voted against the bill, which sets aside \$659 million over five years for anti-violence programs.

As the legislation moved to Congress for approval, some groups expressed outrage that violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people was dropped from the package.

"On one hand, we're optimistic for a good result," John Dossett, a lawyer for the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), told

Windspeaker. "But we're working very hard to make it happen. It's a lot of work."

The president of the NCAI, which is roughly equivalent to the Assembly of First Nations in Canada, celebrated the senate success of VAWA, including its tribal provisions.

"Today's passage of the Violence Against Women Act in the Senate, and previous votes to defeat harmful amendments to the bill, sends a clear message to the House that a strong VAWA bill with the tribal provisions must be passed immediately," said Jefferson Keel in a statement. "There is no reason for further delay.

"This is violence that cuts deep into the hearts of our community. Addressing violence against any women, including Native women, is a priority of all Americans, and the safety of both Native and non-Native communities should not be marginalized."

Dossett explained that in the U.S., tribal governments operate their own court, justice, jail and police systems, seen as part of "inherent tribal self-government." But despite that,

their jurisdiction only extends to Native American citizens, not to non-Natives, even if crimes are committed on tribal soil.

"The proposal is to extend that to non-Indians, for specific crimes, such as domestic violent crimes involving non-Indian descendants," Dossett said. "It's a very important area, because non-Indians who commit these crimes can only be prosecuted by the federal government.

"The tribes have always resented the idea that, if a person commits a crime on a reservation, they don't have jurisdiction over that person... It harms public safety; it's been a problem for a long time. The dynamic they're trying to address is that, with first-time offences, there is often no intervention until the violence escalates to very severe assaults or death. If there is domestic violence, there should be intervention early on, at a local level."

For Andrea Smith—author of "Conquest: Sexual Violence and Native American Genocide" and a professor at University of California Riverside—VAWA is by no means a perfect

legislation. In particular, she raised concern with increasing law enforcement and incarceration, when those too often disproportionately target minorities. But many of the bill's provisions are seen as steps forward.

"The thing with VAWA is, it's a very limited thing," Smith told Windspeaker. "It's not the be-all and end-all.

"From the positive side, some of the tribal provisions put control back into the tribes... Native nations can start to manage themselves. You could see that as a baby step in a good direction."

Smith said that violence against aboriginal women has its roots in colonialism, a problem that will require much more to address than government legislation, but rather a sustained grassroots effort.

"One of the things that gets lost in all this is that gendered violence is a colonial legacy," she said. "In many communities, prior to colonization, there wasn't gendered violence because most of the nations weren't patriarchal. They weren't even necessarily very socially

hierarchical, in fact. Many children were taken from their homes, forced to be Christian, and learned patriarchal [ways]."

Community accountability processes, Smith said, are one way towards ending violence against women.

Upon VAWA's Senate passage, Attorney General Eric Holder urged the House to pass it into law.

"Notably, the tribal provisions included in the VAWA reauthorization and originally proposed by the Department of Justice, will close a significant jurisdictional gap that has left too many Native American women, precisely because they are Native American, exposed to violence for far too long," Holder said.

The bill, in fact, was originally enacted by former President Bill Clinton in 1994, but had languished for decades as a result of partisan bickering. But with Native women 10 times more likely to be murdered than non-Natives, and 2.5 times more likely to face domestic violence than others, the sense of urgency has only increased in 19 years.

# Women's Marches demand justice for the disappeared

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

## VANCOUVER

Knock, knock, Mr. Harper.

Long-time women's advocate Gladys Radek wasn't surprised when the Prime Minister didn't answer the door of his Parliament Hill office on Valentine's Day when missing women's family members called hoping for a

meeting. It was in the wake of a blistering Human Rights Watch report, which alleged police were themselves among the perpetrators of violence against women.

But as Women's Memorial Marches were held across the country to honour an estimated more than 600 missing and murdered women, the organizer with Families of Sisters in Spirit held a faint hope that Harper

might at least acknowledge the growing crisis.

"Every day we hear a new story, a new injustice," said Radek, who co-founded Walk4Justice following her niece Tamara Chipman's 2005 disappearance along B.C.'s Highway of Tears. "Violence against Aboriginal women does not take a day off; it hasn't for 520 years [of] colonization, assimilation and the outright desire for the land, water

and air.

"The white people are right now almost succeeding in a silent genocide that's taking our women, in any way shape or form. Nothing has changed in 520 years, the raping, pillaging, enslaving, buying and selling, and all-out killing our women under the watchful eye of this government."

In Vancouver, nearly 2,000 people attended the oldest of the

country's memorial marches, started 22 years ago after the murder of a Native woman in the Downtown Eastside. Baskets of vibrant roses—red for the murdered, yellow for the missing—travelled through the neighbourhood, leading the loudly drumming and singing crowd in remembering the departed.

(See *Women's* on page 9.)





PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

Several long strings of colourful quilted, embroidered or beaded squares each honoured a missing woman during Vancouver's march.

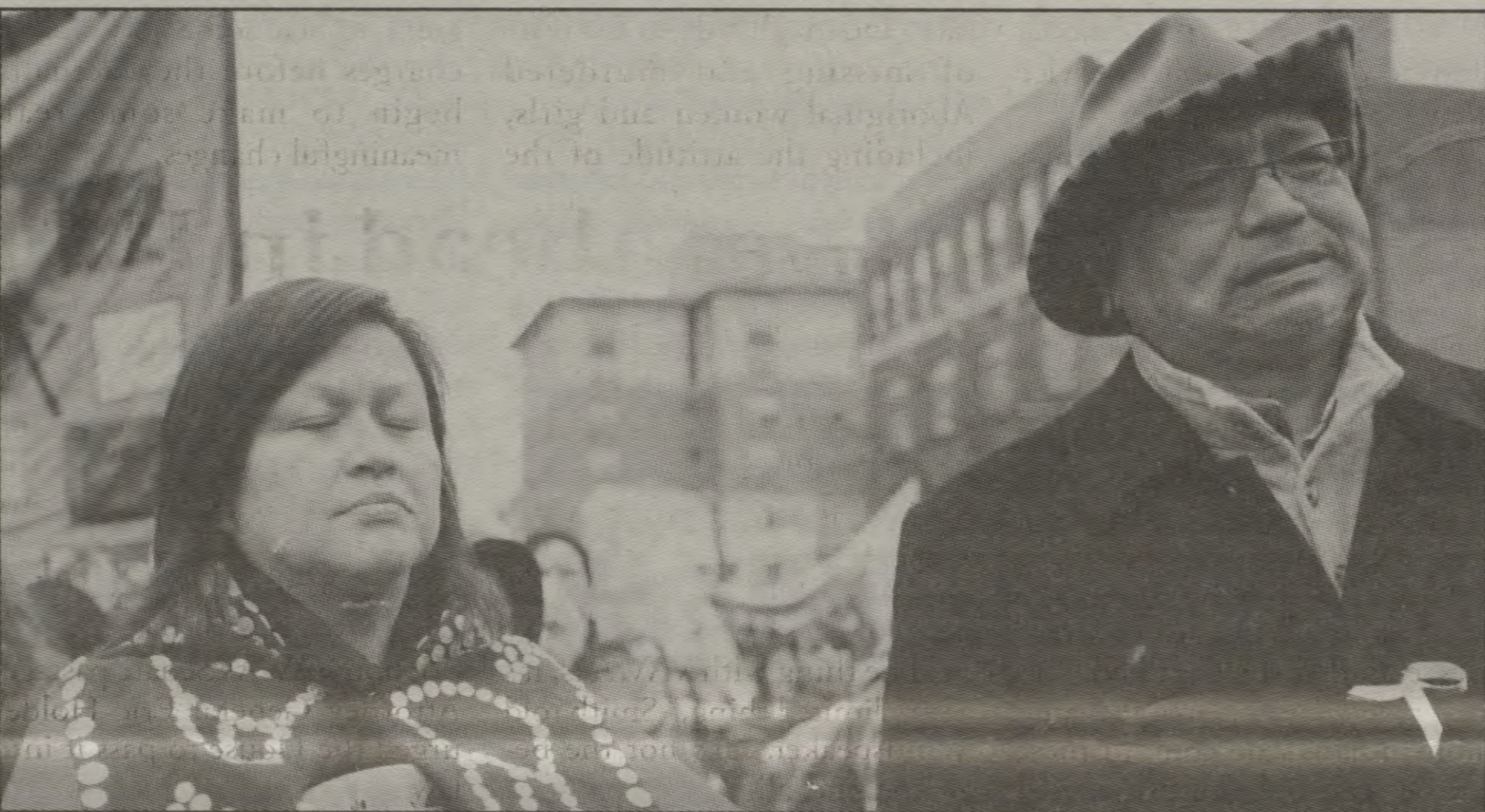


PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

Former B.C. Lieutenant-Governor Steven Point (right), the province's appointed "champion" for its missing women inquiry recommendations, walks in Vancouver's February 14 march, alongside Shelley Joseph of Reconciliation Canada.

(Continued from

For former B.C. Lieutenant Governor Stephen Point, his first Women's Memorial March was marked by a mix of sadness and inspiration. In December, the Stó:lō leader was named the province's "champion" of the missing women's inquiry recommendations. He emerged, sombre, from a families-only memorial service in Vancouver's Carnegie Centre just before the march began.

He told *Windspeaker* he has spent the last months reviewing the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry report, as well as beginning to reach out to advocacy organizations and missing women's families, hoping to build a representative committee for the next year. And though he acknowledged lingering bitterness over B.C.'s refusal to fund organizations to participate in the inquiry, he said that he has so far heard only "yes" in response to his invitation.

"This is where it's really happening," Point told *Windspeaker* in the midst of the swelling Downtown Eastside crowd. Behind him, strings of embroidered squares stretched across the street, carried in honour of dozens of Aboriginal women who disappeared. "These are the very people impacted by the

murders and the missing women—their families.

"It's empowering to be here with them, to hear their stories, and to participate with them. It's a tremendous day for me."

When asked what he hoped to achieve in the coming year as missing women's champion, Point didn't hesitate: "Awareness among everyone that these things are going on, and that we need the courage to bring about major changes in our justice system to make it safe for Aboriginal people to report crime, and for Aboriginal women to be safe in our communities."

The founder of police watchdog group Vancouver Downtown Eastside Copwatch—herself a former sex worker in the neighbourhood, who has known missing women—told *Windspeaker* the annual marches are crucial to advocating for increases in Aboriginal women's support services.

"This march is very important to me, to bring awareness to our missing and murdered women in Vancouver—and across Canada—and to hold the proper authorities accountable for how they allowed the women to go missing in the first place," said Jennifer Allan.

"On a personal level, it's very important to me to stand up and let authorities know we're no

longer going to tolerate them turning a blind eye while our women go missing and get murdered.

"We're going to do something about it, whether it's marching in the streets, bringing civil suits, and more. For First Nations women, it's just a continuation of colonization and genocide... We have to change the laws, we have to get more social services put in place, and get society to care about these women. That, no matter their social status or the colour of their skin, they're all human beings and we won't tolerate human beings going missing or murdered in our country."

For Radek it is the continuing struggle of other families and loved ones of the disappeared who inspire her to continue fighting for justice. Many groups—including FSIS, Walk4Justice and the Assembly of First Nations—are now rallying around calls for a national public inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women.

"Our demands have been very clear: for justice, closure and equality," she said. "The first thing we need is accountability.

"I'm going to be as loud and proud as I can for the families. They're the ones that keep me inspired and give me strength to do what I'm doing."

## Windspeaker News Briefs

### THE 82ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) began Feb. 18 in Geneva, Switzerland. The CERD is considering a submission from the International Indian Treaty Council and the Mushkegowuk People of Attawapiskat First Nation. They had filed an Early Warning Action the previous week. The filing states urgent violations of treaties and Aboriginal rights by the Canadian government through the adoption of two omnibus budget bills, Bill C-38 and C-45, passed into law last year without the free prior and informed consent, or any, consultation with Indigenous nations. The filing also addresses two other unresolved issues: the ongoing lack of safe drinking water for First Nations and the critical housing crisis faced by Attawapiskat First Nation. These charges were filed in February 2012 and at that time, CERD required the Canadian government to provide a report within one year as to their "progress and results" in addressing these urgent situations. To date they have failed to do so. Chief Theresa Spence, who went on a 45-day hunger strike in protest of government dealings, explained why Attawapiskat filed the action. She said: "We are giving them the opportunity to correct those actions and move forward in the true spirit and intent of treaty, and they [the Canadian government] cannot even meet us halfway. In fact, they respond to us as though we are committing a criminal act for demanding the fulfillment and implementation of our rights — this is discrimination." The 18-member CERD is the Treaty Monitoring Body for the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), one of nine legally-binding International Human Rights Treaties within the United Nations system.

### CANADIAN RANGERS CORPORAL DONALD ANGUYOAK

died in a snowmobile accident during a training exercise near Gjoa Haven, Nunavut on Feb. 17. The member of Canada's Arctic reserve force was on a military exercise intended to monitor snow and ice conditions in the Northwest Passage. "This is a stark reminder of the very real dangers that the Canadian Rangers and other members of the Canadian Armed Forces face regularly while promoting national security and exercising sovereignty in our harsh northern territories," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper upon hearing news of Anuyoak's death. "Corporal Anguyoak's sacrifice in the name of defending his country will be honoured and remembered." The Canadian Rangers provide patrols and detachments for national security and public safety missions in sparsely settled northern, coastal and isolated areas of Canada.

### THE TORONTO STAR REPORTS THAT THE

Assembly of First Nations exchanged information about protests with the Mounties and provincial police and developed common stances leading up to a national Aboriginal day of action in the summer of 2007. RCMP documents reveal that RCMP and Ontario and Quebec police met for the "first time in history" with then AFN national chief Phil Fontaine to "facilitate a consistent and effective approach to managing Aboriginal protests and occupations." Reporters Tim Groves and Martin Lukacs write that "the RCMP's heightened collaboration with the AFN coincided with the start of a sweeping federal program of surveillance of Aboriginal communities and individuals engaged in land rights activism that continues today." During the day of action, RCMP worked within the AFN's Ottawa headquarters to ensure a "seamless flow of information." All communications were reviewed by both the AFN and RCMP to "ensure consistency and accuracy," documents reveal. "These exchanges with police are more evidence that the federal government thoroughly co-opted the Assembly of First Nations under Phil Fontaine," said Russell Diabo, an Aboriginal policy analyst who advised the AFN in the 1990s.

### DE BEERS, THE DIAMOND MINE

located near Attawapiskat, believed it was being "held hostage" by a blockade of the winter road leading to the Victor mine by First Nation members, to "exert pressure" on the company "to succumb to their demands of, among other things, compensation, employment and housing," said court documents filed in Superior Court in February. The company filed a "notice of motion" seeking an injunction against six protesters that were blocking the road, and \$130 million in damages. "De Beers Canada depends on the use of the winter road for the majority of annual re-supply of the Victor mine. This annual supply is necessary to keep the mine operating and to keep the mine's staff employed." De Beers pays \$11 million to construct and maintain the 400 kilometre road. A Timmins Superior Court judge declared the blockade an act of extortion. He said it was self-interest, not any interest that would benefit the community that closed the road. These are "individuals with private financial interests, holding a large multinational corporation to ransom," said Judge Robert Riopelle. "It smells of coercion." He said there was sufficient basis for police to lay criminal charges, but despite the ruling, the OPP did not rush to remove protesters, which irritated De Beers lawyer Neal Smitheman. "What is the message being sent to the world" when "five or six disgruntled ex-employees ... can shut down a business of 500 people at a cost of millions? That there is no law in Northern Ontario? ... This is Attawapiskat. It's not Kandahar," he said. On Feb. 23, Sheriff Rebecca lahtail in Timmins said "the blockade has been lifted." The protesters voluntarily complied with the court order so no formal police action was deemed necessary.



# Duncan takes his leave of Cabinet post, remains MP

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

John Duncan has resigned his position as Canada's Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development minister, but it is not because of a near-riot in Saskatoon at the hotel hosting Duncan at his second First Nation Education Act consultation meeting on Feb. 8.

And it is not because of a charge of lack of consultation with First Nations on Bill C-27, the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, which is being discussed presently by the Senate Committee for Aboriginal Peoples.

And it is not because of Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike or the grassroots Aboriginal movement that has formed under the Idle No More banner and which has swept the country in the last few months.

It is because Duncan wrote a character reference letter in June 2011 to the Tax Court of Canada on behalf of a constituent.

In a statement issued by Duncan on Feb. 15, the now

former minister wrote "While the letter was written with honourable intentions, I realize that it was not appropriate for me, as a Minister of the Crown, to write to the Tax Court. I have therefore offered my resignation as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to the Prime Minister, which he has accepted."

The Assembly of First Nations had no immediate comment on Duncan's resignation.

However, Perry Bellegarde, who serves as Saskatchewan Regional Chief with the AFN as well as head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, said he was "surprised." He also charged the government with trying to temper the news of Duncan's resignation by making the announcement on a Friday afternoon of a long weekend.

Bellegarde said Duncan's resignation is an opportunity to get First Nations business back on track.

"Has he moved any issues? No, the record speaks for itself."

Bellegarde points to cutbacks to the AFN and provincial, territorial organizations, the two per cent cap on increases to government funding, poor

housing conditions, lack of access to adequate running water, and the education funding discrepancy between children receiving schooling on and off-reserve.

"Any time there's change we have to seize it as an opportunity to really bring about transformational change," said Bellegarde.

On Feb. 22, Harper appointed Bernard Valcourt as the new minister. Valcourt served as Associate Minister of National Defence.

In a news release, the Prime Minister's Office stated Valcourt would "continue the government's work to advance dialogue on Aboriginal issues and take achievable steps that will provide better education and economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples across Canada."

Bellegarde said the new minister needs to be able to lobby for Aboriginal rights and be committed to closing the socio-economic gap that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

"I always say if the Cabinet mandate and political oversight from the Prime Minister's Office



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada Minister John Duncan was in Edmonton last September shortly after announcing cuts to Aboriginal programming without having first consulted with Aboriginal leaders.

to implement treaty and inherent rights in Canada's own Constitution, meaning Sect. 35, which recognizes that existing great rights are affirmed through there, I think that's the bigger piece to look at and focus on," said Bellegarde.

In his resignation statement, Duncan said, "I have every confidence that the government will reach its goal of improving the lives of Aboriginal peoples across our country."

Duncan will remain as MP for Vancouver Island North.

## Behind the scenes, progress is being made, said Bellegarde

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

It is a "work in progress," said Assembly of First Nations Saskatchewan Regional Chief Perry Bellegarde of what has been accomplished since the Jan. 11 meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

While there is nothing on paper, talks have continued and Bellegarde is hopeful that those talks will lead to a presentation to the chiefs at a National Treaty Forum at Whitecap Dakota First Nation in Saskatchewan March 26 and March 27.

"Treaty implementation process is treaty by treaty. It is not AFN to drive this. Not FSIN to drive this. It's going to be done treaty by treaty, Nation by Nation. It's also re-establishing and shining up that relationship we have with the Crown because it's been breached so many times," said Bellegarde, who is

also head of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

Since the meeting with Harper, Bellegarde has met personally with the clerk of the Privy Council. Other meetings have taken place with the Prime Minister's office staff and officials. Parameters and terms of reference are being put in place, said Bellegarde.

At the Jan. 11 meeting Harper committed to a high level political process on treaty implementation and comprehensive claims policy. Work is now being undertaken to determine what that means and what it will look like.

Bellegarde said possibilities include a restructuring of the federal government and departments, perhaps even a treaty commissioner appointed by Parliament or a new department devoted to Crown-First Nations relations.

"There are so many things that can happen. So what really are we talking about here?" asked

Bellegarde.

Bellegarde said progress is "going to take time. It's a month later... We're not going to solve this overnight."

In a nine-page *Crown-First Nations Gathering Progress Report* released by the federal government at the end of January, it is stated that "our government continues to make progress in priority areas identified in the Crown First Nations Gathering Outcome Statement, however, more work remains to be done. We remain committed to working with Aboriginal leaders who choose to work with our government to improve living conditions and create jobs and economic growth in First Nations communities."

At the Jan. 11 meeting, AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo presented Harper with an eight-point document hammered out by the chiefs: the establishment of a framework for the implementation of treaties; reformation of the

comprehensive lands claim policy; resource revenue sharing; legislation consistent with Sect. 35 of the Canadian Constitution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; a fiscal relationship that removes caps to funding; a national inquiry into violence against Indigenous women and girls; improved education services; and a new government mechanism to address the work that needs to be undertaken.

Meanwhile, in the House of Commons, the NDP and Liberals have been pushing the government for answers and action. A series of questions were directed at Harper and then-Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan on Jan. 30.

As well, NDP Aboriginal Affairs critic, Jean Crowder, tabled a motion "that the House, recognizing the broad-based demand for action, calls on the government to make the improvement of economic

outcomes of First Nations, Inuit and Métis a central focus of Budget 2013, and to commit to action on treaty implementation and full and meaningful consultation on legislation that affects the rights of Aboriginal Canadians, as required by domestic and international law."

Since then, the NDP continues to hammer away at the government in Question Period on First Nations issues, ranging from increased funding for First Nations education and children's welfare services to a public inquiry on murdered and missing Aboriginal women and girls to food security to improved economic outcomes.

The NDP pledged to bring forward initiatives for First Nations in the House of Commons in a document it signed, along with the Liberals, which resulted in Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence and Cross Lake First Nation Elder Raymond Robinson ending their hunger strike on Jan. 24.

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# Canadians would stand up if they knew the truth

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
Windspeaker Contributor

## TORONTO

Akwesasne Grand Chief Mike Mitchell was part of the plenary discussion on First Nations accountability at the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association Conference (AFOA) held in Toronto Feb. 12 to Feb. 14.

Joining him were Chief Tammy Cook Searson of the Lac La Ronge Band in Saskatchewan, Terry Goodtrack, president and CEO of AFOA, and former prime minister Paul Martin. About 800 delegates attended the plenary.

Mitchell said when he was elected in 1984, he found people in the community were behaving like "zombies". They had lost their spirit. Indian Affairs, he said, "virtually ran our communities" and if you needed funding for anything, you had to apply. People from Ottawa would come out and file reports.

Shortly after his election, he was shocked when Indian Affairs informed him they were putting Akwesasne under third party management. There was a deficit but people in the community didn't know about it.

The process of nation-building started then, Mitchell said. Council prepared a deficit retirement plan and took firm control of their administration and finance departments. They started keeping the community informed through annual reports that included not just how the money was spent, but also information such as how many children were graduating and how many teachers they hired.

A crucial move by the council was to separate politics and administration.

"Every chief that got elected was told to stay out of administration; stay out of finance," Mitchell said. The other important thing they did was "to outlaw the word Band" recognizing it for the colonial term it is and changed their name to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

"The accountability, I never was thinking about Indian Affairs," Mitchell said. "The accountability I was thinking about was to our community." All of these things combined have restored pride in their people, he said, because they're informed and feel they have some say in their community.

As far as accountability to

government, Mitchell said they prepare 72 different audit reports for various governments. When Mitchell asked the neighbouring city of Cornwall how many they prepare, he learned they prepare just one. The community of Akwesasne straddles the Canadian-US border and is situated in two provinces — Ontario and Quebec. This brings many challenges, Mitchell said.

The subject of persuading ordinary Canadians to join Aboriginal people as allies was introduced by former PM Paul Martin.

"Canadians are a fair people," he said. "Canadians will not stand for unfairness or injustice. If they don't have the facts... you can't expect them to join in the battle." Martin said the reason the Idle No More movement has been so successful is because it has reached out to Canadians; told them this is as much Canadians' battle as it is First Nations'.

Martin spoke about the government's concerted effort to discredit First Nations in the eyes of Canadians "who are constantly being fed with a never-ending stream of negative innuendo about the quality of Aboriginal accountability," Martin said.

"I can tell you that, overwhelmingly, that accountability is done with as much integrity and character as it can possibly be." He acknowledged that while there might occasionally be a First Nation not living up to its obligations, this is a small minority.

"What this government is trying to do," he said "is to convince Canadians that the leadership of First Nations don't care about accountability."

To counteract the government's strategy, Aboriginal people need to respond quickly when information is published that is skewed or simply not true, Martin said, and gave two examples.

During the media storm about Attawapiskat's audit, Canadians were told that funding given to that community was equivalent to each resident receiving \$11,000. Two weeks later, a report was released showing that per capita spending in Toronto was \$24,000, over twice as much as Attawapiskat's residents. A press release from First Nations would have helped Canadians put the issue into context.

The other example Martin cited was about education. The minister of Aboriginal Affairs

made a statement that funding for education on-reserve is comparable to what provinces provide to schools off-reserve. A reply the next day from First Nations citing the amounts actually provided—for example, that Quebec First Nations get 50 per cent of what the province provides to other communities—would show the lie and help Canadians understand and "then this would be a very different debate," Martin said. "We have to use every means at our disposal," he continued, "and what that means is providing the explanations and the facts for the rest of Canadians to understand what they would never stand for."

Chief Searson said that while she gets tired of educating people, she agreed with Martin about the importance of "learning our facts, our truth and speaking it out there" to advance our cause. The racism is so entrenched, she said, and people don't realize how deep it runs. She sees this changing, however, with increased openness, awareness and understanding about Aboriginal issues.

"When Canadians know the truth, they become our greatest allies," Martin said.

## Entrepreneur has deep roots she celebrates in business

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
Windspeaker Contributor

## TORONTO

First Nation businesswoman Hiawatha Osawamick grew up surrounded by enterprising and entrepreneurial women who were strong in their cultural traditions.

Her grandmother, mother and aunts—the legendary Osawamicks from Wikwemikong First Nation in Ontario—travelled the powwow circuit dishing out Indian tacos and scone dogs to huge line-ups of people at their portable café.

Little wonder that Hiawatha herself embarked on not just one, but two, business ventures to do with food and retaining cultural traditions.

"Seeing my mom and grandma in the kitchen at powwows, they were always laughing and having fun. That was a huge positive influence," said 32-year-old Osawamick.

After spending almost 15 years in the food industry, which included working for her mother's catering business and several years at the Casino Rama restaurants, she launched her first business, Ozaawmik's Catering.

Everything she learned from her mother and her time at Casino Rama about planning, budgeting and feeding thousands of people has made her business the premiere catering service for Aboriginal cuisine in Ontario.

Osawamick got the idea for her

second business shortly after the birth of her first daughter. She'd made a cradleboard for her daughter that elicited not only compliments but also orders from people who wanted one for their own baby or to give as gifts.

She launched an online business selling clothing and accessories for babies, including traditional moss bags and cradleboards.

At this time of year, she's also itching to get back on the powwow trail where she sets up a booth to sell her unique designs. She's now the mother of three daughters between the ages of four and one years old who travel with her. Her girls dance at powwows the same way she did when she travelled with her family's business and she loves being able to continue the tradition.

Osawamick was in Toronto recently to give a workshop on making cradleboards and moss bags. It was offered by the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA). The mission of ANDPVA, a national arts organization based in Toronto, is to create, support and develop a self-sufficient community of Indigenous artists who preserve traditional knowledge, advance respective cultural identities and reflect evolving cultural expression.

Offering workshops to help people learn the traditional arts and crafts, said Osawamick, was

a response to the market demand.

Donna Naughton, originally from Pic River First Nation in Ontario, was at the workshop to make a cradleboard for her four-month-old granddaughter Luna Mae. Naughton was in a cradleboard herself when she was a baby and "continuing the cultural tradition and learning the craft instills pride in my family. We're in a time where there's a hunger to learn," she continued.

"My role as a grandma is to teach and if I don't know, I can't teach."

Osawamick travels to First Nation communities upon request and also offers workshops on making powwow regalia and leather mitts.

Being a businesswoman doesn't present a conflict with Osawamick's traditional values.

"To me, being successful in business isn't about financial or social status," she said. "It's about doing something I enjoy and am passionate about. It's helped me become a stronger person, mother and aunt. I cook with love and laughter like my grandmother and mother. I cook with peace of mind and respect for the animals and love of the land."

Her rewards come when she sees her daughters tucking their dolls into cradleboards or cooking in their play kitchens, or when people walk proudly out of her workshops with their finished cradleboards and moss bags.



PHOTO: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Aboriginal businesswoman Hiawatha Osawamick teaches a Cradleboard-Making Workshop



PHOTO: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Donna Naughton at a workshop making a cradleboard for her four-month old granddaughter.



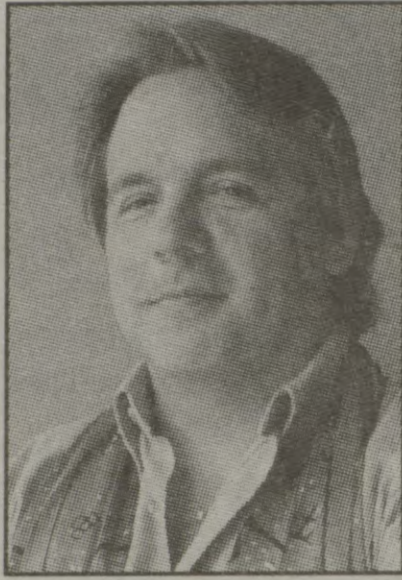
[ strictly speaking ]

## Idling in the fast lane of a unique winter

It's a well-known fact that Native people prefer to wage war in the summer; rarely the winter. After all, they're not stupid. I refer you, for example, to Little Bighorn, which happened on a hot and sweltering June day. The Battle of Batoche occurred during a warmish May. Kahnasatake and Ipperwash were also summer engagements.

This is one of the many reasons that make the current Idle No More movement such an anomaly. Not more than a few weeks ago, I saw several dozen frigid supporters standing outside at Ryerson University trembling in the cold winter air, chanting and round dancing. That was just one of the numerous and continuous nationwide demonstrations reflecting the anger and hope of Canada's Native people. This winter time advocacy was another fine example of how Stephan Harper is changing the way Native people operate.

I can safely say most Native people would far rather be inside watching hockey (finally) and drinking their hot chocolate, than wandering the streets protesting yet another oppressive and insensitive political action by the federal government. There is a saying we have in the Native



### THE URBANE INDIAN Drew Hayden Taylor

community: The road to Hell is paved with government intentions.

An argument could be made that these current battles are substantially different in nature than the more historical and bloody ones, but the truth is, a fight for Indigenous rights is a fight for Indigenous rights. This time, more long underwear is being worn. All those summer battles I mentioned were against an oppressive government force, unsympathetic to First Nations needs. This is quickly becoming a generational institution

And the use of the flash mobs, or more accurately, the flash round dances, also provide something more positive than most protests, for the Round Dance is a healing dance. The belief is that anger by itself can only achieve so much. You get

what you put into it, so a positive, healthy and healing attitude might actually make its way to Ottawa. Hopefully.

What's also new and innovative about the current Idle No More protests is that they are the first sizable and substantial political Aboriginal movement of the 21st century. It is also one of the first Native rallies sustained and empowered by the social media and network. I wouldn't be surprised if the Idle No More movement has embraced that little twitter blue bird icon as their clan or spirit animal. The flash mobs are often humorously referred to as the fax mobs.

What's also interesting is that this undertaking was primarily originated, organized and focused by Native women. Started by four women in Saskatoon last November to protest Prime

Minister Stephen Harper's now infamous omnibus bills, it was further empowered by Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike (or more accurately her liquid diet).

It's amazing what five bossy and opinionated Native women can achieve in this land and luckily women like this are not in short supply in Indian country. We're just the first to harness it. It's a very sustainable energy.

The movement is also expanding beyond the confines of the strictly Native community, and Canada. Many past protests, while endorsed by many non-Native sympathizers, were primarily organized by Native organizations and lasted a brief period of time, after which they would frequently peter out. The Ryerson protest was organized by a non-Native professor who, logically, taught a course in advocacy for the Child and Youth workers program.

I also noticed a trio of sign language translators taking turns interpreting the dozen or so speakers. They smartly opted out of translating some of the more rapidly delivered hip hop songs sung that afternoon. Additionally, there have been more than 30 flash mobs across America, as well as solidarity protests in Sweden,

England, Germany, New Zealand and Egypt. Celebrities such as Paul Martin, Joe Clark, and Blue Rodeo have openly endorsed the movement.

Despite the increasing cold, the occurrences here in Canada are actually gaining speed. There were several major political rallies occurring last Feb. 14 as part of an international event called ONE BILLION RISING, an encouragement to get one billion people worldwide to rise up protesting violence against women and girls. There are also several dozen events planned all the way through February and March in places like Los Angeles, Phoenix, Macon, Minneapolis and Paris, France.

In addition, there was a second event at Ryerson University, the second Idle No More happening in one week, co-organized by the Ryerson Aboriginal Students Association and the Ryerson Students Union.

This is in itself ironic since the man after whom the university is named, Egerton Ryerson, was paramount in providing a report on Native education in the 1800s that would become the model on which residential schools would be based on.

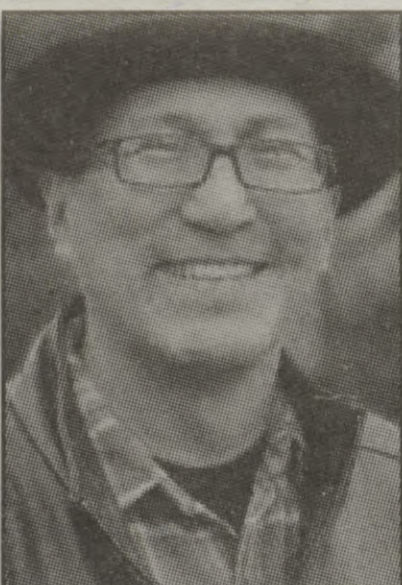
Funny, huh? The things you learn in school.

## Idle No More coverage is a story half told

As a career journalist going on 34 years now, I'm endlessly fascinated by how the media handles Native stories. While I am primarily an author of books now, I'm still in newspapers and on the radio every week somewhere in Canada. Freelancing is a privilege that comes with name recognition. After three decades and a handful of awards I'm afforded the luxury of picking and choosing my spots. But I'm still a working journalist.

That being as it is, I get a chance to monitor stories. By that I mean, because I am not chained to a news desk and committed to daily deadlines anymore I actually get to follow stories as they happen, get covered and die their gradual deaths. It's as educational as being on the job. Especially when it comes to Native stories.

Take the whole Idle No More event. I call it an event because it blossomed so spontaneously across the country. As a First Nations person I was fascinated and heartened to see the collective spirit and voice of our youth and women rise to challenge wrong. It was a glorious 1960s-ish explosion of righteous protest. As a story it was a



### WOLF SONGS & FIRE CHATS Richard Wagamese

remarkable opportunity for media to educate Canadians on Aboriginal issues. Largely, they never took it.

Instead, the media focused on unrest and that's only half the story. Empowerment, the bigger part of it, was left to, well, idle. Sure the flash mobs and the round dances were covered and organizers and spokespeople were interviewed. But only with the focus on cause. Not effect. And it is the ongoing effect of Idle No More that is the real story.

Now that the whole hunger strike and meeting clamour has eddied and died, Idle No More has become Idle Again in the eyes of mainstream media. But as a working news story that's giving very short shrift. The biggest part of the Aboriginal demographic is

under the age of 25. They are the driving force behind the movement. It means that the future of Native protest in Canada is alive, well and empowered, but no one is writing about it.

Native people have more post-secondary graduates than at any time in Canada's history. We have more advanced degree holders. We are employed professionally and in positions of upper level decision making. Our political views, while deemed radical by the unenlightened, are educated, deliberate and refined both by history and circumstance. Behind the banners and barricades stands the bellwether of Canada's history.

At the same time, we have disproportionately larger numbers of people in dire and

ongoing states of poverty than any other group. We still face harrowing rates of societal ills that are always reaffirmed by accredited numbers. The nature of our lives on reserves, remote communities and urban settings has not changed significantly in decades. But those stories, given the spotlight by Idle No More, are still not being told either.

The spirituality and staunch cultural pride that was demonstrated so wonderfully did not appear overnight. Aboriginal people have clung to those foundational elements of their being despite everything. The mechanics and the motions of history and politics have never diminished them. What Idle No More did was allow Canadians to see the living power in them and the resilience Aboriginal people glean from them.

But stories of ongoing spiritual and cultural power do not sell newspapers or attract advertisers to radio or television. Instead, those stories, so eloquent in their depiction of the reality of nations of people are allowed to languish and go untold.

I want to know where the next Attawapiskat is. Everyone understands that they are out there but we are not told about

them until they explode in headlines. To my mind, that's shoddy journalism. I have a right to know when my neighbours are suffering. Simply allowing that part of this national story to remain hidden is just plain wrong.

Further, I want to know how Aboriginal people are continuing to forge the power of the movement without the propulsive effect of crisis. I want to know who the upcoming generation of leaders are and to be introduced to their thinking. I want to know how the movement that was ignited by Stephen Harper's blatant disregard of all things Aboriginal sees its value in Canada's common future. Those kinds of stories are nowhere to be found.

In journalism there's a term called a follow. It means the story, or stories, that arise from the original. To write a follow a journalist allows prominent stories to continue on in the public eye. There are a ton of relevant and important stories behind Idle No More that are not being followed. That is not good journalism. Canadians need to know the stories behind the stories. We await their forthcoming.

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# Lisa Jackson — [ windspeaker confidential ]

**Windspeaker:** What one quality do you most value in a friend?

**Lisa Jackson:** Being down to earth. There is humility to that. You want to feel you can be yourself and you can with these people.

**W:** What is it that really makes you mad?

**L.J.:** Smugness

**W:** When are you at your happiest?

**L.J.:** When I'm with my family

**W:** What one word best describes you when you are at your worst?

**L.J.:** Whiney

**W:** What one person do you most admire and why?

**L.J.:**

My aunt; She's the strongest person I know. Totally honest and extremely hardworking.

**W:** What is the most difficult thing you've ever had to do?

**L.J.:**

Move away from my parents at a young age.

**W:** What is your greatest accomplishment?

**L.J.:** Becoming a fulltime filmmaker and doing projects I'm proud of.

**W:** What one goal remains out of reach?

**L.J.:** Owning a wood burning stove

**W:** If you couldn't do what you're doing today, what would you be doing?

**L.J.:** Animator and/or

humanitarian; volunteer work.

**W:** What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

**L.J.:** This too shall pass

**W:** Did you take it?

**L.J.:** Yes. I feel like I have a much better sense of life as a longer series of moments rather than being focused on the right now.

**W:** How do you hope to be remembered?

**L.J.:** As someone who made art and tried to make a difference.

Filmmaker Lisa Jackson received the 2011 Genie Award for Best Live Action Short Drama by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for her film SAVAGE. Before there was SAVAGE, there was Jackson's first short film, SUCKERFISH. Jackson says of this film, "SUCKERFISH looks at my own history with my mother and Native identity." It was screened at over 50 festivals and was broadcast nationally in Canada on CBC. It was also aired in Canada on APTN and the Knowledge Network.

Lisa Jackson was born and raised for the first half of her life in urban Toronto, specifically the Parkdale area. She says she found a diversity of cultures with new immigrants in the area, an interesting environment and says she ended up benefitting meeting so many different kinds of people.

The film SAVAGE allowed her to explore a little of the life her mother led as a child, being one of the many who were in Canada's residential school system. She says of the project, "SAVAGE is my response to the challenge. I've used my "obstructions" to bring a fresh take, at times even a humorous one (yes, there are zombies), on Canada's residential school history, which—sadly—is still unknown to many Canadians. With SAVAGE I'm trying to subvert stereotypes about "Native issues" and use an unconventional approach to get underneath preconceptions and deliver an emotional experience."

Jackson has a long list of awards and accolades concerning her work: Jackson's 2007 award-winning documentary Reservation Soldiers, on the relationship between Aboriginal youth and the Canadian military, aired on CTV's W5 Presents. The short animation The Visit; Pushing the Line: Art without Reservations; an arts documentary for Bravo! Channel; and four short films on BC Aboriginal languages for Knowledge Network's Our First Voices series. She won the 2004 ImagineNATIVE Alliance Atlantis Mentorship award and the 2005 Vancouver Arts Award for Emerging Media Artist. Jackson is one of seven innovative Indigenous filmmakers who participated in the Embargo Collective, a project launched in



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Lisa Jackson

2008 by imagineNATIVE Film & Media Arts Festival. The individual works produced premiered at imagineNATIVE in 2009, and were selected for screening in the 2010 Berlin International Film Festival and the 2011 Native American Film + Video Festival. SAVAGE was awarded a Yorkton Golden Sheaf for Best Multicultural Film. In 2010 it won two Leo Awards in the short drama category, given for excellence in British Columbia film and television. Jackson received the Vancouver Arts

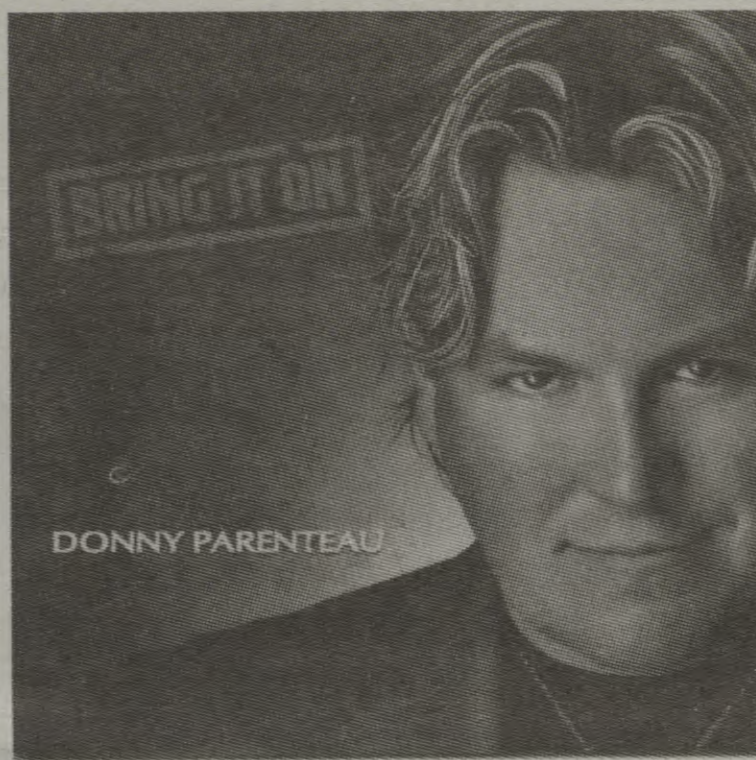
Award for Emerging Media Artist in 2005 and the imagineNATIVE Alliance Atlantis Mentorship Award in 2004.

Her current projects include the upcoming completion of HOW A PEOPLE LIVE, a one-hour documentary on the 1964 forced relocation of BC's Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw people, the fiction feature MUSH HOLE, and a short performance-based film SNARE, the short version of which premiered at imagineNATIVE in 2012. When home, Jackson lives in Vancouver.

## OUR PICK

Artist— Donny Parenteau  
Song— Honey It's Broke  
Album— Bring It On  
Year— 2012

Donny Parenteau delivers a modern country album, taking his music beyond the reputation built from behind his fiddling days that should win him the ears of the many. Parenteau mixes classic rock song sensibilities with clever and humorous lyrics that have made for some of the biggest and most popular country hits. Songs built around



clichéd lyrics such as *Honey It's Broke* where he sings about relationships in context if "if it ain't broke, don't fix it - oh guess what? honey its broke!" will be instant favorites. What's a country album without a little crooning of matters of the heart? Parenteau shares insight of his own Sun Showers or a duet about passions in doubt with vocalist July Black on *It Will Be Alright With Me*. Still not complete until he sings tribute to pride of home and family on *Deep In The Heart of Saskatchewan* cementing his place as another favorite musical son of the prairies. And as fast as life moves in today's society, we are reminded to take stock of the blessings our lives have on *Don't Forget to Fish*. If by this point you wonder where Parenteau draws upon for his memorable song craft, he shares that insight by matching vocals in another duet with a classic Canadian rock icon from the late 70's, Kenny Shields, doing a Streeheart hit, *Snow White* that is as credible as the original version. Every song on this album feels like a classic which is why I believe he is up to the challenge that comes by being nominated for a 2013 Juno Award. It's as if Parenteau, at this point in his career, someone made the dare and he is now ready to Bring It On.

Review by : K. Kantan

## [ radio's most active ]

# ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

	ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
1	Janet Panic	Sweet Music	Most Of What Follows If True
2	Will Belcourt	Love Shines	Epoch
3	Donny Parenteau	Can't Afford To Love You	Bring It On
4	Sherry St. Germain	If This Is Love, I Hate It	Kick Out The Lights
5	Vinnie Sixx	Can't Let Go	Single
6	Billy Grind	I Don't Mind	Billy Grind
7	Don Amero	Turn These Grey Skies Blue	Heart On My Sleeve
8	Tim Cruly	You're Not Really Gone	Single
9	Brandon Solomon Feat. Kelly & Poj	60's Scoop	Single
10	George Leach	Carry Me	Surrender
11	Jace Martin	Brand New	Falling Stars
12	Elisapie	The Beat	Travelling Love
13	Christa Couture	Parasite	The Living Record
14	Joey Stylez	Take A Picture	Single
15	Samantha Crain	It's Simple	Simple Jungle
16	Keith Secola	Nowhere Fast	Life Is Grand
17	Gary Farmer & The Trouble Makers	Makin' My Way	Under The Water Tower
18	Iskwe	One Better	Single
19	Ali Fontaine	Fight For You	Diamond In The Rough
20	Franklin McKay	Destiny	Just Sayin'

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:





## Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

# Oil industry interests 'written all over' Canada-China pact



PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

Brenda Sayers, elected councillor of Hupacasath First Nation.

**By David P. Ball**  
Windspeaker Contributor

### VANCOUVER

Environmental, labour and democracy activists have thrown their weight behind a lawsuit by Hupacasath First Nation, which hopes to halt a major Canada-China trade pact through the courts.

According to band councillor Brenda Sayers, the B.C. lawsuit "reached a milestone" on Feb. 13 with affidavits of support submitted by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the Chiefs of Ontario, and several other bands.

At issue: the Canada-China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA). Critics fear the deal—being hammered out confidentially—would allow corporations of either country to sue a government over environmental, health or Aboriginal legislation, and potentially constrain Indigenous rights or treaties.

"This insidious agreement was negotiated behind closed doors, in secret," said Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. "This is a serious issue of major concern to First Nations people across this country; clearly it violates and undermines treaties across this country."

"It represents a very real and genuine threat to the interests of First Nations here in British Columbia... You cannot buy, sell or barter what you do not own. The Government of Canada, the provinces and the corporations do not hold title to the lands and resources comprising this country and province. That falls within the purview of the Indigenous peoples of this country."

(Continued on page 20.)



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# Idle No More movement seeks to educate Canadians with teach-ins and panel discussions



PHOTOS: SHARI NARINE

Above: At the podium is University of Alberta organizer Shalene Jobin, from the Faculty of Native Studies, who was joined on the panel (from left) by Samson Elder Cecil Nepoose; lawyer from Saddle Lake Cree Nation Janice Makokis; Metis writer Marlene Dumont; Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation member Tanya Kappo; director of Indigenous Inclusion at the University of Winnipeg Wab Kinew; and University of California scholar Kim Tallbear.



Right Samson Elder Cecil Nepoose welcomes participants and panel speakers with a prayer.

**By Shari Narine**  
*Windspeaker Contributor*

## EDMONTON

When grassroots First Nations people were pushing Harper for answers, the Assembly of First Nations gave the Prime Minister a way out.

"I'm not putting a value judgement on that," said Wab Kinew, director of Indigenous Inclusion at the University of Winnipeg.

Kinew was referring to the thousands of mainly Indigenous people who gathered throughout the months of December and January to protest omnibus Bills C-38 and C-45, which brought in changes to legislation on how First Nations business is conducted and to legislation controlling development that impacts the environment.

While rallies took place at provincial legislatures, Parliament Hill and other sites, Prime Minister Stephen Harper met with representatives from a divided AFN membership, which presented him with an 11-point document. The outcome of the meeting was a pledge by Harper to work with First Nations at a high level.

"We have to be politically pragmatic. That means we have to understand that when you put

political pressure on a group of people they are going to seek a way to resolve the situation. I was just presenting an analysis that presents the Assembly of First Nations in these last few weeks as being that sort of help for the federal government," said Kinew.

Kinew said the actions of Idle No More, which represents the grassroots, and AFN, led by National Chief Shawn Atleo, are not at cross-purposes, but rather there is a "disconnect" between the values being pushed by the AFN executive and the priorities set by the Idle No More movement.

"So what I'm suggesting is that Idle No More needs to engage and either present an alternative emissary for the federal government to deal with or work with the AFN to make sure that the priorities of the people you see coming out to the grassroots events are shared by the people at the Assembly of First Nations."

Kinew believes that the AFN is the representative body for the chiefs.

"So there is a vacuum for who is the national voice for the average person on the street. Who do they vote for? They vote for their leaders, but do they have a direct vote in any national leader?" asked Kinew.

He says it is also unclear as to

who represents the other Aboriginal people, especially those who live in urban areas.

"So Idle No More, if we are successful in getting a lot of this energy to translate into political action, it will result in sort of a new voice. I'm not saying necessarily that's going to replace any existing organization. It might come and rise up within one of these existing organizations. But really, what we're seeing is that people in the grassroots have a direction and there's a little bit of tension between where their politicians want to go and where (the grassroots) want to go."

Kinew sees the differences in opinion and the way of doing business between Idle No More and the AFN as a healthy part of democracy.

"I don't think we're divided because I don't consider there is anyone at AFN to be on the opposite side from me. I consider them to be my allies. And I hope they would look at me in the same way. So really the way I would look at the process right now is that we are in the midst of consensus building," he said.

Idle No More has captured the spirit of the Indigenous people, at both the levels of the heart and head, and what makes the movement so attractive is its lack of infrastructure: no office space,



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Wab Kinew was part of a panel discussion on Idle No More hosted by the University of Alberta in February.

no budget.

"But at the end of it, hopefully we stay committed to who this is really about. It's not about me. It's not about the politicians. It's about little kids in the

communities and it's about making changes for them. Hopefully we keep those kids in mind and we're able to forge a common direction for them," said Kinew.



[ idle no more ]  
**Idle No More a unique, unprecedented moment in history**

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
 Windspeaker Contributor

**TORONTO**

The Toronto Aboriginal community has not been idle. In the week leading up to the Jan. 11 meeting with the Prime Minister, many people were hard at work organizing events.

On Jan. 8, one of the two Toronto Idle No More groups held the first of scheduled weekly teach-ins at Toronto Council Fire. About 100 participants showed up and they reflected the diversity of Toronto's multicultural population, as well as the diversity of the Aboriginal community in the city.

One by one they introduced themselves, identifying their cultural roots. Men and women of all ages with family origins in the Balkans, South Africa, Ireland, Scotland, Holland, India, Egypt, Poland, United Arab Emirates sat side by side with First Nations and Metis from Couchiching, Moose Factory, Serpent River and M'Chigeeng First Nations in Ontario, and communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick.

Artist and political activist Wanda Nanibush promised the group they would learn "a different story of Canada." People shook their heads in disbelief as she gave a short history of the Indian Act, events leading to and resulting from the legislation, and some of the atrocities committed in the name of civilization. The next speaker, Hayden King from Beausoleil First Nation and assistant professor of Politics at Ryerson University, spoke about the history of Aboriginal resistance over the past 150 years, taking either diplomatic or provocative means to resisting legislation or encroachment of land.

The Northwest Rebellion, establishment of the League of Indians in 1923, the Red Power Movement and emergence of leaders like Harold Cardinal in response to the 1960s White

**“ There's been an explosion not just on Turtle Island, but around the globe. How we relate to the land and each other, the underlying racism, that conversation needs to continue to be at the forefront. ”**

Jeffrey McNeil

Paper, the American Indian Movement, the Oka Crisis and various legal challenges were some instances of Aboriginal resistance that he discussed.

But Idle No More, King said, is "a moment in history that's never occurred before." It's "a remarkable movement," he said, that has inspired Indigenous people all over the world.

In spite of the damp and drizzly weather, hundreds of people converged at Toronto's Dundas Square for the Flash Mob Round Dance on Jan. 11. A dozen or so female voices accompanied by drums rang out in the square, and spirits were high as people of all races and colors joined hands and round-danced in friendship and solidarity. A collective cheer erupted when Chief Theresa Spence appeared on the Jumbotron screen in the Square.

Loretta Schuster, a young Ojibway woman, said she is drawn to Idle No More because the Harper Bills threaten her fragile connection with her past and her heritage. She was adopted into a Catholic family and the traditional lands of her community, Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation in Northern Ontario, have already been destroyed by flooding and the people displaced.

"This happened to my reserve," she said, "and it will happen to other people with these Bills."

Alice Mathias, an Ojibway woman in her fifties, was at Dundas Square with a friend who was draped with the

distinctive purple and white wampum flag.

"I never thought in my life I'd be participating in a protest," she said, "but this is crucial." Mathias whose roots are in Temagami grew up in foster homes. "Something like this, it's an awakening," she said. "People have to be out here. It stirs something in their soul." Mathias hopes these events will "show the government there is a strong voice and they can no longer ignore us."

Jeffrey McNeil, from Kamloops Indian Band in B.C., believes Idle No More is about bringing people of many ethnic backgrounds into the circle.

"It's happened. Things have already changed," he said. "There's been an explosion not just on Turtle Island, but around the globe. How we relate to the land and each other, the underlying racism, that conversation needs to continue to be at the forefront."

On the evening of the Jan. 11, a group art show opened at the Gerrard Art Space Gallery (GAS) featuring work by 36-year old photographer Jason Jenkins. The show was coordinated by NABET, the union representing Toronto's film and video technicians.

Jenkins who is of Ojibway, African and French heritage is a NABET member and he has been photographing Idle No More events. The photographs are of Flash Mob Round Dances at Toronto's Eaton Centre and Dundas Square and show the sheer size of the crowds, the individual intensity and concentration of the



PHOTOS: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Above: Hayden King, Assistant Professor of Politics at Ryerson University and member of Beausoleil First Nation at Dundas Square Flash Mob Round Dance on January 11, 2011



Left: Artist and political activist Wanda Nanibush is one of the organizers of the Idle No More Toronto teach-ins at Toronto Council Fire

singers, and the spirit of celebration on the faces of the people round dancing.

Jenkins was prompted to enter the show, he said; "to have another venue to continue the conversation with a different audience. Hopefully, they'll start to ask what Idle No More is about and it'll get them involved."

He said the movement is an awakening for the community, but it's also proven to be a personal creative awakening for him.

"For the last couple of years," he said, "I've worked for other people, putting my own creative ideas on the back burner. That's changed with all the stuff that's happening now."



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PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

A young boy holds a sign as he participates in an Idle No More rally held in Vancouver on December 23.

## 'Building alternatives to the colonial relationship'

**Interview by David P. Ball for Windspeaker with UBC First Nations Studies professor Glen Coulthard of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.**

**Windspeaker:** Where do you see the Idle No More movement heading next?

**Glen Coulthard:** Idle No More, and the tactics it's involved so far, will have to continue, and not bow to pressure from Canada, but also potentially the more mainstream First Nations leadership and the Assembly of First Nations. If substantive changes aren't being made to restructure the relationship between First Nations and Canada, [Idle No More] has got to proceed with what it's done so far; rapidly disseminated actions, like the flashmobs and blockading that have emerged, will have to proceed, if not escalate.

**W.:** What about Idle No More's message? Do you think it's getting heard?

**GC:** Yes, but in order to not get trapped in the mirage that it's simply a reaction – without any promises to develop alternatives – we have to start to think about getting that message across.

There's been a number of proposals, ranging from the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which calls for Indigenous peoples to have delegated to them, or devolved, their own authority over their land base ..., to talk of Canada living up to its treaty obligations already. And there's the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Canada is a signatory to; living up to the obligations that are legal norms.

**W.:** Which of these approaches

do you think would be most effective?

**GC:** Personally, I think a lot of the questions revolve around land and authority over it, to break the back of colonial dependency among Indigenous people. There are a lot of proposals... which need to be examined in detail. One is the revitalization of Indigenous economies, land-based economies. Usually this gets characterized as just a "back to the land" fantasy, but a lot of research historically has looked at the sustainability of mixed economies, subsidized by contemporary economic ventures, and with the diversion of funds from mainstream economies to revitalizing traditional practices on the land.

**W.:** Could you talk about some of those values that should inform an Indigenous economy?

**GC:** We have to think about more ways of relating economically to our homelands, in ways that are sustainable. To do that, we have to start thinking about alternative modes of production. Capitalism is based by definition on modes that are not sustainable.

We as Indigenous people can draw insights from land-based practices, and apply them to contemporary institutional settings. This is really interesting about the proposals before, [which] were attempting to apply our values as Indigenous peoples to how we go about producing and relating to the land, to sustain an independent existence.

**W.:** If we could talk about Idle No More a bit, what do you make of some of the tensions that have arisen over what tactics the movement should use to achieve its goals?

**GC:** Often, the tensions are between the grassroots and leaders



PHOTO: DAVID P. BALL

Glen Coulthard, professor UBC First Nations Studies of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

attempting to enter into some sort of negotiations with the federal government. But they have to toe a line around assertive direct actions in order to make headway. These are products of the Indian Act and the acts that preceded it over a century.

National and cultural differences amongst First Nations are absolutely essential. The fact that these conversations are happening should be seen as a good thing, not a bad thing. We should embrace those differences and conversations that come out of them. They give us perspectives on what we should do. They give us different points of view from different traditions. That conversation gives us a host of alternatives and ways of thinking about how to proceed. Difference should be embraced.

We have seen the demands emanating from the grassroots sharpening and becoming even more precise. Before, it used to be housing conditions, the material conditions on reserves, and the attack on some of the environmental and land concerns with one omnibus Bill C-45.

Those were symptomatic of the colonial relationship. Now we're focusing on the core issue: setting right the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. That requires two fundamental changes – changes to Indigenous peoples' land bases, and authority over their communities and lands. We're seeing this very precision emerging in the Idle No More movement, which was previously just dealing with symptoms.

**W.:** A lot of the criticisms have been around the use of blockades as a tool for change. What are your thoughts on that?

**GC:** The blockading tactic has been one of the more effective tools in First Nations and Indigenous peoples' arsenals for decades now. It's proven itself in that way. It's not aggressive; it's been peaceful, and for the most part, historically, it has remained so.

There is a lingering assumption – or demand, actually – from both some Indigenous people and Canadians, with respect to this movement "shooting itself in the foot" if it begins to upset people. There's a demand on Indigenous activists that they not be too disruptive, because it will upset Canadians. This will damage the cause; I think that placing that demand on Indigenous peoples poses the most damage to the cause.

**W.:** What sort of damage?

**GC:** The transformative changes required in order to fix this relationship—where Indigenous people can live cultured, healthy lives in relationship to their communities and territories—requires the dismantling of a good solid two centuries of privilege and power amassed by the dominant society, in particular, its political and

economic interests. That is going to upset people, particularly those interests, when it's corrected! The idea that we can proceed without being disruptive or upsetting the powers that be seems an unreasonable demand, which will result in the solidification of the status quo.

**W.:** What about the worries among some in Idle No More that this support might be alienated by more disruptive tactics?

**GC:** I think there's an element of truth – yeah, it's disruptive. Of course it's going to be! We're challenging illegitimate power and privilege amassed over at least two centuries, if not longer here in Canada. That's not to dive into questions of strategy or tactics uncritically. These conversations are happening all the time, everywhere, over what is to be done to pursue our justice struggles in the most effective way. What we're seeing here is a good thing.

**W.:** What inspires you about the Idle No More movement, overall?

**GC:** What is inspiring, to me, is how broad-based it's becoming. There was a lot of focus on youth before, which had to do with its dissemination on social media, which was really important in getting people mobilized, and of creating this really large conversation and discussion on our rights and what to do next. But to leave it at that is a misnomer—it's being influenced by the values of elders, the knowledge bases of our ancestors, and of course women have been central in all this as well.

This is really a grassroots, broad-based movement which is utilizing all sectors of Indigenous society, and informing what we ought to do next to build alternatives to the colonial relationship that exists now.



# Idle No More gains allies in fight for environment, human rights



PHOTO: SHARI NARINE

Idle No More and Common Causes rally organizers Morningstar Mercredi (left) and Bill Moore-Kilgannon spoke to a vocal crowd in the frigid temperatures in Edmonton on Jan. 28.

**By Shari Narine**  
Windspeaker Contributor

## EDMONTON

In Edmonton, labour and public interest groups came together to declare their support for the Idle No More movement, while in Lubicon Lake territory, members blocked highway 986. These actions, as well as others across the province and the country, marked the opening of Parliament on Jan. 28 and declared the fight against Bills C-38 and C-45 were continuing.

Morningstar Mercredi, who helped organize the event in Edmonton which drew hundreds to Winston Churchill Square in snow and frigid temperatures, says it is important to get non-Indigenous people behind the cause.

"Common Causes and labour groups reflect tens of thousands of members," said Mercredi. "Everybody sees the urgency of doing something right now."

Mercredi put out the call to the unions and labour movements and says there was no resistance from them to support the work being undertaken by the Idle No More movement.

"We stand in solidarity for the protection and preservation of our human rights and indeed for the preservation and protection of the water, and land for each

generation to come," said Mercredi.

"What we're seeing as Canadians is our water rights being eroded," said Bill Moore-Kilgannon, executive director with Public Interest Alberta and co-organizer of the Edmonton rally. "Idle No More has started challenging that and it's not just a First Nations issue."

The Edmonton rally marked one of 25 actions happening with Common Causes for Idle no More across the country.

In attendance were representatives from the Canadian Labour Congress, with 3.3 million members; Council of Canadians; Alberta Federation of Labour, with 140,000 members; Alberta College of Social Workers, with 6,500 members; Edmonton and District Labour Council, with 45,000 members; Greenpeace Canada; Friends of Medicare; and Sierra Club.

"All the power is at the grassroots...from our organization's point of view the last sort of way to stop environmental destruction and environmental catastrophe of the water, air and land is to stand behind the First Nations peoples and the treaties and to say after (the government) got rid of all the other environmental protections of Bill C-38, really the last thing that can help all of

us together," Chelsea Flook, executive director with Sierra Prairie Chapter Club.

Moore-Kilgannon agrees with Flook.

"Through the treaties, First Nations are going to have a huge ability to challenge the legislation," he said.

Already, the Mikisew Cree and Frog Lake First Nations have filed papers in the federal court for an application for a judicial review of omnibus Bills C-38 and C-45, alleging the federal government failed to meet its constitutional duty to consult.

But it is about more than environmental concerns, says Lori Sigurdson, of the Alberta College of Social Workers.

"Social workers see first-hand the suffering of Indigenous people when governments impose their agendas, disregarding Indigenous rights and traditions," said Sigurdson.

"We are here for justice and we're here for fairness... we will all stand together with you in solidarity," said Nancy Furlong, secretary-treasurer for Alberta Federation of Labour.

David Eggen and Deron Bilous, of the provincial New Democratic Party, were in attendance. While the provincial Liberals were not represented, the party did issue a news release stating its support for Idle No More.

SIERRA CLUB CANADA stands in solidarity with the IDLE NO MORE movement in their peaceful opposition to omnibus bills C-38 & C-45.

With no consultation with Aboriginal peoples (as required in the development of natural resources on treaty lands) the undemocratic omnibus bills gut an environmental protection system that took 35 years to build.

The omnibus bills are an outright assault on the environment and Mother Earth.

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The Canadian Auto Workers union (CAW) and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) support Aboriginal peoples in their struggle to reset the historic and grossly imbalanced relationship with the Canadian government.

The fight for justice and self-determination of Aboriginal peoples is centuries old. Time and time again, the Canadian government has been a barrier to improving the lives and conditions of Aboriginal peoples.

The CAW and CEP believe wholeheartedly that issues surrounding Indigenous rights can wait no longer.

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## Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

### THE FIRST PEOPLES' CULTURAL COUNCIL (FPCC)

announced \$600,000 in new funding for B.C. based Aboriginal artists and arts organizations. The announcement took place at the Talking Stick Festival, an annual celebration of Aboriginal arts and culture, in Vancouver on Feb. 22. "Each year, we receive more requests for arts funding than we can grant," said Tracey Herbert, executive director of FPCC. "This type of financial investment is critical to fostering a vibrant and thriving Aboriginal arts community throughout the province, and that benefits all of us in B.C." The funds were donated by the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, based in the U.S., as part of its recently established Native Arts and Cultures funding stream. The \$600,000 will be utilized over three years and will support projects that focus on transmitting traditional Aboriginal arts knowledge and skills, as well as on developing arts and culture managers, leaders and organizations. A portion will also be directed toward arts-related strategic outreach.

### YOUTH MEMBERS OF THE TLA'AMIN NATION

placed personal mementos into a time capsule on Feb. 14 to celebrate the introduction of provincial legislation to ratify the Tla'amin treaty. The Tla'amin Nation is the eighth First Nation to witness the introduction of their treaty legislation in the B.C. legislature under the B.C. treaty process. The other seven are Tsawwassen First Nation, the five Maa-nulth First Nations and the Yale First Nation, which must still be ratified by Canada. "It is truly an honour to be a leader for the Tla'amin First Nation at this important time in our history," said Chief Clint Williams. "Witnessing our youth celebrate another step toward their freedom is truly an inspiration. The journey to this point has been very challenging for our community. We will encounter new challenges as we continue to navigate our way to the effective date of our treaty. Overcoming those challenges will define us as Tla'amin. There is much work to do in our community as we prepare for our independence from the Indian Act." Last June on the day the treaty was to be voted on in the community, a protest group

blocked the voting station and the vote had to be postponed until the following month. The Tla'amin Final Agreement includes self-government provisions and phases out tax exemptions. The treaty will provide Tla'amin with a capital transfer of about \$29.7 million, paid in 10 annual payments; economic development funding of about \$6.9 million and a Fishing Vessel Fund of \$.25 million; and more than 8,000 hectares of treaty land owned in fee simple, consisting of approximately 1,900 hectares of former Tla'amin Indian reserve land and 6,405 hectares of former provincial Crown land.

### ABORIGINAL STUDENTS AT CAPILANO UNIVERSITY

have a beautiful new space in which to learn and embrace their heritage with the official opening of the university's Aboriginal Student Centre. Kéxwusm-yákn (A Place to Meet), the Squamish Nation name given to the Aboriginal Student Centre, provides a welcoming multi-purpose space for students to meet, study, share meals, collaborate and learn from each other and First Nations elders. "The province's investment in

this and other gathering places shows our commitment to improving the quality of life and educational experiences of Aboriginal students," said John Yap, minister of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology. "Capilano University welcomes Aboriginal students in a space that celebrates their unique heritage and supports an environment for success not only in post-secondary education, but in their lives and careers."

### PRE-TREATY AGREEMENTS ARE BRINGING BENEFITS

to T'Sou-ke Nation, the Malahat Nation and the Songhees Nation, all on lower Vancouver Island in British Columbia. T'Sou-ke Nation will receive two 60-hectare land parcels at Broom Hill. These lands will be transferred in fee simple in two stages, one at the signing of the Interim Treaty Agreement (ITA) and the second parcel at the signing of the agreement in principle. The Malahat Nation will receive two land parcels in the south Shawnigan Lake area. A 64-hectare parcel will be transferred upon signing the ITA while a second 120-hectare parcel, adjacent to the first, will

be transferred upon signing the agreement in principle under the BC treaty process. The Songhees will receive a land parcel of .14 hectares (.35 acres) in Esquimalt; .10 hectare (.25 acres) in James Bay and .04 hectare (.10 acres) in Victoria. These land parcels will be transferred in two stages. "Songhees Nation is working diligently to develop jobs and other economic opportunities that will contribute to a prosperous future for its citizens and the surrounding region," said Ida Chong, BC's minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. "We are pleased to be able to support their efforts to build a successful economic base in the capital region." Incremental Treaty Agreements allow First Nations and the province to enjoy shared benefits in advance of a final agreement. ITAs create incentives to reach further milestones and provide increased certainty over land and resources. ITAs are pre-treaty agreements that provide economic opportunities, promote constructive planning opportunities and advance treaty-related benefits for First Nations early in treaty negotiations.



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Aboriginal Education and Employment Strategy Manager  
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## Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon



PHOTO: DABVID P. BALL

Ben West, Tar Sands Campaigner with the group Forest Ethics Advocacy

(Continued from page 14.)

For Ben West, Tar Sands Campaigner with the group Forest Ethics Advocacy, the Canada-China deal seems tailor-made to lock in the Conservative government's support for controversial pipelines from Alberta's oil sands. That is because the deal would be binding for 31-years and penalties imposed for breaching it.

"As an environmentalist, it's hard to look at what's going on right now with the FIPA and not see the names Kinder Morgan and Enbridge written all over it," said West. "It's hard to look at FIPA and all this negotiation going on behind closed doors and not think that this is very much about the export of oil. It's very much about the protection of the Canadian oil industry's interests."

"I, for one, think the fact this is happening behind closed doors shows that our government is scared to talk to the people—scared to hear the voices of the average Canadian—because if they heard those voices loud and clear, it would be transparent that nobody wants this to go forward."

But the federal department of International Trade takes issue with the deal's opponents, arguing that the FIPA merely protects and facilitated economic investment between the two countries, but cannot override regulations or bypass

national security concerns.

"This agreement does not impair Canada's ability to regulate and legislate in areas such as the environment, culture, safety, health and conservation," said Rudy Husny, the minister's Press Secretary. "FIPA contains the exceptions found in our other treaties that preserve policy flexibility for certain sensitive sectors and activities, including rights or preferences provided to aboriginal peoples."

"Canada's Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement with China—the world's second largest economy—will provide stronger protection for Canadians investing in China, and facilitate the creation of jobs and economic growth here at home."

Hupacasath filed their injunction request in January, with the financial support of the self-described "pro-democracy" activist group Leadnow.ca, who fundraised more than \$30,000 among their 225,000-strong membership.

"We agreed it was our fiduciary responsibility to protect the Aboriginal rights and title of our First Nations people, by challenging the FIPA and demanding proper consultation," said Brenda Sayers, elected councillor of Hupacasath First Nation. "The federal government failed to consult First Nations according to Section 35 of the Constitution—thereby violating Canada's own

laws.

"It appears that this treaty will more than likely override the rights of those treaties that were negotiated in good faith with the government years ago... Many of our First Nations already live in poverty. It is our opinion that this will create more poverty. We're demanding the government of Canada consult with First Nations people."

The lawsuit gained the support of several major unions, including the BC Federation of Labour, the Canadian Energy and Paperworkers Union, and the BC Teachers Federation (BCTF).

"The very least that we must demand of our federal government is a rigorous, open and transparent debate on the issue of the free trade pact with China, and on any free trade pact," said BCTF President Susan Lambert at a Feb. 20 press conference in Vancouver. "We should demand that together—unions, Aboriginal peoples, environmental groups, religious leaders and everyone.

"The history of trade and commerce on this continent has been a history of colonialism. And the experience we've had with free trade pacts is they have eroded the regulatory and legislative framework we put in place to have a civil society. They have eroded the rights of working people, regulations protecting the environment, and they have been an assault on the rights of Indigenous Peoples."



### INTERESTED IN BECOMING A DOCTOR?

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC is pleased to announce it will be hosting its 10<sup>th</sup> annual, "Aboriginals into Medicine: Pre-admissions Workshop," August 8 to 10, 2013. It will take place at the Northern Medical Program in Prince George, BC.

The purpose of the workshop is to provide Aboriginal students with the necessary tools to be successful in their application process into and completing the undergraduate MD program. The presentations for the workshop will be given by physicians, faculty/staff members, medical students and residents.

Aboriginal Students completing Grade 11 & 12, and others attending college/university in BC are encouraged to register. There is no cost in attending the workshop as accommodations and meals will be covered by the workshop. Travel is the student's responsibility and we encourage you to approach your school district or Band for travel support. **Space is limited, so apply ASAP.**

**Deadline for registration: June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, Monday**

Aboriginal includes status & non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit peoples.

For registration information please contact:

James Andrew, Aboriginal Student Initiatives Coordinator  
Phone: 604-875-4111, 68946 or email: james.andrew@ubc.ca

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
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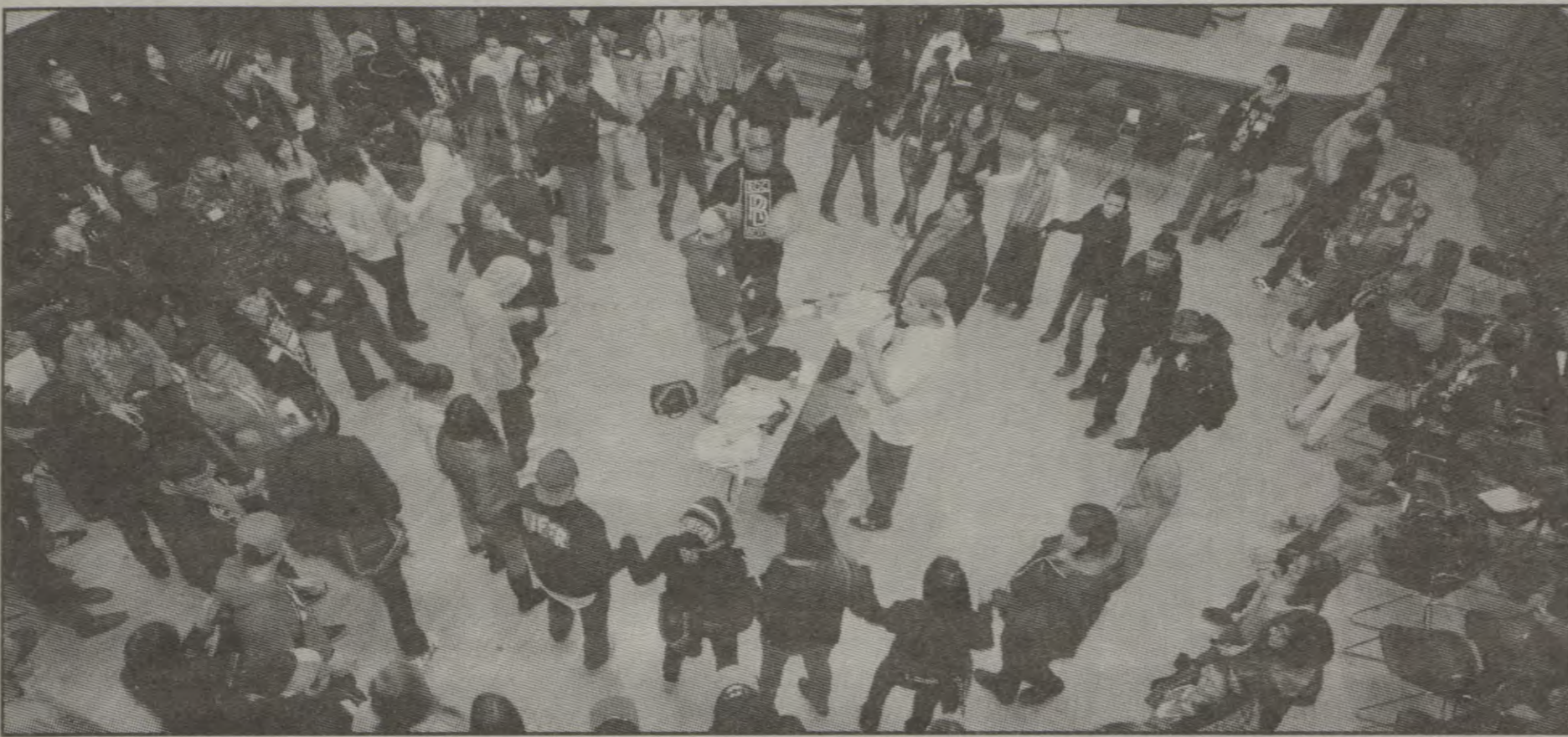
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## Saskatchewan Sage: Special Section providing news from Saskatchewan



The Indspire: Soaring Youth Career Conference completes its visit to SIAST with traditional First Nation singers, Wild Horse and a round dance. (Photo: SIAST)

### SIAST hosts high school students

The SIAST Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon hosted a full-day of activities on Feb. 14 for Indigenous youth as part of the Soaring conference, presented by Indspire. About 150 grades 9 to 12 students attended from across Saskatchewan and Alberta. They received hands-on

experience, as well as knowledge of the post-secondary setting and support services. The students participated in interactive SIAST program demonstrations and learned about the SIAST Aboriginal student services that support First Nation and Métis students in their education. "Events such as this helps students envision

themselves in the post-secondary environment and get them thinking about career options," said Dan MacKay, acting vice-president, student affairs at SIAST. Currently, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology has almost 3,000 Aboriginal students, more than any other Saskatchewan post-secondary




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### Report shows significant gap in education, employment

The significant education gap between First Nations people and the general population is directly affecting the employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, particularly in Saskatchewan, according to a report recently released by Dr. Eric Howe, a University of Saskatchewan economics professor. The study Employment of First Nations People: Saskatchewan Lags Behind referenced 2006 Census data (the 2011 Census did not use long form for data collection), which found 58.6 per cent of Saskatchewan's First Nations adult population did not have a high school diploma, compared to 29.9 per cent of the population at large. "Our employment record of First Nations people is—frankly the word is appalling," Howe told CBC News. "We have a big labour shortage in Saskatchewan right now and we need people to fill those positions," Jim Reiter, minister of government relations and minister responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs, said. "While we need to do a lot of work in the Aboriginal community to decrease the unemployment rate, there is jobs for both First Nations and immigrants as well." The most recent Statistics Canada reporting indicates that the First Nations labour force has shrunk by nearly 1,600 jobs over the last year and that the Métis labour force has shrunk by 400 jobs. NDP employment critic Cam Broten contends that the Saskatchewan Party's decision to cut the Aboriginal Employment Development Program in the next budget will lead to further Aboriginal unemployment.

### Better health services access in two Saskatoon hospitals

First Nations and Métis patients and their families will soon have better access to health services in Saskatoon hospitals St. Paul's and Royal University. The service will provide clinical and traditional care. Health educators will facilitate navigation service, act as a cultural support, including the ability to interpret in a First Nation language, coordinate service and be a liaison person for those who request assistance. Elder services will be a foundational piece of the First Nations and Métis Health Unit. "This new unit is going to help us ensure that First Nations and Métis patients and their families are comfortable with the care they are receiving," said Maura Davies, president and CEO Saskatoon Health Region. "Many of our First Nations and Métis patients come from outside the region and need extra support like access to interpreters to communicate with health care providers."

### Saskatchewan First Nations mourn loss of Elder

Howard Cameron Sr., of the Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation, passed away on Feb. 12, 2013. Cameron began his career in justice with the RCMP in the 1970s, an unrelenting advocate for justice. At a FSIN Justice Commission meeting where he served as an Elder he once said, "One of the easiest things to do is turn your back and say we'll let the police handle that, we'll let the courts handle that. The police cannot come to our communities and arrest the problems away." He served as the Saskatchewan representative on the RCMP Commissioner's National Aboriginal Advisory Committee and the Saskatchewan Commanding Officer's Aboriginal Advisory Committee. Most recently, he served as an Elder at the First Nations University's Northern Campus in Prince Albert. Howard's daughter, the late Robin Cameron, followed in her dad's footsteps when she joined the RCMP. She was killed in the line of duty in 2006.

### Possible new name for FSIN

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations executive council passed a resolution at its annual winter assembly to consider changing the name of the organization. While the acronym would remain the same, FSIN would stand for Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations. "That in itself is a strong statement—to say that we are still sovereign," said FSIN Chief Perry Bellegarde. He said including the word sovereign in the new name goes hand in hand with a more independent FSIN. Bellegarde also said he hopes to make the organization's bureaucracy more independent from political influence. The winter assembly was held Feb. 13 and 14.

### "Eradicate the Ignorance" forum held

On Feb. 15, the Aboriginal Peoples' Commission hosted "Eradicate the Ignorance," an Indigenous issues roundtable. The discussion was hosted by APC's vice president-communications Kevin Seesequasis of the Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation, and explored issues ranging from treaties, the Indian Act, the Kelowna Accord, First Nations child welfare, murdered and missing Indigenous women, Bill C-45 and the #IdleNoMore movement. MP for St. Paul's and Aboriginal Affairs Critic Carolyn Bennett was special guest. The Aboriginal Peoples' Commission represents and promotes the interests of Aboriginal members of the Liberal Party and encourages the active and equitable participation of Aboriginal people at all levels of the party structure.

Compiled by Shari Narine



Manitoba Pipestone: Special Section providing news from Manitoba



PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Artist Christi Belcourt and Deborah Young, Executive Lead Indigenous Achievement, at the second annual Métis Learning Day at the University of Manitoba.

**Métis Learning Day celebrated at U of M**

On Feb. 12 the University of Manitoba hosted its second annual Métis Learning Day. Christi Belcourt, the Métis artist whose work was chosen for the stained glass window in the House of Commons to commemorate Indian residential school survivors, delivered a lecture titled, Contemporary Métis Art as a Healing Practice. U of M Associate Professor Sherry Farrell Racette presented two lectures: The Flower Beadwork People: Métis Art and Clothing; and Métis History for Dummies: the Crash Course. This Métis Learning Day is part

of a larger series that began last year. The University of Manitoba hosts it and a First Nation, and Inuit Learning Day as part of its Pathways to Indigenous Achievement framework. The Learning Day series also supports the University of Manitoba's commitment to acknowledge and affirm Aboriginal voices within the fabric of the university.

**TRC holds hearing in Garden Hill**

Commissioner for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission held hearings at Garden Hill First Nation High School. Commissioner Chief Wilton

Littlechild conducted a two-day hearing at Garden Hill Feb. 19 and Feb. 20. The hearing provided an opportunity for those affected by the Indian residential school system and its legacy to share their experiences with Littlechild, community members and anyone else who would like to learn about and bear witness to the schools' legacy.

**Grade 3 students achieve nation-wide success in Math**

Grade 3 students at Otetiskiwin Kiskinwamahtowekamik School, in Nelson House placed second in Canada for Mathletics, an

internet-based program that allows students to compete in mathematical challenges. After points were awarded for participation, with additional points for each question answered correctly, teacher Nathan Lang's students were second in Canada and 49th in the world. Last year the students received personal laptops through the OLPC Canada program. "The students are loving it. They are running around the classroom to look at each other's monitors. They shout out to see how many points other students have. These laptops have the students loving Math. It follows the curriculum, and every spare chance they want to borrow a laptop so they can do MATH," said Lang. OLPC Canada is a core program of The Belinda Stronach Foundation.

**Thunder inducted into Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame**

John Thunder of Buffalo Point First Nation was one of two 2013 inductees into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. Thunder was chosen along with Manny Jules of Tk'eml'ps Indian Band by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and ESS Support Services Worldwide. Thunder held the role of hereditary chief of Buffalo Point First Nation from 1967 to 1997. Under his leadership, Thunder drove the implementation of a long-term economic development plan for

his community. CCAB is committed to the full participation of Aboriginal people in Canada's economy.

**Brokenhead Ojibway signs FNLM**

The Brokenhead Ojibway Nation is one of eight First Nations to sign onto the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management, which will allow it to begin a process to opt out of 34 land-related sections of the Indian Act and assume greater control over their reserve land and resources. The addition of these eight First Nations to the Framework Agreement means that 69 First Nations will soon be operating or developing land codes under the FNLM regime.

**Team Manitoba Manager for NAIG named**

Jacinta Bear was recently hired as the new Team Manitoba manager for the 2014 North American Indigenous Games. Bear, who lives in Winnipeg with husband Dale and their two sons, is from Fisher River Cree Nation. "I want to help make Manitoba's team at the Games and the Games themselves one of the greatest in history," she told Grassroots News. "I want to make sure our kids have the best time and that they also learn something about their teammates and their sports." The 2014 NAIG will be held in Regina from July 20 to July 27.

Compiled by Shari Narine

**MissingKids.ca builds awareness on First Nations**



PHOTO: SUBMITTED

Parents of missing children Michael Dunahee, Adam Trevor and Mitchell O'Brien, Sunshine Wood and Maisy Odjick with Federal Justice Minister and Attorney General Rob Nicholson (third from left) and Christy Dzikowicz, director of MissingKids.ca.

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

**WINNIPEG**

In Manitoba, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection is working with 10 families that have children who have been missing for more than six months. Eight of those families are First Nations.

While Christy Dzikowicz,

director of MissingKids.ca, with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, doesn't have exact figures, she does know that Manitoba's numbers are a reflection of what is happening across the country.

"It's a sad but accepted fact that we know that First Nations adults as well as children are going missing at a disproportionate rate," said Dzikowicz.

In the last three years, she said,

MissingKids.ca has started the process of building awareness in First Nations communities about the resources the organization has available.

At any given time, MissingKids.ca has several hundred files open, some of which have been active for years. While the office is located in Winnipeg, the organization went nationwide in May 2011 with the launch of MissingKids.ca. The Assembly of First Nations passed a resolution in July 2011 supporting the organization and pledging to work with the centre to "assist in creating awareness of and disseminating tools and resources provided through MissingKids.ca."

The role of MissingKids.ca is to work with parents and provide them emotional support through on-staff social workers as well as to help them with the legal system. And depending on the situation, in particular if the child is a runaway, the centre can provide parents with the steps they can take to help find their child and what they can do to help aid the police in the search. The organization can also liaise with the police on behalf of the family.

"We'd like to see more families contact us so we can advocate for them and help them navigate

through this experience," said Dzikowicz.

She adds that families who already have missing children are welcomed to contact the centre and get the support MissingKids.ca offers.

Missing kids can be runaways, abducted by a family member, or the rarer case of stranger-abduction.

Parents know little about the electronic world that many kids live in these days, so MissingKids.ca has technicians that can help parents access twitter and Facebook on their child's computer.

"We have in-house technical resources. Our staff can help the family navigate through how to do search histories on the computer," said Dzikowicz.

MissingKids.ca also has a unique network established where individuals register through MissingKidsAlert.ca. If a child goes missing in their area, and the family and police think it will be helpful, MissingKids.ca sends out an electronic notification.

"We encourage the public to look around. We know people care, but I think people don't realize it is possible that you can be that person who helps find a child," said Dzikowicz. "It's just

a matter of calling us or calling the police if you think you may have seen that child."

She says MissingKids.ca has a good relationship with the local law enforcement and families are often made aware of the organization through referrals from local police or the RCMP. However, she would like to see MissingKids.ca become well enough known that parents will approach the organization on their own.

MissingKids.ca also has a community response plan, which they developed through working with a variety of advisory committees consisting of First Nations and Aboriginal peoples, families, and law enforcement, and will be rolling out as a pilot project this March in Norway House Cree Nation, in Manitoba.

MissingKids.ca will work with Norway House to tailor the community response to meet that First Nation's needs. It is not that Norway House has a large number of children who go missing, said Dzikowicz, but that the community and MissingKids.ca have a good working relationship. If the response plan proves successful, MissingKids.ca will work with the AFN to bring the plan to First Nations across the country.



## Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario



PHOTO: MARKETWIRE

Former Prime Minister Paul Martin speaks to students about Aboriginal history, culture and traditions at Free the Children's We Stand Together launch at Monarch Park Collegiate. The campaign is a partnership with Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative.

### Campaign to raise awareness about Aboriginal education

The 10-day campaign for the third annual We Stand Together in Support of Aboriginal Education kicked off Feb. 25 across the country. The initiative is a joint effort of Free The Children and the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative and will see students, educators and parents across the country learn about the challenges, achievements and contributions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. "I commend these two organizations for their leadership. A better awareness of First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples and the realities facing our communities can go a long way in breaking the many stereotypes that we still encounter in this country," said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo. In August 2012, Free The Children polled 2,400 parents and their children to learn about philanthropic perceptions. When asked which local issue they were most passionate about, Aboriginal issues ranked the lowest amongst youth and their parents and less than half of youth and parents polled felt they had a strong understanding of the issues affecting Aboriginal Canadians.

### Court rules in favour of TRC

The federal government is reviewing a decision by the Ontario Superior Court that it must disclose and provide all documents to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission related to the Indian residential schools era. In the House of Commons on Jan. 30, then-Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan said, "The decision is anything but clear-cut. The discussion, in terms of relevant

documents, was left somewhat open by the judge. We believe that we have been meeting the spirit and intent, but if there is a slightly different interpretation, we will obviously meet the spirit and intent of the judge's decision." Under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the TRC was tasked with creating a complete historical record of the residential schools system and legacy. The federal government and the churches are to provide all relevant documents in their possession or control to and for the use of the TRC, subject to a few exceptions. "We're grateful to be able to continue the Commission's work of gathering and protecting for future generations documents that are relevant to the history of the Indian Residential Schools in Canada. We look forward to carrying out this work in cooperation with the Government of Canada. We especially acknowledge the clarity of Justice Goudge's decision," TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair.

### Speech from Throne delivers pledge to Aboriginal peoples

In her Speech from the Throne on Feb. 19, Ontario's new Premier Kathleen Wynne pledged to ensure that Aboriginal peoples "share in every opportunity." In portions that specifically addressed Aboriginal communities, the speech stated, "Your government is working with Aboriginal communities to ensure that the benefits of resource development are shared and opportunities for education, training and employment are established." The Ontario government also stated that it "will work with

Aboriginal communities, but the federal government must also live up to its important obligations in this regard."

### Zimmer appointed Aboriginal Affairs minister

David Zimmer is the new minister of Aboriginal Affairs. "We enjoyed a positive relationship with Minister Zimmer in his previous capacity as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and we look forward to building on that relationship," said Métis Nation of Ontario President Gary Lipinski in a news release. Lipinski attended the swearing-in ceremony on Feb. 11. The MNO-Ontario Framework Agreement was signed in 2008 when Wynne held the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio. "The framework agreement proved a solid foundation for cooperation between our two governments and resulted in the advancement of Métis rights as well as achievements in a whole range of other areas including education, health, jobs creation and economic development," said Lipinski. He added that MNO's key priorities included ensuring Métis children and

youth have opportunities.

### Beardy refused Diamond Jubilee medal

Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy declined the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal. In a news release, he said, "Accepting the medal at this time would condone the fact that the British Crown and Canadian government are ignoring the legal and historical connection they have with treaty nations." On Dec. 20, 2012, Beardy wrote an open letter to the Queen urging direct British Crown involvement in Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike. He recently received a response from her Majesty that he felt was unsatisfactory. The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal was created to mark the 2012 celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada.

Compiled by Shari Narine



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[ education ]

# Education consultations marred by bloody Saskatoon skirmish

By David P. Ball  
Windspeaker Contributor

## SASKATOON

The federal government's attempt to consult First Nations across the country over its proposed First Nations Education Act remain controversial, with some taking part in a series of meetings, and others pledging to boycott them.

Outside a meeting held in Saskatoon by Aboriginal Affairs Canada on Feb. 8, tensions boiled over as Idle No More (INM) members say they were shut out midway through, leading to a skirmish with security guards that left the TCU Place doors smeared with blood, according to video and several witness accounts.

"The morning meeting went fine," said Sylvia McAdam, one of INM's co-founders. "People were sitting there; we were listening. It was quite empowering to listen to chiefs saying they opposed the First Nations Education Act... The chiefs there in the morning did extremely well. They opposed the legislation.

"Idle No More does not consent to any consultation that undermines and infringes on the treaty right to education. I asked them how come they're not working with what is already there. They didn't answer me. Why are they not funding the schools already in existence on reserves on par with other education institutions, instead of trying to create a First Nations Education Act?"

According to McAdam, the meeting took a break at 10:30 a.m., but when she and about 50 people returned at 1 p.m., as they had been told, security guards informed them the meetings were now closed to the public.

"I was like, 'What?! Why? That can't be true!' People were starting to move up the stairs, and security said, 'You can't go over there. It's a closed meeting for safety reasons.'

"A young man tried to open the door, and a security guard pulled it hard enough to make a cut on his hand. An older lady tried to come out. She was inside the meeting. She was holding the door open and telling us to come

in. Security shoved her—even grabbed her by her head—and started pushing her. She was trying to explain something to him, but he wouldn't listen. He was really rough... Even other [TCU] staff were telling that security guard not to do that."

Several chiefs eventually negotiated to allow members of the public inside, a few allowed into the meetings and others observing from a foyer. But McAdam said she wants TCU Place and Aboriginal Affairs to apologize for the incident. But the CEO of the building told Windspeaker he was asked by the department not to speak to media.

"At the request of our client who booked the meeting," TCU Place CEO Bob Korol told Windspeaker "We have 'no comment'."

Aboriginal Affairs did not respond to Windspeaker's request for comment on the consultation, the incident with security, or why the afternoon meeting was closed to the public.

Prior to John Duncan's surprise Feb. 15 resignation as Aboriginal Affairs minister—after he wrote a character reference for a constituent facing tax court, violating Cabinet rules—the minister insisted education remains a priority for the government.

"I was pleased to meet today with National Chief Atleo, Regional Chief [Morley] Googoo and other members of the Chiefs Committee on Education," Duncan said on Dec. 6. "Our meeting was frank, productive and focused on how we can work together to achieve our shared objective: improving First Nation education.

"We agreed that a good education leads to greater economic opportunities for students, which in turn contributes to healthier, more prosperous and more self-sufficient First Nation communities. We also agreed that the current approach is not working; First Nation students are not graduating at the same rate as other Canadians, which limits their opportunities. Only significant changes to our approach to First Nation education will lead to improvements in graduation

rates."

Over the coming months, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada is inviting citizens to take part in an online survey which asks questions about educational priorities as well as meetings in cities across the country.

According to the Assembly of First Nations and education advocates, the government only spends \$7,101 per aboriginal student on reserves. That is more than \$3,000 less than the amount spent on each non-Native student country-wide.

But according to Aboriginal Affairs, the ministry claims that First Nations students in fact receive more funding on average than other pupils—\$13,542 per student in the 2010-2011—not including money for infrastructure and building maintenance, a figure which varies by province.

Compared to the 2009 national average of \$10,439 for each off-reserve child's education, the Conservatives' figures significantly contradict aboriginal advocates.

But both sides agree that outcomes are substantially lower for First Nations students with high drop-out rates and lower grades across the board.

According to one study, there are 520 band-run schools on First Nations reserves across Canada, with 77 housed in temporary

structures, and 10 closed due to "dire conditions," including a lack of running water, black mold, snake and rat problems, and over-crowding.

"If they're not willing to fund the schools we already have—Indian-controlled Indian education—are they prepared to guarantee funding as long as the sun shines, the rivers flow and the grass grows? That's the treaty promise for education," McAdam added.

Duncan disputed the claim that First Nations students are funded at a lower rate than non-Native students, and upheld his government's record on aboriginal education.

"Our government continues to take concrete steps to improving educational outcomes for First Nation students," Duncan said in a statement last October. "Our innovative approach to these additional funds builds on the \$1.7 billion our government invests annually in First Nation elementary and secondary education and will ensure that more First Nation students get the education they need so they can pursue the same opportunities available to all Canadian students."

As chiefs met with Aboriginal Affairs staff and Minister Duncan inside the TCU Place meeting room, outside, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde told

reporters he opposed the government's consultation attempts.

"Their consultation process is flawed," Bellegarde told reporters. "[It] doesn't respect First Nations jurisdiction.

"I think we are all trying to do and say the same thing about improving educational outcomes. It's important to keep that at the forefront."

For McAdam and the dissident chiefs—some of whom expressed outrage over the AFN agreeing to meet with government at all, despite internal resolutions opposing such consultations as attempts to legitimize Conservative reform—the issues of education are of vital importance.

"If they're sincere about the best interests of Indigenous children," McAdam said, "then bring the funding on par with the province now, so that our children can be enjoying the same level of education and educational funding as other educational institutions. Let them do that first, to show their sincerity."

Education consultations are planned for Vancouver the week of March 4; Winnipeg the week of March 11; Quebec the week of March 25; and finally Thunder Bay the week of April 8. Comments can also be submitted on the department's Web site survey.

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# Consultation without consideration is no consultation at all

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## SASKATOON

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations is opposed to a national approach to First Nations education.

"We already [have] got resolution to say no to education legislation because it's very, very premature at this time as well because we just got the commitment from the Prime Minister for a high level mechanism to help and assist in implementation of treaties and inherent rights in Sect. 35. So why go ahead with piecemealing one piece of legislation on education when there is a whole bigger piece that has to be addressed?" said FSIN Chief Perry Bellegarde.

Bellegarde said protests about the Saskatoon meeting, which was the second education consultation to be hosted by Duncan, also centred on the process.

"(The government's) consultation process is flawed because it was unilaterally done. There was no input from First Nations people," he said.

Grand Chief Derek Nepinak of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, said Duncan's undertaking lacked "both legitimacy and consent."

In a letter sent to Duncan following the Saskatoon meeting, Nepinak wrote, "It would seem that your government is simply going through the motions of

'consultation' to meet the constitutional standard, despite no acceptance of the idea by our people."

The Assembly of First Nations passed a resolution at its Special Chiefs Assembly in December opposing a First Nations Education Act.

In an earlier interview with Windspeaker, AFN Regional Chief Morley Googoo, who holds the portfolio on education, said the AFN recognizes that there is regional diversity and regional approaches.

"The most important outcome is how do we move forward to create a better education system for our children and that is our goal. Legislation for sure is not an option that is preferred by anybody," he said.

The topic of process was also reiterated in the House of Commons where NDP Aboriginal Affairs Critic Jean Crowder stated, "Dates and locations for these meetings were picked by the staff at the department and published on the Web site. Now First Nation educators are saying they would like some of those dates to be moved to allow them more time to develop their proposals, but the government answer is no."

However, since Duncan's resignation, AANDC's website only has the weeks listed for the five remaining meetings (Calgary, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Quebec, Thunder Bay), along with the designation "Date TBC." It had been Duncan's goal to have First Nations Education legislation in place by September 2014.

# Bill C-27: Draconian, or a law without teeth?

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## OTTAWA

First Nations are not denying measures that assure accountability and transparency from band governments are needed, but Bill C-27, the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, as it stands now, is not the answer.

Bill C-27 may also be illegal, said Sawridge First Nation Chief Roland Twinn. He was speaking to the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples on Feb. 12. Twinn believes the bill was in conflict with Sect. 52 of the Constitution Act, which states that any law contradicting the Constitution is invalid.

Michael R. McKinney, executive director of Sawridge First Nation, added that Bill C-27 would contravene the Montana Decision rendered by the Federal Court of Appeal, which confirmed that the financial statements and audits of First Nations are confidential information and protected from disclosure under the Access to Information Act.

"This puts us in the position of having to file a legal action and all the money and delay this involves," said Twinn.

Of particular concern to the Sawridge First Nation is Bill C-27's requirement that information from First Nation-owned and operated entities be disclosed and posted on the internet. Twinn contends this puts First Nations at a disadvantage when it comes to doing business.

However, Harold Calla, chair of the First Nations Financial Management Board, who appeared before the committee

the following day, did not feel that the requirement for First Nations entities to supply consolidated financial records was inappropriate.

He did say, though, that Bill C-27 was not adequate.

"I appreciate that the minister responsible has to respond, but I don't think any of us should be fooled that good financial management and accountability is contained within the four posts of this particular piece of legislation," said Calla. "I would hope that you would look beyond this legislation to what's required. I think you need to also look beyond this legislation to understand what kind of support First Nations are going to need to develop the capacity to not only create but sustain certification and good financial management practices."

Bill C-27 also requires that salaries and expenses of chiefs and councils be posted on the Internet along with annual consolidated financial statements and any statements prepared by an independent auditor. Band members are permitted to request, at a fee, copies of this information to be provided within 120 days. If the requested documents are not presented, a band member may take court action to get compliance. If a band council does not comply, the federal government could withhold funding to the First Nation or terminate any agreements for funding.

The bill contains a number of unrealistic clauses, Beverly Brown from the Squamish First Nation, told the committee on Feb. 13.

Many members cannot afford Internet, cannot afford to pay the fee to have information photocopied, but mostly, members would not be able to afford to take court action, said

Brown.

Michael Benedict, a First Nations tax consultant, said financial sanctions imposed by the federal government against a First Nation in non-compliance and court action that may be taken by the government were not enough.

"It does little to respond to the citizens, the grassroots people in the community, that are seeking to understand how their finances are being managed and spent and how they're being represented by their First Nations councils," said Benedict.

Both Benedict, from Odanak Abenakis Band, and Brown told the committee about the difficulties they were having getting information from their respective band councils.

"Once the legislation is in place, there's got to be teeth behind it.... (It is) Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada who is the watch dog," said Benedict. However, he noted in the past complaints he submitted to AANDC resulted in him being sent back to his band.

"I don't believe this legislation is going to do very much either. It depends on how it's going to be used and ... the federal government's response to our complaints."

Twinn believes the answer was not in legislation, which he referred to as "Draconian," but in First Nations receiving support to work towards self-government.

"In our experience it's a long hard row to sow, but it's something that has to be done. It takes a lot of courage. It actually encompasses a little bit of healing and allows the voice of the people to come up," said Twinn. "Other First Nations can definitely go down the road... it's not impossible."

# Senators just wanted some sober second thought on C-27

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## OTTAWA

Liberal Senator Nick Sibbeston wanted to see political officials acknowledge the voice of the Idle No More movement, so he asked Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan to delay the First Nations Financial Transparency Act for six months.

When that didn't happen, he and two other Liberal senators walked out of a committee meeting. A week later, Sibbeston made a similar request of the Senate Standing Committee. However, his motion to table the bill was defeated.

"A lot of people say they support Aboriginal people and their rights, and opportunities come along every so often to

show support and make changes, but people have difficulty and often don't step up," said Sibbeston, former government leader of the Northwest Territories.

Sibbeston was joined by senators Lillian Dyck and Sandra Lovelace-Nicholas in walking out of the Senate's Aboriginal committee meeting on Feb. 6 where Duncan was testifying on behalf of Bill C-27, which requires First Nations to make their finances and chief and council's salaries public. All three senators are Aboriginal.

Lovelace-Nicholas, from the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, says while she supports the need for stronger accountability by First Nations, she is opposed to how the act was developed.

"The minister and government

always claims there was consultation and we know for a fact there isn't consultation with the new laws that are being brought in, the new legislation," she said. "I think the bands should be consulted as they draw up the legislation, not after the fact."

"Consultation has been a big issue the last couple of months. With all the agitation ... the government should learn the necessity and need to have proper consultation," said Sibbeston, who has participated in Idle No More rallies.

That lack of consultation when it came to developing Bill C-27 coupled with the Aboriginal senators' frustration with Duncan led to the group leaving the meeting.

(See *Senators* on page 29.)

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# Racism lives and breathes; a virus in healthcare

By Shari Narine  
Windspeaker Contributor

## REGINA

Until the relationship improves between health providers and their patients, Indigenous people will continue to have high rates of chronic illnesses.

"The world of health and medicine has not always treated First Nations, Metis and Inuit people very well," said Dr. Joann Episkinew, director with the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre in Regina.

Racism, whether intentional or through ignorance, plays a key role in explaining the data collected in 2007-2010 and recently released by Statistics Canada in the Canadian Community Health Survey.

And if there is any doubt that racism isn't a major factor in all walks of life, Episkinew says tune into the comments that have been made in the wake of the Idle No More movement.

"The health practitioner and their patient is a relationship that needs to be built on trust," said Episkinew, but a history of colonialism and oppression makes it difficult for Aboriginal people to trust those in authority.

Lack of trust in the health system was also a prevalent finding in another recently released document. According to

the Health Council of Canada's 74-page *Empathy, dignity and respect*, "But one barrier to good health lies squarely in the lap of the health care system itself. Many Aboriginal people don't trust—and therefore don't use—mainstream health care services because they don't feel safe from stereotyping and racism, and because the Western approach to health care can feel alienating and intimidating."

The HCC report is the result of meetings held across the country in 2012. The majority of participants were Aboriginal. The meetings focused on the mainstream urban health care systems. Approximately half of Canada's 1.3 million Aboriginal people live in cities.

While the issue of trust cannot be downplayed when it comes to the continuing health issues faced by Aboriginals, the health system is only one aspect.

"Poverty is a huge cause of ill-health," said Episkinew.

Poor living conditions, poor education, high unemployment, and poor diets and lack of sufficient food also contribute to poor health.

Says the authors of the HCC report, "It is well documented that many underlying factors negatively affect the health of Aboriginal people in Canada, including poverty and the intergenerational effects of colonization and residential schools."

StatsCan indicators found that compared to non-Aboriginals, the Aboriginal population had a smoking rate over two times higher; Aboriginal adults had a higher obesity rate; and Aboriginals were more likely to experience household food insecurity. However, Métis and First Nations people were more active during leisure time than their non-Aboriginal counterparts and Inuit reported a stronger sense of belonging to their community and a high satisfaction with life.

"The education of health care people needs to change," said Episkinew "and they need to work with Aboriginal communities."

While Aboriginal communities do not have the expertise to treat chronic disease or the academic training to back up their practises, they do know which strategies are practical and will be successful. Episkinew says IPHRC undertakes community-based participatory research for that very reason.

"The community is a partner from beginning to end because they have expertise that people at universities don't," she said.

That shift in the health care system is beginning, according to HCC. "We learned that cultural competency and cultural safety are becoming top-of-mind topics in many governments, health regions, and hospitals."

## Health Watch

By Shari Narine

### Community-based food initiatives

The Chronic Disease Prevention Through Local Food Procurement Initiatives is one focus of the Indigenous Health Research Group, a multidisciplinary team. The Initiatives is currently focusing on community-based food initiatives aimed at addressing chronic health issues among Indigenous populations. Initially begun with three communities located in northern Ontario, regions accessible only by plane or winter ice roads, the study has expanded to nine other Indigenous communities across Canada. Health and diet are a growing concern particularly among youth, due to increasing rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Michael Robidoux, who is part of the Initiatives, says the team discovered there was no significant difference in health outcomes between people who consumed wild foods instead of store-bought food. In fact those who eat more traditional food were found to have higher than average amounts of mercury and PCBs in their systems. Regardless, both scientific and local knowledge affirm that locally harvested and prepared foods are of tremendous cultural, social and nutritional value. As a community-based initiative, this research is being translated into effective community generated programs encouraging healthy eating and maintaining traditional knowledge systems. Community initiated hunter-support programs, school breakfast programs and community gardens have been created in partnership with Robidoux and his team.

### Funding received to better deal with sexual assault of girls

The federal government has committed over \$600,000 to the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent in Montréal to help strengthen the knowledge base of Aboriginal service providers so they can better address the issue of the sexual assault of girls. Funding was announced late January by Rob Nicholson, minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. In total, \$630,074, with \$380,074 from Status of Women Canada and \$250,000 from the Department of Justice, was committed. "We are proud to support projects like these that help children and families who have been victims of sexual abuse," said Rona Ambrose, minister of Public Works and Government Services and minister for Status of Women, in a news release. In total, the centre will receive \$1.2 million over three to undertake projects that will serve victims of sexual abuse.

### Stillbirths higher in Aboriginal populations

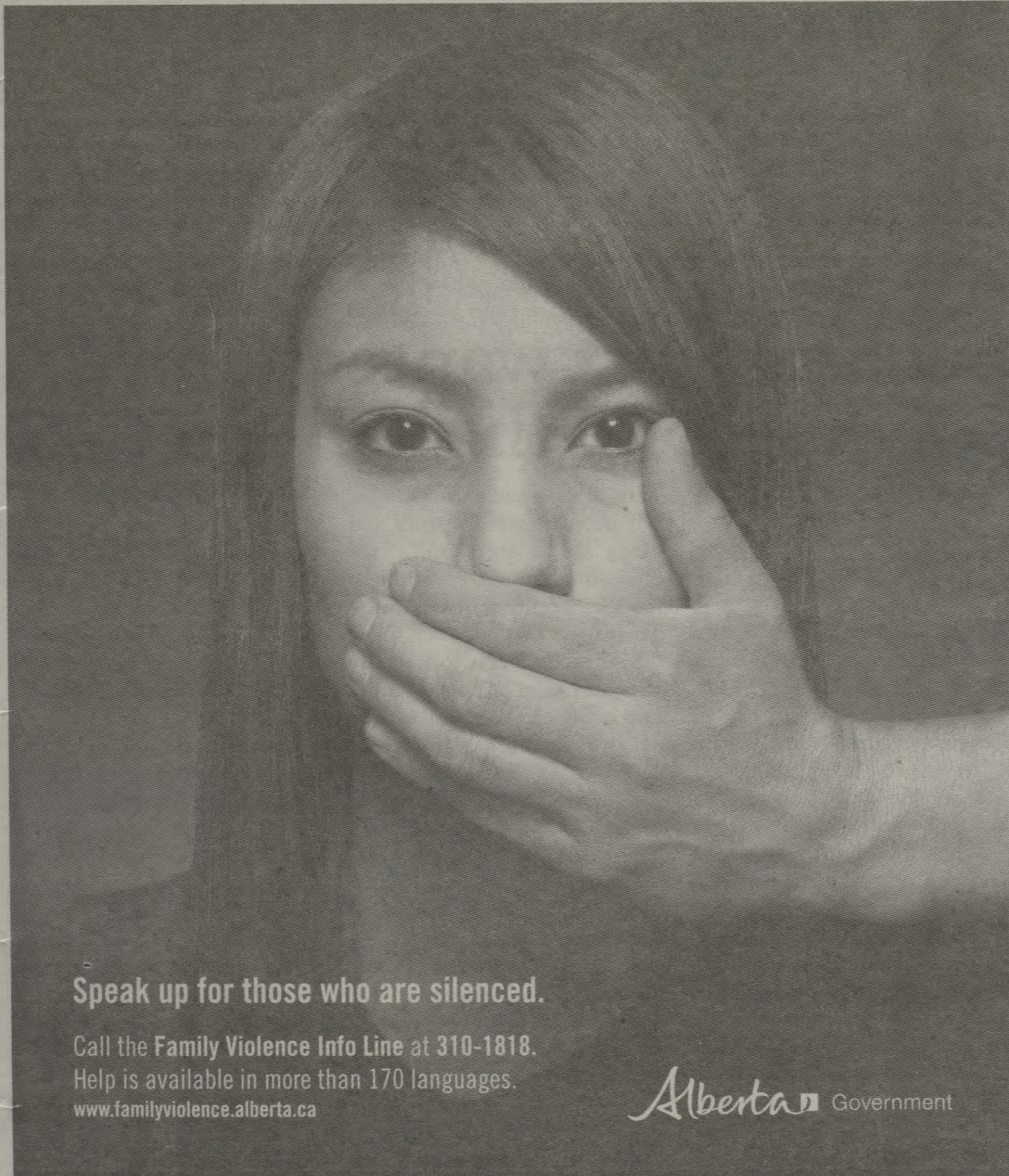
Aboriginal populations in Canada rank at the top of the list of disadvantaged groups with the highest rates of stillbirth in the Western world. A study published in the February issue of *CMAJ* shows that stillbirth per 1,000 births were greater among Inuit (6.8) and First Nations (5.7) than among non-Aboriginal (3.6) residents. Stillbirth rates in Aboriginal populations were particularly high at term gestation. Poor fetal growth, placental disorders and congenital anomalies were important causes of stillbirth among the Inuit, and diabetic and hypertensive complications were important causes in the First Nations population. Prevention may require improvements in pregnancy and obstetric care. The research was undertaken by a team led by Nathalie Auger, MD MSc, who compared gestational age—and cause-specific stillbirth rates in Inuit and First Nations populations with the rates in the non-Aboriginal population in Quebec.

### UAKN launches new Web site

The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network has launched its new Web site, [www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org). Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the National Association of Friendship Centres has been co-leading the creation of the UAKN for several years. The goal of the UAKN is to create a research infrastructure that focuses attention on urban Aboriginal peoples concerns and contributes to a better quality of life for those living in cities and towns across the country. "By funding policy-relevant research as a collaborative effort between government, academics and community agencies, we hope to provide a community perspective while engaging all stakeholders in an ongoing dialogue regarding research needs. Ultimately, we will see strong progressive policy that affects change in a positive way," said Jeff Cyr, NAFC executive director, in a news release. The network has received \$2.5 million through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Grant over a five-year period.

### Heart attack hospital admissions high for First Nations

A recent report by the Canadian Institute of Health Information indicates that First Nations people are more likely to be admitted to hospital for a heart attack and at an earlier age than residents of areas with a low Aboriginal population. This is the first time the CIHI has looked at the topic. The researchers analyzed seven years of hospital records to compare residents of areas with a high concentration of First Nations people to locations with small Aboriginal concentrations. Researchers also found that residents of areas with a relatively high proportion of Inuit were less likely to be admitted for a heart attack than residents of remote low-Aboriginal areas, and Métis in Manitoba and Ontario also had higher risk for and higher rates of heart attacks than their non-Métis counterparts.



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## Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

### Government funds programs

Five Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia will benefit from some provincial government funding aimed at encouraging healthier lifestyles. Premier Darrell Dexter announced on Feb. 8 his government was putting up a total of \$625,000 towards physical activity leadership programs.

Programs will be started in the following First Nations; Annapolis Valley, Eskasoni, Glooscap, Millbrook and Paq'tnekek. Each First Nation will receive \$125,000 from the government to start the programs.

The communities will also kick in \$100,000 each towards the programs.

The money will be used in each First Nation to initiate five-year physical activity plans. Each community is expected to hire staff members to develop these plans.

### Ferland producing for Blades

Calgary Flames' prospect Michael Ferland should be forgiven if he has to check the front of his jersey to see which team he's playing for. That's because the 20-year-old Cree has played for four different teams in three different leagues this season.

Ferland, who was drafted by the Flames in the 2010 NHL Entry Draft, started off the 2012-13 campaign in the American Hockey League with the British Columbia-based Abbotsford Heat. Abbotsford is the Flames' top affiliate club in the minor pro ranks.

Ferland, who is from Swan River, Man., did not earn any points in the seven games he played for the Heat. He was then sent down to the Flames' East Coast Hockey League affiliate, the Utah Grizzlies. He played three matches with the Grizzlies, earning a lone assist, before he returned to the junior ranks.

Ferland originally came back to the Western Hockey League's Brandon Wheat Kings, where he had spent the past three seasons. But after just four games with the Wheat Kings he was dealt to another WHL franchise, the Saskatoon Blades, in early January, just prior to the league's trading deadline.

Though he had to leave his home province, Ferland certainly isn't complaining about this move. That's because the Blades are atop the league's East Division standings while the Wheat Kings are dead last in the six-team division.

Ferland, who had 96 points (47 goals, 49 assists) in 68 games with the Wheat Kings a year ago, has been averaging more than a point per outing with the Blades.

He racked up 24 points, including seven goals, in his first 20 contests with Saskatoon.

Regardless of how far the Blades advance in their own league playoffs, Ferland knows the Blades will still be playing this May.

That's because the Saskatoon club will be hosting the Memorial Cup, scheduled for May 17 to May 26. As hosts, the Blades receive an automatic berth into the four-team tournament.

The event will also include the WHL champions, or the league finalists if the Blades win the league title.

Also taking part will be the Ontario Hockey League and Quebec Major Junior Hockey League champs.

### Spirits defend title

The Nanaimo-based West Coast Spirits did have a favourable schedule.

But the club also won the games it needed to as it successfully defended its title in the women's division of the prestigious All Native Basketball Tournament, which concluded Feb. 16 in Prince Rupert, B.C.

This marked the 54th year the tournament, which attracts Aboriginal squads from across British Columbia, has been staged in Prince Rupert.

The Spirits were one of 14 teams that took part in the women's category. They defeated a team from Metlakatla 63-61 in their championship final of the double-knockout tournament, which saw entrants eliminated after losing two games.

As the defending tournament champions, the Spirits received an opening-round bye in this year's event. That's a huge advantage considering they had yet to play a game by the time half of the entrants in their division had already lost once.

As it turned out, the Nanaimo side only ended up playing four games at this year's event. The West Coast squad, which included seven returnees from last year's champion, won its tournament opener but then dropped a 59-47 decision to Metlakatla.

The Spirits rebounded in their next outing, however, and defeated the Prince Rupert Rain 70-53. This victory earned the team a berth in the final and a chance to avenge its previous loss to Metlakatla.

Three of the Spirits' players were singled out for their efforts following the tournament. Brittany Williams was named the tournament MVP while her teammates Jeannine Adams and Jolene Nagy cracked the tournament all-star squad.

The tournament also featured three other divisions.

Skidegate won the men's grouping, Kitimaat took top honours in the intermediate men's (21 and under) division and Massett captured the men's masters class.

[ sports ]

# The Little tournament keeps growing in popularity



The Little NHL hockey tournament has outgrown its name.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

By Sam Laskaris  
Windspeaker Writer

### SIX NATIONS, Ont.

Perhaps one day organizers of the Little NHL Tournament will want to consider changing its moniker.

That's because the event—officially the Little Native Hockey League Tournament—is not quite so little anymore.

A tournament record of 153 clubs will participate at the 42nd annual running of the event, scheduled for March 11 to 14.

That's a far cry from the 17 squads that took part in the inaugural tournament in Little Current, Ont.

The Six Nations Minor Hockey Association (SNMHA) will host this year's event, which traditionally attracts Aboriginal squads from all across Ontario.

But since there is only one hockey rink in Six Nations, all tournament matches will be staged in Mississauga, about a 70-minute drive away from the Aboriginal community.

"The tournament has long outgrown the small towns," said Blaine LaForme, the president of the SNMHA.

When submitting application bids these days communities must prove they can handle the logistics of accommodating the thousands who will attend the tournament.

"They require a minimum of 4,000 (hotel) rooms with our application," LaForme said. "Mississauga far exceeded that."

Six Nations organizers had originally thought about having tournament contests in nearby Brantford and Hamilton.

"But (the 4,000-room stipulation) ruled that out," LaForme said.

The Six Nations association

had previously hosted this tournament in 1997. A total of 86 teams took part in that event, which saw games staged in Brantford.

This year's tourney will feature about 3,600 participants, which includes players and bench staff.

LaForme is unsure how many people will attend the tournament. But he anticipates each participant will bring a minimum of one person with them, resulting in more than 7,000 people.

A tournament high of 125 teams competed at last year's event staged in Sudbury. LaForme was somewhat skeptical the 2013 tourney would be as successful.

"It's typically a northern (Ontario) tournament," he said. "The vast majority of teams are from the north. So I'm very surprised. I would have been happy with 125-130 teams."

Marvin Assinewai, the president of the Little NHL, said despite a record number of participating clubs last year, the 2012 tournament could have been even bigger.

"One of the reasons they weren't coming last year was because all of the (hotel) rooms were full," he said, adding some of the teams ended up staying in hotels in North Bay, about a 90-minute drive from Sudbury.

It's unlikely, however, there will be many complaints about the proximity of accommodations this year.

Most of the hotel rooms where participants will stay are mere minutes from the rinks where matches will be staged.

The tournament headquarters will be the Hershey Centre, which is the home rink for the Ontario Hockey League's Mississauga Steelheads. This facility has a main bowl arena, with seating for more than 5,000 as well as three

adjacent rinks.

Games will also be held at Iceland Arena and Meadowvale 4 Rinks, which have four pads apiece.

LaForme was not anticipating being as busy as he has been. His phone has been ringing constantly from people asking questions about things to do and see in Mississauga and Toronto, the country's largest city which is about 20 minutes away.

"They all want to see as much as they can," LaForme said of those individuals who will be travelling to this part of southern Ontario, perhaps for the first time. "For some people this might be the one and only time they ever come here."

As in previous years, tournament participants are anxiously anticipating the event.

"Probably about 80 per cent of them play some sort of organized hockey," LaForme said. "Some of them though just play pond hockey. And for a lot of them this tournament is the highlight of the year."

The 2013 tourney will feature 10 divisions, six male and four female. The boys' divisions are for those at the tyke, novice, atom, peewee, bantam and midget groupings. Girls will compete in atom, peewee, bantam and midget divisions.

The host Six Nations association will be represented by 12 teams. Half of those entrants will be in the boys' atom and peewee categories as Six Nations will have three clubs in both of these groupings.

Six Nations will also have two boys' squads participating in the bantam division and one each in the tyke and midget categories.

Six Nations will also have two girls' teams taking part. They will be in the atom and bantam divisions.



[ entertainment ]

# Chocolate Woman a creation of the transformational spirit

By Barb Nahwegahbow  
Windspeaker Contributor

TORONTO

Writing and performing in *Chocolate Woman Dreams the Milky Way* was a journey of discovery for Monique Mojica, actor and playwright. Mojica is descended from the Guna people of Panama and the Rappahannock of Virginia and currently lives in Toronto. She performs in the play together with her mother, Gloria Miguel, a founding member of New York's Spiderwoman Theatre.

*Chocolate Woman* is a story of reclamation and transformation. When asked what inspired and motivated her to write the story, Mojica said, "I got tired of the victim narrative. I've got so much grief, I got so good at being entertaining with my grief, but I was bored. So I asked myself, what would my stories be like if I started from a place of what I am connected to, of what is still whole. What have I got that isn't broken?"

Her question was answered when *Chocolate Woman—Buna Siagua*—a deity of the Guna came to her. "She's the spirit in cacao and the most sacred medicine we have," Mojica said. The next deity that appeared was *Morningstar Woman*, and Mojica only learned while she was

writing the play that her grandfather had named her for the *Morningstar*.

"The other part of the inspiration," she said, "was that I was in a really dark place, a time of crisis in my life." She recalls phoning a close friend in the early hours of the morning and telling her, "I feel like I'm falling and there's nothing there beneath me and it's terrifying."

Her friend gently suggested she go ahead and fall because when *Sky Woman* landed, there was transformation. That led her to explore other influences in her life, and *Alice* falling down the rabbit hole also appears in the play.

The story has no plot but Mojica seems to take us by the hand and we feel privileged to accompany her on her journey, trusting she will not lead us astray and that all will be right in the end. The play is magical, whimsical and complex with many layers. Mojica delivers a solid performance—emotional, athletic and believable. One of the props she uses with amazing vigour and nimbleness is a hammock that hangs centre stage.

Mojica said she wanted to write and perform a piece that was not rooted in Euro ways of telling a story. She wrote the play in pictographs on long sheets of banner paper, a form that came

to her and that is used by Guna medicine chant people to notate the healing chants.

"I really wanted to root the performance, a story of victory and transformation that was told from an Indigenous perception, and not only the content, but the structure and the form of how our stories are told."

Gloria Miguel, Mojica's mother, plays a wise woman sitting behind a screen telling the old stories. She's just right for this role, her years of experience and accumulated wisdom coming through in her words.

"This play was a decolonizing process," said Mojica, prompting her 80-some-year-old mother to state, "I never realized how colonized I was! When I grew up, I was a victim but I wasn't aware it was wrong to be treated that way. I just lived that way feeling most of the time, 'I'm dumb, I'm no good, I'm a piece of shit.'"

This play is the hardest thing she's ever done, she said. She studied theatre in college but, "I've got to forget all that and go into a different place. It's very, very hard but I love it. It's great that my daughter came out thinking this way, something I'm so proud of, but I wonder, where the hell did it come from?"

*Chocolate Woman* was presented by Native Earth at their Aki Studio Theatre in Toronto from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3.

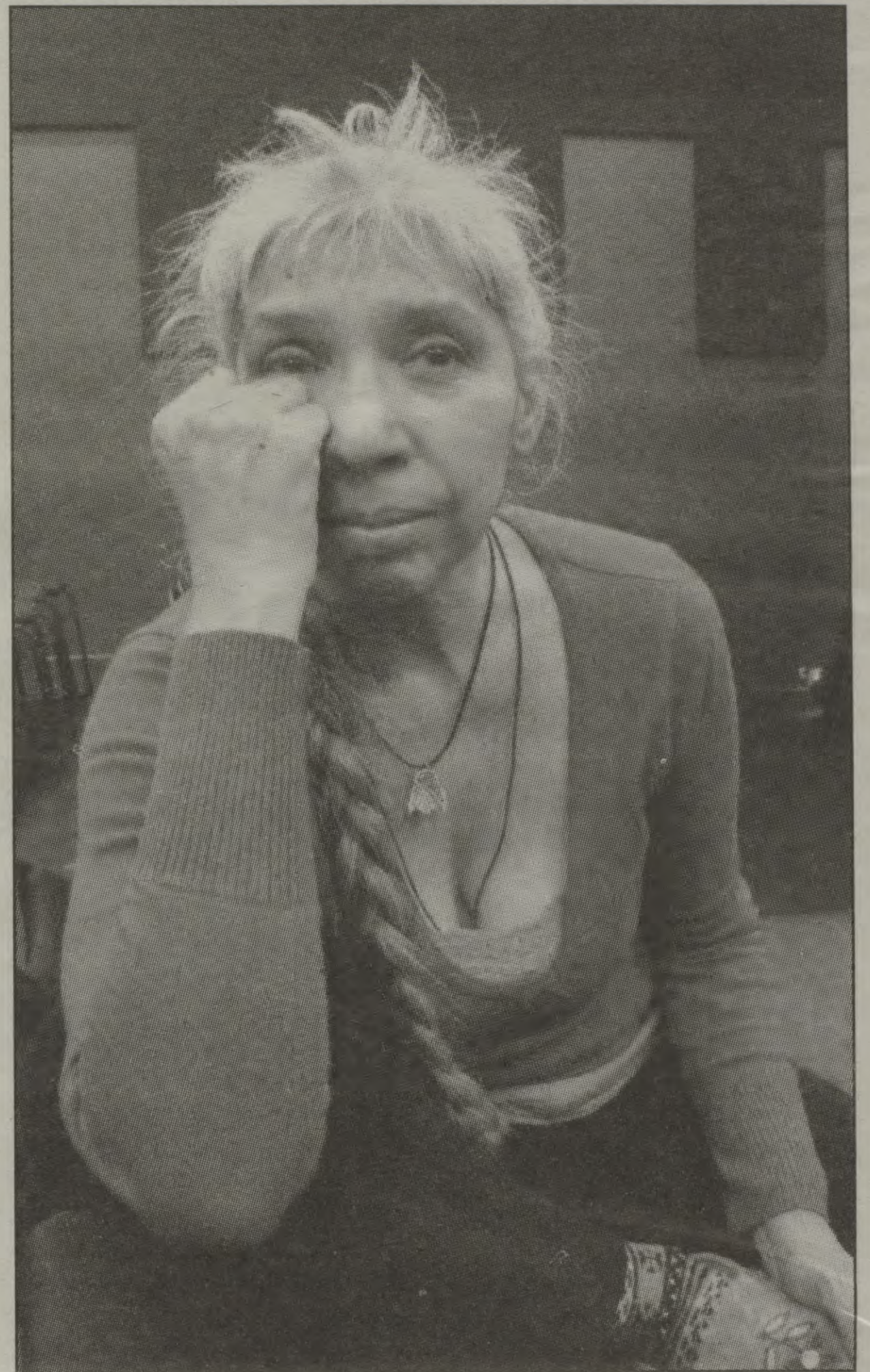


PHOTO: BARB NAHWEGAHBOW

Actor and playwright Monique Mojica in Toronto

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## 'Heartbreaking' case of continued abuse, says minister

By Cara McKenna  
Windspeaker Contributor

### VICTORIA

The Ministry for Children and Family Development failed in its dealings with an 11-year-old Aboriginal boy with complex care and rage issues, reads a report released Feb. 7 by B.C. Children's Representative Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafonde about a taser incident in the province's north.

The report, entitled "Who Protected Him? How B.C.'s Child Welfare System Failed One Of Its Most Vulnerable Children" is a result of an in-depth investigation into what Turpel-Lafonde calls a "disturbing case" of a boy who has suffered a lifetime of abuse and neglect.

In 2011, the boy gathered media attention when he was tasered by an RCMP officer in Prince George, but Turpel-Lafonde told reporters at a Victoria press conference the taser incident was the least of the abuses suffered by the boy.

"The sad reality of this report is that the taser by the police

of this boy at 11 years old is probably one of the least traumatic things that happened to him when I look at the 22 critical incidents reported to my office, including nine since the taser," she said.

"The Ministry of Children and Family Development did not follow basic child welfare practice, in this child's case virtually since the day he was born."

According to the report, the boy suffered abuse and neglect for two years in his parental home.

When the ministry removed him, they placed him in a foster home where he experienced further abuse and neglect.

When he was finally moved to a foster home that supported his special needs, the ministry failed to provide support to keep him in this home, returning the boy to his abusive mother for less than a year before being moved nine more times to date.

The boy was also locked in a "safe room" where he was isolated when he became aggressive.

"The ministry also failed to fully explore a promising

adoption opportunity with an Aboriginal family that might have given the child a chance for a richer life," reads the report.

"There is no doubt that the child who is the subject of this report presents behavioural issues that are extremely challenging for caregivers. But this does not excuse the ministry from its duty to provide care and nurturing for this child and others like him. The ministry's core business is to care for B.C.'s most vulnerable children. Its responsibility is to find ways to do so that further the child's development and protect him from harm."

Turpel-Lafonde said she is not happy with the boy's current circumstances, although, for the boy's protection, couldn't elaborate.

Stephanie Cadieux, the minister of children and family development, told the media that she was disappointed and heartbroken by the report.

"We are accepting all the recommendations in this report," said Cadieux.

"I am heartbroken that the system failed this child, and I am committed to fixing it."

## Senators just wanted some sober second thought on C-27

(Continued from page 25.)

"On a point of principle and as a sign of support for the First Nations we walked out because we were not happy with the minister's point of view. It seemed as if nothing had changed in (Duncan)," said Sibbeston.

A week later, Sibbeston asked his Senate colleagues to table further discussion on the bill for a few weeks until legal advice had been received. Issues of Bill C-27's legalities were raised by Sawridge First Nations Chief Roland Twinn, who appeared before the Senate's Aboriginal committee on Feb. 13.

"Is there a change, is there a spirit of openness because of all the activities of Idle No More? ... I think if we can show that, that will help a lot and I think persuade First Nations in our

country that at least maybe the government doesn't (listen) but the Senate is a place of sober second thought. That we can provide that and give them some comfort that there is a new spirit of change and that we're willing to take the time. So it's with that - it's nothing more than that - so if we can defer the bill for a few weeks on that basis - to have that examination," said Sibbeston.

Dyck, who serves as the committee's deputy chair and is a member of the Gordon First Nation, supported Sibbeston's motion noting that a recent media report indicated that bills passed at the House of Commons level were not vetted for Constitutional compatibility. She also said that receiving legal advice now would prevent court

challenges in the future.

"Today we have received some very interesting and valuable information from our witness. But at some point, why do we have to force (the First Nations) to go to court in order to make those decisions?" asked Dyck.

Liberal Senator Jim Munson, who is not Aboriginal, also voted in favour of tabling further discussion on the bill.

Lovelace-Nicholas, who was sick, missed the Feb. 13 session. However, the outcome of the motion, although disappointing, was not a surprise.

"There's more Conservatives than Liberal senators. They have majority so actually whatever we say or what we do, I don't think it matters because they're going to pass (Bill C-27) anyway," she said.



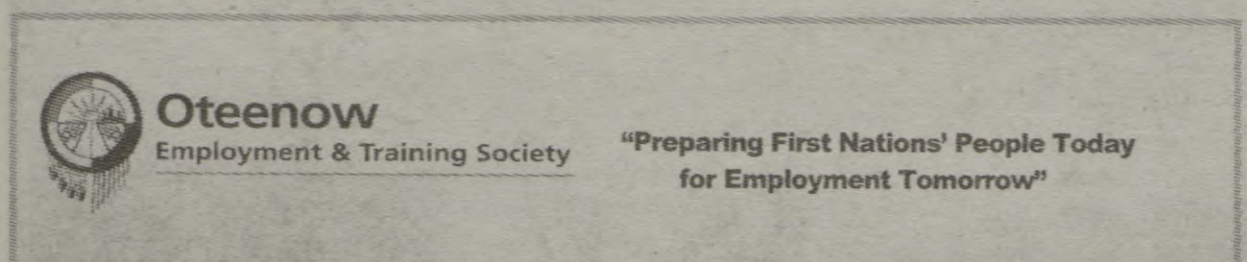
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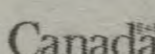


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# [ footprints ] Mishi Donovan Resilient singer was passionate about healing

By Dianne Meili

Juno award-winning singer, songwriter and actress Mishi Donovan searched for family all her life and, ironically, was laid to rest on Feb. 18, Family Day in Alberta.

Self-described as Chippewa Cree, with ties to the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, Mishi was placed into foster care and never re-united with her biological parents. A likely victim of the Sixties Scoop—the decade when social workers routinely removed children from their families believing they would be better off raised in non-Aboriginal families—she struggled with her identity, finding it difficult to adjust to life on her own without knowledge of her past, culture and traditions.

“She didn’t speak much of her early life at all, and I know she was always looking for family,” said Denise Lambert. The two women met in 1985 while working at Native Counselling Services in Edmonton where Donovan acted as a court worker.

“After repeatedly being asked if we were sisters, we finally decided we might as well adopt each other,” Lambert explained.

Early in the relationship, Mishi became involved with the development of the Silver Sage Centre at Sandy Beach, west of Edmonton. She began to participate in talking circles, wellness workshops and ceremonies held there.

Music opened the door for Mishi’s healing.

“She was already playing guitar and writing lyrics when I met her so I’m not sure if she taught herself or took formal music training,” said Lambert. “She definitely had the ability to make music, and everyone encouraged her to keep working at it.”

Donovan’s music described much of her life experience, including childhood abuse, violent relationships and tragedy. Leaving the foster care system when she was 15, she moved into Edmonton, eventually got married and changed her name from Michelle Harris to Mishi Donovan. Finally, in her twenties, she decided to deal with the demons that were preventing her from living a healthy, peaceful

life.

With the help of elders and others, Donovan began her healing journey. When it was difficult to speak of the trauma and racism she had faced, she turned her thoughts and feelings into songs. With her music, she spoke out against spousal abuse and family violence. The songs she wrote helped her to cry and feel once again.

Close friend and adopted brother Ken Ward, who struggled with his own issues of sexual abuse and drug use—and who developed AIDS in 1989—remembered that Donovan was always inviting him out to the Silver Sage Centre at the lake, “to spend time in the trees, and to hear the latest song she had written.”

One day she played him a song she called The Chosen One.

“I listened to the lyrics and I liked the song but I didn’t have a clue it was about me,” Ward recalled. Donovan was acknowledging the courage Ward exhibited as the first Aboriginal person in Canada to go public with his HIV status, as well as his dedication to advocate for AIDS sufferers and create awareness about the disease. In the liner notes of her second CD entitled The Spirit Within, Donovan credits Ward with teaching her about the meaning of acceptance and forgiveness, and inspiring her to have the courage to write songs that revealed her own experience of domestic violence and abuse.

Donovan sang The Chosen One in The Long Walk, a National Film Board documentary about Ward’s life.

“Her songs were about empowerment. She used her music as a form of activism, urging us to see her as an Aboriginal woman. She wanted us to heal ourselves and change abusive behaviour to make this world a better place.”

Donovan’s recording career began in the spring of 1993, when Manitoba-based Sunshine Records CEO Ness Michael solicited new artists in an international talent search contest. Upon receiving Donovan’s rough home

recording, Michael recognized the uniqueness of her vocals and immediately offered her a recording contract. She ventured to Winnipeg and completed her first album entitled Spirit in Flight; gaining her international recognition and multiple invitations to festivals and conferences.

In 1995 she entered the acting world, preparing for screen tests after being approached by directors and agents for film projects. She played a support role in the syndicated TV series Lonesome Dove in Calgary, and acted in Edmonton ITV programs and in live theatre projects.

When Sunshine Records released her second full-length album The Spirit Within, several singles received heavy radio rotation. She accepted a Juno Award for it on March 22, 1998 when it was named Best Music of Aboriginal Canada Recording.

Following that career coup, Donovan experienced a lower profile. A facebook message she posted in October 2012 asked for other sufferers of Dystonia to contact her. Dystonia causes sustained muscle contractions that lead to twisting of limbs and abnormal postures.

The cause of her death is not known.

Born in July 1964, she was 48 years old. She gave life to four daughters—Vanessa, Shyanne, Ember and Mekwun, and one son, Falcon.

“Mishi wasn’t as big as Buffy Sainte-Marie, but there are a lot of people who liked her music and the spiritual focus she had,” said Ward. “So many people related to her songs, about the heartbreaks in life and how we can heal from them.”

“She was a strong woman, but gentle. I’m looking for funding to do a half-hour documentary on her life. I’ll bring her daughters together and it’ll be called Journey Home. I’m not sure where the funding will come from right now, but I’ll find it. If we’re talking Idle No More, Mishi was an original, passionate activist for Aboriginal recognition, in all of her musical expression.”

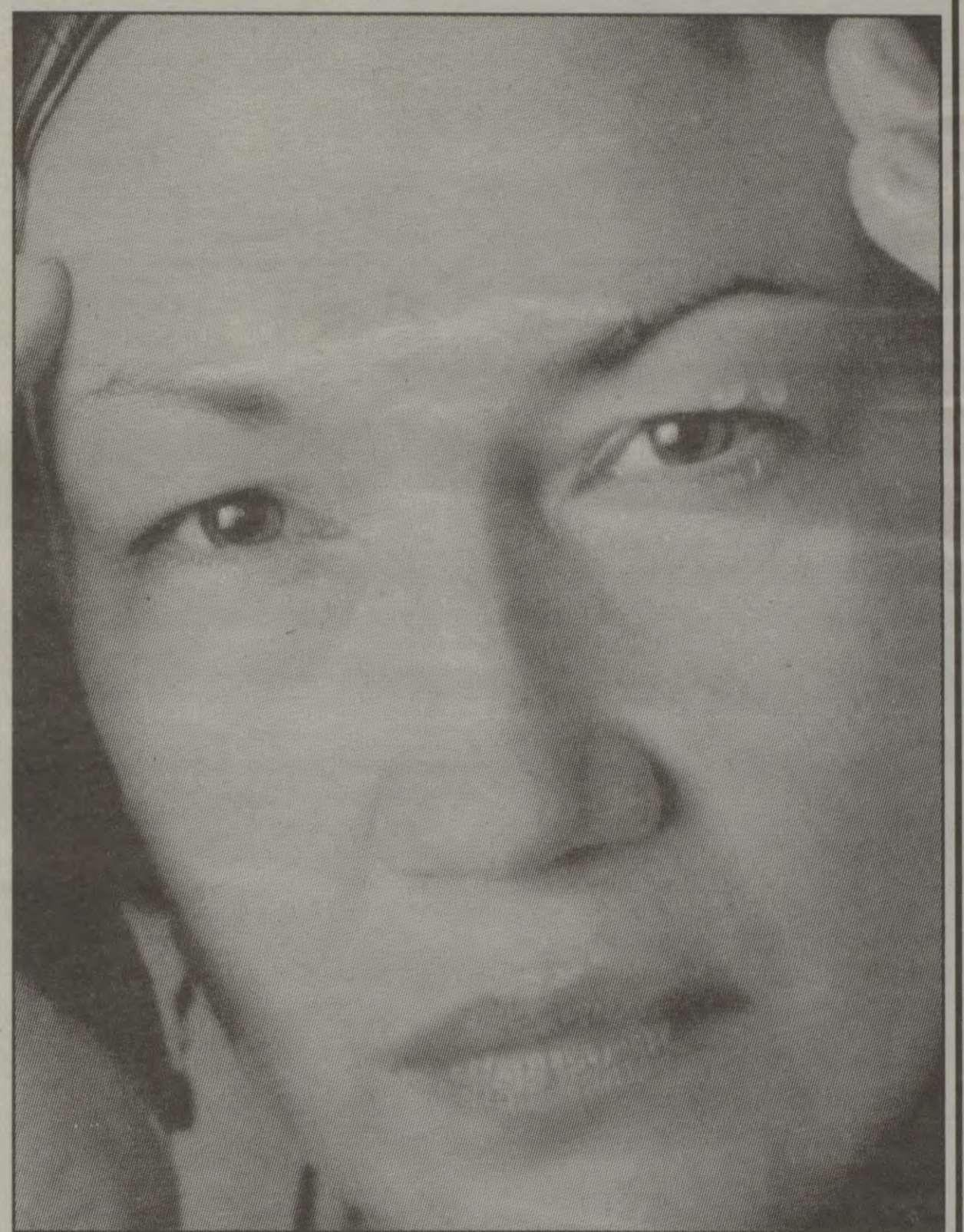


PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Mishi Donovan



PHOTO: FILE 1998

Mishi Donovan

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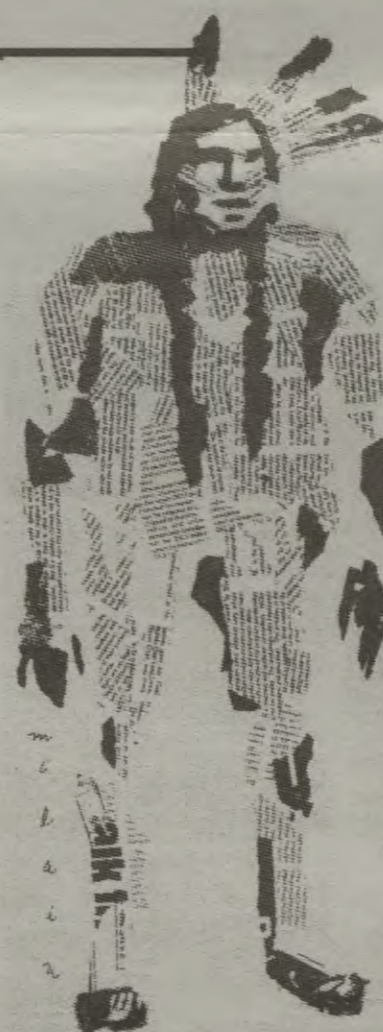
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