

**UNION
OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
INDIAN CHIEFS**



**Aboriginal Rights
Position
Paper**

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

means that we as Indian people have the right within the framework of the Canadian Constitution, to govern through our own unique forms of Indian Governments (Band Councils) an expanded version of our Indian reserve lands that has an adequate amount of associated resources and is large enough to provide for all the essential needs of all our people who have been defined as our citizens or members of our Indian Government

The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs entered its Eleventh Annual Assembly on October 15, 1979, in the essence of optimism and energy. This marked the year the collective Spirit of the Indian people of British Columbia was revived and strengthened.

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS POSITION

WHEREAS the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs was established to oppose the White Paper Termination Policy, and;

WHEREAS this opposition was to be in the form of the development of an Aboriginal Rights Position and Land Claims Position for the Indian Governments of British Columbia, and;

WHEREAS an Aboriginal Rights Position Paper has been developed and endorsed in principle in two (2) previous Annual Assemblies, and;

WHEREAS it has been introduced at this 11th Annual Assembly of Chiefs for third and final endorsement;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Aboriginal Rights Position paper as presented by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs' Indian Government Portfolio be given final endorsement by this Assembly of Chiefs, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it form the basis for our position in all discussions relating to land Claims, Aboriginal Rights, the British North America Act and the Indian Act, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Indian Governments continue the process of implementing the Five (5) Articles and the Twenty-Four (24) Jurisdictional Areas, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs' Indian Government Portfolio explore and define specific areas which can be implemented through our Indian Governments and that the Portfolio continue toward strengthening our Indian Governments throughout the province.

TWENTY-FOUR (24) AREAS OF INDIAN JURISDICTION	A
THE NATIONAL INDIAN GOAL (B.N.A. ACT STRUCTURE).....	B
INDIAN GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO.....	C
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS.....	D
OUR PEOPLE SPEAK.....	E



INTRODUCTION

It is our undeniable responsibility as leaders to clearly say what we have been directed by our Indian Governments to state which is contained within these pages.

Traditionally, as aboriginal people, we had uncontested, supreme and absolute power over our territories, our resources and our lives. We had the right to govern, to make laws and enforce laws, to decide citizenship, to wage war or make peace and to manage our lands, resources and institutions. We had our own political, legal, social and economic systems.

The power to govern rests with the people and, like our aboriginal rights, it comes from within the people and cannot be taken away.

Our Aboriginal Rights Position Paper represents the foundation upon which we, the Indian people of British Columbia, will negotiate a better relationship within Canada. It is presented on behalf of our people in the spirit of optimism, dignity, co-operation and strength. The goals of our people from our past through the present, to those yet unborn provide the framework through which we will possess the tools necessary to further develop and strengthen our Indian identity within Canada. An effective implementation of our position will resolve the current political, economic, educational and social problems facing our people. It will mean that, for the first time, Indian people will be able to share in the wealth of Canada and at the same time other Canadians will have the opportunity to enjoy the full benefits of our rich heritage.

Since 1969, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs has been involved in extensive research and consultation with Indian people throughout the province in relation to the totality of Aboriginal Rights. We have found through this work that our people have no desire, under any circumstances to see our Aboriginal Rights extinguished. Our people have consistently said that our Aboriginal Rights cannot be bought, sold, traded or extinguished by any government. Our responsibilities and our right to be who we are can never be relinquished.

The foundation of our position is:

- a) recognition that we are the original people of this land,
- b) recognition that we have the right to choose and determine the type of authority we wish to exercise through our Indian Governments,
- c) the expansion of our Reserve Lands,
- d) the expansion of our Indian resources including finances based on needs as identified by our people,
- e) the expansion of the jurisdiction and authority of our Indian Governments (Band Councils).

Aboriginal Rights must be recognized, expanded and entrenched within the British North America Act.

Indian people have a strong role to play in strengthening the unity of Canada. We have every reason and right to bear our responsibility in this regard. We are confident that the foundation we build today is a solid one and that the final result of true negotiations will mean a stronger Canada.

THE EAGLE IS A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT,
EACH FEATHER MUST UNDERSTAND ITS CONNECTION TO THE WING
TO GIVE THE EAGLE A POWERFUL FLIGHT....

**THE INDIAN CHIEFS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
TAKING ALL THE FOREGOING INTO CONSIDERATION,
DO HEREBY PROCLAIM AS OUR ABORIGINAL RIGHTS POSITION THAT:**

Article I

We are the original people of this land and have the absolute right to self-determination through our own unique forms of Indian Governments (Band Councils).

Article II

Our Aboriginal Rights to self-determination, through our own unique forms of Indian Governments are to be confirmed, strengthened and expanded, through the British North America Act.

Article III

Our Indian Reserve lands are to be expanded to a size that is large enough to provide for the essential needs of all our people.

Article IV

Adequate amounts of lands, waters, forestry, minerals, oils, gas, wildlife, fish and financial resources are to be made available to our Indian Governments on a continuing basis and in sufficient quantities to ensure socio-economic self-determination for the peace, order and just government of Indian people.

Article V

Our Indian Governments or Legislatures are to have exclusive jurisdiction to make laws in relation to matters coming within classes of subjects, hereinafter referred to, without limiting the scope of the possible subjects to be under the jurisdiction and authority of our Indian Governments (Band Councils), including;

Section 1

The development of a constitution and the amendment, from time to time, of the constitutions of our Indian Governments.

Section 2

The establishment and maintenance of regulations pertaining to who shall be a citizen or member of our Bands under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 3

The management of all Indian reserve lands, including all other Indian lands or Indian resource areas that will, from time to time, be established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 4

All waterways and bodies of water associated or defined as being associated with our Indian reserve lands, including any form of water rights and foreshore rights that, from time to time, will be under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 5

All air space above all Indian reserve lands, bodies of water and Indian resource areas established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 6

All forests that are located on Indian reserve lands including all other Indian forest resource reserves that will, from time to time, be established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 7

All mineral resources located under and within boundaries of all those lands, waters and resource areas established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 8

All oil and gas resources located within the boundaries of our Indian reserve lands and within any additional lands or waters that, from time to time, may be negotiated and agreed to be the federal, provincial and Indian Governments as being under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 9

The conservation management of all migratory birds that pass through Indian reserve lands, including those Indian migratory bird sanctuary reserves that will, from time to time, be negotiated and established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 10

All the wildlife resources contained within Indian reserve lands and all other Indian wildlife resource areas that will be negotiated and agreed to be federal, provincial and Indian Governments as being under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 11

All fish resources contained within the waterways and bodies of water that are defined as Indian Fisheries by Indian Governments.

Section 12

The conservation of all lands, waters and resources that have been established under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 13

The productive management of the environment affecting all lands, waters and resource areas that may be negotiated and agreed to by federal, provincial and Indian Governments as being under the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 14

The establishment and management of the economy through the development, implementation and enforcement of regulations, on such matters as trade, commerce, and the formation of companies within the framework of Indian Government objectives.

Section 15

All areas of Indian education as defined by the authority and jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 16

The maintenance of social order within the jurisdictional objectives of Indian Governments.

Section 17

All matters pertaining to the proper health, welfare and care of our people as defined by Indian Government objectives.

Section 18

The solemnization and dissolution of marriage within the institutions of traditional Indian religions.

Section 19

The safeguarding of all Indian sacred places. The protection of our right to practice our religions, cultures and languages.

Section 20

The development of communication systems within the framework of Indian Government objectives.

Section 21

All revenues accruing within the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 22

The administration of justice, including the constitution, maintenance and organization of Indian Governments courts.

Section 23

The imposition of penalties for the violation of any laws of the Indian Governments in relation to any matter coming within the jurisdiction of Indian Governments.

Section 24

All matters of local or private nature on Indian reserve lands, including other lands, waters and resource areas that will, from time to time, be established within Indian Government jurisdictional boundaries.

THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INDIAN GOAL BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

SECTION 91

1. Charges of Constitution of Canada
2. Regulation of Trade & Commerce
3. Raising of Money
4. Borrowing of Money
5. Postal Service
6. Census & Statistics
7. Military
8. Civil Servants salaries
9. Beacons, Buys, Lighthouses
10. Navigation & Shipping
11. Quarantine & Hospitals
12. Coastal & Inland Fisheries
13. Ferries
14. Currency & Coinage
15. Banking
16. Savings Banks
17. Weights & Measures
18. Bills of Exchange & Notes
19. Interest
20. Legal Tender
21. Bankruptcy & Insolvency
22. Patents of Invention & Discovery
23. Copyrights
24. INDIANS AND LANDS RESERVED FOR THE INDIANS
25. Naturalization & Aliens
26. Marriage & Divorce
27. Criminal Law
28. Penitentiaries

INDIAN GOVERNMENT

Our Indian Governments or Legislatures are to have exclusive jurisdiction to make laws in relation to matters coming within classes of subjects, hereafter referred to, without limiting the scope of the powers of the Indian Governments in relation to the subjects to be under Indian control. Some of the areas to be under the jurisdiction and authority of our Indian Governments (Band Councils) include:

1. Band Constitutions
2. Citizenship
3. Land
4. Water
5. Air
6. Forestry
7. Minerals
8. Oil & Gas
9. Migratory Birds
10. Wildlife
11. Fisheries
12. Conservation
13. Environment
14. Economic Development
15. Education
16. Social Development
17. Health & Welfare
18. Marriage
19. Cultural Development
20. Communications
21. Revenues
22. Justice
23. Indian Law Enforcement
24. Local & Private Matters

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

SECTION 92

1. Amendments to Constitution
2. Direct Taxation
3. Borrowing Money
4. Provincial officers & offices
5. Management & sale of public lands
6. Prisons
7. Hospitals
8. MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE PROVINCE
9. Licensing of Shops, Saloons, Taverns
10. Local Works & Undertakings
11. Incorporations of Companies
12. Marriage
13. Property & Civil Rights
14. Administration of Justice
15. Imposition of Punishment
16. Local or Private Matters

INDIAN ACT

DIA CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENTS

MUNICIPAL ACT

DIA'S FUTURE PLAN TO CHANGE
INDIAN BANDS INTO
PROVINCIAL MUNICIPALITIES

B

INDIAN GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO

In presenting our Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, we are re-affirming our right to be here and the responsibilities given to all nations of Indians on this continent. These rights and responsibilities held us together as nations of people for thousands of years and we celebrate our survival and the beauty of our land. We now share our land with others and both our people and the European-Canadian people can draw strength from each other. We seek the unity and strength of Canada in the same way that we seek the unity and strength of our people.

The relationship which exists between Indian nations and the Governments of Canada has never been clearly understood. We have always taken for granted that Indian institutions and European institutions would co-exist in Canada. Many of the European colonial leaders held a similar conviction. They sought to be known and to be respected by the heads of our nations. They asked our leaders to make alliances and agreements. They did not question the authority of our leaders to speak on behalf of our people, just as our leaders did not question the authority of the colonial leaders.

At the same time as open recognition was being given to Indian governments and Indian cultures there were other colonial figures who refused to recognize Indian governments. They advocated the destruction not only of Indian governments and Indian cultures, but of Indian people themselves.

These two opposite views have continued to co-exist in Canada and British Columbia. However there are signs that recognition of and respect for Indian people, their cultures and their governments has been growing. The time is now right for a clarification of the status of Indian governments within Canada and within British Columbia.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES

Two principles are basic to the position of the Indian people of British Columbia. The first is the principle of self-determination of peoples. This is a principle of International law, restated most recently in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Canada has signed both Covenants. Both provide as their first article that:

All peoples have the right to self-determination.
By virtue of that right they freely determine their
political status and freely pursue their economic,
social and cultural development.

The principle of the self-determination of peoples is a basic political and legal concept. To be effective it must exist with a second principle, that of the equality of peoples. For self-determination to have meaning, there must be a basic respect between political communities.

The British North America Act of 1867 sets Indian nations apart, recognizing their uniqueness within Canada. Canadian governments have undercut that fact by deliberately minimizing the significance of the constitutional provisions. Indian governments are treated as municipal governments. Our communities are unique in coming under federal jurisdiction, yet they have not been given full recognition as a distinct order of government within Canada. This can change. Canada can fulfill the promise of the British North America Act and take a leading role internationally in applying the principles of self-determination and equality of indigenous people.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Our right of self-determination is a right which we have not and will not surrender. The Canadian government will have to accept that Indian people are a people who will not disappear.

In our quest for self-determination, we should not be called separatists. The tensions between the English and the French have led governments to refuse to even listen to our position. We are committed to a strengthening of Canada for we have more at stake in this country than anyone else.

MODELS OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Serious discussion on models of self-determination has begun in Canada. There has been considerable interest in the Inuit's achievement of home-rule in Greenland. The Inuit now have an elected parliament and an increasing jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Island.

Greenland remains a part of Denmark but as a politically distinct part. For example, Greenland may withdraw from the European common market though Denmark may remain a member.

The people of Canada have shown interest in a model of self-determination. For example:

- the "devolution" proposals of the United Kingdom which offered Scotland and Wales regional parliaments and a measure of home-rule;
- the Spanish constitution of 1978 in which home-rule has become possible for a number of regions of Spain; and,
- the home-rule parliaments established in Catalonia and the Basque region.

Another example is the special status of Micronesia in relation to the United States.

While non-Indians have been slow to accept our ideas, there has been a dramatic change in the last few years. Judge Thomas Berger, in the Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry in 1977, discussed the concept of Indian self-determination and called for a "social contract" between the Indian people and the political institutions of Canada. Since then the need for special constitutional provisions on Indian rights has been recognized by the Canadian Bar Association in their report "Towards a New Canada" by the Pepin-Robarts Task Force on National unity; by the Quebec Government's White Paper "Quebec-Canada: A New Deal" and by the Quebec Liberal Party Proposal "A New Canadian Federation." In February 1979, the Prime Minister and the provincial premiers agreed that Indian people had to be considered in the process of constitutional change. They agreed to add a new item to their agenda, "Canada's Native Peoples and the Constitution." On September 28, 1979, Prime Minister Clark agreed that the National Indian Brotherhood would have a full, equal and on-going role in the federal-provincial discussions on that agenda item.

These events signal a new willingness of Canadians to discuss and resolve the basic questions of Indian political rights.

THE POSITION OF THE INDIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

To the Indian people of British Columbia, the questions of the constitution, the Indian Act and Land Claims are simply different parts of Aboriginal Rights. They can be resolved by full recognition of Indian Government. That recognition requires changes to the existing order which we will now describe.

1. THE CONSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 91 (24) of the British North America Act of 1867 gave the Parliament of Canada legislative jurisdiction over "Indians and Lands reserved for the Indians." The Indian Act, which was enacted under the authority of Section 91 (24), is treated by Canadian law as the source of authority for Indian band councils. Indian governments existed for thousands of years before Europeans came to Canada. Indian people can never accept the notion that the authority of their governments is a grant from those who came from elsewhere. The proper way to establish Indian relations to the rest of Canada is not by the Indian Act but by a basic political agreement, a covenant or social contract. The use of a basic agreement will respect the principle of the equality of peoples. The agreement will be recognized as part of the constitution of Canada. As an agreement it cannot be changed without the consent of both sides. As part of the Constitution both sides will be compelled, by law, to respect its terms.

The agreement will describe the place of Indian governments within Canadian federalism. It will define Indian rights to renewable resources - rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather - on lands outside the limits of Indian governments. It will also deal with Jay Treaty Rights, resource sharing, taxation, the paramountcy of Indian Government laws over provincial legislation and Indian representation in the institutions of the central government.

2. THE POWERS OF INDIAN GOVERNMENTS

The agreement will entrench Indian governments into the Constitution and create a legislative body that may be called the House of Indian Governments. Band governments will be strengthened and will be the basic constituent units of the Indian governments. Indian people will directly elect their representatives to the new governmental body and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs will be dissolved.

The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs has defined the powers it feels are appropriate for Indian governments. They are set out in twenty-four points near the beginning of this document. It is clear that the powers of Indian governments will basically be similar to those of the provinces. In addition certain powers that are presently federal, such as powers in relation to fisheries, marriage and divorce, must be vested in Indian governments for the areas under the jurisdiction of those governments.

Indian governments will have the authority to draft Bills of Rights which will apply within their jurisdiction in the same way that certain provinces have their own Bill of Rights. Any constitutional Bill of Rights will apply to Indian governments subject to the terms of the basic agreement establishing Indian governments and defining their powers.

3. REPRESENTATION TO THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The agreement, as part of the constitution of Canada, will define the structure and the powers of Indian government and its relationship to other governments in Canada. Indian government will be a recognized order of government parallel to provincial government. The federal government will have jurisdiction over matters outside the jurisdiction of Indian governments (and outside the jurisdiction of provincial governments).

Relations between Indian governments and provincial governments will be handled by mutual agreement (as relations between provinces are currently handled). Citizens within the jurisdiction of either an Indian government or a provincial government will elect members to the federal parliament and be represented in other institutions of the central government which have a regional structure.

At present, provincial boundaries are respected in the boundaries for constituencies for members of the federal House of Commons. No federal constituency in Canada has ever crossed the boundaries of a province or territory. The Senate, as well, reflects provincial boundaries, though in a different way. There are four regional divisions in Canada, each defined in terms of one or more province. A certain number of Senators are appointed for each division. At present the so-called "Indian seat" in the Senate must come within one of the four regional divisions. Other institutions of the central government have regional representation as well, either as a result of legislation or practice.

Recognition of Indian governments as a distinct order of government in Canada will mean the creation of federal constituencies which group together Indian government areas in various regions of Canada. There will be "Indian seats" but in exactly the same way that there are "British Columbia seats" in Parliament. This will not be a system of special representation, as in New Zealand where there is a racial or ethnic franchise. It will be the direct result of the recognition of Indian governments as equal to provincial governments within Canadian federalism.

4. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Stable and workable financial arrangements are of fundamental importance. Historically Europeans confiscated Indian resources with little or no compensation, leaving an inadequate land and resource base for the Indian communities. Moreover, the federal government uses funding as a method to control Indian communities. The existing approach locks Indian communities into a permanent welfare system which does not lead to any positive solutions. The controversy over the Local Government Guidelines of 1975 is being re-enacted in 1980 with the Local Services Agreements. These controversies will continue endlessly unless basic changes are made in the financial arrangements which affect Indian communities. It is only when structures of dependence and welfare are removed that equality and self-determination can be achieved. Four arrangements are essential to bring about the desired change.

Firstly, there must be an increased land and resource base for Indian communities. Land and resource issues have never been resolved in British Columbia, a fact acknowledged by the federal government in their statement on Aboriginal Title Claims in 1973.

Secondly, Indian governments, like provincial governments must qualify for equalization payments. We agree with the philosophy that there should be equal standards of public services in all parts of the country. The payments are unconditional. The provinces are free to choose their own priorities. This is the kind of block, predictable funding that Band governments have sought for their people. It is funding based on need, not short-term politics. For example, in the fiscal year 1979-80, Prince Edward Island received approximately seventy-six million dollars in equalization payments. It has a population of just over one hundred thousand people. For the Atlantic provinces, equalization payments have represented about 25% of their governmental revenues.

Thirdly, Indian governments must be the vehicles for the delivery of programs and services to Indian people presently funded by the federal government. There exists a large, costly, inefficient bureaucracy to deliver services and channel monies for Indian people. The Indian Affairs bureaucracy competes with Indian governments for authority and, inevitably, maintains the colonial character of Indian-government relations in Canada. The recognition of Indian governments will lead to the assumption of basic administrative and program responsibilities that are now the "white man's burden" of the Department of Indian Affairs. Administrative cost savings will be substantial and political responsibility for Indian programs will rest where it should, with Indian people.

Fourthly, Indian Governments must be the direct recipients of transfer payments, whether they are equalization, revenue sharing or program monies. These payments will be regular items in the budget of the federal government and will be paid directly to Indian governments. In other words, these transfers of funds will be handled in the same manner as transfers to provincial and territorial governments. The reporting and accounting will be defined by agreements to be negotiated between Indian governments and the federal government, and not by the Department of Indian Affairs or any other government department. This will establish maximum flexibility and will dramatically reduce the administrative costs involved.

We do not want a settlement of Aboriginal Rights which in any way reflect a policy of termination or a final case settlement as characterized in the James Bay and Alaska type of agreements. We want the recognition of Indian Governments on a continuing basis within Canadian federalism. Indian self-determination will free both Indian people and non-Indian people from structures of colonialism and dependence. It will pour meaningful content into the principles of self-determination as annunciated at the United Nations. Canada can then offer the International community an inspiring and realistic model upon which to build.

D

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

In order to implement Indian Government, we propose:

That a Ministerial Committee be established with a mandate to negotiate the implementation of the Indian Government manifesto, and;

That the structure of the Committee be comprised of three Ministers and three Indian representatives appointed by the Indian Governments. This Committee will have the ultimate responsibilities for recommending the final agreement to Parliament, and;

That the Ministerial Committee appoint an Arbitrator to overcome impasses. This person may be called in by either party to help resolve differences, and;

That the Ministerial Committee be established to sit for two (2) years.

SECRETARIAT

We propose that a Secretariat be appointed by the Ministerial Committee comprised by an equal number of representatives from the Indian Governments and the Federal Government and:

That the Secretariat be a working group to carry on the day to day negotiations underlying the implementation of the Indian Government Manifesto.

That the Secretariat, if necessary, call upon the services of the Arbitrator to settle any differences which may arise.

That the Secretariat have a separate office with funding available to hire support staff.

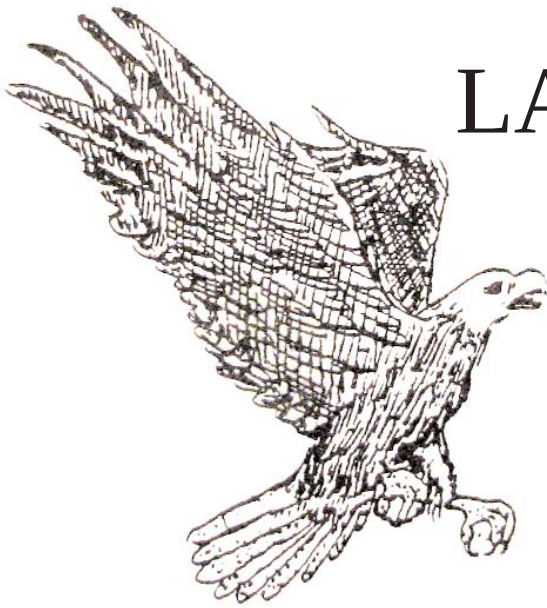
That the Secretariat be empowered to conduct inquiries under the Inquiries Act.

E

Our
People
Speak

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR PEOPLE SPEAK.....	1
SACRED CIRCLE OF LIFE.....	8
OUR CHILDREN	
OUR YOUNG PEOPLE	
OUR PARENTS	
OUR ELDERS	
THE HARMONY OF ALL LIFE.....	16
The Land and The Water	
The Fish	
The Animals	
The Plants	
THE LAWS OF OUR LIFE.....	27
Authority over Indian Religion	
Authority over Indian Education	
Authority over Indian Culture	
Authority over Indian Communications	
Authority over Indian Health	
Authority over Indian Land Management	
Authority over Indian Socio-Economic Development	
Authority over Indian Law	
Authority over Indian Government	



LAND CLAIMS IN B.C.

1763: Royal Proclamation, a statement of British Policy clearly recognizing Indian lands and rights. It has never been repealed and has the force of law in Canada.

1849: James Douglas of Hudson Bay Company and later governor, secures Indian land for white settlement by Treaties on Vancouver Island. However outrageous those treaties, they do represent formal recognition of aboriginal rights.

1850: The English start flooding in, clearing land for agriculture and threatening the salmon in their rush for gold. Reserves are set up.

1867: Section 109 of the British North America Act gives jurisdiction and ownership of land and natural resources to the provinces.

1871: Declaring ownership and control of the land, the non-Indians of B.C. join the confederation of Canada. For the next 20 years, there is a great push to destroy the Indian lifestyle.

1880: Start of our historical battle for our land claims. Individual tribes and local groups start making representations, petitions and start sending delegates to the provincial and Federal governments. Chiefs of the Lower Fraser and South Vancouver Island protest encroachment on Indian land.

1887: The Chiefs of Port Simpson and the Nass petition for return of their land and formal treaty guaranteeing their rights to those lands forever. "What we don't like about this government is their saying this: 'We will give you so much land.' How can they give it to us when it is our own land."

1890: Nishga land claim committee formally organized by Arthur Calder.

1889: Treaty 8 signed with the Beaver and Slavey Indians in the north east.

1906: Squamish delegation go to England with a petition.

1909: 20 tribes from southern B.C. send delegations to London.

1913: The "Nishga Petition" demanding a legal judgement on the land claim is formally adopted by Nishga Land commission.

1915/16: Nishga delegations to Ottawa to lobby.

1915/16: McKenna/McBride Commission and the cut off lands.

1915: Meeting at Spences' Bridge and

1916: Meeting on Mission reserve from the Allied Tribes of B.C. to present land claims directly to the Imperial Privy Council.

1919: "Statement of Allied Tribes of B.C. to the Government of B.C.," prepared by Peter Kelly, a Haida Minister, and incorporating for the first time all claims for Indian Tribes in the Province. This is also the first demand for action on related social and economic issues. It is also the first petition to both the Provincial and Federal Governments.

1920/24: Allied Tribes fight the Bill to make the McKenna/McBride Commission the final settlement for land claims in B.C. They are successful.

1926: The Allied Tribes, through Peter Kelly, Andrew Paull, Chief David Basil and Chief Chillihitza, present land claim positions to Parliament which sets up a Joint Committee to hold hearings and make recommendations.

1927: Joint Committee judges that land claims are not proven. They also make a recommendation, later to become law, that fund raising by Indian organizations for land claims become a criminal offense. They further recommend an annual Special Vote with \$100,000 for improvement for Indian life, to be administered by the Department of Indian Affairs. No leaders have ever accepted the B.C. Special Vote as payment for land title.

1931: The Native Brotherhood. Andrew Paull organizes protests from groups around fishing, land and social issues.

1942: Indian commercial fishermen have to pay federal income tax. Andrew Paull organizes protests from the south and joins the Native Brotherhood.

1943: Andrew Paull attends the meeting and is elected President of the Brotherhood of Canadian Tribes. This is to become the North American Indian Brotherhood.

While the Native Brotherhood and the North American Indian Brotherhood share many concerns, one difference keeps them apart. The Native Brotherhood seeks equal rights for Indians; the North American Indian Brotherhood argues that we have special rights for our own ways of life as aboriginal inhabitants of this country.

1946 to 1951: Peter Kelly and Andy Paull fight for and succeed in getting revisions to the Indian Act.

1949: B.C. Indians get the vote. Frank Calder elected to Provincial Legislature.

1950's: Question of Aboriginal land rights is heard more and more.

1955: Nishga Tribal Council formed to continue the work of the Nishga Land Committee.

1959: Joint Parliamentary committee convened to hear question on committee "So long as the title question is not dealt with, every Indian in B.C. feels that he is being tricked and will never be satisfied." He died soon after. George Manuel and William Walkem of the Native Rights Committee continued to press the question of Indian Land title in B.C.

1960: Land Claims is a major issue for Indians in B.C.

1963: Regina vs. White and Bob. Clifford White and David Bob of Nanaimo are charged for hunting deer out of season and their defense is based on Aboriginal rights, that they were hunting on traditional tribal territory. The White and Bob case becomes the land claims rallying point. South Vancouver Tribal Federations organized by Wilson Bob, Dave Elliot, Fred Miller, Phillip Paul and Mike Underwood and together with the Native Brotherhood they sponsor the case.

December, 1964: White and Bob decision. Supreme court upholds the treaties but avoids the question of land title. Federal government reimburses all costs of this court case and promises to open negotiations on B.C. land claims, provided one group represents 75% of the B.C. Indians. Several organizations are formed to meet this requirement but none last.

1969: Nishga Tribal Council decides to press its claim independently in the case of Calder (et al) vs. the Attorney General of B.C.

1969: (two months later) Liberal government issues White paper on Indian Affairs reversing their stand on Indian Land Claims and refusing to recognize aboriginal land title as valid.

1969: Formation of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs unites most of the leaders of the previous organizations to fight this stand and to work towards a settlement of the land claim. Under great pressure and protest from Indian people and organizations all over Canada, the Federal Government agrees to give funds to groups working for land claims settlements.

1969: N.D.P. position paper in B.C. recognizes that Indian title has never been extinguished and has to be negotiated.

1972: U.B.C.I.C. leaders present "Claim Based on Native Title" in Ottawa.

1973: Supreme Court of Canada decisions

on the Calder Land Case. Three justices rule that the Nishgas have aboriginal rights to 1,000 square miles of the Nass Valley. 3 justices say no, and the 7th justice gives judgement on the case and not the issue.

1973: (August 8th) The present government acknowledges the 1763 Royal Proclamation to be a Declaration of Indian lands and that the federal government has lawful obligations to negotiate. The Province of B.C. was expected to have input into these negotiations.

1975: Rejection of Government funding by U.B.C.I.C.

1979: 11th Annual General Assembly adopts the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs Aboriginal Position Paper outlining the principles of Indian Government.

OUR PEOPLE SPEAK

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs' Eleventh Annual Assembly was an outstanding example of how the Indian delegates of British Columbia want to fit into the Canadian mosaic. First of all, we want to be recognized as the first aboriginal peoples of this country. Secondly, we want to regenerate our hereditary right to self-reliance and self-determination. We want to achieve self-determination and our aboriginal rights through our own form of Indian governments.

The determination of our people for self-reliance through our own Indian Governments can be seen in fact that this conference was totally Indian designed. The speakers and resource people were Indians, the delegates and observers were all Indians.

The silk screens, carvings of silver, gold, copper, wood, and all other art work at the assembly art showroom was done by Indian artists from various parts of B.C. The organizer was an Indian. Participants and organizers of the "Indian Expression" and talent show were all Indian. The Indian land claims question is being recaptured by our people in British Columbia. The Indian songs, dancers and the power of the drum is bringing back strength to our Indian nations and declaring our identity with our homeland. That to me is Indian Government being regenerated back to life: our aboriginal right to self-determination is being exercised by our people here in British Columbia.

The priority of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs is the regeneration of Indian Government. But Indian Government does not lie in the hands of an organization. It lies in the hands of families, clans, bands and in every reserve community in British Columbia. It is the responsibility of the local people to study, learn and implement the kind of authority you want in your Indian Governments. Indian communities all work at different levels in different ways, therefore Indian Governments can only be developed at the Indian reserve level. Every time a Band takes the initiative to make their own policies, regulations and laws for your people, it is Indian government; and every time we take an aboriginal right case to

"Aboriginal rights are the responsibility given to all nations of Indians on this continent. They are powers and controls of four elements of life and nature. These rights held us together as nations of people for thousands of years for the purpose of survival and the beauty of our country. Aboriginal rights is our heritage: ours, regardless of whether we want it or not. It can't be given away, sold or denounced and no government or legislation can abolish it. The Indian is born with it.



Sovereignty is a balance of nature which one takes pride in exercising. It is our Aboriginal rights to maintain its earthly wealth by preservation and respect and to maintain the philosophy therein with dignity. Communalism fantasy is so great that it makes it beautiful to live and beautiful to die."

Jacob Kruger, Penticton Band

court, it is Indian government and every time Indian people stand together to face the federal or provincial government on various issues affecting our people, that is Indian Government in action.

The message presented by all Indian people at the Eleventh Annual General Assembly came loud and clear. The message is "we are no longer prepared to live on our knees. From now on we will fight on our feet for our right to self-reliance through our Indian Governments." This expression for Indian self-determination was being asserted by the Indians at our Assembly. We are sick and tired of the white man's heavy handed control over our lives. We want to control our lives within the framework of our beliefs and traditions in our Indian homeland, British Columbia.

Yours in Indian Strength and Recognition of
Aboriginal Rights,

George Manuel, President
Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs
Shuswap of the Neskainlith Band



"The position of most of the Indian people in British Columbia today is quite unique in that no treaties or agreements or any other transaction were ever entered into with the Federal or Provincial governments, dealing with their land rights and rights to the resources of the sea and their rivers and the lakes."

Godfrey Kelly,
Skidegate Band

"We happened, as Indian people, to be put back here on this continent on one side and the Great Spirit has given us fish, birds, vegetation to live on. As the non-Indians came in they have taken control of most of it and they've given us very little and what ever we have left now we are struggling to try and hold it... for we know the fish is ours, the game is ours, and also the fowl and birds is ours, and also the country is still ours because we are non-treaty Indians."

Rosie Stager,
Mount Currie Band

"...for as long as the river shall flow your people will be permitted to hunt and fish for their needs for as long as there are Indians around.' This is what James Douglas wrote. We have copies of that document. He wrote this on behalf of the Queen. And your government today, they just completely ignore that. It's like they say, to hell with that, who the hell is he making an agreement with like that? Everybody stands for the Queen, then why don't they respect what James Douglas did on her behalf?..."

Ted Seward, Squamish Band

"We were the richest people in the world, we didn't have a penny in our pocket, but we were the richest people in the world. We had everything: we had game, we had fish, we had everything. Everything was just natural, but I am told now I have to wait for my pension to buy my food, there's no more out there. That's what we're fighting about."

Sam Mitchell, Fountain Band



"Self-determination has to be our goal and our quest is to recover our land, energy and resources and political authority that is entrusted to the white political institution. We are saying: 'for the past 100 years we gave you, the white government the responsibility to manage our lands, energy and resources and political authority. You have mismanaged that trust and responsibility now we are taking it back into our hands and we will manage our own resources through our own Indian political institutions. This is known both by Indian people and white people as Land Claims or Aboriginal Rights.'"

George Manuel, Naskainlith Band

"What we sell out now we are stealing from our children. The land and nature is not ours to sell it is only ours to honour, respect and protect for our children and our children's children. And they say only through protecting our land and our children can we again hope for complete self-respect and peace of mind."

Randy Chipps,
Cheanuh Band

"A just Aboriginal Rights settlement in B.C. will affirm our rights as Indian people to control our own lives and the means to live for the rest of time. We must accept no less if we expect to survive."

George Manuel,
Neskainlith Band

"We talk about human rights. My human rights is to stand up and have the necessary equipment and the type of things that is necessary so that Indian people operate in the way that the dominant society doesn't. As far as human rights is concerned, we, the Indian people are human..."

Chief John L. George,
Burrard Band

"The ways of Indian people are in the minds of the old people. Where they go, we go."

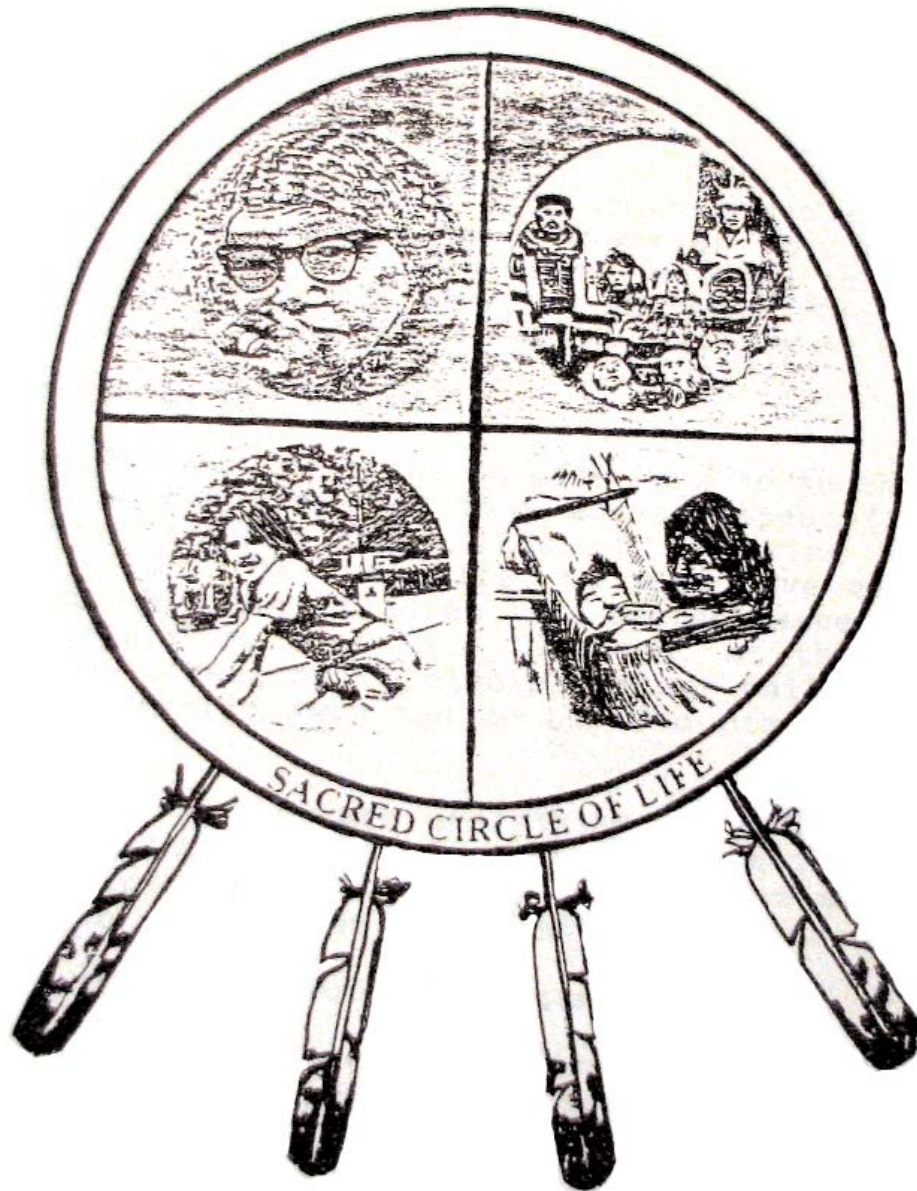
Tina Marie Christian,
Spallumcheen Band

"Indian resources are now returning. We are still fortunate, the old resource people are still around. We now have the knowledge and ability to run our own affairs."

Chief Roy Christopher,
Canim Lake

"Our words will come back to you like quiet echoes from the past. Be proud, be strong, have respect, keep our ways, give courage to your children that our words will not be empty - that our people will be strong."

Casper Charlie,
Anderson Lake Band



“The first stage is childhood - you grow and learn many things that are supposed to be taught to us since the creation of time. During this part of our lives, we are taught that our minds and our hearts are closest to the creator of all good things. At this stage, the way the parent treats the child is always remembered by the child, and this is the way the child will treat you as an elder. He will respect the rest of life that has been given to us in the proper manner.

The next stage is adolescence.

This is the stage where young people are taught that all life is our relation and that each living thing on this earth needs each other to live. In this stage of adolescence, a person's body is strong, it is swift in spirit, mind and body, with a strong heart and a strong will. It is during the adolescence stage of life where we see hard training and rigorous training for our minds and body and will to be strong.

The young people are taught by their parents to have great respect for the elders and to do whatever they can do to help the elders, for they are the ones who are teaching the ways that have been given to us since the creation of time. They cut the wood, find the food, hunt, get water, build shelters or homes.

The next stage is parenthood.

We are blessed with the right to give life to another human being in a sacred manner. We must have great respect for this. As a parent, we go through many kinds of suffering in bringing up children. In this part of life, we must have an understanding mind, a warm heart for children in a sacred manner even though it may seem hard. You must have kindness, at the same time, you must have the strength, to discipline our children so that they will not get carried away and do harm to other living things on this earth.

As a parent, we must share everything we have as a part of the community with the rest of the community. In this way, they will learn. As parents, we must have respect for all living things that have been given to us. We must respect our elders.

The last stage we go through is being an Elder.

During this stage of life, the Elders do most of the teaching. They usually have the greatest of patience for the children and great understanding. They also believe and live strongly in the spiritual way of our people. They know all manner of things of the spiritual manner because they lived through it during the many years of life they have lived on the sacred mother Earth. In this stage of life, they teach the young people through the stories given to Indian people from generation to generation. They teach the values of Indian ways, the rules and regulations, the laws of our Indian people, and the wisdom of our ancestors who have passed before us. They also teach respect, honesty, courtesy and the kindness and the way our ancestors have suffered in order for our Indian ways to be taught to us today. When the Elders have completed this beauty in their lifetime, they die; but in the Indian way, when a person passes on, they are reborn into the spirit world.

This is what is called the sacred circle of life, where we are born from the spirit world into the physical world of our own lives right now. We are born into childhood, to the teenage level, to parenthood, to the elderly stage. When we are reborn back into the spirit world, the cycle has been completed and we go through the cycle once again."

Derek Wilson,
Haisla from Kitamaat Band

OUR CHILDREN

"Last year, I got a hundred dollars for my fur. When I got money, I bought Christmas stuff for my mom, my sisters, my grandma, my auntie and everyone. It is fun when you go Christmas shopping. This year I don't get too much because the whiteman came and bugged up our wildlife."

Everette Gauthier, West Moberly Lake Band, aged 10



"Now on this reserve, parents have got respect from their children. It is good to be on a reserve that doesn't drink - the families get along good. It is great value to have the elders to tell us the things we do not know. It is good and great to learn where and how we stand by using our power."

Child of Alkali Lake

"At one time, the welfare of a child was the concern of everyone in the community and the rearing of a child was a very important responsibility. The children were the future, they carried on the names, the traditions and the teachings of the Elders so they would continue to grow strong and never die. Indian children had many grandparents and numerous aunts and uncles who were not all related by blood but related nonetheless by a strong bond. It was through these relationships that a strong foundation of responsibility and trust was formed within each community.

Children have been removed from their own communities to be raised by non-Indians, have been deprived of their own right to their heritage and have been deprived of their identity as Indian people. Only after we have begun to take back our responsibilities can we begin to build a better future for our children."

Julie Newman, Squamish Band

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

"We want the Nimpkish Band to hire us to paint the totem poles and the long house, cut the grass in the graveyards to make Alert Bay look nice. We'd also like other jobs like working in the office, day care and the museum. We plan to make something of our lives and those jobs will help us. We want to know more about our culture because it's important to us and will be with us all our lives."

Kwawkewlth Children, Alert Bay

"We have to help young people acquire all the tools that are necessary to survive in society. Education doesn't stop just in the schools. Parents, the community, the way the Chief acts, the way the Council acts, and all the other people in the community educate all the time. Whether they like it or not. There is no time to waste. We must take immediate and definite steps to overcome the confusion and frustration that push our young people to alcohol and drugs and suicide. We must give them something strong and positive to relate to and ensure that they are fully involved in the construction of our Indian governments. I see faith and hope being restored to the young minds with the belief emerging that maybe there is a place in the world for each one of them. No development should take place without the approval of those who have the most to lose."

Bob Manuel, Neskainlith Band.



OUR PARENTS

"Love your children and know how to love your children. These two items make up the main rules of caring for your children. All parents love their children unless there is something terribly wrong with them. To really love your children you have to show your children that you really love them. Also, if you know your customs and traditions, teach them to your child. Make your child proud of his heritage. Most of your customs and traditions in raising your child are in the previous words I have written because we would not have been able to survive this far as Indian people if they were not practiced by our ancestors. I have just written them in the language of the white man."

Xavier Eugene,
Shuswap Band

"We have an interest in every Indian child in the community for it is understood that what our Indian children become will be reflected in what the community is going to be. What we do to our children we are doing to the community, and to ourselves."

B.C. Native
Women's Society

"You know in teaching our kids our values, we don't only talk about them, we also have to practice them. Where we can begin is to make the family unit like one again, and talk with the kids every day about our old values. Our greatest gift was life itself."

Walter Leech,
Lillooet Band



"We are Indian people with a past that is filled with honour, harmony, sharing and respect for each other and nature. Our traditions of life were passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Essential to those traditions is the understanding that we are sacred and that our children are gifts of the great spirit. It is part of our tradition to love our children, to be patient with them, to treat them with respect.

Today we are Indian people who still care about our values and wish to pass those values down to generations to come. It is within our power to live according to our Indian traditions in the context of a modern world we have endured - we prevail. We are parents, we care about the education of our children - it is accepted in the common law all over the world that a parent has a right to say how his child shall be educated.

The idea of making education meaningful to Indian children by putting it in under Indian control is simply common sense."

Phillip Paul, Coast Salish, Tsartlip
Stewart Phillip, Okanagan, Penticton
Robert Sterling, Thompson, Nicola Valley
Mary Louise Williams, Lil'wat, Mount Currie
Al Mason, Hartley Bay
Muriel Roberts, Skwah Band



Remember the Past

OUR ELDERS

"It is elders who have seen the things that have been happening to our people over the many years of their lives. The Elders are more than willing to share their knowledge with the future generations if we will only ask them. If you want to know something about the old ways of Indian life, talk to an Elder. Indian people have always known what great resources our elders are to us. We have always known to respect and look after our elders - we can remember this when we are looking to use old ways in a new manner. The elders are our main sources of research and verification and I can assure you that is not a token situation. I cannot adequately cover the contribution our elders have made to the total education programs. If the very old will remember, the very young will listen."

Shirley Leon, Chehalis Band

"My mum was the head of our clan - she was a good counselor, guide, our protector. She taught me everything I know and the different kinds of work we Indians are skilled at. If you have Elders who are available, they are very valuable in your villages. Do not hesitate to write down their stories and their counseling."

Francisca Antoine, Necoslie Reserve

"They thought we were gonna die off and disappear but we didn't. And here we are. Boy, you are coming back, we are coming back. You have to tell your young people, your children. This is why we include our elders. You have to tell your young people what it was like in the old days. When we were still ourselves."

Dave Elliot, Elder of Saanich Band

"You see, our roots are deep; our trails are there. Everywhere you go you see our signs. There are stories to be told of what has happened in these mountains, some not so good and some very good. There are also legends that have been told to us in the past, through many generations. To us Indian people it is priceless. Do the white men understand what this means to us? No. To us our land is our survival and the strength of our people."

Johnny Morgan, Elder of Bonaparte Band



The Harmony of All Life

The Harmony of All Life

Harmony of all life basically means that all of the creation of life has been given to us by the Creator of all good things. To live in a sacred manner in everyday life everybody needs each other. There are many different peoples of this earth: I don't mean the different races of this earth, but in the Indian way the things I'm going to talk about, animals or anything like that, we call them people - human beings.

The first one is the two legged people, the ones that walk on their two legs; the four legged people, those are the ones that walk on their four legs, the bear, the deer, the elk; the fish of the sea, the salmon, halibut, whales; the feather of the sky - the eagle, owl, raven, hawk; the plants that live closest to the earth - plant life, the plant people; the trees, different roots and the berries we eat. All these things are called human beings in the Indian way.

One of the things that I have been told many times is, in the Indian way, these are called your brothers and sisters because they help you in a sacred manner, they help you in your everyday life.

Within these two legged people, there are four sacred colours, and the colours are red, yellow, black and white. Each of these colours represents a people or a nation of red people. The yellow people, black people and the white people have been given to us in this creation of life.

The two legged people are the weakest of all creation. Each one of these need the other four brothers and sisters to help them live in everyday life. The Elders have told many of the young people that I deal with that the rest of the four brothers and sisters are so powerful that they sacrifice their lives to the two legged people many times so they can feed themselves, and grow strong in a sacred manner. First of their most humble brothers and



sisters is the four legged - the deer, elk, moose, mountain goat, beaver. All the four legged animals that walk upon this earth give themselves up for the two legged people. They allow their bodies to be taken, to be killed so they may be eaten. The flesh is used to give us strength. In the old days of clothing, the furs that had been given by the four legged people were used for clothing. That's how much they loved us, and that's how much they sacrificed themselves for us in order for us to live.

The second of the four brothers and sisters is the fin ones, they also sacrificed their lives for the two legged people. Salmon, oolichans, the shelled ones that live in the ocean - clams, oysters, abalone, seal, whale, many of these, also, they sacrificed their lives for the two legged people in order for them to be strong. They humbled themselves so much as to give up their lives for the rest of their brothers and sisters to live.

Third of these brothers and sisters is the Feathered People, the people of the sky. The eagles, ravens, hawks, owls, many other birds that fly in the sky; ducks, geese, many of these also give up their lives in different ways for us to live. Many of them feed us with their own bodies, many of them give up their own bodies so we can use their feathers in sacred ways to help our people, when we pray in the Indian way, like the eagle, hawk and the owl. Many

of these have done that because we, the two-leggeds, are the weakest. They sacrifice their lives for us in a sacred manner.

Last of the brothers and sisters are the Plant People, the ones that set their feet deep into the earth to live. They spread their arms out close to the sky in thanks given for the life that has been given to them, the branches and leaves, they thank the grand father, the Creator, for the life that has been given to them. They also humble themselves so much as to allow their bodies to be used, to help the two legged people. The trees, if it wasn't for the trees, we would not have paper, we would not have warmth when we set the wood on fire. The plants that live into the earth like the potatoes, corn and many of the other plants that we can eat, they sacrifice their lives for us.

We need all of these things, we need all of these human beings, to live in a sacred manner, to live in a harmonious manner. At the same time these four people need the weakest - the two legged people - to live. Because of the greed and jealousy, the hunger, and the plain stupidity of the two legged people many of our brothers and sisters are dying away. This one old man told me one time that it's the two legged people that are going to have to stop themselves, from the destruction of the rest of our brothers and sisters.

There are many other things that have been given to us to live in this creation of life. The earth has been given to us to live on, the air that we breathe, the water that we drink and cook with has been given to us to live with, the moon and the sun also have many ways of helping the creation to live.



The earth, in the Indian way, we call it our Mother, mainly because she sacrificed her body for her to give us life, all the rest of the creation needs air to live with. The air, we call it our grandfather, sky world and star nation.

The water we need to cleanse ourselves, purify ourselves. It's used in many ways to help our people, used for many things to grow, the plants and all that. The fin ones live in the water.

The moon is our grandmother, she's the one that controls the waters of this earth. At the fullest of our grandmother moon that's when the highest tides come. It also controls the water of our bodies, that's why in the full moon, we get active. We want to move fast all the time, She also gives us light during the night time. She gives protection during the nighttime. That's our grandmother, the moon.

The sun, is our grandfather, he's the one that gave us fire. Also, he is the one who gives us warmth during the day time. With this warmth there are many other things he's given to the children of Mother Earth. He gives us strength for the plants to grow, gives warmth for the rest of the Creation to grow. Gives them protection with all his blanket of warmth. Also gives us the power to see, with his powerful light that comes down upon us.

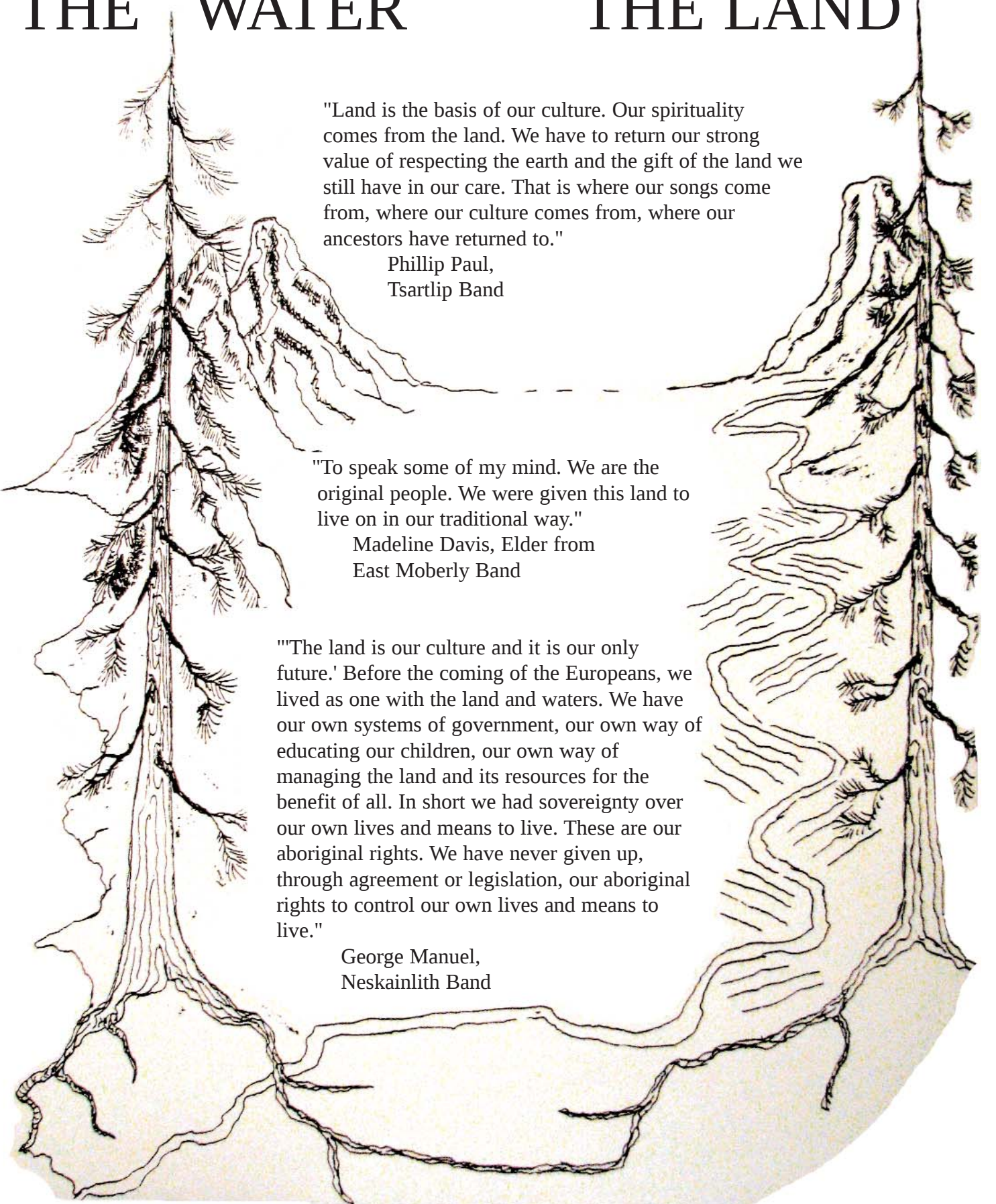
All of these things here bind together in a circle. Each one of these elements of life that has been given to us needs each other to live, to live in harmony. That's why in the Indian way, everything



that we talk about on earth, on our mother the Earth, is our relation and we must try to teach and to help our children understand that everything that lives on this earth, our mother the Earth, is our Brother and Sister. One of the things that have been given to us, passed on from generation to generation, taught to us by grandparents, 2nd great grandparents, is respect. Respect of our own selves, our own bodies, our own minds, our own heart, our own spirit, and most of all respect for the rest of our relations on this earth has been taught to us and we must carry it on.

THE WATER

THE LAND



"Land is the basis of our culture. Our spirituality comes from the land. We have to return our strong value of respecting the earth and the gift of the land we still have in our care. That is where our songs come from, where our culture comes from, where our ancestors have returned to."

Phillip Paul,
Tsartlip Band

"To speak some of my mind. We are the original people. We were given this land to live on in our traditional way."

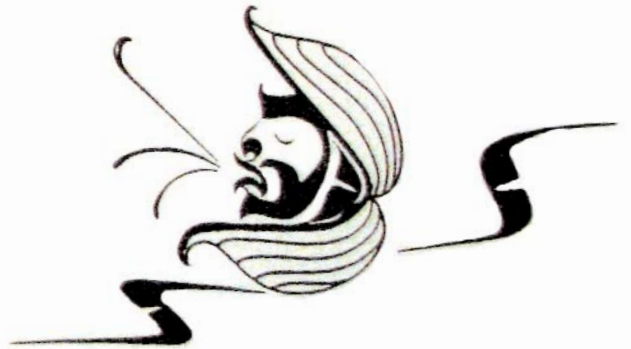
Madeline Davis, Elder from
East Moberly Band

"'The land is our culture and it is our only future.' Before the coming of the Europeans, we lived as one with the land and waters. We have our own systems of government, our own way of educating our children, our own way of managing the land and its resources for the benefit of all. In short we had sovereignty over our own lives and means to live. These are our aboriginal rights. We have never given up, through agreement or legislation, our aboriginal rights to control our own lives and means to live."

George Manuel,
Neskainlith Band



THE FISH



"Indians and fish are inseparable. This has been quite so throughout the history. Traditionally, the fisheries resources formed the economic base of the Indians throughout the entire West Coast."

Godfrey Kelly,
Skidegate Band

"Historically, all facets of community life among the Coast Salish including patterns of work, religious rituals, community ceremonies, leisure activities, and the arts originated in the communities' usage and relationship to the sea."

Gus Underwood,
Tsawout Band

"Our fish is our survival, our culture is our survival... the white man has been trying to change our ways for the longest time. I don't think there's any way you would be able to change the old folks' ways because it is the way they lived, all their lives. The old folks can't live any other way. We young people can't live any other way because we learned from our old folks. We learn how to cut fish, dry fish, can fish, they teach us how to make dresses, moccasins and vests. We learn these things from them and we are going to live like them."

Gladys Joe,
Mount Currie Band

"I need our fishing, it is a way of life, it's not only food. Our people had ceremonies because they thought that it was so important, the fish to us were so important. It is not just something to eat, it is a way of life."

Mary Louise Williams,
Mt Currie Band

"As long as we native Indians have a heritage that we are proud of, as long as we have traditions that we are proud of, and as long as we have our hereditary rights, especially fishing rights, we will protect everything we have and we will strongly protest any more impositions regarding these rights."

Chief Saul Terry,
Bridge River Band

"For thousands of years, we have depended on the powers of the waters to provide food to Indian people along the river systems and the coastal areas. Abalone, clams, crabs, oysters, seaweed, kelp, whale, sea lion, sea urchins, cockles, mussels, sea-prunes and many species of fish have been very important to our Indian way of life throughout the centuries... History shows that we have never surrendered our lands and resources. Legally and morally, the lands, the salmon and the marine resources should be under Indian responsibility and control. Indian people consistently face extremely hard struggles in determining means and ways of protecting our fishing rights."

Lillian Basil,
Mowachaht band

"Fish is one of our basic food, without that food I do not think we would be a people much longer...."

Gordon Antoine,
Coldwater Band

"As for the fish, it's used very extensively in our religious ceremonies. The Coast Salish people and the Lillooet had potlatches and the fish was one of the main foods in their religious ceremonies and that's still being done today. We still hold our potlatches so, if this fish is taken away from us, part of our religion is being taken away."

Frank Rivers,
Squamish Band

"The value of money isn't the same value as fish. Fish has been a part of my life all my life. I've always known I've had a right to fish. My grandfather taught me a lot. He brought me up to the mountains and down to the river. He taught me what rights we had and he told me this is ours. Whenever he felt like going down to the river he said there was no restrictions. There is a lot of people that really depend on fish. The closures by Fisheries really affect the people. They always felt it was a guaranteed reserve right to fish any day of the week. It was passed down by my grandparents. It's our reserve right. I was told by my grandfather, 'this is your land and your fish. Don't let anyone take it away.'"

Bradley Bob,
Fountain Band

"We as Indian people do not have to decide on or go over the concept of Aboriginal Rights any longer. We know what our fishing rights are."

Steven Point,
Skulkayn Band

"DDT was sprayed into our waters and what resulted in ten years was scant salmon stocks, as well as the immediate death of thousands of salmon. With my own eyes, I saw miles and miles of young salmon dead on the beaches... fish has become endangered to the extent that the Nimpkish people have had to give up their food fishery just to sustain an adequate spawning escapement. Every legislation the government has put in place with the idea of helping us has been a detriment. They are failing because every one of these programs has been designed without Indian input."

Basil Ambers,
Tunour Island Band

"The Fraser River is an artery of life and it is important to maintain those arteries of life, not only for Indian people, but for all citizens of the country."

Saul Terry,
Bridge River Band

"I want to declare here that Indian people are the owners and have jurisdiction over marine resources in the West Coast and hence claim our rights to manage, control and protect these and other resources."

George Manuel,
Neskainlith Band





THE ANIMALS

"I pass judgement not on those who live under dictatorship and cannot speak, but to those who live in freedom and fail to do so. The natives of Moberly Lake have lived off the land all their lives. This may include trapping, hunting, fishing and snaring rabbits. The land has treated us good, it is a simple way of life. We measure our weakness only in order to know our strength, and our strength lies within the land. So in order to maintain our strength we would look at some sort of plan to preserve the diversity of species and ensure the wildlife is available to meet the economic needs of the Indian people. What we really believe is a land which we have lived off in the past and will continue to live off in the future."

Buddy Napoleon, East Moberly Band

"You people are going to destroy our fishing, hunting, and trapping. When you do this, you are destroying our way of life. In other words, you are trying to make our native person to live like the white man. This is very impossible to do because the native people was the first to be in this country. We lived off the land."

Charlie Peat, Lower Post (To Northern Pipeline Agency)

"The only source of living is in the land, for these people. It was a long time ago they used to use pack horses, dog packs and in the winter, they either backpacked or used dog teams to bring in the food such as moose, caribou, goats, where ever they killed a game."

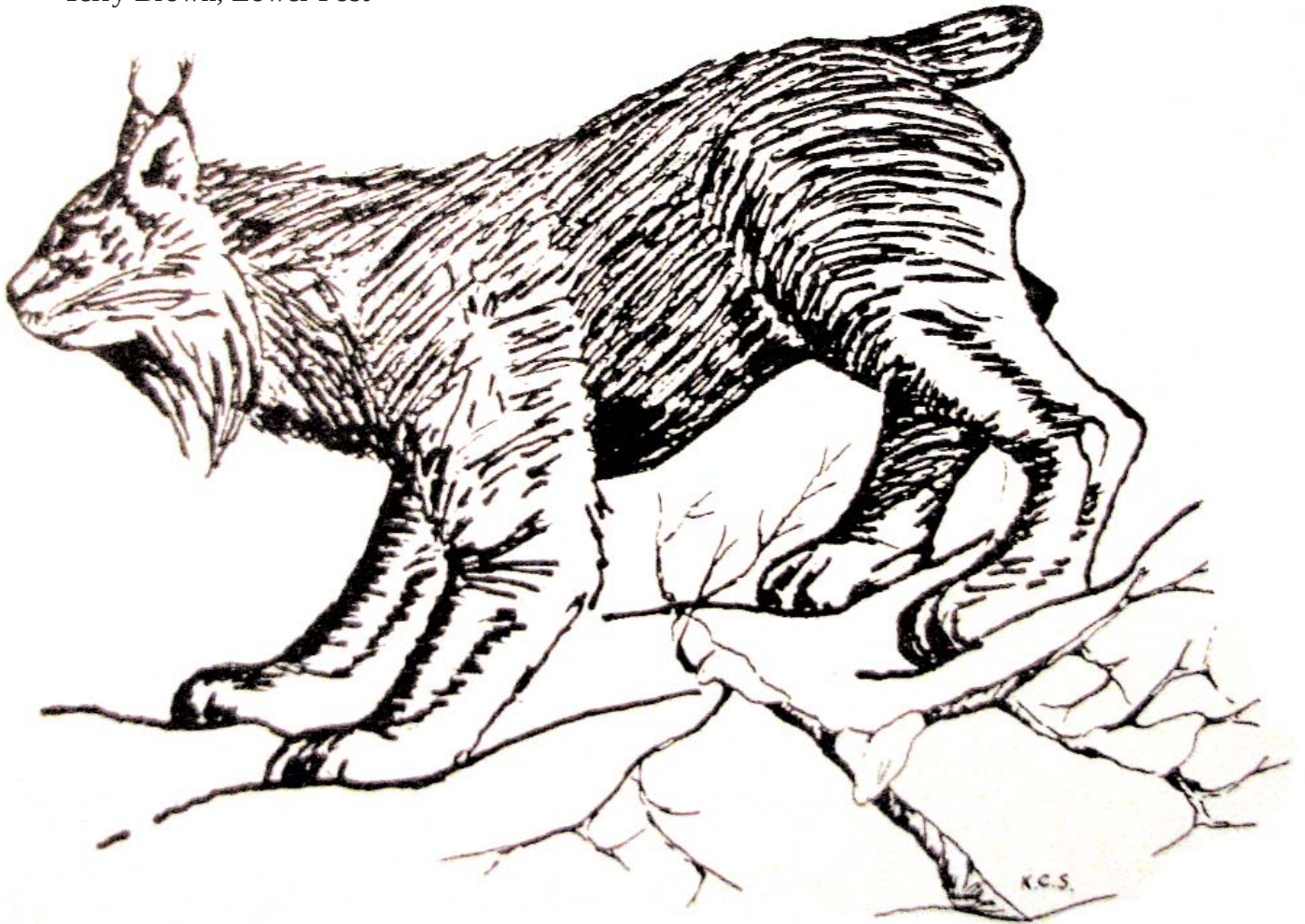
Annie Boya, Lower Post

"As long as there is the sun that goes over we shall never stop hunting in this country and where ever we like to do so, as long as the sun is still there."

Thomas Hunter, Halfway Band

"Our people have always depended on the land for our livelihood; the men were always great hunters and they still are. Presently, we are an oppressed nation, we are the aboriginal people of this country and we have never participated in any decision making in any form. We want to gain control of our lives, we want to have pride in ourselves, we want to have our religion back and all the values."

Terry Brown, Lower Post



"Maybe you can give us a few bucks, but that isn't going to support us for the rest of our lives like the traplines. If the pipeline is going to be put through our traplines, why don't they set a piece of land where nothing is going to affect us. We want a big piece of hunting area where no one else can get in except us."

Clarence Apsassin, Blueberry Band

THE PLANTS

"The land gives us vegetables that we grow, the berries that we preserve, the water that we drink. I was taught to save this land and I respect it for that reason."

Chief John Dokkie,
West Moberly Band

"We had nothing but wildlife, planted our own gardens, had our own everything. Them were the days when there was lots of land, we raised things in the proper way without interfering with the others."

Dolly Felix,
Cooks Ferry Band

"The importance that I see in family gardening is that we give our children responsibility. That is our living and it teaches us and exercises our minds for the future. We are not living just from day to day. We should all be aware too that we are one day going to have to grow our own vegetable garden."

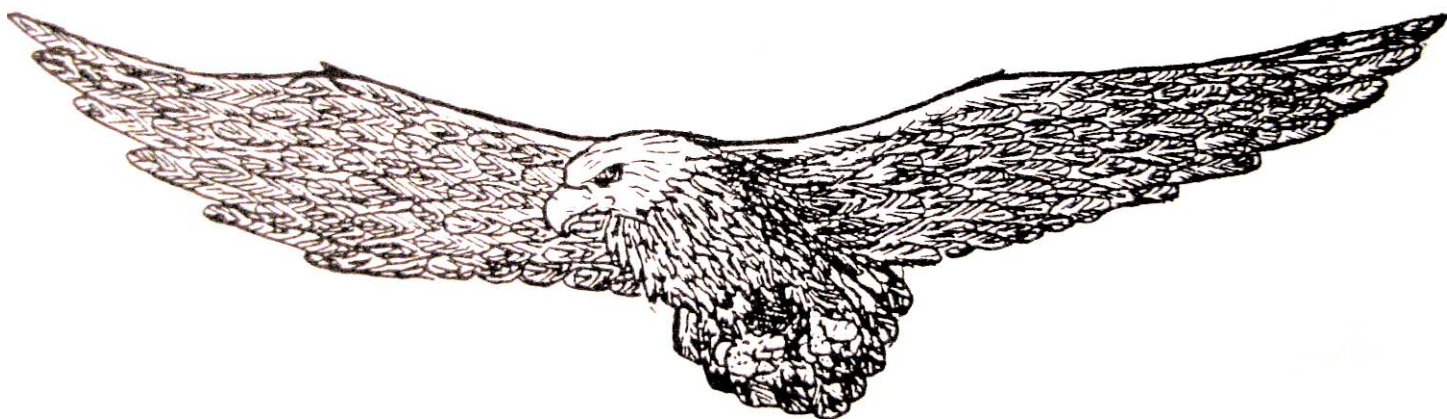
Gabe Bartleman,
Elder of Tsartlip Band

"My grandmother used to make the racks outside, anywhere around the field. And she squashes the Saskatoon berries with something and she just spread them on top of a mat made out of something inside the maple bark. She spreads it the thickness she wants. I guess after two or three days, she turns it over and it's dry right through. You can just break a piece off and just eat it. It's lovely. When we kids got hungry they would break a piece for us and we would go and play. She would go up in the mountain and you do the same with huckleberries."

Leah Hope,
Elder of Seabird Island

"Our agricultural technology and our distribution system of food amongst Indian families is part of our traditional cultural values that kept our Indian Government self-reliant and strong for many centuries. No people have been entirely free of scourge, or famine, but Indian societies were free of protein deficiency in the normal cycle of the generations. The Indian nations have given more to the world of technology than they have received from it. The Indian community of man."

George Manuel,
Neskainlith Band



THE LAWS OF OUR LIFE

AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN RELIGION

"Our maker put us on this island and we must thank him everyday no matter how hard your work will be, it will help. My ancestors never surrendered this island we call North America. It still belongs to us no matter how many Government there is. You must get together with one mind and one spirit, one word. Together, ask your maker, ask his servants to make you strong, to give you knowledge to teach you how to go about making things good for your children's children."

Mary Ann Michael,
St. Mary's Band

"Many religious rites were established and performed through the centuries with the first return of the sockeye salmon in the Fraser River, and in the Skeena and other large rivers along the B.C. Coast. All designed in appreciation to nature's bounteous goodness.

The same can be said also to the annual return of the huge herring schools, from which were harvested the herring roe and kelp, the traditional food of the Indian people in earlier times and the present period.

Besides this, the return of the Oolichan fish also marked occasions for huge, colourful festivities, in which the Indian people performed the specific rites for the incoming first runs of the salmon.

The sea, rivers and lakes were like their larders. They harvested their needs as required, and they preserved for future needs, the surplus of their requirements. They developed a very close spiritual relationship to all these resources, and to the total environment, and there were also taboos established by the younger generations with each successive generation, to safeguard the continuity of these resources of salmon."

Godfrey Kelly,
Skidegate Band

"We have seen the desecration of Indian burial grounds in other areas in the past, and we certainly aren't going to give permission for further desecration in our own area. The Elders too said the Burial Grounds must be protected at all costs in order to abide by the laws of Nuxalk Nation."

Edward Moody,
Bella Coola Band

"The second you think about burning, it has to be done.
 You go to see Louis Charlis and he tells you about the type of food to be burnt,
 he knows what to look for, he counsels us on how to clear our minds so we can do the burning.
 It's part of our responsibility to the dead to recognize these things.
 If we don't do it, it may cause more problems."

Chief Tommy Sampson,
 Tsartlip Band

"Who used burning to help himself after losing two children, and he said that no psychiatrist could ever have done the job as well. There is a lot of satisfaction, spiritually and emotionally, if we didn't have those things that are Indian, like burning, what else would we look to. I could never go to a psychiatrist. If they took that away from me I would be finished as an Indian."

Sammy Sam,
 Tsartlip Band

"My great-grandfather wanted food and I couldn't get over it. That is the way Indians used to live. I had to go look for it because it was bothering me. Louie Charlie, Religious Leader of his people, he explained if there are problems in a family, burning can be used to help them. It is called upon when spirits of the dead come to the family. The work is very sacred."

Elizabeth Jack,
 Tsartlip Band

"We haven't changed anyone else's religions and we won't let them change ours."

Chief Tom Sampson,
 Tsartlip Band

"Since the dawn of our history, Spotted Lake or "Klilok," as we call it, has been a medicine lake. Indians from all tribes came to visit the lake for the medicine that the lake contained. The ceremonial cairns and tombs that surround the lake testify to that. Some of these are so ancient that they have sunk underground and only the tops are above ground. Some are buried altogether. There are many stories told by our ancestors about the cures this lake has provided, physically and spiritually, through its medicinal powers. Its medicine powers are not to be taken lightly. This lake is a Chief among lakes. Its powers are above the purely physical."

Jeanette Bonneau,
 Okanagan Tribal Council

THE CEREMONY

Isaac Frank, United Native Club



In the chapel
I sat cross-legged
Forming a part
Of the circle of people

We were told before we sat
That prayers might be answered
Some soon
Others not.
That there might be
A test first.

He began
By taking from a can
Some fungus to burn.
It smouldered as he waved it
Over his red-blanket,
That held all his things.

Each piece he purified:
A charm first with smoke,
He did the same
To his white eagle-feather.
He waved his hand about his pouch.
And then into an abalone shell
To smolder its life away.

From his pouch
He took a stem and bowl;
All the while mumbling softly
As his helper drummed rapidly
With head bowed.

With pipe together
And filled with tobacco and bark
He tamped it with a quill.
There was quiet in the room.
We made no sounds
As he quickly pointed
To the six directions:
To the west: north: east and: south:
To the earth, and: to the sky.

The drum stopped.
And he spoke,
"Creator.
Thank you for my heart,"
And I cried inside.

AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN EDUCATION

"Long ago our people never had anything called school, each day itself was a page, each event was a lesson. Each day of one's life revealed a story, each day was a part of the learning process of life. The things our people learned were in relation to living in harmony with our mother, the earth. Our history lessons were in the form of stories in our language. Our grandparents were our teachers and our guides in our years of growing."

Lillian Gottfriedson,
Similkameen Band

"Education encompasses everything that goes on everyday. My philosophy said the world around me is our school. I think the important part of education for anybody is learning about your cultural identity. I consider myself very lucky. I have very strong grandparents, if I ever strayed away from my culture, my grandparents would set me on the right track."

Anfinn Siwallace,
Bella Coola Band

"If there should ever be a breakdown of the system, our people need our traditional lifestyle in order to survive. Our grandfathers knew we would need both ways in order to live and their prayer must have been for us to find a way of merging these two ways of life. Let us bring our minds together as our grandfathers before us and act now to ensure the continuation of our future generations."

George Abbott,
Lytton Band

"When potlatching was outlawed, this was when we lost control of teaching the children proper behaviour in the Indian way of life. We were told if we didn't move from our original home to a place with a school, we wouldn't get better. We did and look what it has done for us - NOTHING."

Jack Peters,
Elder of Ohiaht Band

"Indian Education to me is that you learn your own language and your own culture, plus learning about the future. It means a lot to be so I can learn my own language and background."

Student, Grade 11

"We know that you want to learn to talk in your language. It is not your fault that you can't talk. For each of you young people, don't blame yourself, don't think you are not an Indian. You were born an Indian and you will always be an Indian. These are our children, our children are Indians, they will learn our values so that they will continue the teachings of our people even after we are gone."

Abel Joe,
Cowichan Band

"For those who want this identity, they deserve to be made aware of their history and culture so they may be proud of their place. Our children and grandchildren have the right to learn the skills to survive in their respective communities or outside their communities if they choose. Without education and skills suited to their potential, they could end up with no choice. Indian Education is very much a part of our lives. We want what is best for our children and we believe that learning their own culture is very much a necessity."

Annie Jimmie,
Lower Kootenay Band

"Indian Education is to teach the younger ones the Indian culture and the Indian ways of life and to teach them to hunt the deer and the other animals."

Student, Grade 9

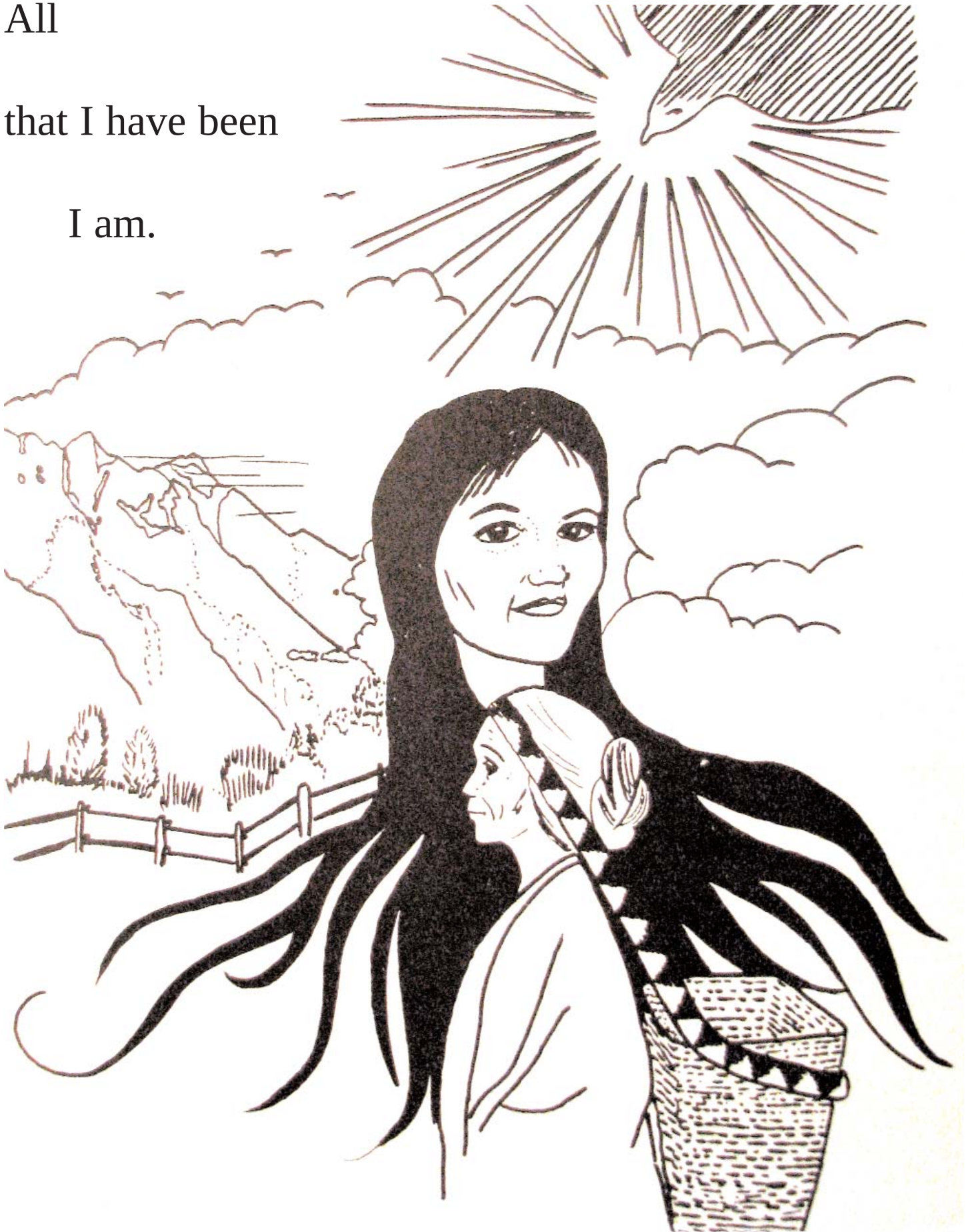
"When we send our children to school, we cannot expect them to learn the ways of our Indian people. Where is the wisdom of Indian people in schools? It isn't there."

Jeanette Bonneau,
Penticton Band

"Mount Currie is getting control of their own school. This was done through the strength of a group of parents in Mount Currie who looked at what was happening to their children and said - that is enough. We'll find our own way. Since 1972, when the School Board of Mount Currie had an alternate set of 21 students, the school has grown to house some 220 students, from nursery to the year 12. The school has graduated some 55 Indian students from the year 12 in the past 5 years. Those graduates from Mount Currie seem to have confidence in their Indianness, and have a measure of personal self-worth and integrity that the public and residential school system did not foster."

Mount Currie Band School

All
that I have been
I am.



AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN CULTURE

"There were fried cockles, deer meat stew, seaweed, herring roe, salmon and many other delicacies. Real Food. After the eating, there was the artwork and crafts to admire and maybe to buy - argillite carvings from the Queen Charlotte Islands, silver and gold, beaded chain jewelry, crocheted and knitted blankets, clothes and oil paintings. The talent and skill filled the hall. And then the dancing. A new dance group from Port Simpson. The Kaien Island Dancers. Haida dance groups. Kitwancool dancers. Performers from Metlakatla, Alaska. The buttons on the capes flashed and made the Raven, Eagle and Killer-Whale come alive and dance. The small children danced with the young teenagers and young adults and middle-aged and elders. The children were everywhere dancing, sitting and among the crowds, playing outside. Everyone danced and sang and drummed and met old friends and new ones, too. I was home again."

Val Dudoward,
Port Simpson Band

"Bella Coola is a community well on the way to becoming one of the strongest, independent reserves. They are extremely fortunate to have their Elders who have been patiently waiting for the day that the children awaken and heed their predicament of nearly losing their culture. The Elders were patient for years waiting, and are exercising that same patience in working with the members of the community who are to learn dancing, singing and the language. The children in the nursery school dressed in button blankets - dancing, the young mask dancers, the young sisters. It was a moving experience. ...As I danced I was a whole new person, I wasn't me, it wasn't Dinah that was dancing; it was my grandmother. I was all the people that had no homes, dancing."

Dinah Schooner,
Bella Coola Band

"Five million dollars could not buy my culture."

Mary Louise Williams,
Mount Currie Band

"I do not need money to carry on my culture."

Ray Harris,
Chemainus Band

"My tears flow like a river when I see the artifacts returned from the government, I wonder what the Elders would say, I know they would have rejoiced."

Mrs. Cranmer,
Elder from Nimpkish Band

"We shall not deny we came here to do the ritual of our forefathers."

Tommy Hunt,
Kwawkewlth Band

"It is okay to be an Indian person and there are so many beautiful things I can give to my people in the community. The legends and stories are very powerful things that our ancestors used a long time before the whiteman came. They are simple and basic in our culture."

Glen Williams,
Mount Currie Band

"Many of our elders have recorded our history and the very young listened. Songs and dances are taught and the regalia has been taken out of storage. Our young people are seeking knowledge and now many are taking part in the feasts. In Gitanmaax we are rebuilding our culture. It is a slow and painful journey."

Jane Mowatt,
Gitanmaax Band

"On March 8 and 9, 1980, the Seton lake Nation Singers hosted the gathering in Shalalth. The reason for the gathering was to try and interest more people in the revival of the old days."

Garry John,
Seton Lake Band

"Band Chief Bill Roberts spoke and commented on the dances saying each dance has a story originating from past beliefs of tribes in the area. The Cannibal Bird Dance in which the great mask's beak came to life with its loud clapping was one of the dances featured.

What caught my eye was the involvement of the children in the ceremonies as they danced proudly around the gymnasium floor."

Darryl Watts,
Kincolith Band

AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN COMMUNICATIONS

"The Elders pass down through the generations our legends and history.

A storyteller had to be tolerant, sensitive, respectful, gentle and emotional and self-disciplined to listen even when a subject may seem boring. Stories are like documentaries and humorous just like in real life and a story teller always remembers to balance bad with good.

The base for our form of writing comes from the tradition of the storyteller.

The development of our own communications systems expresses the needs and dreams of our Indian people.

The people's right to know and the people's right to express, on these two principles we rest our work."

Dinah Schooner,
Bella Coola Band



AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN HEALTH

"Our level of health is related to all aspects of our lives. It is the right of Indian people to retain our cultural identity and shape our future according to our aspirations and our own values."

Bobby Joseph,
Quoted from Jack Beaver's Report.

"Spotted Lake was made by the Creator and is very sacred. The White society did not bring this Lake from Europe and place it in Osoyoos. We are not going to carry the Lake from its natural state. What is more important here, money or a person's health. What we are concerned about is the person's health."

Larry Pierre Senior,
Elder from Penticton Band

"Why is it always them that has to control us? We have to have control of our own health. The rebuilding of fish is imperative to the health of our people. Any interference with the rebuilding of our food and economic base is a direct threat to Indian health."

Basil Ambers,
Turnour Island Band

"Elders made their presentation during the Alert Bay Health Inquiry. They spoke of herb medicine they used to gather and use to cure many diseases and ailment prior to using modern medicine. They said they wanted to go out again to gather herbs to teach the young people its value."

Angela Matilpi,
Alert Bay Band

"Indian medicine is... you have to go in the bush to get the medicine. Sometimes you have to walk for hours before you find this medicine. The thing is to go out to get this medicine and try and fix it yourself, this is our drawback. We depend on other people to make it. Try and make it yourself, because it's not that hard."

Louise Dudoward,
Port Simpson

"I feel the Elders could be used more, with their knowledge of the different types of medicine. I use the Elders an awful lot. I think, for the most part, that CHR's (Community Health Representatives - federally funded programming) do speak with their Elders. Like whenever I can, I will use Indian medicine, the little I know. The amount depends on building up the trust of the Elders and this is up to each of us. It takes time."

Diane Brown,
Skidegate Band



AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN LAND USE MANAGEMENT

"In the early nineteen hundreds was the building of the Grand Coulee Dam. They built that thing when a part of our Indian peoples' livelihood was provided by salmon. When they built this they never consulted with us in regards to what compensation would be given our people or what would replace it. They made the decision and once the dam was built, there was no more salmon."

Xavier Eugene, Shuswap Band

"The Nazko Band's concern regarding the oil and gas exploration since the beginning of oil exploration which represents further erosion of the Indian rights. The issuance of licenses for adjacent areas to reserve land means development activity and the possibility of removal of resources prior to settlement of aboriginal rights in the areas around Williams Lake."

Dennis Patrick, Nazko Band

"We come before you today to tell you that if construction begins on the Alcan pipeline in the province of British Columbia, the lives of many Indian people in the province of British Columbia will be hurt, Indian culture and Indian way of life will be fractured in many areas, and the Indian people of British Columbia will not let this happen."

Ray Hance, Toosey Band
To House of Commons Committee



"We are not militant opposers to everything that happens, but we have outstanding concerns that relate to our livelihood. Take a drink of Fraser River water from the Vancouver areas, if you want to know if it is polluted or not. There used to be so many salmon in the river, that a rock thrown in the river would lay on their backs and it would not sink - they were so thick. Pollution is the greatest agent destroying our natural resources."

George Manuel,
Neskainlith Band

"Our sea foods which we rely on most year round will be contaminated also all shell fish. An oil spill will possibly affect the salmon, ling cod, and other bottom fish in and around our areas. It will most certainly kill off water fowl which my people also depend on. I know accidents will happen. There is no guarantee that it won't but then those accidents could ruin my people's way of living which we are so accustomed to, you could say with us Indians of this country it is the only way we can survive, we don't make a great deal of money at our employment so depend a lot on our seafoods. And who knows if we had a bad oil spill it may affect our place of employment."

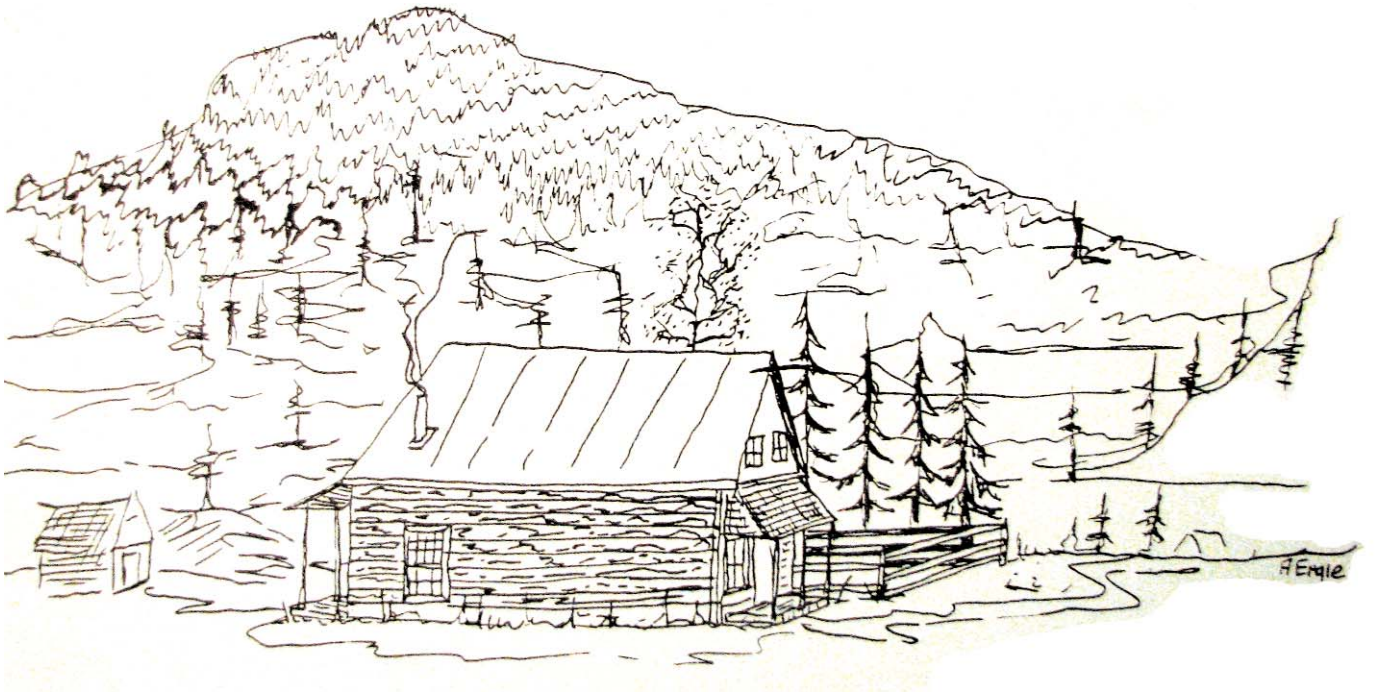
Bert Charles,
Cheanuh Band

"The Island is divided into two parts and we have very strong winds and tides, if there ever is an oil spill up there it will affect both sides of the Island. We depend a lot upon the herring and sea weed and all the salmon, and all different kinds of shell fish. Massett has a Cannery and if anything should happen and the cannery had to close down we would have no employment and we will have nothing to live on. There are also canneries at Port Simpson North of Prince Rupert and one at Bella Bella and we all depend on resources from the sea."

Caroline Wesley, Skidegate Band,
Queen Charlotte Islands

"We don't think the pipeline should go across the river because it might break open, and leak and pollute the water for drinking and fishing."

Terry Elaine Carlick,
Lower Post Band, Age 15



"When kids go swimming they get sores, sometimes the water's polluted and kids don't like that. The pollution has been around here for a long time. The sawdust gets in our eyes. Kids get infection in their eyes because of the sawdust. I don't like what's going on because of the pulp mill pollution."

Connie Mark and Evelyn Savey,
Mowachaht Band,
Ages 11 and 7



AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Life was good and strong - our people had pride in the values of our civilization. It was possible for a man to live with his family and relatives because wealth belonged to a family as a whole. Every member of the family had the right to use family property. This is how we lived as a nation of people - this is how we want to live. This is what we mean when we talk about having our own Indian Government."

George Manuel,
President, UBCIC

"I like the business of farming, I think a lot of people could if they just recognize the economics of it. I like to see the crop grow from there to there, I like to see a crop harvested, it's kind of nice to watch a calf grow to a large animal. I don't know if I had any real expectations when I went into the field of agriculture, but I felt it was something I wanted to do. It's important that Bands must have something to offer young people after they complete their training in whatever field."

Chester Douglas,
Cheam Band

"Sim-Valli Enterprises was formed with the intent of helping members of the Okanagan Nation gain self-reliance in education, health and other fields. It is not formed to make an individual or group rich in terms of finances, but to become rich in a better understanding of their world, their lives and to help them plan for future generations."

Sim-Valli Enterprises, Keremeos

"Leadership in the Agricultural Economic Sector must be developed. The agricultural potential of reserves must be protected to ensure the interests of the community are protected."

Bob Pasco,
Oregon Jack Band

"We depend on fur-bearing animals. Even when a person can't find work, he goes into the bush for a certain length of time and makes his living on trapping. Trapping helps keep us off welfare during the off-seasons when there is no other work. In the summertime, our people find jobs - they go guiding, they go to work - life is a lot better in the summer time after spring break-up. Some of the women go trapping, and all of the women go berry-picking in the summer. They make a living selling moccasins, mukluks and moosehide jackets."

Amy Gauthier, East Moberly Band

AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN LAW

"Whenever marriages, taking a name, a death or a new Chief was recognized, there were potlatches held.

The person giving the potlatch prepared and readied everything himself. A lot of work was done by himself and his immediate family. The potlatch was in itself a form of social order because it had very strict rules to be adhered to. Equal rights of all the people were guarded. Hunting grounds, root digging grounds and root digging parties were all handled the same way. Whenever things for all the people were to be discussed all the head men of family groups or clans met to talk over matters of importance. Only when each head man had spoken and agreement was reached were the meetings closed.

All the people of the village recognized and listened to their clan Chiefs of family heads."

Mary Louise Williams,
Mount Currie Band



"I was raised between two societies. Raised by two Grandmothers. My Indian Grandmother spoke no English, lived on a Reservation in the United States all of her life and clung to her ancestors' ways. She taught me pride in my native blood, respect for my people and their culture and how to survive using all the old ones' skills. She never forgave my mother for weakening her bloodline and never spoke to her after my birth. Her repeated advice to me was, "Marry your own kind, live the way of your ancestors."

My white Grandmother had never met a Native person before my father married my mother. She was a good mother because it was the "Christian" thing to do. She took me to her church and Bible school, taught me the importance of a formal education and all the skills to be a good "white wife and mother." She never would admit I was part Indian. Her advice to me was, "Marry your own kind, live as the white people live."

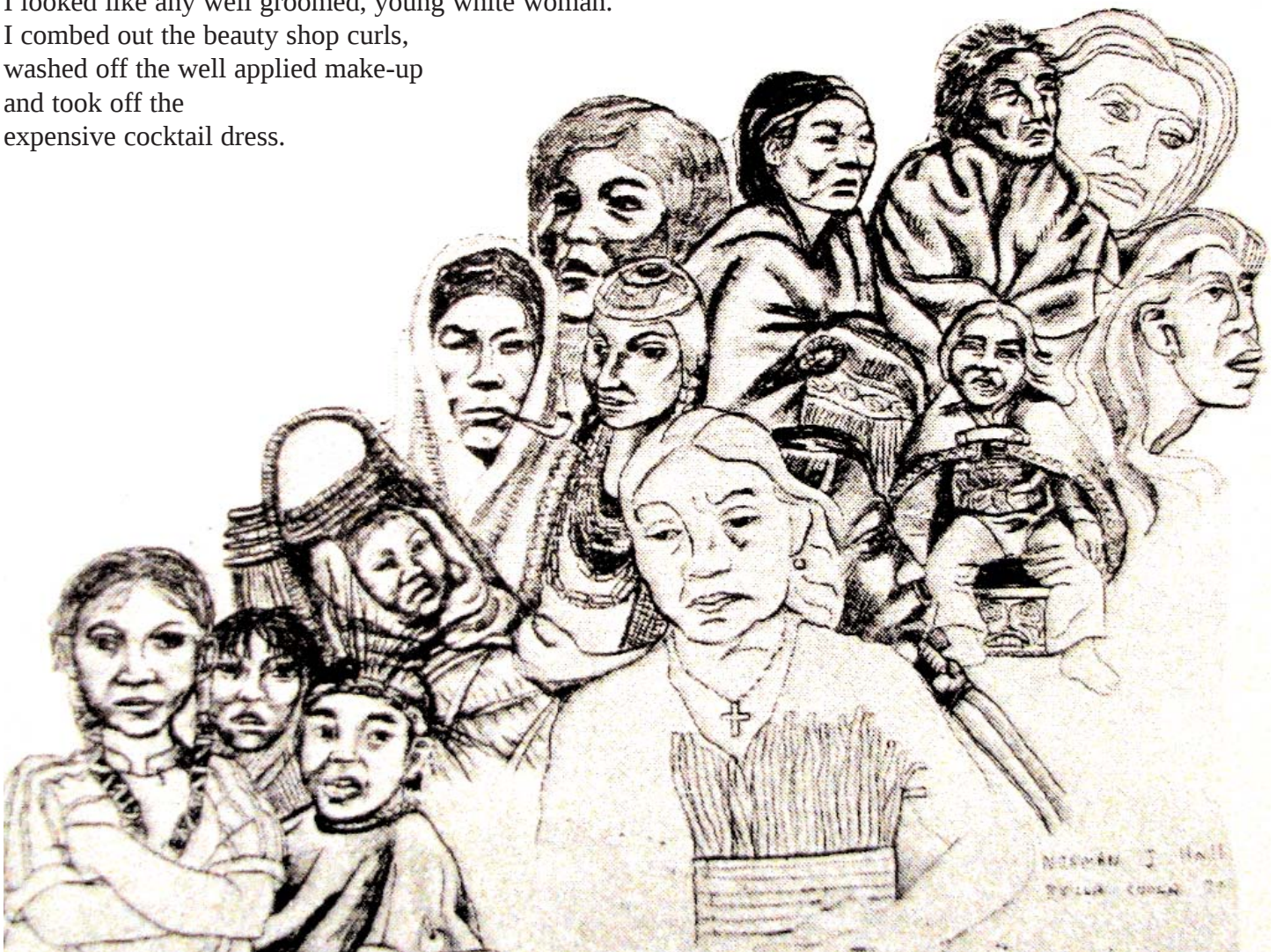
Who then were my people? I look like my white father and act and feel like my Native mother.

I left my Grandmothers and went out into the world. I graduated from high school and college, served time in the Army and still did not find the answer, "Who then are my people?"

I had a good job, a nice apartment and friends of every race. One evening at a large dinner party, as I sat in a room full of good friends, I suddenly realized how very lonely I was and that I had been lonely for a very long time. I left the dinner party, went home and took a good long look at myself in the mirror.

I looked like any well groomed, young white woman.

I combed out the beauty shop curls,
washed off the well applied make-up
and took off the
expensive cocktail dress.



Now dressed in levis, old moccasins and shirt, with my hair in the braids of my youth, some of my mother showed through.
I got in my car and drove out into Mojave.
I stayed there three days, doing all the things my mother's mother had taught me in my youth, to purify my mind and body in the ways of the old ones. Then I returned to my people.

I have been alone many times, since that evening fifteen years ago, but I have never again been lonely. In this present day when so many of us have so many different bloods flowing in our veins I say to others who live in lonely confusion in their minds, return to your people wholeheartedly, the call of your ancestors is strong. Follow it faithfully and you will find peace.

To others I remind you that to weaken that bloodline is to bring sorrow, confusion and loneliness to your children.

To be a half breed is to live in two worlds, belonging to neither, accepted by neither. It takes a strong commitment to choose one way of life and follow that path no matter where it leads.

For fifteen years I have lived with and for my people. I've been taken off to jail at Franks Landing, shot at while bringing supplies into Wounded Knee and again I ask, "What does make a person an Indian? Is it a certain amount of blood, a belief or an acceptance by other Indians?"

Shannon Point,
Chehalis Band

AUTHORITY OVER INDIAN GOVERNMENT

".... the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs has decided to recover some of its political authority through a process of Indian Government. Self determination has to be our goal in our quest to recover the lands, energy, resources and political authority that it has entrusted to the White political institution. We are saying for the past 100 years we gave you, the White government, the responsibility to manage our lands, energy, resources and our political authority. You have mismanaged that trust and responsibility. Now we are taking it back into our hands and we will manage our own resources through our Indian political institutions. This is better known by both Indians and White people as Land Claims or Aboriginal Rights."

George Manuel,
President, UBCIC

"I think the discussion around Indian Government, what it really means, has got a lot of people acting on preserving their culture and doing something about the language, seeing the land again the way it was meant to be, how important the land is for the continuation of our culture."

Phillip Paul,
Tsartlip Band

"Striving for this Indian Government, this Indian way of life... one thing was brought quite clear to mind... that it is not solely the leaders that will make this possible. It was stressed quite often that each individual at the reservation level, the community level, each one has a contribution and encourage participation by all in this pursuit. So the gap, I think, is closing in that time lapse from the Indian way back and the Indian now. The youth are going to the elders and finding the ways and means of establishing Indian Government."

Chief Victor Adolph,
Fountain Band

"The discipline and the laws that go on are the things that we are looking at... Indian Government doesn't just come about by good words... I apply those principles as really tough. When we're talking about Indian Governments we have to recognize what they were initially. I think this building of Indian strength can happen..."

Chief Tom Sampson,
Tsartlip Band

"When we're talking about Indian Government we're talking about Indian power. With this power we could control our own affairs, develop our resources, give us the independence we want. With the authority of Indian Government we can educate our children that would guarantee that they learn our language, history and culture. We have to emphasize very strongly our Indianness. We must bring back the proper place of our Elders. Bring back our Indian music, art, poetry. Our language is very important. What we mainly want is the power to run our own lives without the control by the governments of Canada with the system of Indian Governments."

Chief Bob Manuel,
Neskainlith Band

"When we talk about Band management, we have to look at it in terms of Indian Government."

Chief Wayne Christian,
Spallumcheen Band

Establishing Band by-laws:

- The St. Mary's Band passed a by-law to deal with the trespassing of railway operations on the reserve.
- The Lytton band has passed a by-law to regulate the use of recreation and off-highway vehicles on reserve land.
- The Cape Mudge Band has a by-law to allow taxing on the reserve.
- The Gitlakdamix Band has made a by-law to control licensing of and protection from domesticated animals on its land.
- The Songhees Band has a by-law to govern mobile home parks or sub-divisions on its land.
- The Mowachaht Band passed a pollution by-law to protect the health of its residents.
The by-law regulates pollution levels allowable by the Tahis Company, situated near the reserve. It also regulates noise levels, disposal of waste by residents, leasers and industries other than the Tahsis Company.
- The Squamish Band has a by-law to provide for the preservation, protection and management of fish on its reserve. The Nicolas, Bella Coola and Lillooet Bands have passed similar by-laws.

Darrell Ned,
Sumas Band

"We must control our lives and our destinies as people to our own system of Indian government. It is within this system of government that we must evolve an economic plan for decent standard of living for our people. Indian government will provide the system to allow Indian people to govern ourselves and is an expanded reserve system containing sufficient resources to meet the essential needs of our people. We will make our own laws under Indian Government, we will look after our own forests, our rivers. We will determine the conservation practices for wildlife and timber policies for our forests. We will plan the development of our community buildings and services. Because of our commitment to the land, we are the only people who can maintain and develop our resources for future generations. Aboriginal Rights settlement would include a recognition of our Indian governments as a fourth level of government within Canada, within confederation. Indian Government. What it involves will be entirely different from anything that now exists. As we grow and develop this new kind of political autonomy, we will develop the structure of our government to meet our needs as Indian people."

Chief Bob Manuel,
Neskainlith Band

"We are the politics. We are the people. That's why we are here."

Pat John,
Hope Band

"I'm very concerned that our province doesn't recognize Aboriginal Rights. We want special fishing rights in our area. We want to process fish, sell fish. We want to export and market our products. We want to restrict sports fishing. We want to control pollution and regulations."

(In the original, "we want to process fish, shell fish.")

Chief Bill Roberts,
Campbell River Band

"The Okanagan, South Central, Kootenay and Lillooet Tribal Councils have made the first attempt as Tribal Councils to really implement the concepts of Indian self-determination and self-government that we talk about. The study is an attempt to deal with the wide range of issues which relate to Indian Government. The Central Interior Tribal Councils are saying that we can do as good a job as, if not better than, the Department of Indian Affairs, in providing services to people for which Parliament approves monies."

Saul Terry,
Bridge River Band
Vice-President of the Central Interior Tribal Councils

"The Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, adopted by the Eleventh General Assembly by all the member Bands of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, provides a base for the development and implementation of the policies and laws to regulate the Bands' chosen responsibilities, so that they can truly function as governments, Indian Governments."

Archie Pootlass,
Bella Coola Band
Vice-President of the North Coast Regional District

"Indian Government is not a new idea or concept. It was the strength of Indian Government prior to contact that helped us survive for thousands of years. It was the gradual destruction of Indian Government through the colonial approach of divide and rule which weakened our Indian Governments. Today we are just now waking up to the realization that we never gave up our right to govern ourselves."

Phillip Paul,
Tsartlip Band
Vice President of the Southwest Regional District

"What we are talking about is making the Canadian Government responsible for guaranteeing our rights and to provide the same resources to Indians as they do to other governments."

George Manuel,
Naskainlith Band
President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS

PRESIDENT: George Manuel, Neskainlith Band

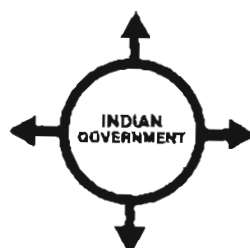
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Philip Paul, Tsartlip Band
Saul Terry, Bridge River Band
Archie Pootlass, Bella Coola Band
Dennis Patrick, Nazko Band

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES TO CHIEFS COUNCILS:

Stanley Stump, Williams Lake District
Frank Johnson, Bella Coola District
Nicholas Prince, Lake District
Victor Adolph, Lillooet/Lytton District
Stan Napoleon, Fort St. John District
John L. George, Fraser West District
Bill Williams, Fraser East District
William Roberts Sr., Kwawkwalth District
Sam Baptiste, Okanagan District
George Muldoe, Gitksan-Carrier District
Tom Sampson, South Island District
George Saddleman, Thompson/Nicola District
Xavier Eugene, Kootenay District

UBCIC April, 1980

*Transcriber's note:
The original document can be found
at the UBCIC archive.
The original recording and transcription of quotes
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and the entire manuscript,
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This transcription from the typed text was
prepared by Kerry Coast, November 2009.*



Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs
April 1980