

Tobique First Nation, NB August 2012

Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St. John River

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Wulustuk Times:

Each month we gather and publish the latest, most current and relevant native information for our readers. Proceeding with this concept, we feel that a well informed person is better able to see, relate with, and assess a situation more accurately when equipped with the right tools. Our aim is to provide you with the precise tools and the best information possible.

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SHAWN ATLEO RE-ELECTED AS NATIONAL CHIEF OF ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

CP

TORONTO - Incumbent Shawn Atleo has been re-elected as national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, vowing to assert his people's rights in Ottawa and at the mines, hydro projects and oilfields that neighbour aboriginal communities across the country.

"We will take our rightful place in our respective territories," Atleo told an assembly hall packed with chiefs after three rounds of voting.

"We will stand together and put the final stake in colonialism," he said. "We will reject government's attempt to deny or extinguish our rights."

His words were assertive, but an Atleo victory is also a sign of broad support among chiefs for working with Prime Minister Stephen Harper on the joint plan that the national chief spent much of his previous term crafting.

Just over a year ago, Harper and Atleo agreed to a process that created an education task force and culminated in a summit last winter with the prime minister, his cabinet ministers and the chiefs.

There, Harper committed to passing legislation that would give First Nations more control over schooling, and to working with natives on comprehensive land claims and treaties — commitments he has yet to make good on.

Atleo's conciliatory approach invited no end of harsh criticism during the election campaign, with his challengers accusing him of being too soft and too patient with the federal powers.

That criticism is mislaid, Atleo told reporters after his victory speech, making a point of gently sending a message to other Canadians and Ottawa that he is no push-over, and that he will reflect the will of the regional chiefs who advise him.

"Massive transformative change is required right now. I do feel we are at a moment of reckoning right now, an incredible moment of reckoning, not just for First Nations but for this country," he said, pointing to the need for improved housing and better living conditions on reserves.

"The path forward is only going to be hard or harder. It's going to be harder if governments don't come to the table and deal with First Nations in a respectful, rightful manner."

While Atleo reached out to his opponents in his victory speech, some of them and their supporters remained bitter.

"We're going to keep going," said runner-up Pam Palmater, a Mi'kmaw lawyer who led an anti-Atleo campaign. "This is a movement that won't stop now. Our movement is strong."

Palmater claimed 141 votes in the third ballot, while Atleo won support from 341 chiefs out of 512. Bill Erasmus, a regional chief from Northwest Territories, placed a distant third.

Atleo's victory on Wednesday shows that the large majority of chiefs could live with his plan, and want to see it continued, chiefs from all sides conceded.

"It's a confirmation of the work that he's done and that our executive and our chiefs have done over the last three years. And we have three more years to follow through with plans," said Jody Wilson-Raybould, the B.C. regional chief and a staunch Atleo advocate.

Harper was quick to offer his congratulations, issuing a statement within seconds of the declaration of victory. And Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan noted the mandate Atleo has now to pursue their common agenda.

"Today's outcome is an acknowledgment of the progress we are making toward our common goal of healthier, more self-sufficient First Nation communities."

Just because Atleo and Harper have a joint plan and a mutual respect does not mean maintaining the relationship will be easy, however.

All eight of the candidates running for national chief repeatedly and adamantly rejected Harper's changes to environmental laws. They demanded a far larger say in the sharing of the wealth from natural resources. And Atleo made a point of reminding the AFN that the organization opposes water legislation that is working its way through Parliament.

"It's a challenging relationship. Having said that, we have to have a relationship with the federal government," said Wilson-Raybould. "That's our reality."

SQUAMISH NATION SIGNS DECLARATION

Nation one of many to voice opposition to Enbridge pipeline

This month, the Squamish Nation joined a growing group of First Nations speaking out against Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline.

Squamish, along with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, signed onto the Save the Fraser Declaration — a document in which more than 100 aboriginal groups are asserting their indigenous laws to bar tar sands-related projects in their territories.

"I think it is important for us to start raising awareness on issues like resource distraction," Squamish Nation Chief Ian Campbell said.

The document was drawn up two years ago, as First Nations banded together to protect the Fraser River watershed and declare their opposition to the proposed pipeline.

The controversial proposal would see a pipeline built from the Alberta oil sands to a tanker facility in Kitimat. The provincial NDP opposes the \$5.5-billion plan, as well as a host of First Nations' voicing concern about the environmental threat of tankers transporting oil along B.C.'s coast. Squamish Nation is certainly impact be such development, Campbell said.

The decision by the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish to sign the document also hits Kinder Morgan, which is proposing to expand its Trans Mountain Pipeline from Alberta to its Burnaby oil port — which sits within Tsleil-Waututh traditional territory.

NEW MINING REGULATIONS REQUIRE ANISHINABEK CONSULTATION: CHIEF DAY

UOI Offices, Nipissing First Nation (May 2, 2012) – Changes to the Ontario Mining Act require direct consultation with the Anishinabek Nation, says Lake Huron Regional Grand Chief Isadore Day, Wiindawtegowinini.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines recently posted a number of regulatory proposals for the second phase of new regulations under the Mining Act on Ontario's Regulatory and Environmental Registries. Ministry officials provided Anishinabek leadership with a written request to comment on the proposed regulations via the Environmental Registry by May 1, 2012.

The Anishinabek Nation asserts that First Nations have the right to be consulted and their interests accommodated on a direct, government-to-government basis on mining legislation that affects their treaty territories. Because of their unique historic and legal relationship with both levels of government in Canada, First Nations maintain that such public consultation processes as the submission of comments to the Environmental Registry do not meet the standards set by Supreme Court decisions on the duty to consult and accommodate.

"More than ever, the level of dialogue with First Nations is critical," says Chief Day, who is Lands Portfolio holder for the Anishinabek Nation. "Our government-to-government discussions must match the dire need for clear and fair consultation with our First Nations and promote a clear and fair treaty right to sharing in the resource-based economy."

The proposed regulations also state that proponents and prospectors will be compensated for their consultation expenses. As there is no comparable reference to First Nations compensation, the Anishinabek Nation requests that the Ministry address this inequitable distribution of financial resources for consultation capacity.

"It is incumbent upon the Ministry to ensure that assigning a directive to developers to consult First Nations in the development process should in no way erode our rights at the government table," says Chief Day. "The province must maintain its role as a treaty partner and accommodate a process that is consistent to Anishinabek goals and values." The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 citizens. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

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QUEBEC'S ATIKAMEKW FIRST NATION FIGHTS FOR ITS RIGHTS

While Cree celebrate, Atikamekw leaders still haven't found a path to agreement with province Gazette

On the eve of a provincial election call, the disparity between two Quebec aboriginal communities has been brought into sharper focus this week.

Premier Jean Charest stood under the glare of flashbulbs and TV cameras in the National Assembly on Tuesday as he signed a historic agreement between the provincial government and Quebec's Cree Nation.

The deal guarantees new levels of economic opportunity and self-determination for the Cree, who have secured a unique bargaining position with the government through years of courtroom battles and direct political action.

But outside the limelight and in the depths of Quebec's boreal forest, the poverty-stricken Atikamekw continue their decades-long struggle to reach some kind of meaningful partnership with the provincial government.

"The Quebec government takes the approach that all aboriginal communities are equal but some are more equal than others," said Daniel Salée, a professor in Concordia University's First Peoples program. "It comes down to the fact that the government needs Cree territory for a variety of reasons. That, in turn, gives the Cree leverage at the negotiating table."

Reaching treaties with the Cree has been a priority for the government since before 1975, when the James Bay Agreement was signed. The deal ceded \$225 million of federal and provincial funds to the Cree in return for the construction of massive hydroelectric dams on their territory.

Tuesday's agreement is a major step forward in the development of Charest's multi-billion-dollar Plan Nord, which passes through vast swaths of Cree-owned land. The Plan Nord and the billions in mining revenue the Charest government says it will generate are expected to be at the centre of the Liberals' re-election platform.

"The Cree are savvy and they're politically organized, but there's no denying the importance their land holds in both the past and future of Quebec's economy," Salée said. "The Atikamekw, on the other hand, they're a community that's badly bruised and their only major resource (lumber) isn't really a significant bargaining chip."

In late June, the Atikamekw grew tired of stalled land claim negotiations with the federal and provincial governments. Groups in the northern communities of Opitciwan, Manawan and Wemotaci began forming blockades on logging roads and railways that pass through their territory. The Atikamekw demanded a James Bay-style agreement between their nations and the government as well as a larger stake in the development of natural resources.

“It was a last resort for us but in a way it was also our only resort,” said Opitciwan Grand Chief Christian Awashish. “We don’t have the kind of budget to win lengthy court battles with two levels of government, so we did the only thing we thought would work.”

The road blocks shed light on living conditions in Opitciwan, where more than half the adult population is unemployed. The eight-square-kilometre reserve is also experiencing a housing shortage crisis, massive poverty and social problems including alcoholism and drug abuse.

In the end, the blockade was lifted within a week after a trucker for pulp and paper giant Kruger Forestry drove his tractor-trailer through a checkpoint near Wemotaci. But the action forced the government and the Atikamekw to renew land claim negotiations, which have been deadlocked for 33 years.

“We’ve put the idea of royalties for logging rights on the table and we’re trying to reach an agreement in principle by the end of August,” said Quebec Native Affairs Minister Geoffrey Kelley. “I can certainly understand the frustration the Atikamekw feel and the challenges they face, but this is a process that has to start with us signing a treaty.”

For the people of Opitciwan, the blockades were just another chapter in a long and painful history the community has had in its dealings with industry and the provincial government. The village was uprooted and flooded twice to make way for the enormous Gouin Reservoir during the 1930s.

Eventually, the 2,000 Atikamekw that comprise Opitciwan settled on a tiny peninsula on the shores of the Gouin Reservoir, about 600 km north of Montreal.

“We’re desperate, everything the government has wanted from us was already taken,” Awashish said. “There are already logging companies nearby, the town’s already been moved to make way for a hydroelectric project so what do we have left to use for leverage? Nothing, really.”

The Atikamekw have given the provincial government until Aug. 30 to reach an agreement on their land claim and over disputed logging rights in the region. If a deal isn’t signed by then, the blockades are set to resume.

“We’ll be back on the roads in force if things aren’t settled,” Awashish said. “This time it’s the last chance, we’re in it for the long haul. I can’t guarantee things won’t get out of control, that things won’t get violent.”

WOODSTOCK RESERVE (NB) -Part 4

Nick Smith

I was sitting at Peter Paul’s table again where I was deeply absorbed with Peter unraveling Indian words in his language that had been in us for thousands of years. One of the professional linguists who visited in the summer months tried to discourage me from a task that he assured me served no purpose. The Alonquian Indians all spoke a language so similar that it was not difficult to know what another Algonquian was saying, although his home could have been a thousand miles away or more. Just who,

how, and under what circumstances people now greatly separated came to agree on language principles will never be known.

Suddenly we were disturbed by some loud agitated voices and some women rushing to a scene. A mixed group of youngsters was playing and fooling around. Someone claimed that a girl had jumped over a boy who was lying on the ground. Such a woeful action would mean that the boy would never be able to be a father to his own children. It made no difference if the act was intentional or a mistake, the outcome would be the same. Girls, when very young, were taught to never jump over a boy when they played together. In this case the excited adults were soon calmed being convinced that no such action had taken place. Strange as it may seem, this belief was also deeply embedded in the cultures of other Indian tribes across Canada.

The Maliseet, like the other North American Indians, had a rich collection of traditional customs and stories that had been passed down from parents to children over many generations. No one knows how they became introduced into the culture or why.

The people who lived from the Gaspé to southern Maine believed in Kluskabeh or Kluskap, (sometime spelled Gluskap. (I use the spelling that Andrew Dana who worked with Frank Siebert for many years compiling a Penobscot Dictionary accepted) the ancient Wabanaki cultural hero whose name in English was "the liar." The first term was used by the Maliseet indicating that the person or animal is no longer living; the shortened form used by the Penobscot indicates that he is still alive. They believe that he has left but will return some day to help the Indians. The image of this man of extraordinary power was that he paddled a stone canoe. His exploits as a hunter can still be seen in certain geologic features in the land from the Gaspé to southern Maine. He created the animals as helpers to the Indians. Finally after he made the world safe for man, he created Indians by shooting an arrow into the heartwood of a black ash tree. As a psychiatrist Kluskabeh had fine words of wisdom as to how one should get along in this world.

It is easy to feel the resonance of many years of Maliseet history as one becomes introduced to these ancient tales. The settings change from those of ancient times, to the period of French rule, then English dominance. Finally, in more recent time, Kluskabeh was the Maliseet's hope for justice over evil.

Ben Franklin accompanied with some other influential men met with a group of Indians to influence them to become Christians. The Indian reply was, "We believe your stories, why don't you believe ours?" The discussion ended abruptly. Not long ago a friend for the first time heard an Indian telling his cultural history. When the Indian finished, she turned to me saying, "He really believes those stories doesn't he." "Yes," I replied, "they are deeply rooted in their culture and history just as the stories of King George or George Washington are to us."

Before Indians were created the little people were fashioned. There were two kinds: the Mi'kumwesusuk of the forest and the W'nag'meswuk, who were among the rocks. These little people were seldom seen. They forewarned of some sort of change coming, either good or bad. They worked in the dark of night fashioning an image in clay that Indians could easily interpret as something good or bad. Thus a death in a family might

be foretold. A Mi'kumwes who permitted himself to be seen meant that he was foretelling good luck. In this way Indians were to be alerted to changes that would affect them.

There was an early theory that Kuluskap was the Wabanaki's god. The Maliseet quickly refuted this hypothesis saying that they never worshiped him, or made images of him. A respected deity would not be termed, "the liar." Others saw a resemblance of these stories to Viking stories and searched for a connection with them those hardy men who made settlements in Iceland, Greenland, and northern Newfoundland. This hypothesis was also not accepted.

Kuluskap did not create the earth or the universe. He only altered what had already been created to improve it for the Indians. The Creator owned the land but permitted the Indians to use the land. The Indian was to keep the land in good order so that when they no longer needed it, the land would be in fine condition to be passed on to others.

Of all the stories showing Kuluskabeh in his many hats as a person of phenomenal strength, a mighty magician, or a reputed trickster, the one that I like the best is Kuluskabeh the baby sitter.

This story, like the other Kuluskabeh tales, are very old being passed down from one generation to the next since anyone can recall. Kuluskabeh had roamed the land and conquered the strongest animals, magicians, and devils. One evening he was sitting in his wigwam reflecting over his many victories. He thought that there was nothing that he could not conquer. He asked a woman who was sitting near him if she could think of anything that he could not conquer. She was a wise woman remaining silent for several minutes before replying. Then she said, "only one!" "What is that asked the amazed puzzled Kuluskabeh as he quickly reviewed in his mind all of his toughest conquests. "The mighty baby that is facing you reclining in its papoose carrier that leaned against the wigwam wall opposite him, she answered. The baby contentedly sucked on a piece of maple sugar. Kuluskabeh had been too busy roaming the land hunting and doing his great deeds so never married. His close contacts with small children were few. Kuluskabeh looked at the smiling child's face that was still sucking the maple candy. The mighty Kuluskabeh stretched out his arms to pick up the baby. The smile left the baby's face and it turned away. Kuluskabeh in his deep voice commanded the baby to allow Kuluskabeh to pick him up. The smile faded from the baby's face, although he still sucked the sweet treat. Kuluskabeh in a still stronger voice reached out to the baby. The scared baby turned away from him crying vociferously. Kuluskabeh then resorted to his magic tricks. The baby stopped crying, but would have nothing to do with Kuluskabeh. His interest was in the sweet maple candy and expressed a short "Goo! Goo!". Babies still say, "goo, goo" in remembrance of their victory over the mighty Kuluskabeh. The baby was the only creature that mighty Kuluskabeh was not able to conquer.

Before Kuluskabeh's final departure he with his friend Woodchuck paddled to Europe in Kuluskabeh's stone canoe to inform Europeans that they were not the ones who discovered North America, the Indians were. The mighty Kuluskabeh at a great age still paddled his stone canoe and was as much as ever the Wabanakis' champion.

The famous Passamaquoddy chief and craftsman Tomah Joe produced a number of birch bark etchings depicting the marvelous acts of their cultural hero. James Francis Penobscot historian and artist recently told me that they did not do pictures of Kuluskap. It would be disrespectful to him. Kuluskap is still deeply embedded in the culture and traditions of the Wabanaki.

There will be other Wabanaki figures who are richly entrenched in Maliseet culture and were often referred to in the middle of the twentieth century in future issues.

QUEBEC RECOGNIZES ABORIGINAL CUSTOMARY ADOPTION

Montreal, June 13, 2012 – Ghislain Picard, Chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, is pleased that the Government of Quebec has officially recognized the customary rules of adoption of the First Nations and Inuit. A Bill is tabled today at the National Assembly to modify the Quebec Civil Code in order to recognize the legality of Aboriginal customary adoption. “This is a very important step in Quebec’s recognition of our status as Aboriginal people and of the specific laws of governance of the First Nations”, stated Chief Picard.

The recognition of the customary rules of adoption set out in the Bill dealing with adoption and parental authority is a direct result of the “Report of the Working Group of Aboriginal Customary Adoption”, tabled on April 16, 2012, which stated: “In the Aboriginal tradition, the historical actions of various authorities were hardly propitious to the development of customary adoption. However, its very survival demonstrates clearly the resilience of this practice.

Furthermore, it is a real and contemporary expression of the uniqueness of Aboriginal cultures.”

Consultations were held in Aboriginal communities in order to document the status of customary adoption and to clarify how this practice could be integrated into legislation. “This was remarkable work. This study made it possible to recognize, not only the reality of customary adoption, but also its relevance which is well established in the lifestyles of our people and communities. We are extremely happy that the Quebec Government is now able to adapt its laws in order to meet the needs and expectations of our populations”, declared Chief Picard.

The Bill states specifically that “the conditions of any Aboriginal custom in Quebec which is in harmony with the principles of the interest of the child, of the respect of his or her rights and of the consent of the parties involved, may replace the conditions for adoption set out in the law”. This legislative amendment will grant the right to families who have adopted a child under customary rules to exercise all parental authority just as any other parent who has adopted a child according to the legal regime.

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DAN'S CORNER: – CROWN LAND IS INDIAN LAND

The land that has come to be known as Canada is Indian land, our land, and has always been our land.

At some point after contact those transplanted Europeans arrogantly decided that they would begin referring to Indian land as Indian Crown Land. This represents the beginning of the theft of our land. It also represents the beginning of the creation of the legal fiction and political illusion that has come to be known as Canada. This was the eurocanadian means of legitimizing what they knew and still know as the theft of land. Theft of Indian land.

If one reads European history one will discover that the theft of Indian land began much earlier. This was when the Christian church divided North America into portions and gave certain portions to different countries. Along with land grants the church also granted to European whites its go-ahead to conquer and populate Indian lands for in the minds of Church officials the occupiers were/are only sub-human savages. These savages were not civilized, not Christians, were/are not like Europeans for they did not try to conquer and convert "others" and they did not develop the land.

In the minds of Europeans the "permission" from the Christian church was and is the legitimizing force for the act of stealing land that does not rightfully belong to one. After all, the church gave its approval to steal savage land.

The Christian churches "permission" was what began the religious theft process of our land, and the methods that gave it life and sustainability, into the present, was the concept of Indian Crown Land. From there, it was simply a matter of time and eurocanadian chicanery attitudes for it to become simply Crown Land.

In the present day you add to the mix the eurocanadian's deliberate and calculated state of denial with respect to their theft of our land along with their "white is right" and "might is right" attitude and you have a situation where those eurocanadians are more than willing and able to eliminate more of our people in the same manner that they managed to annihilate the Beothuk, so that they may continue holding on to our land.

Maybe the eurocanadians won't annihilate our people in as blatant a manner as they once did but annihilate they will for they will not return our land simply because they know in their hearts that this land is our land. For their individual and collective greed is too great. Greater yet than even their individual and collective guilt for their theft of Indian land.

As Indian people we are duty-bound to do what we must do to continue what the Ancestors have instructed us to do. To honor, respect, nurture and protect our Sacred Earth Mother. And to honor, respect, nurture and protect the Ancestors, the People and the Seventh Generation.

All My Relations, Dan Ennis

DEAN'S DEN: Magic Lantern,August Alders

Magic Lantern

A lightning-bug - a spangle
Creator's gift ... the firefly
Refulgent and flamboyant
Yet, a softened glow - to gratify,
Flitting through the dahlias
And around the old rail fence
Neath the branches of the maple
In the grasses tall and dense,
By the flowering-crab - a shimmer
Twinkle, sparkle, blink
A magic lantern point of light
To dazzle, blaze, and wink,
A flash in the night-filled darkle
To strob, and play, and dance
In the gloam of dusk - a candle
Seen - then gone in a glance!

August Alders

Cut your alders in August
For the time is opportune
But you must be sure to do it
With the fullness of the moon,
Then they won't grow back again
There'll be no next spring roots
For, new growth now is over
And, dormant are the roots!

D.C. Butterfield