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Wulustuk Times

Wulustuk - Indigenous name for St John
River

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WISDOM OF THE PAST - Part 3 – Deceitful Values

“They believe also that when they die they go up into the stars, and afterwards they go into fair green fields, full of fair trees, flowers, and rare fruits”
Marc Lescarbot (regarding the beliefs of the Mi'kmaq in an afterlife) Nova Francia; A Description of Acadia, 1606, pp. 156.

The world we know while we are little children growing up obviously has a great influence on the personality that we become. The daily routines and customs we see around us at that early age are all we have to measure our values by. We learn to function and survive within this world that is the "norm" for us. We take it for granted that this is the way it is. But, as we mature and meet new people, new families, make new friends, and watch programs and movies on television, and perhaps travel to new places, we are exposed to different lifestyles and values. We compare these to the way we live. We discover new things that are giving other people pleasures that perhaps we have never experienced. This is the most critical and dangerous point in our journey. We will start to determine and define our own values, weighing the values we have been taught with the new ones we are discovering.

But at this age are we mature enough to intelligently and wisely assess these new values, and accept them or reject them as part of our life style? Will we reject the values that our parents (or parent) taught us and replace them with newer, more exciting values we have discovered? Perhaps our own lives are so unpleasant and dysfunctional that we will take on any new values that give us a quick fix of happiness. It could be alcohol, drugs, gambling, or sex. Yes, this is a very critical time in our growing up years. We are shaping our own personality, molding our character, not always heeding the spirit of generations dwelling within us.

Perhaps the most powerful influence on our lives will be the propaganda that happiness is found in accumulating as much material abundance as we can, just for ourselves, not to share with others, but to flaunt as our success and prestige. To rise to the top and have all eyes watching us with envy. It is the most selfish of values. It is the most false and the most destructive.

In Canada today the Christian religion and the oligarchy form of European government enforces these values for their own selfish goals. This great deception pervades all levels of social order, even to the politics on reserves, which pretend to have their own traditional form of government.

Christianity promises a new life-after-death world that, for its followers, promises a heavenly city built entirely of the most expensive minerals that European monarchs have sought on this planet for many centuries. According to the Holy Bible, the book of Revelation, chapter 21: verses 18 – 21, the walls of this promised city will be built out of jasper, while the city itself will be built entirely out of pure gold. The very foundation of the city will be "adorned" with expensive jewels. There will be twelve gates leading into this city of gold and each gate will be made from a single massive size pearl, the "pearly gates of heaven" that we have been told so much about. You won't find roads or streets made of dirt or even contemporary asphalt pavement. No, all the streets will be paved with "pure gold." This is where all Christians who are judged obedient and meet the qualifications will go after they die, spending an eternity surrounded by gold and expensive, precious jewels – like winning the ultimate lottery.

This is the final goal of life for Christians, the paradise that the Jesuits, Calvinists, and other early Christian leaders would teach to the Indians, the gold and silver religion. These ministers of the gospel of the Christian faith felt sorry for the poor Indians who based their beliefs on the values taught by Mother Earth, and an afterlife of no more than just a "happy hunting ground", a natural place where the weather was always good and animals wouldn't run away, and there were plenty of fruits and nuts to eat. They were astounded and perplexed that the Indians thought themselves richer than the Europeans, even though they didn't accumulate hardly any material possessions, especially items of gold and silver. In fact they buried what few possessions they had with them as part of their funeral ceremonies. How stupid is that! Father Pierre Biard wrote in 1611 of the Indians in Acadia, "... they regard themselves as much richer than we are, although they are poor and wretched in the extreme." Even more perplexing, these Indians didn't selfishly hoard up for themselves to prove their success over others by how much they had accumulated. Instead they shared what little they had with all their friends and relations. Wrote Biard, "These Savages are extremely liberal toward each other; no one is willing to enjoy any good fortune by himself, but makes his friends sharers in the larger part of it."

They even shared the land, unlike the European monarchs who believed North America was a gift to them by their God to have dominion over, to mark out boundaries of land to which they claimed ownership, often through bloody wars. Marc Lescarbot wrote in 1604 of the Indians in

Acadia, "Our savages do not found their wars upon the possession of Land we do not observe that they encroach upon one another in that respect."

The new culture and religion that came to this country has dug up the ground for gold, silver, copper, iron, coal and oil. They have cut down the forests to make lumber and paper, and for making room for raising huge numbers of livestock and planting profitable agricultural crops. And in the process of generating this material affluence they have polluted the environment and made the air and waters unsafe for humans and all other living creatures. The executives and powerful owners of mega-corporations, the monarchs, prime ministers and presidents flaunt their wealth of material possessions, their mini-heavens right here on earth, and rejoice in the massive carbon footprint they have made in climbing to the top of selfishness and greed. This is not the goal a true Indian seeks. Nor does he seek the religion that rewards an obedient servant with streets of pure gold, walls of jasper and gates of pearls.

In 1599 Samuel de Champlain went on a journey to areas of Central and South America where the Spanish had begun to colonize. He observed the Indians there being enforced into slave labour, compelled to dive into deep waters to harvest pearls (oysters). They were also forced to work as slaves in silver mines. The king of Spain had established an Inquisition among the Indians and enslaved them or else put many of them cruelly to death. The Catholic religion was used as an enabling tool in justifying these dastardly deeds. Indians who did not attend mass were beaten severely in public by Catholic priests.

At this earliest date in America's colonization history the pearl fishery was already showing decline from over harvesting. And so the story has continued until this day in many similar aspects of the European colonial pursuit of the ultimate goal of the city of gold. In fact, as this article is being written, "black gold" is gushing uncontrolled from an oil well deep in the ocean in the Gulf of Mexico at a rate greater than 12,000 barrels per day, a major environmental disaster. A horrible inflicted injury upon our Earth Mother.

Take time to assess the values and goals each of us has blindly accepted as the only way to achieve happiness. Listen to the wisdom in the teachings, the oral traditions, of the ancestors who once opposed the new culture and religion of the invading colonists, those primordial values that had evolved over thousands of years and enabled the ancients to live in harmony with the Earth Mother. Each of the Indian nations may have had some different cultures and traditions than the others, because of the geography and terrain of where they lived, and they may have shared and adopted parts of each other's culture, but the inherent values within those cultures for respecting the Earth Mother remain strong and unchanged to this day. They are enduring and healing values. It is time to rediscover those values, and if necessary to adopt or develop new traditions to reflect and preserve them, and to teach them to all our relations and to all mankind.

..... all my relations, Nugeekadoonkut

A SEA OF CHANGE - OR IS IT

By Sheryl Lightfoot

Dr. Sheryl Lightfoot, Lake Superior Band of Ojibwe, is assistant professor in the First Nations Studies Program and Department of Political Science at University of British Columbia.

In 2007, 143 members of the United Nations voted to support the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Only four countries registered votes against the Declaration: Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. Immediately after the General Assembly vote, all four of these countries (known among indigenous organizations as "CANZUS") issued simultaneous diplomatic statements that attempted to justify their individual votes, citing the multiple problems they had with the text. Each of the four emphasized that the Declaration would not be binding on them since they did not vote in favor of it.

Since 2007, indigenous peoples all over the world have been drawing attention to these four countries' resistance to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, attempting to embarrass or even shame them on the world stage for standing alone in opposition to the human rights document that articulated minimum international standards on indigenous rights. While all four countries have repeatedly, and often quite

defensively, claimed that they will not be moved by such meaningless international pressure, two of these countries have now changed their official positions on the Declaration, and the other two are currently reviewing their stance, sending clear signals to the international community that an official change in their positions may be forthcoming.

Certainly, this sudden change of heart in the CANZUS group is reason to celebrate. Indigenous peoples of the world who have labored tirelessly for decades to achieve a global consensus statement on indigenous rights have finally achieved their goal. Furthermore, these recent position changes also demonstrate that the CANZUS states are indeed subject to diplomatic and moral persuasion on indigenous rights, even if they try to vehemently deny it.

A closer look at the fine print and provisos offered by Australia, Canada and New Zealand, however, should offer some pause to the celebratory mood.

In April 2009, the incoming Rudd government in Australia was the first to announce a position change, indicating that it was now officially supporting the Declaration. However, the statement issued by Australian Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin contained a number of caveats that deserve to be highlighted. There were four occasions in the statement that described the Declaration as “aspirational” and several mentions of it as “non-binding” and having no effect on Australian law.

Canada moved next. During the annual Speech from the Throne delivered March 10, Canadian Governor General Michaëlle Jean announced that the Canadian government would “take steps to endorse this aspirational document in a manner fully consistent with Canada’s Constitution and laws.”

Now in April, at the United Nations Permanent Forum in New York, New Zealand’s Maori Affairs Minister Dr. Pita Sharples surprised the forum and the world with his announcement that New Zealand would officially change its position to one of support. Upon closer examination, however, it is clear that the statement delivered by Dr. Sharples contained a substantial amount of legal rhetoric that emphasized the conditional nature of New Zealand’s support. In the four-and-a-half page statement, some variation of the word “aspirational” appears six times. This statement, like both Australia and Canada, emphasized the non-binding nature of the

Declaration and mentioned specifically how it would not impact New Zealand's domestic law or policies.

Next, the aspiring multilateral internationalist Obama administration offered up a statement on the Declaration. U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice told the Permanent Forum that the United States would also begin to review its position, in the spirit of honoring its commitment to Native Americans. At this point, no caveats or qualifications have been mentioned.

Clearly, we are witnessing some type of sea change amongst the CANZUS states on indigenous rights and the Declaration. But, is it really a change? Or is it, upon closer examination, a change that ultimately complicates the indigenous rights struggle by providing moral, political and diplomatic cover for the CANZUS states? As Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, stated, "limited support of the Declaration threatens the very purpose, essence and integrity of the Declaration as an international instrument."

International lawyers and diplomats choose their words carefully, and the preponderance of the terms "aspirational" and "non-binding" is disappointing. The emphasis on a strict adherence to existing domestic legal frameworks is disheartening, since the Declaration is intended to serve as a framework for indigenous-state relations based on justice and mutual respect. This very careful couching of language by Australia, Canada and New Zealand suggests that these countries are attempting to change public perception of their positions on the Declaration in order to mitigate some of the loss of international prestige that accompanied their votes against the Declaration. Meanwhile, they are holding fast to an effective position that continues to resist a full commitment to indigenous rights as articulated in the Declaration. In other words, their fundamental position on the Declaration is unchanged; it remains one of resistance to the Declaration, although that resistance is now more nuanced and shrouded under a veil of perceived international legitimacy.

Will the United States follow the lead of Australia, Canada and New Zealand and offer only limited and conditional support? Or, will the new administration honor its stated commitment to the indigenous peoples of the United States, listen to our voices, and offer its full and unqualified support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The next move is yours, Mr. Obama.

FACTSHEET ON: FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT (FPIC)

Important! Please share

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2007, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the obligation of states (countries) to consult with Indigenous Peoples and “to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.” “While the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples may not be legally binding per se, in important parts, it reaffirms customary international law, say two law professors.” (S James Anaya & Siegfried Wiessner)

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

The principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent is vital to upholding the human rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The right of FPIC is an expression of the fundamental and inherent right to self-determination of American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States and First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada.

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent is a basic underpinning of Indigenous Peoples’ ability to conclude and implement valid treaties and agreements, to have sovereignty over and protect our lands and natural resources, and to develop and participate in processes that redress violations of our land and treaty rights.

From Consultation to Consent

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent is defined as the right of our communities and Native Nations to be thoroughly informed about any development affecting our lands and resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water, environment or other resources and any legislative or administrative actions which may affect our community, in a timely basis, and to provide consent prior to the commencement of the development or action. This includes participation in setting the terms and conditions addressing the economic, social, cultural, spiritual and environmental impacts.

An Emerging New Standard

At the core of the Free Prior, and Informed Consent standard is the acknowledgement that under certain circumstances, companies must accept that projects will not proceed – especially when our Native Nations/Indigenous Peoples say NO! For most companies, this is a difficult pill to swallow.

While companies should set Free, Prior, and Informed Consent as an ideal standard, only Indigenous communities have the right to a project veto. Other stakeholders, such as NGOs, do not have this power. This distinction is based upon the emergence of national and international jurisprudence grounded in the concept that Native/Indigenous communities have land title—non-Native communities and other stakeholders do not. In addition, in many cases, non-Native communities do not have the historic, spiritual, and cultural ties to land.

“In many ways, Canada has been at the forefront of this evolution. Over the past 10 years, a series of court decisions has fundamentally altered the relationship between resource companies and Indigenous Peoples’ communities. Courts have consistently ruled that governments must consult with and accommodate the needs of Indigenous communities prior to development when a decision affects the exercise of aboriginal title. These court decisions have led to a new assertiveness among many First Nations and Inuit communities: in recent cases, development projects facing Indigenous community opposition have been stopped in their tracks.” – The Ethical Funds Company

~ FPIC is More than Mere Consultation ~

Related to development and environmental impacts, companies can achieve the FPIC standard through consultation. But consultation, on its own, does not constitute FPIC. Consultation is not equivalent to consent. The possibility that projects can be rejected must be acknowledged.

Elements of Free, Prior and Informed Consent

Free from any external manipulation, interference, coercion, outside pressure, duress, fraud, bribery and “divide and conquer” tactics. Critical protocols must be developed concerning monetary inducements. Free includes the absence of any threats or implied retaliation if the results of the decision are to say “no”.

Prior refers to meaningful, fully informed consent sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or decision-making of activities or developments. This allows for sufficient time, without time constraint to allow for information-gathering, Indigenous analysis and discussion, including translations into traditional languages.

Informed means full disclosures and having all the information available reflecting all views and positions in appropriate languages and formats that recognize the unique and diverse indigenous governing structures, laws, cultures and customs. This includes the active participation of tribal members, elders, women, spiritual leaders, subsistence practitioners and traditional knowledge holders, with adequate time and resources to consider impartial and balanced information about potential risks and benefits, including interpretation of highly technical and legal language. Consent is the community or tribal governmental body making a clear and full agreement of the proposed activity or development. Consent must be acquired at the earliest stages. Agreements must be reached within the established leadership structures and with tribal grassroots communities that would be affected by the decision. One caveat: In modern indigenous communities not all tribal members' have an equal voice. The effect of "Internalized Oppression" as a symptom of colonization takes its toll. Companies and state/provincial governments should make special efforts to understand how projects and administrative policies impact marginalized groups. Decision-makers must make sure that decisions don't deepen pre-existing community divisions.

What We Must Do

The standards and policy of FPIC and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) must be implemented at every level of government and in decision-making bodies within the United States and Canada including our American Indian/Alaska Native and First Nations, Inuit and Métis governing structures. This includes operating standards of companies, social and financial investment policies, governmental environment, natural resource and historical protection regulatory and compliance laws and many other areas.

CANADA FLAGGED FOR FAILURE TO PROTECT ABORIGINAL RIGHTS -sun media

OTTAWA - Canada has been cited for flouting human rights of aboriginals and people entangled in post 9-11 national security measures in an annual report by Amnesty International.

While the report cites some positive progress - such as limits on the use of Tasers - it also flags loose practices in Canadian overseas mining operations in the 2010 study that finds a growing "global justice gap." The report said Canada has not done enough to stop violence against indigenous women and girls or uphold native land rights.

"The authorities failed to ensure respect for indigenous rights when issuing licences for mining, logging and petroleum and other resource extraction," the report states. "The government continued to make baseless claims that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples does not apply in Canada."

Amnesty International Canada spokesman John Tackaberry said the report highlights issues that cause a "sustained pattern of concern" that is leading to the erosion of Canada's position as a global leader in human rights.

"The historical role that Canada has played in terms of international institutions as a champion of human rights is wearing thin because of our inability to address a number of issues raised," he said. "There's a real concern that Canada is rapidly losing its prominence as a key spokesperson on international human rights issues - and that's a critical loss for the world community, and that's a critical loss for Canadian citizens." The annual report documents repression, torture, unfair trials, forced evictions, racism, limits of free speech and a litany of other human rights abuses in 159 countries, pointing to cases where powerful governments are blocking advances in international justice by silencing criticism and standing above the law on human rights.

FIRST NATIONS TO GET CLEAN-WATER LAW -sun media

OTTAWA - For the first time, Canada's First Nations will get federal legislation to help improve the quality of drinking water.

"It's a good bill, long overdue," Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl said Wednesday. The move gives the federal government the power "to enforce

what everyone else takes for granted,” he said.

The Safe Water for First Nations Act, introduced in the Senate, is meant to lay out federal standards and lines of responsibility for attaining and maintaining safe drinking water in First Nations communities. It will spell out who is responsible for everything from infrastructure upgrades to testing or repairs.

Strahl said there are already fewer communities facing a high risk of drinking water contamination - from 193 to 49 - since the Conservatives took power.

“We’ve done a pretty fair job but overall water issues management will never go away. It’s not like we can improve it and say good enough. It will always require, in our opinion, a legislative mandate.” The government is continuing what it calls the First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan, which provides \$330 million over two years. This is funding a countrywide assessment of water quality on reserves.

“This is a forever issue,” Strahl said. “Managing water will never go away.”

GENOCIDE AND RELOCATION OF THE DINE’H (NAVAJO)

By Brigitte Thimiakis

Far from the spotlights of the Media, a human and cultural genocide is going on every day in America, in different places. Human, civil and religious rights are repeatedly being violated. Native Americans are being forcedly relocated even nowadays. One example in the USA is the ongoing forced relocation of the Navajo in Arizona.

The Navajo People, (the Dine'h in their native tongue) have been forced over the years to leave their land and settle in urban surroundings which are irrelevant to their culture, or in areas contaminated by toxic wastes since the worst nuclear disaster of the USA in 1979.

At the beginning of the 20th century, geological surveys revealed the wealth of natural resources on Dine'h and Hopi land. The Black Mesa, the Northern Part of the reservation, is the largest open-cast coal mine in the world, with an estimated deposit of 200 billions tons of coal, operated since the 1960's by the PEABODY COAL COMPANY (owned by a British company). In addition, one third of all uranium mined in the United States has come from the Dine'h land. And next to the site, the US largest power

plant was built, adding dramatically to the pollution of the area and the rest of the world as it is the largest single source of greenhouse gasses in North America.

The relocation of 12.000 Dine'h was to begin when in 1974 President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 93531 - while on a skiing trip. As a result, 25% of the Dine'h who were first relocated to the area around the Rio Puerco have died within six years, as the soil and water of these "New Lands" chosen for them are contaminated by uranium tailings, an extremely toxic substance the levels of which have been measured at 100 times the maximum safe level. The birth defect rate has risen to TWICE the national average. This relocation land is unfit for humans or animals, yet the US government is still taking extreme measures to force the relocation of the nearly 3 000 Dine'h who have resisted and refused it, and most are elders.

The main reason why these people refuse to give up their land is their sacred bond to Mother Earth. Leaving the land of their ancestors is bound to kill their spirituality by taking away their heritage and identity. The elders, many of them grandmothers, will not sign the Relocation Agreement in spite of the continuous harassment for another reason too : they know that by doing so their descendents will lose claim of the land as the agreement concerns only the signer - the children and grandchildren are left out.

The harsh measures taken by the US government in Black Mesa amount to an unbelievable level of harassment and violation of basic human rights which would never be tolerated elsewhere. These measures stem from a continuous policy of terrorism and threats. The Dine'h are threatened with exclusion orders, eviction notices nailed to their doors. There have been beatings and arrests even for the elderly. Firewood and tools have been confiscated even in winter. Wells have been capped and the people forbidden to draw water out of them which means that they have no fresh water and that their ability to maintain their sheep has been reduced dramatically . What is left to them is the water from the nearby contaminated streams, which has killed many of their sheep. "They're our living! Taking away our sheep is taking away our life." shouted Chris as armed rangers were confiscating the sheep on a farm where the boy was taking care of them. The confiscation of the livestock upon which the Dine'h depends is part of the US policy. Every time the livestock is confiscated, the only thing the Dine'h can do is BUY it again -regardless of their poverty. In addition, houses, holy sites or burial graves have been illegally bulldozed to the ground.

Another inhuman measure is known under the name of the Bennett Freeze. This law was issued in 1966 to prevent the Navajo tribe from constructing and repairing their dwellings on land which was subject to the so-called land dispute with the Hopi tribe. The Freeze was confirmed by Congress in 1980, lifted in 1992 by a US District Court order, imposed again in 1995 and continues through this day. For over 30 years the Dine'h people have been forbidden not only to build new dwellings, but also to repair their homes (even broken windows!) which are continuously shaken by the dynamite explosions from the mines. The Bennett Freeze has also stopped essential construction, such as waterline and power line extensions, road improvement and inadequate sewage disposal. Only 3% of these families have electricity; only 10% have running water. Several generations of families have to live together in dwellings declared unfit for human habitation. The conditions of life are even worse than in the rest of the Dine'h reservation. As a matter of fact, all the facilities including housing should be replaced. What is more, the Dine'h Black Mesa are now totally dependent on the Hopi Tribal Council. Permits are required for everything, from cutting a green branch from a tree to grazing their herds or even bury the dead on their own land, which is part of their religion.

It is fair to say that the genocide of the Dine'h is more than ever in effect, resulting in extremely high rates of radiation-related diseases, high suicide and murder rates, child abuse, high infant mortality and soaring school drop-out rates.

Now the mining is coming close to Big Mountain, a sacred site to the Dine'h, and the USA want them out of the area. The Dine'h resistance to this forced relocation is not only motivated by the belief that this land has always been Indian land - their attitude towards mining itself compels them to protect the Earth. In their eyes, mining is open surgery into Mother Earth who has protected them and nurtured them for so long; the white man violates the land by extracting the coal and the water in order to create more facilities for himself (the energy is used to serve the huge demands of energy in South California and Las Vegas), thus contributing to the drastic environmental destruction of the planet. Like many other Native Americans, by their resistance the Dine'h are trying to warn us of the dangers threatening the future of our children and of the earth. They are trying to protect not only the land where the Creator has put them but also the whole planet. And this, even though their hearts are broken in the process. For the traditional Dine'h elders, to give away the land is to die twice, spiritually and physically.

The US government has remained blind to their rightful claims for decades, and in order to cover up the scandal of the whole genocide, they have fabricated the so-called "Navajo-Hopi Land Conflict". Thanks to the Relocation Act of 1974, officially called the "Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute Settlement Act", they have painted the expulsion of the Dine'h as a 'well-meaning mediation of a territorial dispute between two Indian tribes'. They have portrayed the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) as benevolent and the tribes as childish and ungrateful. The truth is that from the 1500s to the 1800's the Dine'h and Hopi coexisted peacefully in this area. Later in the 19th century attempts were made by Colonel Kit Carson, on contract with the USA, to annihilate the Hopi and Dine'h. He destroyed their crops and livestock, and forced the captured Dine'h population on the 400 mile "Long Walk" to Fort Summer, New Mexico. Thousands died before they arrived and the survivors were held in concentration camps that later inspired Adolf Hitler and led him to congratulate the USA on the strategies chosen to "get rid of the Indians".

Surviving under intolerable conditions the Dine'h were forced to agree to the 1868 Navajo treaty and were given only a fraction of their original homeland. They were also "educated" by the white man to forget everything about their national culture : the children were removed from their homes, forbidden to practice their religion, speak their native language or do anything related to their culture. However, the Dine'h resisted again. In 1882, the US government imposed new boundaries to both the Hopi and Navajo; as a result, many Navajo found themselves living or having sacred sites within the Hopi land, and many Hopi living on Navajo land. In 1923, through the BIA, the US government created a diversion to the mining projects by fabricating a territorial conflict between the two tribes, and against the will of the Dine'h people, they formed the First 'Navajo Tribal Council', which was merely used to sign mining leases. The conflict has never existed between the Hopi and Dine'h people who have cried out in protest against the mining companies and the BIA. In the early 1970's the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act became law and there followed a 50/50 partition of the lands, 90% livestock reduction and a Relocation Commission to implement removal of the people living in the "wrong" areas. This is when the home repair and construction freeze began.

The latest deadline for the eviction of the Dine'h was February 1st, 2000. Thousands of supporters all over the world had been protesting against it with countless emails, letters, phone calls and petitions. Native

organizations and individuals have actively supported the cause of the Dine'h. Demonstrations and vigils were held in several places of the USA and a number of European countries as well, and many supporters even traveled to Big Mountain in support of the Dine'h, even from far-away places like Japan where a Walk was organized .However, the Media have been very quiet and as in many other countries the American people are not really aware of what is going on in their nation. .Eventually nothing bad happened and the Dine'h are still in their homes for the time being, but it is feared that the US government together with the companies are waiting for the pressure of the public opinion to decrease.

On Thursday 17th February, 2000, during the plenary sessions in Strasbourg, France, the European Parliament adopted the Urgency Resolution against the forced relocation, the ongoing violations of human, religious and land rights of the Dine'h at Big Mountain. This is another step in the right direction, however the everyday life of the Dine'h has not changed yet. This is still the struggle of a "small group of resolute Dine'h fighting out a battle against the USA Superpower", as Professor Harald Ihmig has put it in this remarkable article on the issue. And all people of goodwill should find a way to help them.

SPECIAL: NEW ZEALAND ANNOUNCES SUDDEN SHIFT IN ABORIGINAL POLICY

"... at the United Nations Permanent Forum in New York, New Zealand's Maori Affairs Minister Dr. Pita Sharples surprised the forum and the world with his announcement that New Zealand would officially change its position to one of support. Upon closer examination, however, it is clear that the statement delivered by Dr. Sharples contained a substantial amount of legal rhetoric that emphasized the conditional nature of New Zealand's support. In the four-and-a-half page statement, some variation of the word "aspirational" appears six times. This statement, like both Australia and Canada, emphasized the non-binding nature of the Declaration and mentioned specifically how it would not impact New Zealand's domestic law or policies."

DEAN'S DEN, If I were a Tree

If I were a tree, I'd be a tree
That everyone would want to see
But one thing for sure, no if's or but's
I'd not want someone to steal my nuts,
I'd be as twisted as I could
So none would cut me down for wood
And also too, unlike the rest
No bird droppings from some nest,
No crazy kids with tire swing
With all the noises that would bring
I don't want to grow on some nice lawn
To be a black dog's leg-cocked pawn,
I don't want to be the tallest either
Or have the biggest branches neither
And if some highway came my way
I'd hope someone would save the day,
So, if I had my choice of each
I think I'd be ... son of a beech! --D.C. Butterfield

A COMMENT FROM DAN ENNIS

I heard a recent CBC radio interview with a Manny Jules on the subject of taxation for Indians and Indian lands along with other white privileges such as mortgages for our reserve homes and property. According to Manny Jules these particular white economic privileges will “empower” our people and Indians can be just like “normal” Canadians and be able to join the white european free market economy. I cannot imagine anyone, but especially Indians, wishing to join the white european capitalist system which is so destructive to human beings and to our Mother Earth. One has only to look at the devastation that has and is wrought upon our Earth Mother here in Turtle Island over the last 500 years to see all of the different species that have gone extinct, including the many different Indian nations. All of this human and environmental devastation under the manmade evil known as the free market economy capitalist system. Manny Jules and everyone should view the Michael Moore film entitled “Capitalism: A Love Story”.

The driving force behind the capitalist system is pure naked greed disguised as competitive drive.

It sounds to me like Manny Jules is one Indian who has chosen to forget his heritage and his Indian identity, the Indian identity of the Ancestors and the Seventh Generation. Manny Jules has chosen to forget how our homeland was stolen from our people. The truth is that our homeland was stolen through violence, greed, war and genocide perpetrated by the european invaders.

Some facts that Indians should consider when looking at the so-called free market system:

- think the sub-prime fiasco.
- think the recent Wall Street meltdown.
- think the unequal and completely out-of-balance distribution of wealth inherent within the capitalist system where 1% of the population controls 95% of wealth to the detriment of society as a whole.

I would also urge Manny Jules and any Indians thinking about becoming modern Indian capitalists to read about the fate of the Menominee Indians when they demanded to be part of the white capitalist system and how quickly they began to lose their land to unscrupulous and crooked whites. Finally, I would remind and urge modern Indians to think as our Ancestors thought about our Sacred Earth Mother.

All My Relations,
Dan Ennis

Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you can be successful or be happy.