

Tobique First Nation, NB November 2013

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 the precise tools and the best information possible.

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SHALE GAS PROTESTERS STAKE CLAIMS ON CROWN LAND

Elsipogtog members lay symbolic plaques
CBC News

Members of the Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick are staking symbolic claim on Crown land in their continuing opposition to shale gas exploration.

About 20 members gathered on Saturday to reclaim public land in Kent County by placing plaques on 50 separate 40-hectare lots.

SWN Resources intends to resume operations on Monday.

Now, band members, like Kenneth Francis, are taking action.

"The plan today for us is to go out and plant our stakes of claims in areas that are very vulnerable to exploration. Because it seems to be the only way to get our message across that we are very, very determined on this issue," he said.

The demonstrators are using a bus to travel throughout the county, nailing stakes into the ground to assert their sovereignty. Each member of the band said they'll take ownership for the care of the land

But Serge Rousselle, a professor of aboriginal law at the University of Moncton, said it's a symbolic exercise with no legal consequences.

Rousselle told CBC News in order to prove their claim to the land the Elsipogtog First Nation would have to show regular occupancy and use of the land for hunting and fishing.

Chief Aaron Sock said he was assured the premier would ask SWN Resources to delay exploration to hold more negotiations. On Friday, he told reporters he felt deceived.

After violence broke out during protests near Rexton last month, both Sock and the premier agreed to a cooling off period.

NB FRACKING PROTESTS AND FIGHT FOR ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

CBC News

Protests this month at a potential shale gas site in New Brunswick involve an issue that has been at the heart of resource development battles across Canada — the duty to consult and accommodate aboriginal people when the development is on their traditional land.

The latest round of the protests by Elsipogtog First Nation members and their supporters resulted in a violent clash Thursday when the RCMP moved in to enforce a court injunction against the protesters' blockade.

But long before that, local First Nations leaders were raising concerns about the failure of government and industry to consult with them before development went ahead.

Rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada and lower courts have established a duty to consult and accommodate aboriginal people when development is considered on their land, even non-reserve traditional lands. Since the mid-'80s, aboriginal groups have recorded 186 victories in lawsuits over resource development, a 90 per cent success rate.

"First Nations have far more legal rights than most Canadians understand," Ken Coates, one of Canada's leading experts on aboriginal issues told CBC Radio in Moncton. The University of Saskatchewan professor explained that the Supreme Court "has made it absolutely, unequivocally clear that First Nations people have to be consulted... and accommodated."

Coates said it's not about special treatment, "It means following the law."

Environmental issue

The exploratory drilling in New Brunswick also faces opposition from the local non-aboriginal community. Allan Marsh, the chair of the nearby local service district for Saint-Charles, told CBC News that the provincial government "isn't listening to any of the other messages that it's getting."

His county council voted nearly unanimously for a moratorium on shale gas exploitation, Marsh added.

Environmental concerns are also a key issue for many of the protesters, a topic CBC News covers in other stories.

Land wasn't surrendered

First Nations in New Brunswick didn't surrender their land through treaties, Stephen Augustine, the principal of Unama'ki College at Cape Breton University, told CBC News.

"Those pre-Confederation treaties were just treaties of peace and friendship, the government of Canada has acknowledged that," he said.

The situation is "unlike any other found in Canada," according to the federal government. "Under the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1760 and 1761 in the Maritimes, the Mi'kmaq and the Maliseet signatories did not surrender rights to lands or resources," Aboriginal Affairs states on their website.

Cross-country protests, cross-country issues

Following Thursday's violence and arrests, the protests went cross-country, with over 45 planned on short notice for the next day.

Shannon Houle, a band councillor with Saddle Lake Cree Nation in northern Alberta, went to the protest in Edmonton. She says it was an act of solidarity not only with the Mi'kmaw people but solidarity with the land and the water as well. "We have a responsibility to protect these lands and defend them."

Although Houle is not opposed to development on First Nation land — she told CBC News about resource agreements Saddle Lake has with companies — she said fracking is out of the question. "It leaves too much damage underneath to the aquifers."

Augustine does not rule out the possibility that a First Nation could allow fracking on its land in the future, but said it would be very difficult to persuade people because of concern about the water. He pointed to an example from earlier this year at Lake Ainslie, N.S., where aboriginal and non-aboriginal opponents of fracking succeeding in blocking plans for a possible fracking project.

Many resource developments, however, do have the support and participation of a First Nation.

Finding common ground

In Alberta, aboriginal entrepreneur Dave Tuccaro said he has been working with oil sands developers for more than 30 years and has developed a good working relationship with the companies.

"We've been able to find a common ground, a place where everybody can thrive," said Tuccaro, founder, CEO and president of Tuccaro Inc., which provides support services to the oil industry. "For us it's worked well. We've been able to adjust to the changes that happen in our traditional area."

"There are issues that still have to be ironed out, I'm sure, but in the end we need to benefit by any kind of development that happens no matter where it is. Whether it's shale gas in the East Coast or oilsands in Alberta, nickel in Voisey Bay, diamonds in N.W.T., pipelines going across from Alberta to B.C., we need to be involved and we need to own some of this stuff."

Tuccaro said he didn't have enough information about the current conflict in New Brunswick to comment, but that in general terms, anybody that's going to develop resources in Canada has a legal duty to consult the aboriginal community if that development is on or near their traditional lands.

"Nobody can bypass that system anymore," he said. "Anybody that tries is just wasting their time, wasting a lot of money and getting a lot of people pissed off for no reason at all."

Resource development part of N.W.T. land claims

Nellie Cournoyea, chair and CEO of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and former premier of the Northwest Territories, said all the comprehensive claims in the territory that have been settled in the last 25 years are clear on how resource development should treat the land and the people who live in the region.

"The companies, when they operate up here, they know what the name of the game is and it's been like that for many, many years," she said.

Cournoyea said that whether it's in the Northwest Territories or New Brunswick, if there hasn't been due diligence, you're going to have severe opposition.

"Right at this juncture in time, native people are saying let's not play games. Let's get down to it. Maybe they will be opposed to it, but maybe if it was properly done, people might weigh the pros and cons."

MALISEET ANTI-SHALE GAS LETTER DELIVERED TO PREMIER'S OFFICE

Maliseet grand chief Harry LaPorte invites Premier David Alward to meet with First Nations leaders. (CBC)

But the gathering at the legislature will not be like the anti-shale gas demonstration in Kent County that turned violent earlier this month, stressed Tremblay.

"Oh much, much different," he said. "Our total focus is on peace and friendship and unity and solidarity. We are not protesters, we are not warriors. We're protectors. That our main message going out to all people."

Protesters clashed with RCMP near Rexton on Oct. 17 after officers moved in to enforce a court injunction obtained by SWN Resources Canada against a blockade. Five RCMP vehicles were burned and 40 people were arrested.

On Sunday, members of the Maliseet First Nation carried a sacred fire across the St. John River for a ceremony at the longhouse, where six elected Maliseet chiefs and the traditional chief of the St. John River Valley signed an agreement, stating all are unified in their opposition to shale gas development.

Premier David Alward was in Ottawa on Monday, St. Mary's First Nation Chief Candice Paul hand delivered the letter to one of his staff members.

Paul contends there needs to be an independent review of the contentious issue.

"It would involve qualified people that we would pick ... and with the proper credentials," she said.

Bronson Acquin-Mandisodza, 17, of St. Mary's First Nation, says it's an historic occasion.

"My mom, in her lifetime, said she's never seen all the Maliseet communities being brought together until this week," said Acquin-Mandisodza, the keeper of the sacred fire at the longhouse.

"This gathering here is a show of unity and solidarity among the nations here," said elder Alma Brooks.

Harry LaPorte, grand chief of the Maliseet First Nation, said he hopes the unity shown among the Maliseet will be echoed by the Mi'kmaq and Passamaquoddy nations they also invited to the longhouse.

"I think they showed their support by being here, witnessing what we did," said LaPorte

Organizers said the longhouse will remain until they are able to present their stance to Premier David Alward.

Laporte said Alward is welcome to visit the longhouse any time.

"Our unified front has already been established by us meeting in here today in our government longhouse. Mr. Alward probably should come talk to us. Then he'll have a better understanding of who we are. And what we are. And why we are."

SIGNIGTOG MI'KMAQ RECLAIM STEWARDSHIP OF NATIVE LANDS

"There will be no more of our lands being held in trust by governments."

Elsipogtog First Nation Chief and Council will announce their resolution to reclaim their stewardship over all unoccupied alleged "Crown" land. The Band Council Resolution (BCR) will be publicly unveiled at a media conference at the Rexton shale gas resistance site at the junction of Highway 11 & 134 at 11 p.m. on Tuesday, September 30, 2013.

Compelled to action by their people to save their waters, lands and animals from ruin, the Elsipogtog First Nation and Signigtog District Grand Council are reclaiming responsibility for stewardship of all unoccupied reserved native lands in their territory.

The lands of the Signigtog Mi'kmaq have never been ceded or sold; for centuries, the British Crown claimed to be holding the lands in trust for them. However, the Original people of the territory, together with their hereditary and elected leaders, believe that their lands and waters are being badly mismanaged by Canada, the province and corporations to the point of ruin. Now facing complete destruction, they feel that the lands are no longer capable of providing enough to support the populations of the region.

Because of these threats to their survival and way of life, the Mi'kmaq people of Signigtog are resuming stewardship of their lands and waters to correct the problems and are planning measures to restore them back to good health. Last July, the Signigtog District Grand Council notified the province of New Brunswick that they had served shale gas developer Southwestern Energy (SWN) with an eviction notice.

Eslipogtog Chief Arren Sock states, "We will respect everyone who lives and works in our territories and respects the Treaties of Peace and Friendship and our authority over our lands. We intend to be fair to everyone."

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AS/wn

ESIPOGTOG CHIEF ISSUES EVICTION NOTICE TO TEXAS-BASED FRACKERS. BAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION TO RECLAIM ALL UNOCCUPIED CROWN LAND

REXTON, New Brunswick – In what may well go down as an historic Treaty Day, Eslipogtog First Nation's Chief Arren Sock today presented a Band Council Resolution stating that his community is prepared to reclaim all unoccupied Crown Lands in Signigtog District, which comprises most of present day provincial New Brunswick. The resolution was read to an exuberant crowd of hundreds of supporters from across Kent County, New Brunswick, and beyond.

"Whereas Prime Minister Harper and the Canadian Government have washed their hands with regards to the environmental protection of our lands and waters," read Chief Sock from a prepared statement.

"And whereas the provincial government has turned over all lands entrusted to them by the British Crown to a corporation for their own benefit.

And whereas our lands have been assaulted by clear-cutting and hardwood spray for the benefit of a few.

And whereas the Queen, under whose name our lands are entrusted, has shown unequivocally that she will not protect our interests.

And whereas our present lands are not adequate for our populations.

And whereas our lands have not yielded the amount capable of supporting our people due to mismanagement.

And whereas we are capable of managing our lands better than other governments or corporations.

And whereas we have lost all confidence in governments for the safekeeping of our lands held in trust by the British Crown.

And whereas a notice of eviction from our Keptin has been totally ignored by the provincial government and Southwestern Energy.

And whereas we have been compelled to act and save our water, land and animals from ruin.

Therefore, let it be resolved at a duly convened band council meeting, let it be known to all that we as Chief and council of Elsipogtog are reclaiming all unoccupied reserved native lands back and put in the trust of our people.

Furthermore, we have been instructed by our people that they are ready to go out and stake their claims on unoccupied Crown lands for their own use and benefit.”

Councillor Robert Levi from Elsipogtog then announced that the Elsipogtog band chief and council would be issuing SWN Resources Canada an eviction notice to have all their equipment removed from their currently blockaded, Irving-owned, compound along highway 134.

The notice of eviction will demand that SWN vacate by midnight, tonight, October 1st.

Jim Pictou, representing the Mi'gmaq Warriors Society, noted that the society would personally escort them out of the province of New Brunswick.

Chief Candice Paul of St. Mary's First Nation then offered the support of members of her community in assisting the Warriors in their escort.

In terms of the larger scope, the future implications of this Band Council Resolution remain unclear, but massive. Chief Sock alluded to the potential of mis-allocated royalty payments on equipment on Crown land, which currently goes to the province, but would benefit – and is due – to his community.

As far as the immediate issue of evicting SWN Resources Canada's blockaded seismic testing equipment, the chief kept his cards close when asked what would be done if the Texas-based gas company chose to ignore his eviction notice.

“We have planned next steps. But right now we're just going to keep that amongst ourselves as Elsipogtog Chief and Council,” said Sock.

Sock also noted that he had not yet spoken to representatives from the provincial New Brunswick government, but that they had a copy of the resolution and the eviction notice.

“I want a moratorium on fracking in New Brunswick,” said Sock. “Until if there is such a time that they can come up with a safer solution on how to extract shale gas. Right now I am here for our children and their children's children. Right now nobody can guarantee a safe and effective way of extracting shale gas without harm to the environment.

“No more negotiations with anybody.”

N.B. SHALE GAS SOLIDARITY PROTESTS SPREAD TO OTHER REGIONS

Events held in Montreal, Ottawa, Thunder Bay and elsewhere in support of New Brunswick demonstrators

CBC News

First Nations communities in several regions of the country staged protests Friday in support of the Mi'kmaq demonstrators in Rexton, N.B., who clashed with police Thursday during a protest against shale gas exploration in the region.

More than 40 people were arrested after tensions escalated at a road block near the New Brunswick community where members of the Elsipogtog First Nation have been protesting seismic testing being conducted by SWN Resources of Canada.

The natural gas exploration company wants to extract shale gas from the area using the controversial method called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The First Nations community is opposed to the project and is trying to force SWN Resources off land that it says it has a right to reclaim from the Crown.

vents turned violent when RCMP decided to enforce an injunction to end the weeks-long demonstration and fired pepper spray at protesters who were trying to push through the police line. Eight of those arrested have been charged, and the rest released.

Protests in support of the New Brunswick demonstrators began Thursday in several Ontario, Quebec and East Coast communities, including Ottawa, Montreal and Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, and spread to other parts of the country Friday.

Issues at heart of protest won't go away

On Friday, the sympathy protests began early in the morning with members of the Mohawk community in Kahnawake outside Montreal disrupting traffic on the Highway 132 approach to the Mercier Bridge. The event lasted from about 6:30 a.m. to 8 a.m., with protesters handing out information to motorists.

Montrealers protest shale gas arrests in NB

About 200 people had also marched through Montreal on Thursday to show their support for the Mi'kmaq and anger over the arrests. That protest included a stop in front of RCMP headquarters.

In Nova Scotia, there were road blocks and demonstrations in several parts of the province, including Halifax, Cape Breton Island, Aulds Cove and Millbrook, near a highway connecting Halifax to New Brunswick.

Fracking protests across Nova Scotia

"We will be shutting the economy down, but not the people," said Jenny Marshall, one of several protesters along the Trans-Canada Highway south of Waycobah, near Baddeck on Cape Breton Island. "The people are free to go as their please. It will be the trucks we stop, the merchandise."

In Thunder Bay, Ont., a little over a dozen people gathered outside the Ontario Native Women's Association office on Friday. They lit a fire, played drums and sang songs.

Thunder Bay fire burns for New Brunswick First Nations

Even though he couldn't be in New Brunswick in person, Thunder Bay resident Chance King said being part of the ceremony felt like the next best thing he could do.

"Our sacred fire, sending strength to them, sending out prayers to them so that they can stay strong and continue the protest against the fracking, because it's not going to stop today, right, it's going to keep going," he said.

More demonstrations planned

First Nations people who came out to protest in different parts of the country voiced a combination of support for the land claim and resource development issues underlying the New Brunswick protest and criticism of the RCMP intervention, which some saw as heavy-handed, and the injunction that was aimed at ending the protest, which many considered unjust.

"One of the biggest strategies that has been used against us time and time again is ... the divide and conquer strategy," said Robert Animikii Horton, who helped organize the Thunder Bay protest. "What we're seeing now, since they've shaken the beehive, is unprecedented solidarity all across Turtle Island."

Turtle Island is the name that has historically been used by some aboriginal people to describe the continent of North America.

Others were planned throughout Friday afternoon and early evening in various communities in several provinces, including Ottawa, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Iqaluit and Whitehorse.

Roughly 80 people gathered in downtown Calgary Friday evening to protest.

"This evening we are going to be standing and rallying in solidarity with our sisters and brothers out on the East Coast," said Chantal Chagnon.

She said the violence that has erupted there is unfortunate, and the Calgary protesters would like to see everything end peacefully and respectfully.

"We are here to pray for their safety and to pray that the officers involved have a softening of their heart."

In downtown Edmonton, over 100 people gathered in Churchill Square before marching to an RCMP detachment.

And in Toronto, Idle No More protesters gathered outside the Metro Toronto Convention Centre this afternoon in solidarity with Elsipogtok and in opposition to Enbridge's Line 9 pipeline. Members of the National Energy Board, who were holding a public hearing in the convention centre, were eventually escorted out by police after a group of protesters gained entry and disrupted the proceedings with chants and singing.

A demonstration was also planned for outside the Canadian Consulate in New York City, and members and sympathizers of the the Idle No More movement based in Washington, D.C., intended to gather in Columbus Circle to show their support for the Elsipogtog First Nation.

A major intersection in Vancouver was also temporarily blocked as a crowd of several hundred protesters made their way to a rally on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

FIRST NATIONS WARN HARPER'S ZEAL FOR RESOURCES MAKES THE ELSIPOGTOG PROTEST PART OF A WIDER STRUGGLE

FIRST NATIONS' FRUSTRATIONS with government are nearing a boiling point where confrontations are increasingly likely to turn violent, B.C. aboriginal leaders warn.

In a telephone interview, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip told the Georgia Straight that recent clashes between RCMP officers and First Nations members in New Brunswick are part of a struggle shared by aboriginal people across Canada.

"I think Prime Minister Harper has done an incredible job provoking a conflict between the economy and the environment," the president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs said. "It's shaping up to be a war between oil and water. And it applies to the eastern part of this country as well as British Columbia."

On October 17, the RCMP broke up an Elsipogtog First Nation protest that for three weeks had peacefully blocked access to a fracking project operated by SWN Resources Canada outside the town of Rexton, New Brunswick. Videos show teams resembling military commandoes armed with heavy weapons positioned alongside a large number of regular officers donning riot gear.

Six RCMP vehicles were set on fire. Authorities used pepper spray and fired nonlethal "sock rounds" to disperse the crowds, and 40 people were arrested.

"All you have to do is connect the dots to recognize what happened in New Brunswick is not an isolated incident," Phillip said. "The brutal response on the part of the RCMP...was, in part, to send a message—a very strong message—to the First Nations and the environmental movement in British Columbia."

Phillip claimed he's been informed Canadian law enforcement officials have been instructed to intensify how they respond to First Nations and environmental protests. He said that authorities will be less likely to seek court-issued injunctions ordering demonstrators to disband. "We have been told that from now on, the RCMP are going to simply arrive, and that from that moment, they are going to move in with enforcement actions," Phillip said.

Those remarks echoed comments Phillip made at an October 19 rally in downtown Vancouver that was attended by hundreds of supporters of the Elsipogtog First Nation. There, he was joined by Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, who called the day a "moment for collaboration or collision".

Gord Hill is an activist with the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation and a contributor to Warrior Publications, a website that aggregates news related to aboriginal issues. In a telephone interview, he told the Straight that the Elsipogtog fracking fight mirrors B.C. protests against oil pipelines.

Hill noted that the October 17 incident was the culmination of months of peaceful demonstrations during which tensions slowly grew. He added that he sees the same thing happening in B.C.

"It's building towards a conflict," Hill said. "They will use any means that they have at their disposal to push through and impose these pipeline projects, fracking projects, and whatever onto the people here."

Both the Canadian Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and its provincial counterpart declined to make representatives available to comment. The B.C. RCMP responded to an interview request with an email stating its officers are impartial and uphold the law.

Douglas Bland is a 30-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces and former chair of defence studies at Queen's University. A May 2013 report he drafted for the Macdonald-Laurier Institute warns that First Nations' marginalized position in society combined with economic and resource factors "provides motives for an insurgency".

"The fact that Canada's natural wealth flows unfairly from Aboriginal lands and peoples to non-Aboriginal Canadians is a long-standing and justifiable grievance," the document states. "Therefore, it is morally and ethically just that Indigenous peoples act in their own interests and in the interests of their future generations to correct this unfairness."

On the phone from his home in Kingston, Ontario, Bland told the Straight that Canada's economy is "very vulnerable to disruption" via the country's transportation infrastructure. He recalled that in 2012, a Canadian Pacific Railway strike was estimated to cost the economy \$540 million per week.

"Imagine if the thing was shut down for three months?" Bland added. "The economics of transport are very important to British Columbia and they are very important to the rest of the country. If they shut down the railway lines going over the Rockies...as the strike with the railways proved last year, it would be a very serious problem for the government."

A book Bland authored in 2010 called Uprising is scheduled for reissue next month. "It's a political novel but I wrote it over a long period of research with aboriginal people and government and so on," Bland said. "In a number of ways and in detail, it describes how an aboriginal insurgency would unfold in Canada."

He suggested that a peaceful path forward depends on meaningful government dialogue with First Nations groups, something that, he noted, most aboriginal leaders maintain is not the current state of affairs.

Several First Nations people the Straight spoke with for this story also put heightened tensions in the context of glaring inequalities. On October 15, the United Nations special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples said that Canada is facing a "crisis" when it comes to the situation of aboriginal people.

"Canada consistently ranks near the top among countries with respect to human development standards," said James Anaya, "and yet amidst this wealth and prosperity, aboriginal people live in conditions akin to those in countries that rank much lower and in which poverty abounds."

Khelsilem Rivers is a community organizer with the Skwxwú7mesh Nation who has worked with the Idle No More movement. Like Phillip and Hill, he also voiced concerns about the growing possibility of violence between First Nations groups and Canadian law-enforcement agencies.

Rivers lamented that for years, Canada's aboriginal people have known that the federal government regards their protest movements as illegitimate. He recounted how in 2007 the public learned that the military was using a counter-insurgency manual that listed Native groups alongside international terrorist organizations. More recently, Rivers continued, the RCMP used the Elsipogtog incident to denounce First Nations' protests as a threat to public safety.

"It's a tactic that's meant to separate supporters from each other and try to create dissent, as well as a level of doubt within the Canadian public," he said.

Rivers described rising frustrations as part of fundamental disagreements that go back more than 100 years. "The main issue in all of this is indigenous jurisdiction," he explained.

"The B.C. government, just like the New Brunswick government, wants to build its economy on shale gas and bitumen pipelines, and so there is going to be a conflict coming to a head," Rivers continued. "It thinks it can ram these projects through, and I think that indigenous people need to get ready to fight that belief."

A MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT TO THE MI'KMAQ OF ELSIPOGTOG IN THEIR STRUGGLE TO RESIST CANADIAN OCCUPATIONAL TERRORIST FORCE

I write this letter in my capacity as the K'chi Saugum for the Wulustukyeg Traditional Council of Tobic.

The WTCT supports, in the strongest terms possible, the position taken by our Mi'kmaq brothers and sisters of Elsipogtog.

Long before those eurocanadian terrorists invaded our homeland and brought us their treaties and so-called treaty rights we had our birthrights placed within us by our Great Creator. This is what our Mi'kmaq brothers and sisters are protecting and fighting for, their birthright as Mi'kmaq people.

We encourage them to remember and honor the Ancestors, the People and the Seventh Generation in their continuing struggle and resistance against occupational forces of oppression at the hands of the eurocanadian colonial government.

We also encourage them to continue that struggle by any means necessary and, if need be, to resort to the same tactics that the Canadian occupational terrorist force is employing against our people in the Canadian colonial governments' continuing effort to either assimilate or to completely annihilate (GENOCIDE) our people in the name of pathological avarice. As a traditional elder I do not condone the use of violence, but there does come the time when our people have to take a stand for our continued survival, much as our Ancestors did.

The stand being taken by our Mi'kmaq brothers and sisters at Elsipogtog against the Canadian government terrorist forces of oppression is the same stand that our Ancestors were forced to take against eurocanadian oppression and genocide and for the very same reason, the survival of Indian people and the survival of the Seventh Generation.

In the white man's four thousand year history of violence, war and genocide they still haven't learned that you cannot win when you go against Great Creator's law/natural law, all that you can gain is Great Creator's judgment.

As Indian people we are in for times of unusual difficulty when our wholehearted solidarity with one another as oppressed people will be crucial. We call on all oppressed people to express their solidarity, by any means necessary, with the Mi'kmaq of Elsipogtog in their struggle to protect and preserve their birthright, their identity as Indian people, their right to self-determination and their right to live their lives as the Ancestors did.

In the war cry of the great Lakota Holy Man Crazy Horse "it is a good day to die". These are the words of a child of the Canadian Holocaust.

All My Relations,
Dan Ennis, K'chi Saugum
Wulustukyeg Traditional Council of Tobic
October 21, 2013

WOODSTOCK WINTERS

Nicholas Smith

It was a bright sunny day with wind gusts that sent newly fallen snow into dancing circles. then dropped the flakes to settle in a different location. The temperature was well below freezing. Footsteps make a high pitched rhythmic crunch as the person passed by. It was a delight to be sitting around the humming hungry stove in Peter Paul's house after one of Minnie's delicious meals. It was tough for Indians to find work

in the winter. The older people now relaxed enjoyed the warmth radiating from the singing stove. The younger people had their chores or other things to do.

There was always firewood to get and haul back to the house. Usually boys from two or three houses would join together and snowshoe out over a well traveled trail a mile or more hauling the sleds behind them. As we sat smoking and talking, we saw two sleds returning with firewood stacked high on them. It was fairly easy to haul the well-loaded sleds over the sled runner easily gliding on the hard packed frozen snow. The work would also keep the boys warm. In former times the boys only had the gathering of firewood chores until they began accompanying the hunters to obtain fish or game.

The conversation drifted back and forth about Maliseet winter and summer activities . The women made baskets and other craft work most that would be sold in the summer along with all their everyday house or camp work. This was broken up around Christmas time by taking sled loads of baskets to town to sell. The old way was a form of barter for goods rather than money. An egg basket was “sold” (traded) for the number of eggs the egg basket would hold, anywhere from a dozen to two and a half dozen eggs. Larger baskets were filled with potatoes or turnips. These baskets were usually of a half bushel capacity. The trader had a box or basket to carry his food home with. This was an agreeable method with with both parties happy without a precise scale or measure down to the smallest part of a milligram or centimeter. This method of selling was known as “once full.”

There were pin baskets for the women. Most women made clothing and or changed the size of children’s clothing. Pin baskets were a popular item as were hat baskets, laundry baskets and trash baskets and the list goes on. It is surprising how many different kinds of basket there were for women. There were nose baskets for horses. The basket was filled with oats and put over the horses’ head. No matter how he shook his head the oats did not scatter.

Someone offered that the Woodstock Indian community would usually go to a neighboring farm when they needed butter. In those days the farmer made what was called a pat of butter, a round globe with a flat bottom. The top was usually decorated with a fork or by hand. The pat was wrapped in rhubarb leaves for the Maliseet to take home with him. Children loved to put salt on the rhubarb stems and eat them. The stronger sourish it was, the better it was! Maliseet wood carvers made butter boxes and incised designs on a flat piece of wood that could be “stamped” into the butter, a sort of trademark for a specific farmer

By the end of spring the Woodstock market for baskets had been filled. The Woodstock Maliseet picked a village where the residents lacked much opportunity to obtain baskets. Each Indian family picked a different town and went there summer after summer becoming well-known in their temporary town. The Indians camped in their usual style, the men cutting the black basket ash and pounding it for the women to make into useful articles to sell.

Another voice chimed in, “Before I was born my Grandfather went to St. Andrews , a resort area like Bar Harbor. There were chairs, and chairs and chairs that needed recaining at the big hotels. We went to Benton, a small village of ten to fifteen houses

and two mills. Old Doc Polchies went up to Hartland. He worked on the bridge several summers. It was just a small place, but everyone would need some kind of basket, usually more than one. Another family went to Old Orchard Beach in Maine.” These summer camps consisted of at most six to eight people including adults and children,

In the evenings the family sat around a small fire making baskets, often singing and enjoying the evening. The local villagers were welcome to join them. They were good times. The people worked and sold their goods without high strung tension that exists in so many places today. These were time when hunting and fishing were restricted and the people wee challenged to develop a transitional way of life.

A FRACKING PROTEST PERSPECTIVE

Hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”, is the process of drilling and injecting fluid concoctions into Mother Earth at a high pressure for the purpose of fracturing shale rock to release natural gas inside it. That gas has been kept down there for millions of years and we want all of it NOW. The concern is not just the fact that from 70% to 90% of the secret fracking chemicals get sealed in the ground permanently along with millions of gallons of water, but also the thousands of trips by large tanker trucks traveling to and from the sites have a damaging impact on roads and bridges, and on the environment in general. All over the world we are losing water as it is sealed permanently in the ground. There is also a risk of heavy metals in the waste water evaporation ponds contaminating local water supplies above-ground.

Ever since 1604 when Champlain hired the services of Chief Messamouet to explore for copper and other minerals along the La Baie Française (Bay of Fundy) the European immigrants have been negotiating with the First Nations over access to natural resources. Natural resources included furs, timber, gold, copper, coal and other minerals. Chief Messamouet was one of the early Wabanaki who had gone to France where he stayed at the home of M. de Grandmont, the governor of Bayonne. He and a handful of other First Nations who had been taken to France, willingly or by force, were the first of the nations in this land to experience European culture. As the tide of Spanish, French, Dutch and English started flooding into this land and fighting over the resources here, the cultures of the many First Nations would be impacted catastrophically, especially with the introduction of new diseases. The Europeans believed in dominating and controlling nature, claiming large territories of the continent to be their dominion, to cut down, dig out and consume. The First Nations believed in living by the laws of the natural world, respecting their intimate relationship to all creation, and treating Nature as the great provider of necessities for survival, good health and protection via the universal force, the Kci-niwesq.

Historically wherever mining companies are established there is an economic boom for the short term, and then when the minerals are exhausted the mine closes and moves on leaving behind sinkholes, tailing dumps and ponds, contaminated soil and groundwater, and erosion. Politicians tend to focus on the front end job creations and revenue crumbs provided by the big mining companies. More often it is the government, specifically the tax payers, who pay for the clean-up after the companies leave.

Although fracking is a new process, it is just an improved form of mining that reaches into places underground previously not possible.

The recent anti-fracking protests in Rexton, New Brunswick that eventually ended in violence and five police cars being burned was for the most part members from the Mi'kmaq Elsipogtog First Nation, but there were also non-native locals and supporters from other communities in the Maritime Provinces and even United States. Forty people were arrested. According to their protest signs and interviews they are against shale gas exploration and extraction by SWN Resources (from Texas) who have been licensed to conduct searches in over one million hectares of New Brunswick. But it goes deeper than fracking if you'll pardon the pun. It is also about native rights, treaties, and who owns the land. Specifically it is about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and control over resource development of their lands. On the other side it is about jobs and economy, about the N. B. government solving a financial debt and deficit dilemma that has caused some economists to compare this province to the present debt crisis in Greece. The situation goes beyond Rexton and Elsipogtog. Protesters in Rexton were getting support from other communities in New Brunswick and as far away as western Canada at the same time. Roads were being blocked to bring this situation to the attention of everyone across the country. Such timely coordination is possible with new generation mobile communication technologies such as smartphones and tablets, and the "world-wide-web" or Internet. With these technologies each protester at the site became a worldwide news reporter. It is a powerful new age. Media reporters were not allowed into the protest site at one point, but protesters themselves were still broadcasting pictures and videos via their smartphones.

What the real issue boils down to is who owns the land where hydraulic fracturing is to take place? It's an old issue. The national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Shawn Atleo insisted that the federal government must work with all bands to ensure treaties are implemented. He acknowledged that bands are asserting their treaty rights and responsibilities over lands and waters. He clarified that First Nations are not against resource development, but they will not agree to it at any cost.

Treaties vary greatly among the various First Nations across the country. Early treaty negotiations in the 1700s with the several nations of "Eastern Indians" by the British Crown did not include land issues. They were primarily Peace and Friendship treaties. Later treaties with other First Nations further west and south began including land related terminology in their wording. A couple of points I'd like to make before going further. I read one article from a First Nation writer who was endeavoring to appear fair and unbiased. He contrasted the various First Nations to other cultures in Canada like the Ukrainians, Hungarians and Danish who had managed to live under Canadian laws and yet maintain their cultures, celebrating them with festivals and other regular cultural events. He was suggesting that the First Nations should look at these groups as successful examples. But he is forgetting that these people came to Canada and became Canadian citizens and had to adopt the laws of this country. The "Indians" did not come to this land. They were already here. They were the "first nations", hundreds of different nations with their unique cultures. Why should they change their cultures and adopt those of the immigrants who came here from Europe? They were eventually

forced to change through assimilation strategies. Shouldn't the newcomers to this land learn the ways of the First Nations that lived here? "When in Rome do as the Romans do." A small number of the immigrants actually did, and even married into the First Nations families and raised their children the "Indian way." This was particularly true of the Acadians.

The other point I'd like to make is that I keep reading about First Nations' chiefs and other representative spokespersons who refer back to the Proclamation of October 7, 1763 as being the preferred starting point of all present and future negotiations. Careful consideration needs to be given to this positioning. By doing so they are agreeing that the Government of Canada who acts on behalf of the British Crown has dominion over all the lands and no lands can be bought or sold except by British (Canadian) land tenure law. Under the land tenure system the holder of the land, often called incorrectly the "owner" of the land, in reality holds a title to occupy the land and make improvements, which is basically permission from the Crown to hold the land. The proclamation specifically refers to the huge area of this continent that the British claimed after defeating the French as being "Our Dominion and Territories." In the proclamation they pretend to be kind and generous by reserving certain areas of their Dominion and Territories for the "several Nations or Tribes of Indians" to have for their hunting grounds. The proclamation makes it clear that the Indian Nations cannot sell any part of this reserved land to any private person and none of the British subjects may purchase from the Indian Nations. However, the Indian Nations can sell portions of the reserved land to the government (Crown). This later became known officially as "aboriginal title." Aboriginal title is inalienable (cannot be sold), except to the national government, basically the Crown. In an earlier article I discussed this issue in detail and referenced an incident with the first reserved land on the St. John River (Wolastoq), the Eqpahak reserve, in which all these legal issues came into play and might be considered the first case for testing this law with the Wabanaki. Unfortunately the lawyer and judge at that time, who knew the laws intimately, was able to use them to his advantage over the Maliseets who were vague in their understanding of British tenure law. The judge was able to purchase for himself all the Eqpahak reserve land and the Maliseets then moved up the river a short distance to where some remaining French Acadians had a tiny village. The judge was then owner of their two sacred grave sites and their island where they traditionally had a summer village.

This is a very complex issue and it depends where you want to start in history, where your bench mark is set, to be able to identify First Nations' rights in Wabanaki country today. Government representatives must work under Canadian laws and are accountable to the Prime Minister, who in return is accountable to the Governor General who represents the Crown. Whose laws do the First Nations follow? Do they have their own governance? Who are they accountable to? Do they abide by both the laws of Canada and their own laws? Where is the balance?

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." (from the Sermon on the Mount)

.... All my relations, Nugeekadoonkut

DEAN'S DEN: WULUSTUK EAGLE

Comes soaring down the watershed
Where the river sets the pace
For the people - and the eagle
Well-fitted for the chase,
It drifts and glides - then hovers
Ride the beam, and then peel off
Cross-wind, slip-stream, updraft
Floating through the trough,
Bank, roll, and whip-stall
A shrieking screaming cry
Seeking, stalking sustenance
By sharp, keen, eagles eye,
Spectacular and splendid
Emblematic of the quest
Kinetic, energetic
For the quarry - no contest,
Durability, endurance
Eke out, subsist, survive
Yet, a superb stately symbol
Of what it means to be alive,
A cutting-edge in headwinds
It persists, and wings its way
A people, and an eagle
Endure ... to fly another day!

D.C. Butterfield

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by virtue of the Great Law of Respect of the Wulustukyeg Nation and by virtue of the provisions of the Covenant Chain of Treaties of Peace and Friendship and pursuant to the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

That the Wulustukyeg Traditional Council of Tobic (WTCT) issues this Caveat Emptor addressed to any government, person, interest or corporate entity that may be planning, considering or contemplating the purchase, the sale, or the development of any and all lands within Oskigineweekoog or Wulustukyeg Homeland, whose natural boundaries are as follows: to the east is Soo Baaque, to the south is the Kennebec River, to the west is Gaa Baag and to the north is the Wulustuk River.

This proclamation addresses, challenges and duly forewarns the general public regarding the validity and legality of buying, selling, developing and or claiming title to lands which have never been ceded, sold, surrendered, traded, bartered, given-up,

exchanged, converted or compromised in any way shape or form by it's original owners... the Wulustukyeg People.

Individuals who fail to heed this legal notice leave themselves vulnerable to legal action including criminal and civil.

Signed:

Dan Ennis, K'che Saugum, WTCT

Pat Paul, Saugum, WTCT

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.