

my friends **Intotemak**

Winter 2012 Vol. 41, No. 4



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The Discovery Doctrine and Those Dangerous Goods



Not sure if you've heard, but something dangerous has been going on of late in many Christian circles. Over the past couple of years, the Anglican, Episcopalian, and United Churches...heck, even the World Council of Churches...have decided to

“repudiate” the Doctrine of Discovery. It's incredibly dangerous stuff. But only a few realize how risky this rhetorical refutation is.

If you're not sure what the Doctrine of Discovery is, here's a cartoon sketch. Way back in the 15th century, Pope Nicholas V passed a couple of Papal Bulls that supposedly gave Christian nations the right to dispossess indigenous peoples of their lands, all in the sweet name of Jesus. As long as “X” land and her peoples weren't “discovered” by a previous Christian monarch/nation, then it was free for the taking. And thus went the white nations of Europe, planting flags wherever they went - Africa, Asia and the Americas - giving glory to God for all the good gifts he gave. Of course, this wasn't just a Catholic thing. Protestants held similar convictions, and with few exceptions, so did the quiet (yet often strategic) Anabaptists - Christians had the right to take land from non-Christians.

That's why we find Puritan lawyer John Winthrop in the early 1600s riding a boat to Turtle Island - a land he had never ever seen before - with a dream of “A City on a Hill” in his pocket and a pen in hand...a pen crafting a sermon that deemed this ‘new’ land Puritan land. Although indigenous peoples were everywhere, it was virgin to Christians, and besides, those natives hadn't done anything to “improve” or “subdue” the land (see Genesis 1:26-28). It was a dastardly move, but a common one. Winthrop was doing what everybody did, a story repeated from sea to sea to sea.

Most of us shudder at the blatant racism and religious arrogance that the Doctrine of Discovery embodies. It's a

horrific blight on the Church. How could followers of the Cruciform ever have believed such things? Why was there no significant movement within the church railing against a teaching that licensed genocidal practices?

We can understand why so many present-day settler communions are confessing how evil these religious warrants for colonial occupation were... and still are. Note that. The Discovery Doctrine isn't a thing of the past. Legal systems across the globe (including Canada and the US) continue to base various claims to land ownership in notions of discovery, and - as Arthur Manuel said at a recent UN Indigenous Forum - the government-corporation complex uses ‘discovery’ to violently force their doctrines of development into indigenous lands and bodies.

It seems like a no brainer. Every church should renounce, once for all, the Discovery Doctrine. So where are you Mennonite Church Canada? Mennonite Church USA? Shouldn't we get in line...sign on the dotted line...swear off on this too?

“Watch out!” Those are the words of my friend, settler activist and theologian, Jennifer Harvey. With passion, she warns of these apologies: “Be careful! This is dangerous stuff!” And here's a Jennifer-story to explain why:

“Several years ago I was part of an email exchange between George Tinker (Osage) and a white American colleague, discussing the apology that the Prime Minister of Australia gave on behalf of parliament to the aboriginal peoples. My colleague had brought this news to our attention, and expressed how pleased he was with it. Initially, I was pleased too. The apology lamented the egregious and systematic oppression Australian governmental policy had visited upon a “proud people and a proud culture.” Like Canada and the US, Australia's settler-colonial history is constituted by massive land dispossession of the original peoples and genocide in a variety of forms, including boarding schools. An apology seemed long overdue.

But then Tinker weighed in with an email, saying that indigenous peoples should reject any apology that comes without transfers of land. This “good” (the apology), he as-



Captain Vancouver overlooks the land he "discovered" and claimed for the British Empire.

serted, was worse than meaningless. While it posed as a moral recalibration it did not alter the material realities of indigenous communities. Nor did it shift existing power relations between settler-colonial and aboriginal peoples.

In time, I came to agree with Tinker. It is a deeply flawed assumption in the dominant society that we can admit responsibility without redressing, repairing and otherwise concretely responding to the actual damage and harm for which one was apologizing. The good wasn't all that good. It was dangerous."

It's easy for our institutions to issue grand statements. Yet it's awfully difficult to actually commit ourselves to those concrete actions that can begin to undo the damage of Discovery Doctrines, or residential/day schools, or culture-fracking-missionary-engagement. In many ways, I respect what the United and Anglican and other churches have done. And I have even more respect and admiration for the indigenous voices who have been speaking truth to power, calling on institutions to do the right thing. But that said, if my Mennonite community decides to do the right thing and join the apology procession in the days ahead, I hope and pray we do it with some risky reparations that press our apologies beyond mere words. I pray we commit a significant percentage of our annual budget(s) for land reparations (recognizing that our current wealth and privilege is linked to the possession of indigenous lands). I pray that we commission at least a hundred young hearts and older minds to join indigenous struggles against corporate resource development, moving heavenly "Peace, peace" verbs to earthy reality on the front-lines. I pray that our national constituencies would covenant to a "Being a Faithful Treaty Church" process (we presently have a BFC process engaging human sexuality), led by indigenous persons, that can educate us on local and national land issues, equipping us to work out our faith accordingly.

Maybe I'm dreaming. But if Intotemak is about true friendship and solidarity, then we've got to keep on inviting, even demanding, that our well-intentioned words get real. It's less dangerous that way.

*Miigwech, and peace,
Steve Heinrichs*

Intotemak

Publication # 40012495
December Winter 2012 | Vol. 41, No. 4

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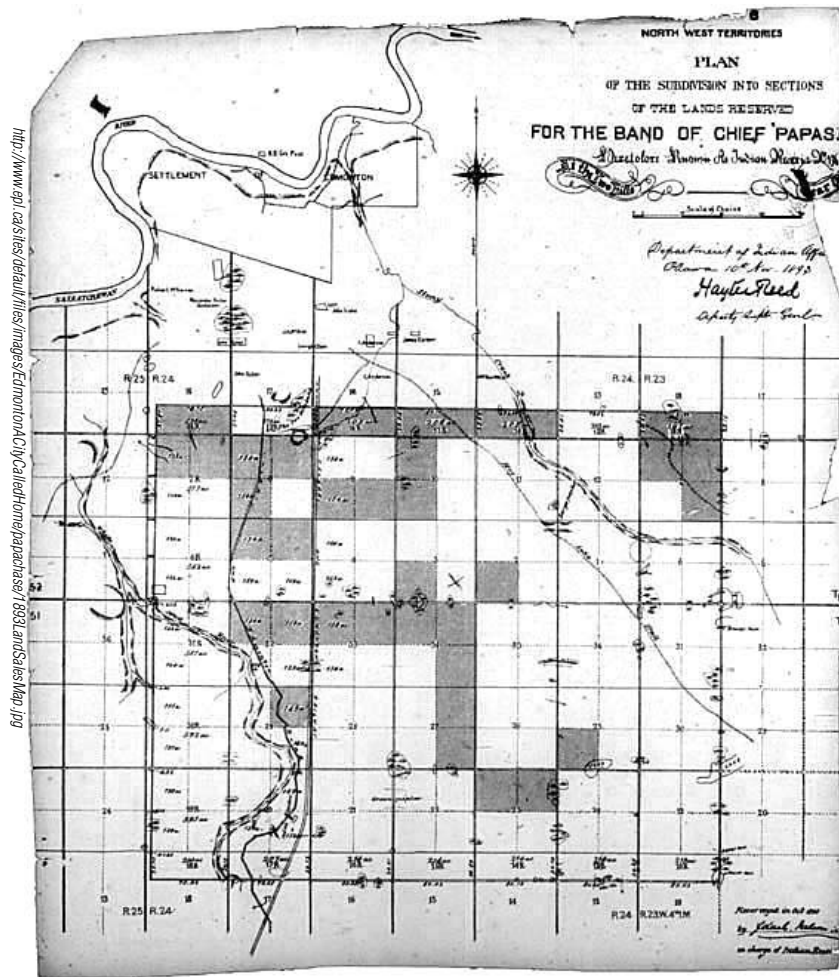
COST OF PUBLICATION

\$15.00 a year for four issues.
Donations above the cost of publication will receive a tax-deductible receipt. Please send payment by cheque, VISA or MasterCard. Cheques are payable to Mennonite Church Canada/Intotemak.

Intotemak translates as my friends or my clan and are people who walk in solidarity together. *Intotemak* is a quarterly "zine" of particular interest to friends of Indigenous Relations, published by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

VISION HEALING & HOPE

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.



Indian Affairs. (RG 10, Volume 3911, file 111,213)

“This has nothing to do with me!”

Learning the Story of these Lands

Upon hearing the history of the Indian Residential Schools and their destructive impact on the indigenous community across Canada, many Canadians (and Mennonites) will likely respond with a comment to the effect that, while this was indeed a tragedy for all the people involved, and that it’s a “good thing” that through the activities of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* attempts are being made to take corrective action, ultimately, in any direct sense, “This has nothing to do with me.”

The point of this reflection is to suggest that this attitude, while correct in the sense that our ancestors proba-

bly had no direct involvement in these tragic events, is nevertheless incorrect by virtue of the simple fact that we live here now and that we are imbedded in the history of this place. Consider my home province of Alberta.

We can’t put our feet anywhere in this land without stepping in a moccasin footprint. Our residence, whether we own or rent, is built on land that is available for us to use by virtue of one of the historic Indian treaties. Those statements hold for all people in Alberta, no matter how briefly you and I have been here. They’re foundational truths – as Roger Epp says, “We’re all treaty people.”

But, it is also true that for most of the specific locations throughout this province, there are stories not widely known that also point to profound linkages. I, for instance, live in Edmonton, on the south side. More specifically, I live near Whitemud Crossing, on land that once was part of Indian Reserve # 136, the Papaschase Reserve. And therein lies a story, unknown or forgotten by almost all who live on that land. And there may well be some 250,000 or more of us!

According to the latest census, Edmonton has over 817,000 residents, and the 40 square miles of the former Papaschase Reserve covered most of

the current south side of the city. There is some uncertainty about exactly where the boundaries were, but as best I can determine, the northern edge was about 52nd or 53rd Ave., the southern about 22nd Ave., the western edge about 122nd St., and the eastern edge about 22nd St. According to an Elder I once heard talk about it, the main settlement of the Papaschase community was on Mt. Pleasant, which is mostly just north of the area defined above and currently the site of a cemetery.

The short history of the Papaschase band is complicated, but the essence is easily grasped. Chief Papaschase and his band moved to the Edmonton area from Lesser Slave Lake in the late 1850s. Symbolically it was a move away from hunting and trapping and a move toward the commercial economy. They signed an adhesion to Treaty No. 6 in 1877, becoming Treaty Indians. By 1879 they and other Indians in the area were starving, as the buffalo were almost gone, but the relief supplies promised to Treaty Indians never came. Moreover, when the reserve was being surveyed in 1880, it turned out to be smaller than it should have been, but their protests meant nothing.

Meanwhile, Frank Oliver, politically powerful owner of the Edmonton Bulletin, wrote editorials against having a reserve so close to town, organized mass meetings and petitions to Ottawa against having Indians living so close, and even incited settlers to squat illegally on the Reserve. And nationally, the second Riel rebellion was happening. Papaschase people were not involved, but one of the results was that efforts, not entirely legal, were being made to reduce the size of Indian bands and to encourage people “legally Indian” to change their status. In this context many Papaschase people moved to the Enoch Reserve and elsewhere. Some seventy Papaschase people also accepted “Half Breed Scrip.” Very briefly, scrip was designed primarily to extinguish the aboriginal title of Metis people, but unscrupulous



speculators also “worked the system,” persuading starving Treaty people (like the Papaschase) that they could sign up for scrip, get immediate cash in hand, and somehow retain Treaty status. Desperate people sometimes are easily convinced.

The culmination of this unseemly scene came on November 19, 1888 when three members of the Papaschase Band living on the Enoch Reserve just west of Edmonton were persuaded to sign a document surrendering the entire Reserve to the Crown. That three persons of no particular standing could so act in a way that was legally valid is preposterous on the face of it, yet at the time no one seemed to be in a position to object. The Reserve was now gone and over the years all the land was transferred “legally” to new owners, and Edmonton expanded as Frank Oliver envisioned, without the annoying presence of Indians.

Let us now jump to the present. Since 1999 there has been an entity called the Papaschase Band. Their website is <http://www.papaschase.ca/aboutus.html>. They say this about themselves:

“The band is regrouping after being scattered for so many years since the illegal surrender of their reserve and forced transfer to other bands. This work has begun in earnest with the first election in 1999 of Chief and council to provide representation on behalf of all descendants. Since then the Chief and council have filed a civil lawsuit against the Federal Government of Canada on behalf of all descendants over the alleged illegal surrender of reserve land that was located in the present boundaries of south Edmonton.

“The Chief and council’s mandate is to govern the Papaschase descendants affairs, to defend and advance their treaty rights and legitimate interests of the Papaschase Descendants, and to take all necessary steps to obtain a just settlement of the unlawful surrender of Papaschase IR 136 in 1888. Many descendants have come forward to join our cause, but we continue to search for the lost members who have been scattered to the four winds and call them home.”

In 2008 the Supreme Court of Canada decided not to hear the case. In a sense then, it is in limbo. The case could be pursued further, but meanwhile nothing is publicly happening. On the other hand, there is some increasing public awareness. On August 18, the Edmonton Journal ran a very insightful piece on the current Papaschase situation. Moreover, a FaceBook site has been created to stir more awareness of the Papaschase situation and reconciliation efforts, specifically trying to nurture a better future on a person-to-person basis.

For those of us who think of ourselves as being good neighbours – or even peacemakers - perhaps this is the kind of thing we should be taking on? Have you and your church community discovered the forgotten history of your neighborhood?

Rod Wilson lives in Edmonton and is a member of Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church.



Holy Revolution Birthed in BC

Soren Mennohawk takes a slice of the overly familiar Christmas story and tries to make it helpfully unfamiliar by giving it a present-day indigenous-settler twist.

In the back of a trailer, somewhere near the Sardis Reserve, a teenager is in hard labor, giving birth with boyfriend by her side. And as groans get louder, contractions faster, a group of shamans make their way to Victoria, coming from the far south - Hopi territory. They head straight for parliament in order to make contact with those at the top, but are stopped by security. With gifts of blue corn in hand, they courteously request, "Please, we need to speak with those in charge. Can you help? We've been sent here find the one who was born leader to all nations."

The guards look at each other, and almost laugh.

"Over the past months we've been given dreams. The spirits of animals have spoken clearly to us. 'Go to Sto:lo homelands. A great siyam has been born who will turn everything over, make it new...make it good as old.' So we've come to find this child, lift our hands and show respect. But we don't see Sto:lo lands marked on your imperial, British-Columbus maps...so if you're able, tell us where we need to go."

For reasons unseen, the guards are suddenly taken by these strange guests, and decide to bring them to the office of the Premier. They sit in the waiting room while Christy Clark is notified.

"What? Who's here? A delegation of Hopi medicine men?" Thinking it's a joke, the BC Premier is about to dismiss them, but then the phone flashes red with a priority call. Concerned church leaders - evangelicals, Baptists and a few Mennonites - from the Fraser Valley are on the line, all hot



Pian Robt Barbel, Memorial Church Canada

and bothered. They have heard the rumors and are demanding that the government act, and soon.

"Premier Clark, let the Aboriginals do what they want. They can practice their old religious traditions, they can have their exorbitant fishing rights and those overpriced Truth Commissions...but this is far too political...it smacks of revolution. Sources, trusted sources, tell us that there've been a number of not so secret gatherings in Vancouver and Chilliwack in the last two weeks. Elders and young radicals coming together and planning something. We've heard unlawful, incendiary rhetoric."

"Like what?" says Clark.

"Like this: 'The time for action is now! Creator's going to break this colonial system, scatter settlers from the land, and give healing, once-for-all to the oppressed.'" We don't like it one bit. Someone needs to stop this. And you know, that's not just good for us law-abiding citizens...it's also good for them. Our Indians will be better off once they learn how to just forget the good old days, take responsibility today and learn to work within this democratic system."

Clark thanks the men for sharing their concerns, and puts down the phone. "Serve our guests some tea," she tells her assistant, "I'll be with them shortly."

Quickly she dials up Prime Minister Harper on his cell. "Stephen, there's crazy stuff going on here with the Indians. I'm not sure what it's all about, but they could be planning something serious.... No, no, I don't think it's about the pipeline....didn't hear about any immediate protests.... yet there's been suspicious activity and some talk of violence. I don't know what their capabilities are, but we need to watch them, and...well, it wouldn't hurt to nip this in the bud before it goes anywhere."

As Harper listens to Christy's concerns, his eyes drift to a picture on his wall, a recent one, commemorating the tribute the Bloods had given him. Decked out



Premier Clark, let the Aboriginals do what they want. They can practice their old religious traditions, they can have their exorbitant fishing rights and those overpriced Truth Commissions...but this is far too political...it smacks of revolution.

in a big headdress, smeared with war paint, he was made honorary chief of that nation. "I look pretty darn good," he muses. "Why can't all these nations be like the Bloods and just get along."

"Yes Christy, I agree. I think we should address this right away. I'll touch base with Tom (Chief of Defense) and get a few of my experts to give you a shout in the next couple of minutes. Hold on."

In no time a cadre of intelligence officials and a group of native studies professors - mostly white, including that specialist, Tom Flana-something - are on a conference call with BC's Premier.

"What the hell is this about? What are these people really thinking? Is this another Red Power thing? Are we going to have another Oka on our hands?"

"We're not totally sure Premier Clark. We think it could be a fringe religious movement, some sort of Indian-Christian syncretism at work here, quite possibly the fruit of Salish Shaker prophecies from the south...but we aren't 100% confident. But we do know this. There's a growing group of indigenous peoples in that area who think their Creator, Chíchelh Siyá:m, is going to subvert the current political realities, bring in some spiritual revolution of sorts. And they're starting to mobilize themselves."

"What's going on...what do they want? These people get everything! When is enough enough? They've got more than a fair deal."

"Well...some of the stats we have might disagree Ms. Clark. In select instances, there might be some real grievances. Perhaps if we addressed those..."

"If I may," an officer interrupts. "Whatever the case may be, lots of natives - especially the young people - are unhappy and are chomping for change. That's what this is about. And they might go militant to get it. We need to have our eyes on that, and be prepared."

"Okay...thanks for that. Keep me posted on whatever else you discover, and what directions you think we should take."

Tea long finished, Christy calls the shamans into her office, and after offering up a comment on how they don't really look like shamans (they wore bluejeans and gortex jackets), she smiles uncomfortably and questions them in detail. "Who is this mysterious child being born in the Fraser Valley?"

Though she feigns great interest at what might be taking place, they don't buy it... and don't say much. So Christy sends them off with these words: "It's for

the good of this province, this nation, and all our aboriginal peoples, that you come back and share what you've learned. Good things appear to be happening, and we'd like to be a part of it."

Turning to her desk the Premier grabs a little sculpture, used as a paperweight, and gives it to the men, "On your way out, my secretary will give you a map telling you where you need to go. When you arrive, please offer this to the child and her family...it's an authentic Bill Reid. I think they'll like it."

As the shamans leave the building they mutter under their breath and shake heads. "Pretty disappointing, huh." But just like that two crows come out of nowhere, swoop up and over them and with a loud "Caaaaw, caaaw!" poop a tremendous poop on the Parliament doors. The men burst out in laughter. And with that sacred sign of encouragement they make their way to the ferry - four medicines and a Bill Reid whale in hand - trekking on to Sto:lo lands to meet this Great Mystery.

Meanwhile...Clark tells her assistant, "Get the head of Child and Family services on the line. We've got a newborn that needs to be rescued from an unstable home situation."

Northern Gateway Pipeline about Canada's Moral Direction

This past August, Will Braun took a trip to the West Coast, sponsored in part by KAIROS and Mennonite Church Canada Indigenous Relations, to learn more about the proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline, an Enbridge line carrying Tar Sands crude through unceded indigenous lands. Will shares some of his findings here in an effort to stir a deeper conversation within the Church:

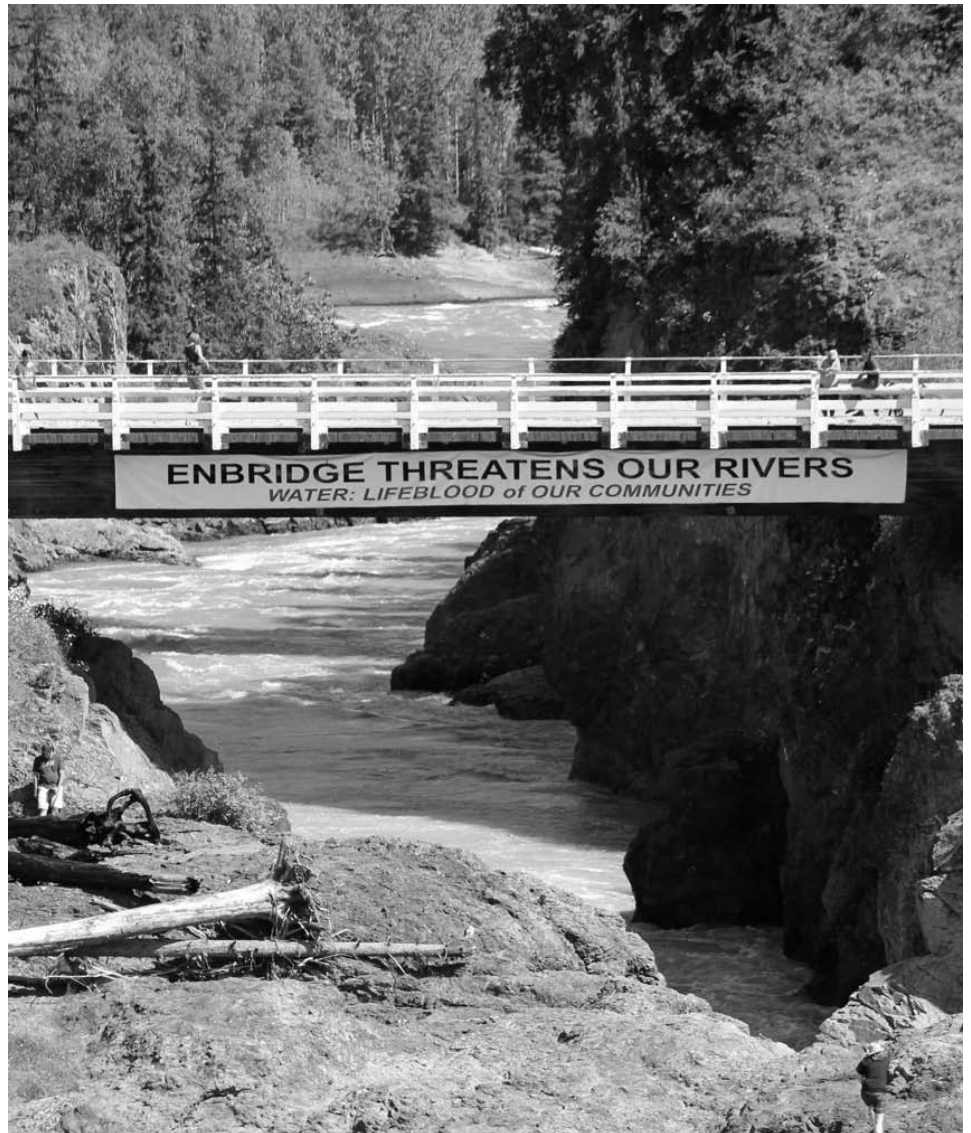
Prime Minister Harper says his cabinet will ultimately decide if the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline will proceed, but it's more likely that 15 or 20 small B.C. First Nations along the path of the \$6-billion project will determine its fate.

The half-dozen indigenous leaders I spoke with in communities between Prince George, B.C. and the coast all said four things about the project: 1) they oppose it; 2) there is nothing Enbridge can do to make it acceptable to them; 3) they are prepared to fight it in the courts and by physically blocking construction; and 4) they don't think it will be built.

Not since Mohawk Warriors stared down tanks at Oka in 1990 has Canada seen this degree of Aboriginal opposition to a project.

Northern Gateway is a proposal to link the Alberta bitumen sands with Pacific shipping routes by means of a 1,170-kilometer pipeline ending at a sea port in Kitimat, B.C. A federal panel is reviewing the project.

"We're at ground zero," says Russell Ross Jr., a Haisla First Nation councillor. From the Haisla community of Kitimaat Village, the 800 residents can easily see across Douglas Chan-



Sign over the Bulkley River at a traditional Wet'suwet'en fishing spot.

nel to the site of the proposed marine terminal. Ross explains that his people face the triple threat of spills along the Kitimat River Valley portion of the proposed pipeline, at the proposed terminal, or along the proposed super-tanker route—a 125-kilometre stretch of channels and passageways between Kitimat and the open ocean.

He emphasizes "proposed," lest anyone forget that the outcome of the Gateway debate is far from certain. But as significant as the looming confrontation could be, Gateway is about more than who will win the battle. It is about the moral direction of the country. The federal government is using Gateway to test drive its vision for Canada, both in terms of our response to climate change and our approach to Aboriginal relations.

The crux of Enbridge's case for the pipeline is that access to diversified energy markets (China, primarily) are "clearly in the national interest," to the tune of \$270 billion in national GDP growth over 30 years. It says pipelines are the safest way to transport crude and that the tanker route is within standard guidelines for marine transport. The company promises a range of state-of-the-art precautions.

But critics such as the Haisla say a spill or tanker accident is inevitable. They cite the company's grim record of spills as well as the notoriously wild weather, unforgiving terrain and seismic activity in the area. They also recall that BC Ferries' Queen of the North hit a rock and sank at the mouth of Douglas Channel in 2006 despite modern navigation equipment and the

fact it had travelled that route regularly for decades.

Given their location and culture, the Haisla face higher risks than anyone, Ross says. For them, the connection to the waterways is immediate, real and deep. Many people eat salmon and other wild foods regularly. These foods are essential to their ceremonies and their identity. They are “like a birthright,” Ross says. Haisla culture and identity depend on a viable marine environment.

A full-bore rupture of the pipeline in the Kitimat River Valley or a tanker wreck in Douglas Channel could devastate marine life over a large area for a long time. As a leader of a community located at ground zero, Ross would be negligent not to consider worst-case scenarios, which are dire.

When I ask him how he would feel about bitumen-laden tankers venturing deep into Haisla territory, he pauses, as if it's too hard to even consider. “I'd have to move away,” he says, his eyes brimming with emotion.

Gerald Amos, a Haisla elder and former elected chief, is blunt about what is at stake in the pipeline debate: “our lifestyle as we know it.” For him, stopping Gateway is about protecting his grandchildren's right to be Haisla.

Given the resolve and legal standing of the Haisla and other like-minded First Nations—which have never ceded title to their lands—and given the sheer moral cost to the government of potentially arresting large numbers of respected Aboriginal leaders, the project's future is in question.

With confrontation seemingly imminent, the tendency is for the public to merely pick sides. On a broader level, though, the issue should cause us to think more deeply about what kind of country we want.

In an age of global warming, as humanity faces one of its greatest challenges ever, do we want our country to offer the world creative leadership toward a new energy future or just shiploads of bitumen?

And in an age of supposed reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples, do



Mennonite Church Explores Involvement in Indian Day Schools

On November 26, staff and members of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church Manitoba met with leaders of Spirit Wind – a volunteer indigenous advocacy organization established in 1986 – to learn of the issues surrounding Day Scholars in the Indigenous Community.

Day Scholars are Indigenous children who attended (often by force) schools that were funded and run by the Canadian government and a variety of Christian denominations. These children endured many of the same abuses that survivors of the residential school system suffered; the main difference being that Day Scholars were able to return home at the end of each school day. Like their residential school sisters and brothers, they still suffered the harsh assimilationist policies of Canada's Department of Indian

we want First Nations to be continually forced to fight for their rights?

Will Braun lives in Morden, Manitoba, near a different Enbridge pipeline. His August 2012 trip to Northern B.C. was supported, in part, by Mennonite Church Canada Indigenous Relations. A version of this article first appeared in The United Church Observer.

Affairs which sought to eliminate native language and culture. In the infamous words of Duncan Campbell Scott, former head of the DIA, the goal was “to kill the Indian in the child.” Day Scholars also suffered tremendous spiritual, sexual, physical and emotional abuses.

Ray Mason and Garry McLean – president and vice-president of Spirit Wind – along with Irwin Kehler – publisher of Weetamah newspaper – spent over two hours powerfully describing the history and impact of residential and day schools. They also explained how Spirit Wind is actively pursuing a class action law suit on behalf of day school survivors. Past class action law suits led to an out of court settlement in 2006 between the government, the implicated churches, the Assembly of First Nations and the Inuit. This settlement recognized the suffering of residential school survivors, offered compensation to victims, and birthed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools. Yet a majority of survivors were left out of the settlement – those residential survivors whose schools did not make the settlement list, and more than a hundred and fifty thousand day school survivors. One of the reasons for this exclusion is that many school buildings were not owned by the government; classes were held in

church buildings and basements.

In order to pursue justice and fair compensation on behalf of day scholars, Spirit Wind has initiated a new class action law suit. This suit, filed in 2009, has over 11 000 signatories, but requires \$300,000 in order to be certified. “The government can ignore it,” said Mason, “until it is certified.”

Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church Manitoba have a long history of connecting with Indigenous communities dating back to the 1930’s. During World War II some Conscientious Objectors were placed in residential and day schools as principles, teachers and support staff. They also ran day schools in Pauingassi and Bloodvein in the 50’s and 60’s. Two former teachers in these schools were present at this meeting.

Some of the staff partaking in this conversation were very familiar with these issues as they had participated in a Day School Conference, hosted by Spirit Wind, this past May. For others this was new information. Though most in attendance had some familiarity with the Indian Residential School Survivors Settlement and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, many had not been aware of their connections (or lack thereof) with this matter of day schools. Some asked questions of clarification and others asked questions of how we can work together for justice.

Mason, McLean and Kehler thanked the group for entering into this dialogue, and encouraged Mennonites to support their efforts for healing and reparations. “Come and join us,” said McLean. “What [the day scholars] need is help to certify this class action. “What would happen, Kehler asked, “if Mennonites helped?”

(Note: As registered charities, congregations and Church bodies cannot receive or grant money to organizations that are not charities. As of this writing, Spirit Wind is in the process of seeking charitable status).

*Ken Warkentin, Executive Director
Mennonite Church Manitoba*



TRC Commissioners & representatives of those bodies that gave expressions of reconciliation, including Mennonites.

Mennonites offer Expression of Reconciliation to Residential School Survivors

This past June, at the Saskatoon Truth and Reconciliation Commission, MCC Saskatchewan and Mennonite Church Saskatchewan offered up an expression of reconciliation, which they put into the bentwood box. The box holds the confessions and commitments that various bodies are making towards more peaceable indigenous-settler relations.

We are humbled to be invited to this circle. We want to acknowledge that we are meeting on Treaty 6 Territory.

We watched with reverence the elders at the lighting of the Sacred Fire and walked behind the survivors on their lonely procession to the opening ceremony. We heard courageous and gracious words from speakers and we read the panels giving the history of the residential school movement from its beginning to end.

We observed as people lined up to receive their Annuity Payment from the Crown – a reminder that we are, indeed, all Treaty people.

And we have heard some of your life stories. We’ve added our tears to the countless that have already fallen. We acknowledge that there was – and is – much hurt and much suffering.

Many people from the Mennonite community have come to this gathering to volunteer, to listen, to learn. We are on a path leading us to greater understanding.

We regret our part in an assimilation practice that took away language use and cultural practice, separating child from parent and people from their culture.

We repent of our participation in the destructive acts of the dominant society.

We thank you for your welcome to walk this path together as we move to a healthier and more just tomorrow.

We commit ourselves to walk with you – listening, learning and walking alongside.

Thank you.

*Claire Ewert Fischer
Executive Director, MCC Saskatchewan*



Meditation

Ⲭⲟⲃ 1:46-47, 52-53

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And Mary said,
 "I celebrate the heartbeat of the Creator; I rejoice in the song of my Savior.
 For the One Above has
 resisted the exploiters
 rescued the oppressed
 restored the circle
 And will do it again."



Events 2013

January 26 – Day of Mourning: Survival/Invasion Day

In Australia, the Day of Mourning is a public holiday in which indigenous and settler communities remember the sorrows of the past, and celebrate the survival of indigenous cultures and peoples

February 14 – Annual Women’s Memorial March

In every major urban city across Canada, native and non-native communities gather to grieve and protest the loss of missing and murdered indigenous women. See <http://womensmemorialmarch.wordpress.com/national/> for more information and locations.

March 15-16 – Building Bridges (Winnipeg)

Join the Manitoba Partnership Circle for 2 days of exploring what it means for the Church to live as Treaty People. Ovide Mercredi, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, will be our guest teacher and dialogue partner.

April 5-15 – Christian Peacemaker Team Aboriginal Justice Delegation to Treaty #3

Explore what it means to live in right relationship with the earth and each other. Find out what it means to be an ally to indigenous communities engaged in healing, resisting colonialism and struggling for sovereignty. For more info see www.cpt.org/work/aboriginal_justice

June 6-8 – NAIITS Symposium (Tyndale University/Seminary, Toronto)

The North American Indigenous Theological Society will be having its 10th Symposium exploring “How Language Informs the Journey” through lectures, talking circles, music and discussions. For more information email symposium@naiits.com and check out www.naiits.com



Community News

Please pray for our friends in Pauingassi, Manitoba as they deal with three recent and tragic deaths.

Theresa Pascal of Pauingassi passed away on September 14, 2012 at Little Grand Rapids due to a boating accident. She was predeceased by one brother and is survived by her mother Sarah. Theresa will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Tony Crow of Pauingassi passed away in a boating accident in Pauingassi on September 20, 2012. He was 53 years of age. Tony is survived by his wife Marjorie, 4 children, 7 siblings and many friends. An ardent fisherman, he will be greatly missed by family and community.

Ricky John Henry Leveque of Pauingassi passed away September 26, 2012 at the age of 32. He was predeceased by his mother who passed away when he was born. He is survived by his father at Little Grand Rapids and one brother. His absence will be felt by many.

Harlin Baptiste of Little Grand Rapids passed away December 4 just 19 days short of his 70th birthday due to a stroke. He was predeceased by his wife Gladys. He is survived by a son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was well respected in the community and will be missed.

Native Kitchen: Venison & Barley Soup

Minah Two Crow offers up this tasty recipe which she learned in her Reservation community.

- 4-5 diced celery
- 4 sliced carrots
- 2 diced rutabagas
- Venison meat (approx. 2 lbs cut up in cubes)
- 2 fresh tomatoes
- 2-3 cups of Barley
- 1-2 gallons of water
- 1 onion - diced
- salt & pepper to taste



In a large pot, add the cut-up venison and water, bring to boil. Dice the vegetables while meat is cooking, add to pot and continue cooking for 45 minutes. Add the barley and cook for another 30 minutes until all ingredients are tender. Enjoy!

Resistance to Pacific Trails Pipeline Continues: Surveyors Ordered Off Unceded Indigenous Lands

Last Intotemak, Dave Diewert shared about the Unist'ot'en Action Camp, in which Wet'suwet'en peoples and settler allies are mobilizing a resistance against unwanted pipeline incursions through indigenous territory. Here's a recent update on the struggle:

From the beautiful unceded Unis'to'ten Yintah (Territory):

On the evening of November 20th, 2012, Wet'suwet'en Chief Togh-estiy intercepted and issued an eagle feather to surveyors from the Can-Am Geomatics company who were working for Apache's proposed Pacific Trails Pipeline (PTP). In Wet'suwet'en law, an eagle feather is used as a first and only notice of trespass. The surveyors and all other people associated with PTP were ordered to leave the territory and told that they are not allowed to return to Unis'to'ten land. As a result of the unsanctioned PTP work in the Unis'to'ten yintah, the road leading into the territory has been closed to all industry activities until further notice.

Toghestiy stated, "I have invoked the Wet'suwet'en *Inuk nu'ot'en* (Law) called *Bi Kyi Wa'at'en* (Responsibility of a husband to respectfully use and protect his wife's territory) to issue a trespass notice to Pipeline workers on her sovereign territory. My Clan's territory called *Lho Kwa* (Clore River) is located behind the Unis'to'ten territory

adjacent to the Coastal town of Kitimat and it is our responsibility to protect our territory as well. We will be stopping all proposed pipelines."

The Wet'suwet'en are made up of five Clans, with territories that they are expected to manage for their future generations. The Unis'to'ten clan has been dead-set against all pipelines slated to cross through their territories, which include PTP, Enbridge's Northern Gateway, and many others. The Unis'to'ten have established a permanent community along the Widzin Kwa (Morice River) directly in the path of the proposed energy corridor and made their opposition extremely clear.

Freda Huson, spokeswoman for the Unis'to'ten Clan, states: "PTP does not have permission to be on our territory. It's unceded land. We said "No!" in their meetings. We've written them letters; I've sent them emails, saying "absolutely no!" to their projects. Consider it trespass when you enter our territory without permission. You've received your warning. Don't come back!"

This marks the second time that eagle feathers have been issued



Surveying equipment confiscated by Wet'suwet'en resisters.

to pipeline workers. On August 23rd, 2010, Toghestiy and Hagwilakw of the Likhts'amisyu clan gave Enbridge representatives trespass warnings during a Smithers Town Council meeting in which Enbridge officials attempted to smooth over their recent oil spill on the Kalamazoo River.

Judy Da Silva of Grassy Narrows, a friend of CPT and many Mennonites, recently shared her support for the Unistoot'en resistance. "The Asubpeeschoseewagong Land Defenders stand with the Unist'ot'en. When we come together to protect the land, we are doing it for all of our future generations. This government and all of industry needs to understand that no means no. We will not sacrifice our lands, cultures, and children for their greed."

my friends
Intotemak

Publication Mail Agreement # 40012495
Return undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
Intotemak
Mennonite Church Canada c/o Indigenous Relations
600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

Intotemak Winter 2012
A Mennonite Church Canada Publication

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Canada**