

We the Concerned Aboriginal women met occasionally in different area's to discuss the occupation of the Department of Indian Affairs building in Vancouver, because of the poverty on our reserve level, of the situation we Indian people have to live through every day. The Department of Indian Affairs would of made it impossible for us if they knew what we were planning.

When we entered the Department of Indian Affairs building Walchli used every measures of his power to remove us by labeling us as a organization or band. The familar tactic's of D.I.A. , which is to divide and conquer.

Through out the week there were threats of court injuction, through that time the women work together discussing and sticking to our demands.

The government sent Senator Ray Perrault only state they only wanted six of us women to go to Ottawa to discuss our grievances on condition the rest of the women vacant the building.

We the concerned aboriginal women of the land, our demands were, 1) Mr. Fred Walchli's resignation as the director general, (Fred Walchli is the head boss of Indian Affairs in B.C.) 2) A full scale independent public inquiry of the Department of Indian Affairs administration in B.C., and 3) A meeting with John Munro, the minister of Indian Affairs in order that he could see the truth about his B.C. regional office and Ottawa Headquarter Bureaucrats.

Our results during the occupation were:

- 1) Brought out supporters from those Bands dis'satisfied with the Department of Indian Affairs.
 - 2) Problems were exposed of being hurt and the suffering caused by D.I.A.
 - 3) Expressed desire to control our own lives.
 - 4) Personal development and group growth happened.
 - 5) Inspired Indian people and Non-Indians by our courage, respect, caring and discipline.
 - 6) Exposed police and government (& courts) justice system.
 - 7) Followed directions of elders and observed traditional decision making process.
 - 8) Exposed government insensitivity and self interest.
 - 9) Began the process of rooting the movement into the community.
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CONCERNED ABORIGINAL WOMEN

COURT DATES

"August 4/81" - All in Room #101

1. Eileen Pierre: Tel: 894-6989
2. Harry Schooner: H: 799-5562
3. Terri Williams: H: 894-6659; 6331
4. Dorothy Jeff: Tel: 255-8892; 668-3035
5. Frank Rivers ~~987-8758~~

"August 5/81" - All in Rm. #101
Except A. Pootlass
Rm: 306: 10:00 a.m.

6. Gina Adolph: 985-1550
7. Lillian Basil: 253-4850; W: 684-0231
8. Mançy David: 847-2521
9. Archie Pootlass: 684-0231
10. Theresa Ann Williams: 894-6647

"August 6/81" - All in Room #101

1. Donna Lee Basil; H: 253-4850
1. Steven Basil: W: 684-0231, 253-4850
13. Cheryl Billy: Tel: 985-3054
14. Isabel Deom: Tel: 679-3295
1. Jack Lewis: Tel: 321-1385
1. Duane Howard: Tel: 253-4850
1. Jerry Jack: Tel: 668-3035
1. Edna Paul

"August 7/81" - All in Room #101

1. Nora Narcisse: Tel: 679-3780
- . Derek Wilson: Tel: 733-5853
21. Fay Wilson: Tel: 731-2257

"August 10/81" - All in Room 101

22. Della Denault: Tel: 679-8107
23. Maynard Denault: Tel: 679-8107
24. Mary Joseph: Tel: 894-6810

"August 10/81 (CONT.)

25. Brenda Schooner: Tel: 799-5562
26. Melvin Seymour: Tel: 372-9575
27. Mary Wallace: Tel: 894-6810

"August 11/81" - All in Room 101

28. Hubert Jim: Tel: 894-6168
29. Nora Pascal: Tel: 894-6164
30. Eunice Sam: Tel: 894-6394
31. Dinah Schooner: Tel: 799-5453
32. Rose Whitley: Tel: 251-5689

"August 12/81 - All in Room 101

33. Karen Anderson: Tel: 799-5453
34. Leonard Anderson: Tel: 799-5453
35. Mitzi Billy: Tel: 985-3054
36. Wayne Christian: Tel: 839-6496
37. Faye Edgar: Tel: 799-5989
38. Wendy Gabriel: Tel: 894-6394
39. Ethel Gardner: Tel: 987-9824
Lorna Bob
40. Wet. Keekoleemo: Tel: 437-5972
41. Mary Michel: Tel:
42. Philip Paul: Tel: 684-0231

"August 13/81" - All in Room 101

43. Inez Dan: Tel: 894-6891
44. Iris Dan: Tel: 894-6891
45. Robin Henry: Tel: 684-0231
46. Bernadine James: Tel: 894-6394
47. Gay Williams: Tel: 894-6635
48. Mary Louise Williams: 894-6394
49. Louise Williams: 894-6635
50. Sylvia Woods: 685-9748; 684-0231

"August 14/81" - All in Room 101

51. Katherine McCreary: 435-6208
52. Sally Norris: 437-5972
53. Bridget Pascal: 894-6394

There will be a RALLEY at the Brittania Center in Vancouver on Napire and Commercial on August 9th, 1981 from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., organized by the Aboriginal Women who occupied the D.I.A. building. The reasons why are to inform people at the band level and other citizers. We will be discussing our demands, explaining what we are going to do now, and what the support groups can do to help us.

Kamloops Pow-wow August 14,15, 16th, 1981

There will be a gathering in Kamloops on August 17th, 1981 at the residential school, orgainized by the Aboriginal Women. We incourage all concerned aboriginal women to attend. We are still standing by our demands.

Bella Coola Constitution Express Potlatch August 24-27/81

Williams Lake Constitution Express Potlatch August 29-31/81

When we entered the D.I.A. office we asked the staff and Walchli to leave. The first night many women spoke and explained why they were there. My problem seemed so little compared to others. But by the time night was over and the days that came ahead, it was clear that we were STATING that we want and will take control of our own lives. As long as we don't take control of our own life that the government will set us up and tell us where to live and how to live. We must stand strong as people: In many ways we must develop our own skills and be distinct and to continue to keep our land as Aboriginal people.

We must know our Language, songs, dances.

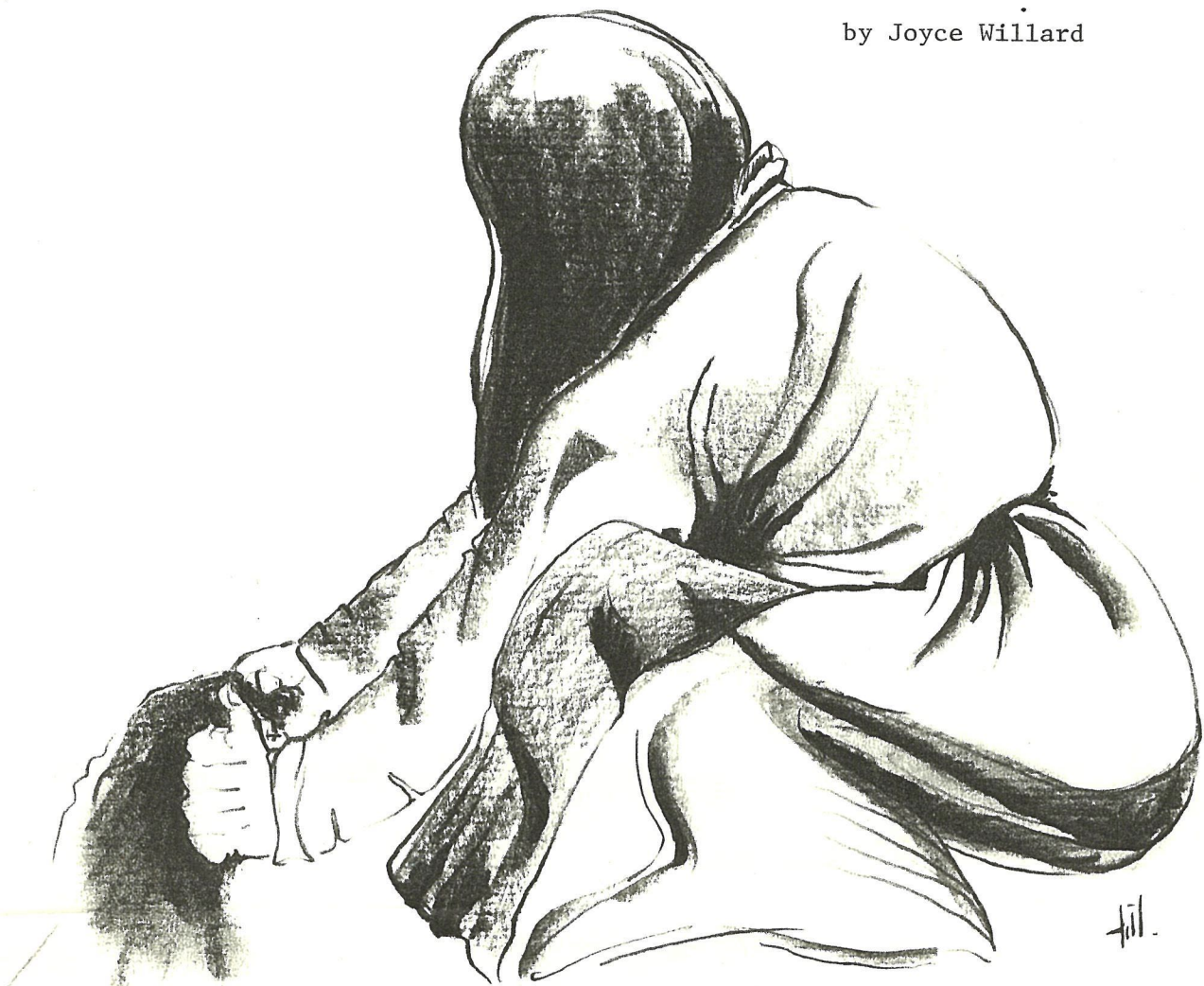
and the laws,

the arts, the flag, our history.

But to become self-sufficient we must except some of the white mans ways such as skills of bringing food into the community as we can not live off the land as we traditional did.

We can use their tools to take care of our health and many others ways. But we must use all their tools to advance us as Indian people. We must not carry their weakness with us.

by Joyce Willard



WASHING BLACK HOSS.

First of all, I would like to tell you all the reason I attended and fully supported the Concerned Aboriginal Women occupation of the Department of Indian Affairs, physically, spiritually, and emotionally, on July 27, 1981.

I have been attending meetings that have been held at the provincial level for the last year and half, the more meetings I attended the more clearly it was pointed out that the Dept. Of Indian Affairs was playing games with our leaders, by buying the leaders off, using OUR money. The leaders that could not be bought off were the ones that suffered more, because the money was used to buy off other organizations.

The corruption and mismanagement of the Dept. of Indian Affairs in the last while is becoming more and more clear. We have had our auditor go over the Dept. of Indian Affairs budget for this year and it was clear that they were transferring program funds to DIA administration offices.

Here at the Band level, there is so much more problems we are faced with everyday. It has become a excepted part of our lives to live with alcohol, social disorder, suicides, poor housing, dependant on Gov't, speak other languages but our own. The only way we can help ourselves is to start looking around ourselves and start working. Learning our culture heritage, reviving our pride, digity, and self ccnfidence, land base, territory, building our Government, Knowing our rights, hunting, fishing, ect., building our Nationhood.

It is important that we know what is going on around us in the world because it is resources from our country that they are using to be rich on to wheel and deal with. These kind of things have to brought out in the open so that Indian people can have a say in our resources and environment we want to live in.

EACH AND EVERYONE OF US HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY IN OUR COMMUNITY TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY GROW IN A HEALTHY AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR GRANDCHILDREN.

The demands that we made were simple and straight forward, the Government has the power to fire someone if they want to but they were just giving us the usual red tape run around. They were to busy wandering how they can divide and conquer the women.

Munro could have come here it would have been least expensive for him to come then for 6 women to fly to Ottawa. It just shows the mismanagement of our funds.

I would like to mention to you some of the feelings I got while in the DIA offices with 50 to 100 women. I can feel the power of each one of them. The hurts and pains that they went through we all went through together. The unspoken lasting frienships, strong self disapline, self respect, repect for other people feelings, respect for elders, which are all Indian values by tradition. There are much more I can say to express the close working relationship we had. It was with a force that was unseen but felt by all.

We, All, have a lot of work to do together, and looking forward to hearing and talking with you the feelings you have about the occupation of the Department of Indian Affairs by the Concerned Aboriginal Women 1981.

Danna Anthony, Neskainlith Indian Government, Shuswap Nation

My main concerns for being down Vancouver and participating with the involvement of the occupation of the D.I.A. office.

The ways our Indian people are being treated by the government and the white people, and have to live through it everyday. Even now today our own blood relations and friends don't even know what to do, that they are caught in this fantasy world. That all they know is that life is full of good times, that our people live off of alcohol and drugs which is destroying our own people. The white man laughs in our faces when they see us falling and stumbling all over the place, to see our Indian people fighting amongst each other, watching the husbands beat up their wives, seeing children be neglected. That's why our names are always drunken Indians, were showing them that and giving the pleasure to knock us down. We see that the people that are suffering from alcohol & Drugs that it's going to be hard to pull themselves together, because there is so much they have to deal with in themselves first. That's why it's time we stand up on our feet and help our brothers and sisters to follow the right path again. That they aren't getting nowhere by filling their fulfillments with the trash of what the white man gave us when they first came here.

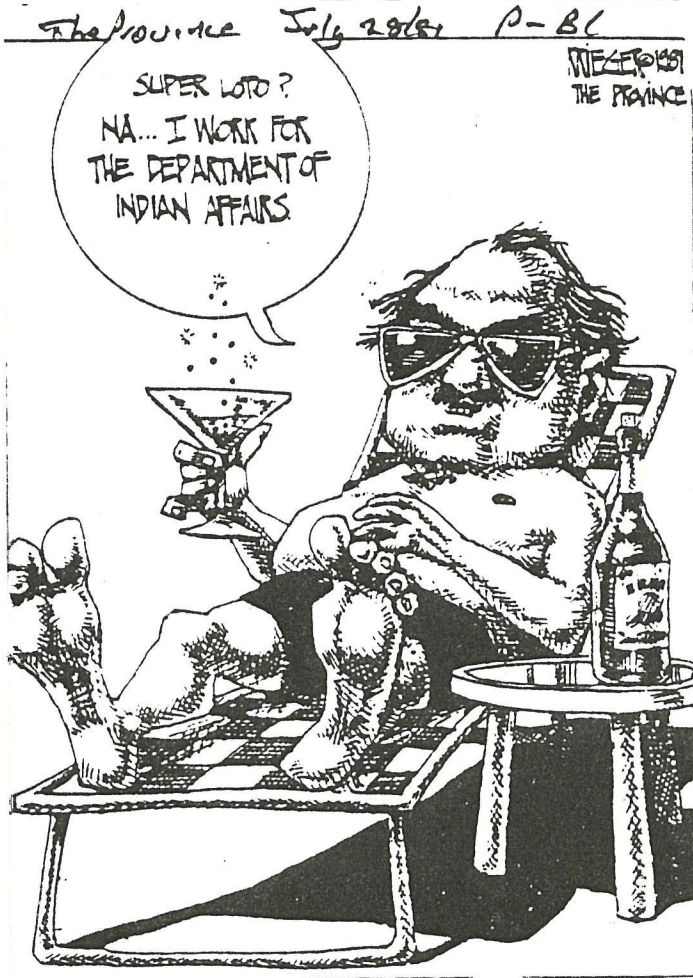
The education system is doing more harm to us than helping, they say graduate then you'll make something out of yourself, go to college or University. You make it there but when you come back your mind is filled with ideas of which was put into you. Education is good to a certain point, but on the other hand you can't get a job in the city or town even if you do have a diploma showing your skills, there is always that discrimination. Or there is that gap in the community when someone comes back from school, and that your skills can't be any use to the band for reasons such as funding for the person or project. That they don't know how to use their skills, instead they use it and abuse and use people for their own interest. It's hard to work at home at the community level without the communication of the people.

There is so much we are fighting for now, for our rights that we don't even have to fight over, because it's ours. Like fishing, hunting, trapping, our land, anything that will help us in the long run to becoming self-sufficient, to help our own families, friends and brothers and sisters.

It's time we join together now to pull and push for the long struggle of our goal. To become one whole nation, to help each other again, because I am not going to let anyone destroy myself or my family, friends and brothers and sisters. That I am going to continue to fight the government and white men that are destroying us. That each time we get together we are growing and growing to be stronger to be of one mind and thinking of our future for the next generation ahead of us, and the ones that follow.

by Diane Anthony





Indian Affairs
not Walchli's Affairs

Occupation was first step by Indians to win justice

By JOHN MORRAN
Daily Staff Writer

The recent occupation of Indian affairs department offices in Vancouver is the first step in a renewed campaign by Indians to win justice, says Kamloops Indian band chief Mary Leonard.

She said Thursday that reserve conditions, such as shabby housing and unemployment, aren't improving because two-thirds of government funds destined for Indian bands are lost in a bureaucratic shuffle.

"People talk about \$140 million going to Indians but by the time it gets to the bands it's not worth looking at," she said.

"They (Indian affairs) aren't spending it on Indian people so let's find out where that money is going."

Leonard said the Vancouver protest was successful because it prompted Senator Ray Perrault to promise an inquiry into Indian complaints about funding.

"I think they are really right trying to get attention... I'll support any Indian group because I think what they're asking is very little compared to what was taken from them."

Leonard said Indians want government money sent directly to Indian bands, which would benefit not only natives but taxpayers in general.

"The public has a lot of money going to supporting civil servants who are supposed to be helping Indians," she said.

Kam Daily, July 31/81

Indians will resist eviction

The Province

July 23/81

P-As

By SUZANNE FOURNIER

Indians occupying federal offices in Vancouver — their numbers swelled by 100 reinforcements — say they will resist eviction until Indian Affairs Minister John Munro comes to them for a meeting.

Munro sent a letter to the protesters Wednesday through B.C. regional director general Fred Walchli saying he was willing to meet a delegation of the protesters in Ottawa.

He added: "The offer is made subject to your group vacating the Indian Affairs' offices immediately."

Terry Williams, a Lil'wat Indian from the Mount Currie reserve — one of the most impoverished — said Munro must come here to see conditions on B.C. reserves and meet Indians in the occupied offices.

"Munro knows we will not communicate through Walchli and we don't want any closed-door meetings in Ottawa that are just an excuse to get us to end our occupation. They've carried on secret negotiations and sold us out for 100 years," said Williams.

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Albert Mackoff Wednesday refused to give department officials an injunction to evict the 40 women who Monday occupied the offices. Since then they have been joined by about 100 additional protesters — men, women and children — who arrived from reserves across B.C. and Canada.

"Indians all over Canada are feeling the harsh effects of the DIA's selective funding policies, and they support the protest begun by these women," said Rosalee Tizya, administrator of Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

Telegrams of support poured in from across Canada, from Ojibways in Ontario, Indians in Alberta

and Saskatchewan and from more than 50 B.C. Indian bands.

UBCIC lawyer Louise Mandell said the native people are standing firm in their determination to ignore the courts and continue the occupation.

"There may have been a technical or legal trespass committed, but the Indian people feel this is a moral or political issue: The DIA is mishandling their affairs, because it's funding time and the Indians aren't getting their money," said Mandell.

Another hearing is set for today at 10:30 on a request for an injunction to evict the Indians.

Indian women justified *The Vancouver Sun July 24/81 A-5* in challenge to Ottawa

The occupation of the department of Indian affairs office by native women deserves praise and recognition from all Canadian people and it has the profound support of the B.C. Federation of Women.

Since the creation of this nation Indians have held a citizens-minus status that few people even question or confront. As a result, those 40 women, later joined by more, have chosen to challenge government authority and to fight their oppression in a direct and public way.

For too long federal powers have tried to shunt our native peoples into oblivion. Indians have continuously suffered an eroding standard of living while mired in poverty. Their legal and cultural rights have been denied and their government funding hopelessly mismanaged. Such conditions have helped create both emotional and physical scars — anger, frustration, bitterness, hostility, illness, starvation, and slow death.

As mothers, native women know only too well the difficulty of raising children without enough food, clothing, or living space. They must live in fear of having their children removed if government workers deem their home conditions unsuitable. And yet: the government itself is the irresponsible parent — its level of funding controls the quality of lives.

The native women, who launched the occupation are not a group of quibbling children. They are not a voiceless, passive sub-group born to be ignored. Nor are they hidden and muffled on a reserve, waiting for men to speak out on their behalf. They are a strong collective force seeking a concrete response to their basic needs.

And yet, while these women rally for an improved standard of living, the B.C. Supreme Court has ordered them out of the offices they are occupying. That occupation has kept 140 employees out of work at a daily cost to the government of \$11,000. The Indian affairs department is squirming because it feels a financial pinch as a result (not to mention the blight on its public relations image). But at the same time it callously disregards the monetary requirements of its own native people.

That's executive privilege. And that's what it all comes down to, a question of whose price is inevitably worth more. So, with the support of 47 women's groups across the province, these native women must stay and fight — to win.

HEATHER CONN
Communications committee,
B.C. Federation of Women

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