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# Bulletin



Canadian Association in Support of the Native Peoples

An Independent Journal on Native Affairs

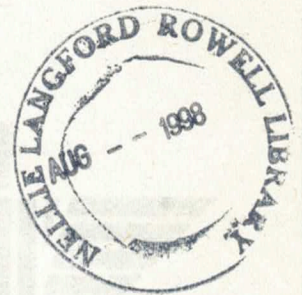
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Fall, 1978

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# On Native Women



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Mrs. Jay Peterson's many friends  
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# Bulletin



## C.A.S.N.P.

# Bulletin

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# In Memoriam

## Jay Peterson



This Bulletin, concerning Native women in Canada, their accomplishment and hopes, is aptly dedicated to the memory of Jay Peterson (1920-1976). A selfless worker throughout her adult life in the cause of Native people, children and youth, new Canadians and humanity at large, Jay was loved and respected by all who were fortunate to know her. She was a person without affectation who perceived clearly and acted on her beliefs. It is no wonder she is remembered as someone who inspired others.

A wife and mother first, an occupational therapist and artist by career, she worked, over a period of years, alongside Native people in Six Nations, Oneida, Muncey, Kettle Point, Walpole Island and in the London, Ontario urban setting, employing her very special skills in various ways. She compiled, for example, outstanding collections of North American Indian art and artifacts — prints, slides, reproductions, books and other documents. These exhibits contributed substantially to public appreciation of the valuable contributions of Native people to Ontario history and culture. Perceiving the importance of the survival of Indian culture in all its forms, including languages, it is not surprising to learn that Jay aided in the establishment of the Friendship Centre in London and served on its Board for several years.

Jay was instrumental in furthering the objectives of the Indian-Eskimo Association in southwestern Ontario

during the 1960's. Her support extended far beyond the capacities which she was able to bring to the field of artistic and cultural appreciation. She believed, for example, that treaties should be honoured and that Indian people must not weaken their resolve against the assimilation policy of the Government's 1969 White Paper.

Elected to the Board of Directors of the Indian-Eskimo Association's successor, the Canadian Association in Support of the Native People, in September, 1975, Jay's understanding of Native Priorities reflected the times — the threat of imposed massive development projects on Native lands and lifestyle; the uphill struggle of Native women for recognition of their plight. Up until her death in December 1976, Jay sympathized with these concerns, and also pondered seriously the directions which non-Native support should take.

In early fall of 1976, Jay and I discussed the possibility of a Bulletin devoted exclusively to Native women's activities. She liked the idea. I believe she would have been especially encouraged now by the strides which Native women have made over the past months in the face of obstacles which seem, at times, impossible to overcome. It is therefore to her spirit, always optimistic, that this Bulletin is dedicated.

Joanne Hoople.



Early photograph, representing a noble looking Indian woman wearing a war bonnet.

Credit : Public Archives of Canada

# Editorial

In 1973 an Ojibway woman from Ontario, Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell, stood before the Supreme Court of Canada protesting the loss of her legal status that resulted from her marriage to a non-Indian. Although she lost her case, Lavell's name became a rallying cry for Native women across the country who felt it was time to demand equal treatment before the law and in society.

Since the early '70's, Native women's organizations have grown in strength and number. On platforms, in workshops, and in numerous conferences Native women are speaking out against discriminatory legislations such as the provision for loss of status contained in Canada's Indian Act.

One organization that has been at the forefront of this battle is Indian Rights for Indian Women. In April of this year the group published a report on the legal status of Native women entitled: Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus (a summary of which is included in this issue of the Bulletin; last June the IRIW presented Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Hugh Faulkner with a list of recommended changes to the Indian Act.

The question of status, however, albeit important, is only one of many issues that concern Native women today. Through their organizations and in their communities they are confronting problems of education, poverty, health, adoption, aboriginal rights - all those aspects of modern life that affect their children's future.

And as various prominent leaders have pointed out, women's groups tend to overcome barriers created by differences in race and nationality and thus act as a unifying force among Native peoples. Says Bertha Allen, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, "We don't distinguish whether you are Dene, Inuit or Metis. Anybody that makes those distinctions in our board meetings gets slapped down by the other members."

This issue of the CASNP Bulletin is dedicated to Native women - their concerns, efforts and achievements. We draw public attention to some Native women's organizations and community groups that are working, despite limited financial resources, to better the lot of their people. Also included are samplings of poetry, book reviews, tributes, historical pieces and photographs. All of these convey a sense of the strength, dignity, courage and heritage of the Native woman.

# Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus

by Kathleen Jamieson



Advisory Council on the Status of Women  
Indian Rights for Indian Women

## A SUMMARY

Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus is a report on the history of discrimination against Indian women in 109 years of Canadian Legislation. The book was written by Kathleen Jamieson for the Indian Rights for Indian Women organization and sponsored by the Federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Citizens Minus is not a report with hard-hitting new recommendations or startling new facts. It wasn't meant to be. It was meant to be an informative historical explanation of where Native women are now and why. Because very little research has ever been done on the subject, Citizens Minus represents an important step towards filling this void. The following is a summary of the report by author, Kathleen Jamieson.

\* \* \*

For one hundred and nine years Indian women have been subject to a law which discriminates against them on the grounds of race, sex and marital status. The Indian Act, which regulates the position of Indians in Canada, provides that an Indian women who marries a non-Indian man ceases to be an Indian within the

meaning of any statute or law in Canada.

The consequences for Indian women of the application of Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act extend from marriage to the grave — and even beyond that. On marriage the woman must leave her parents' home, and her reserve. She may not own property on the reserve, and must dispose of any property she does hold. She may be prevented from inheriting property left to her by her parents. She cannot take any further part in band business. Her children are not recognized as Indian, and are therefore denied access to cultural and social amenities of the Indian community. And, most punitive of all, she may be prevented from returning to live with her family on the reserve, even if she is in dire need, very ill, a widow, divorced or separated. Finally, her body may not be buried on the reserve with those of her forebears.

No such restrictions are provided in the Indian Act for Indian men, who may marry whom they please without penalty, and indeed by doing so confer on their non-Indian spouses and children full Indian rights and status.

Two widely held misconceptions about this discriminatory section of the Indian Act are that it reflects Indian cultural tradition and that it was designed to protect Indian lands against encroachment from white men who might marry Indian women.

The 1869 legislation, which first introduced the section penalizing women who "marry out", was created primarily on the basis of the Dominion Government's experience with the Iroquois and Algonquian groups of Ontario and Quebec. In these societies, women did much of the work and were the traditional providers for their families. Among the Iroquois, descent was traced through women and after marriage the husband went to live with his wife's family.

European cultural values served as a model for the development of the early laws relating to Indians and historical documents show that from the beginning Indians were strongly opposed to legal discrimination against Indian women who married non-Indians and their children.

Indians have never been a party to formulating any section of the Indian Act — they were not consulted in 1869, nor have they ever, until now, been concerned in the drafting of legislation for Indians. Indeed, the whole of nineteenth century legislation for Indians was based on the assumption that Indians were to be gradually "civilized", to be assimilated by the superior culture, and that in the meantime special laws were required to regulate their transition from barbarism to this state of grace. The culmination of this process was the act of enfranchising, which meant that an Indian was no longer an Indian in law, had become civilized, and was entitled to all the rights and responsibilities of other Canadian citizens. The best

efforts of the Indian Department were directed towards this end.

Various commissions of inquiry were established during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, to review progress in the process of assimilation, and to adapt and change the legislation in order to bring this about. After the Second World War, a special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons was established and its deliberations led to the enactment of the Indian Act of 1951, which is the Act still in force today. The restrictions placed on Indian women who married out were even more severe in this Act than they had been in previous legislation.

"INDIANS HAVE NEVER BEEN A PARTY TO FORMULATING ANY SECTION OF THE INDIAN ACT."

Concern for human rights in the later part of the fifties led to the passage of the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960, and in the same year to the extension of the franchise to the Indians, marking the beginning of a new political awareness for and of Indians. It then began to appear that Indians were moving to a position where they had more rights than other citizens, and where they were, in fact, "citizens plus...as charter members of the Canadian community", as a 1967 report from the Department of Indian Affairs described it.

The development of native militancy in the late sixties and early seventies culminated in the Lavell case, and the events surrounding this case are crucial to understanding the complex approach of status Indians to Indian women's rights today.

#### LAVELL CASE

The stand taken by Jeannette Lavell was itself, first of all, a manifestation of the resurgence of pride in Indian identity. It was an affirmation by an Indian woman of her belief in the concept of "citizen plus" and the desirability of retaining Indian status. To pose this case, as it has been, as one of Indians' rights vs. women's rights, is to assume that all Indians are male.

The case, which became a political vehicle for both the government and the Indians, came before the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973, when Jeannette Lavell contested her loss of status under Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act. The basis of the case was that the discriminatory provisions of this section were contrary to the Canadian Bill of Rights.

The government had just published a "White Paper" proposing that the Indian Act should be phased out. But a strong Indian political front was emerging, and was apparently determined to wring redress from the government for past injustices. Insistence on the retention of the Indian Act was regarded as a crucial part of this strategy by Indian leaders. As Harold



Credit : THE CITIZEN

Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell fought to retain her status in the early '70's.

Cardinal put it, "We do not want the Indian Act retained because it is a good piece of legislation; it isn't. It is discriminatory from start to finish. But it is a lever in our hands and an embarrassment to the government, as it should be...We would rather continue to live in bondage under the inequitable Indian Act than surrender our sacred rights."

The Indian Act was thus transformed from the legal instrument of oppression which it had been since its inception into a repository of sacred rights for Indians. The opposition of Indian leaders to the claim of Lavell became a matter of policy to be pursued at all cost by government and Indians together because it endangered the Indian Act.

#### TABOO SUBJECT

Jeannette Lavell lost her case, but the consequences were far-reaching. The issue of Indian women's status under Section 12(1)(b) acquired, for many people, the dimensions of a moral dilemma — the rights of all Indians against the rights of a minority of Indians, i.e., Indian women. The case created a united Indian front on the "untouchable" nature of the Indian Act and the government gave an undertaking to the National Indian Brotherhood that no part of the Indian Act would be changed until revision of the whole Act is complete, after full process of consultation. The result of this gentlemen's agreement has been that

until very recently a powerful blanket of silence was imposed on discussion of the status of Indian women, and it became taboo to even mention the subject. Thus it seems that the rationale used by Cardinal which justified the victimization of Indian women has become conventional wisdom.

Many parliamentarians are beginning to find the legislation on Indian women an embarrassing anachronism, especially since loss of status is now clearly seen as a violation of fundamental human rights. But while both sides admit that the discrimination against Indian women is manifestly unjust, neither the government nor the Indian leaders have yet been able to agree on how this question might be resolved.

Since the articulation of the special status concept "citizens plus", Indian leaders have continued to insist that Section 12(1)(b) must not be repealed, however unjust it is. They claim that the Indian Act, which symbolizes their special status, will thus be laid open to government attempts to encroach on this special status.

"TO BE BORN POOR, AN INDIAN AND A FEMALE IS TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MOST DISADVANTAGED SOCIETY IN CANADA TODAY."

The government, on the other hand, apparently believes that it can escape the consequences of confronting the issue by laying the whole blame for the continuing discrimination on the NIB, by arguing that it has promised the NIB not to make any changes to the Indian Act until the whole Act is revised through the joint NIB-government committee, and that any interim attempts to alleviate the women's situation would be interpreted as bad faith.

The NIB has refused to allow status or non-status native women's organizations to be represented in these negotiations. Curiously the federal government does not see anything at all amiss with the fact that the NIB can unilaterally make such a decision. As "Indians" meant only males to the governments in the past, so it is today.

This denial of the human rights of Indian women on the part of both the government and the NIB has been compounded by the fact that this same government has carefully excluded any possible recourse to law, by removing the Indian Act from the reach of the new Human Rights Act, which came into force on March 1, 1978. Indian women have nowhere to turn and are denied the basic human rights enjoyed by other Canadians.

#### INDIAN RIGHTS FOR INDIAN WOMEN

Indian rights for Indian Women is at present considering options for a definition of membership which would replace the present discriminatory sections of the Indian Act. As an interim measure,

they have made three minimal requests to government to alleviate the situation in which Indian women now find themselves.

They have asked that evictions of Indian women and children from reserves be stopped immediately. Those who are being evicted are elderly women, widows and deserted mothers with small children. This request, however, has been rejected.

They have asked that since both government and Indian leaders have said that Section 12(1)(b) is unjust and discriminatory, the implementation of this section be suspended until the whole Act is revised. This request has also been denied.

They have asked that, since it is their fate that is being decided, and since Indian women comprise at least half of the Indian population, Indian women's organizations be allowed an official voice in the joint NIB-government negotiations on the revision of the Indian Act. This request has also been refused.

One thing is clear — that to be born poor, an Indian and female is to be a member of the most disadvantaged minority in Canada today, a citizen minus. It is to be victimized and utterly powerless. It is to be, by government decree, without legal recourse of any kind.

Citizen Minus is available free of charge in English and French from:

The Advisory Council on the Status of Women,  
Box 1541, Station B,  
Ottawa. K1P 5R5





# Indian Rights for Indian Women



Credit : Howard Bernard

Jenny Margetts and Mary Two-Axe Early representing IRIW recommendations to DIAND minister Hugh Faulkner.

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1971, INDIAN RIGHTS FOR INDIAN WOMEN (IRIW) HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FEW NATIVE ORGANIZATIONS PREPARED TO DEAL WITH SOME HIGHLY SENSITIVE ISSUES WHICH CONCERN NATIVE WOMEN - THE RIGHTS OF INDIAN WOMEN TO LIVE, DIE AND BE BURIED ON THEIR RESERVES, THE BAND MEMBERSHIP OF THEIR CHILDREN AND, OF COURSE, FORCED ENFRANCHISEMENT.

As currently applied, Canada's Indian Act strips a woman of her Indian status if she marries a non-Indian, although, Indian men are allowed to marry non-Indians without penalty.

IRIW has been the only organization to take the responsibility for trying to change a law which discriminates against Indian women on grounds of race, sex and marital status.

In 1971, the year of IRIW's formation, Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell was protesting her loss of legal status that resulted from her marriage to a non-Indian. IRIW was not registered federally as an organization when Lavell went before the Supreme Court of Canada. The organization could not officially back her appeal; however, members of the group supported Lavell as individuals. Theirs was the only national group to do so.

Jenny Margetts, President of IRIW recalls that, during the Lavell case, her organization asked the Native Council of Canada to act on its behalf but that

"this got badly disorganized...From then on after being tossed from one organization to another and because no one wanted to take responsibility for funding IRIW, we decided to stand on our own. We spoke for ourselves to cabinet ministers, departmental officials and our people."

Margetts is a Plains Cree from Saddle Lake, Alberta, who was disenfranchised in 1960 when she married a non-Indian. Along with the other members of IRIW she has helped the organization stand on its own since 1973.

IRIW members have come up with options to discriminatory clauses of the Indian Act.

They recommend that a person with 1/4 Indian blood be registered as a status Indian and that the blood line follow either the mother or the father. Margetts says it is possible for the government to consider making this 1/4 blood rule retroactive. This would mean that women who have been enfranchised because of marriage and children of mixed marriages would be eligible to all the rights of a status Indian, providing they meet the 1/4 Indian blood criteria.

"IT'S NOT THE MONEY THEY ARE AFTER, IT'S THEIR RIGHTS THEY ARE AFTER."

Margetts: "We dealt with retroactivity at our last workshop and after doing these workshops together the Native women came up with the fact that they would like to see status granted retroactively but that there would be no payment involved for the loss of status, there would be no compensation. I think that's very Indian. When I saw that recommendation - and it passed unanimously - I saw it as being quite indicative of what Native people feel. It is not the money they are after, it's their rights they are after."

Margetts said an appeal board at the local band council level would help settle the who-is-and-who-isn't-Indian question and ensure that Native women would have the rights guaranteed to them under the Indian Act.

"Tribal councils or band councils should have an appeal system and at the national level have a tribunal system whereby a person whose status is questioned by the government could go to a board or tribunal, present a case and get on a band list, or a membership list or a general Indian list. There would be women involved in this appeal system. I think this appeal system would be fair to the women."

"What is happening now at the reserve level, the band council level, is that the band council is composed mainly of men, and that the women never have any kind of appeal system to go to. They do not have any recourse to appeal for themselves or for their children. Don't forget, there are many children involved - both boys and girls - and a lot of time these children lose their status at the whim of the band council."



Credit : Howard Bernard

Mary Two-Axe Early, Vice-President IRIW

#### WOMEN NOT PROTECTED

"THE PRESENT INDIAN ACT REALLY PROTECTS THE INDIAN MEN AND NOT THE INDIAN WOMEN."

Margetts says it is not only non-status women who lose rights under the present Indian Act, but also status women. "It is particularly affecting the rich reserves. Money talks. Economics. These are the new rich reserves coming into gas royalties, oil royalties. Of course, the fewer members you have the more each band member will get. They are, for instance, looking at illegitimate children and striking them off the band list."

IRIW's other recommendations include:

1. In the case of marriage to a non-Indian person, a matrimonial properties contract should be compulsory. This contract would be endorsed by the Band Council and would establish clearly that the non-Indian has reserve residency rights only.
2. An Indian Bill of Rights should be passed to guarantee Indian rights.
3. Non-Indian children adopted by Indians should enjoy residency rights only, until their age of majority.



Credit : Howard Bernard

## NOT FIGHTING INDIAN MEN

Margetts emphasizes that IRIW, under its present leadership, does not want to see Indian women and Indian men fighting each other. "We said in the national workshop in Edmonton, in April, that we would not spend our energies fighting with our people, our own Native people. NIB and Native associations across the country come out hitting hard in press releases, the media and it is very difficult not to fight and because politically I have very strong feelings about what they are saying about us many times. But true to our words, we have not fought back."

IRIW has met with federal cabinet ministers to present its set of recommendations regarding changes to the Indian Act. The group has also discussed expanded guidelines for the new federal Human Rights Commission which currently exempts the Indian Act from its responsibility.

"We have the support of the Human Rights Commissioner, Gordon Fairweather. He will be spending half a day with us at our board meeting. He has also said that the cabinet ministers are talking to him and they will likely be given the task of coming up with recommendations on how that whole section should be dealt with at the federal level. To me that makes sense: it doesn't just involve Faulkner but the Human Rights Commissioner."

No one wants to be responsible for funding IRIW. They receive monies to hold meetings, workshops and some special project funding but they do not receive core-funding from the government. (The National Indian Brotherhood, Native Council of Canada and Inuit Tapirisat of Canada receive core funds from the Department of the Secretary of State.) Nevertheless, the organization was able to produce a well-documented report on the Indian woman's status issue entitled: Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus.

"It is a documentation of what has happened to women, what is happening to women. She (Kathleen Jamieson) mentions the NIB joint cabinet committee and the book deals with it only up until the time that they were refusing to allow us to be part of that consultation process. It does not deal with the fact that NIB has left the joint committee."

IRIW is currently involved in a second report on Native women and elders, which they expect to release in the summer of 1978.

Jenny Margetts, President IRIW

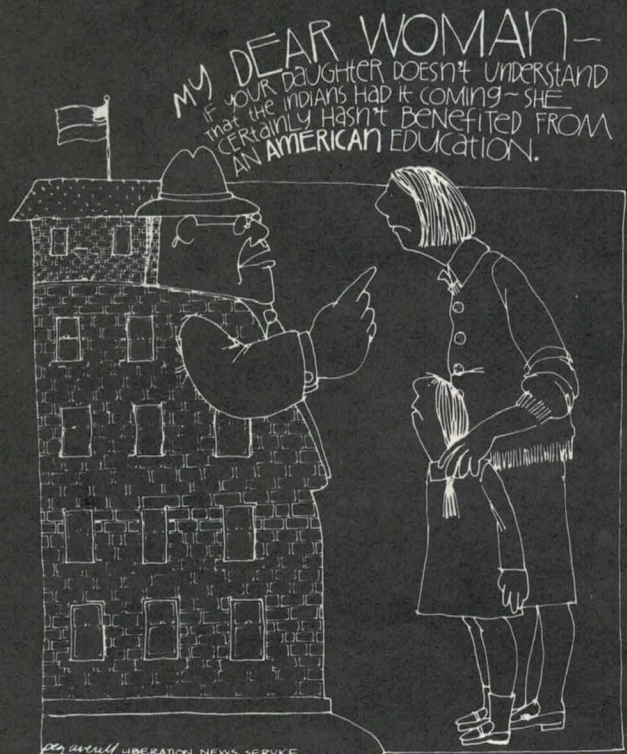
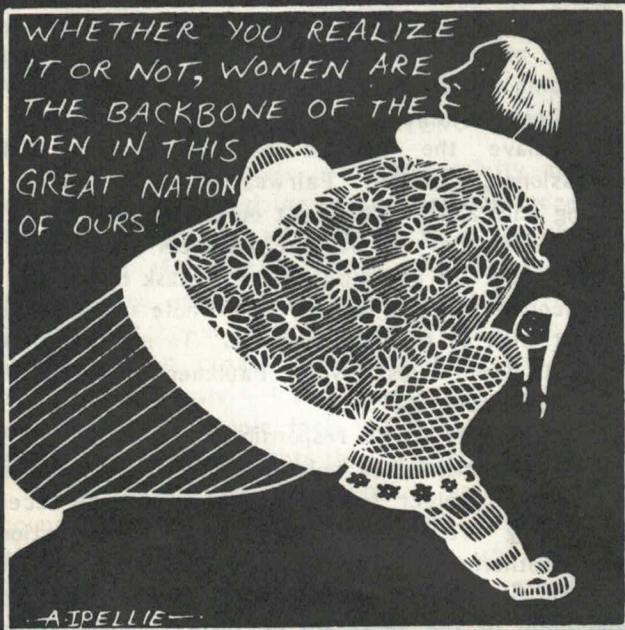
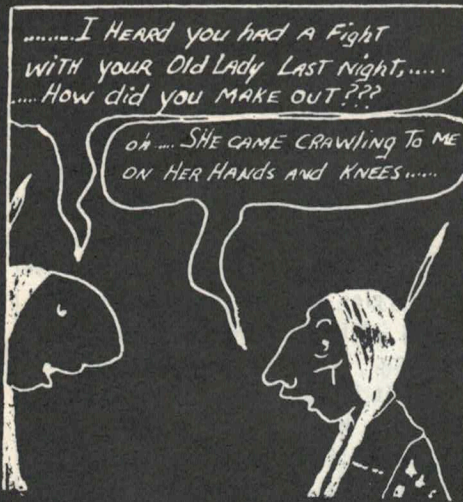
4. Tribal marriages should be recognized as valid and all rights of the married couple should be ensured on and off the reserve.
  5. Because of the retroactive enfranchisement, the Department of Indian Affairs should take necessary steps to obtain additional lands when necessary.
  6. Finally, those non-Indian women who gained status through marriage should lose their status.
- Indian Rights for Indian Women is not interested in merely a revised or updated Indian Act. They are trying to ensure that women who have a right to be there are not evicted from their homes on reserves.

Margetts: "We have taken the case of the Tobique women (Tobique reserve in New Brunswick where the band council is evicting non-status women and children from reserve lands) and have passed a resolution saying we will do everything in our power to help them stay on their land, in their homes."

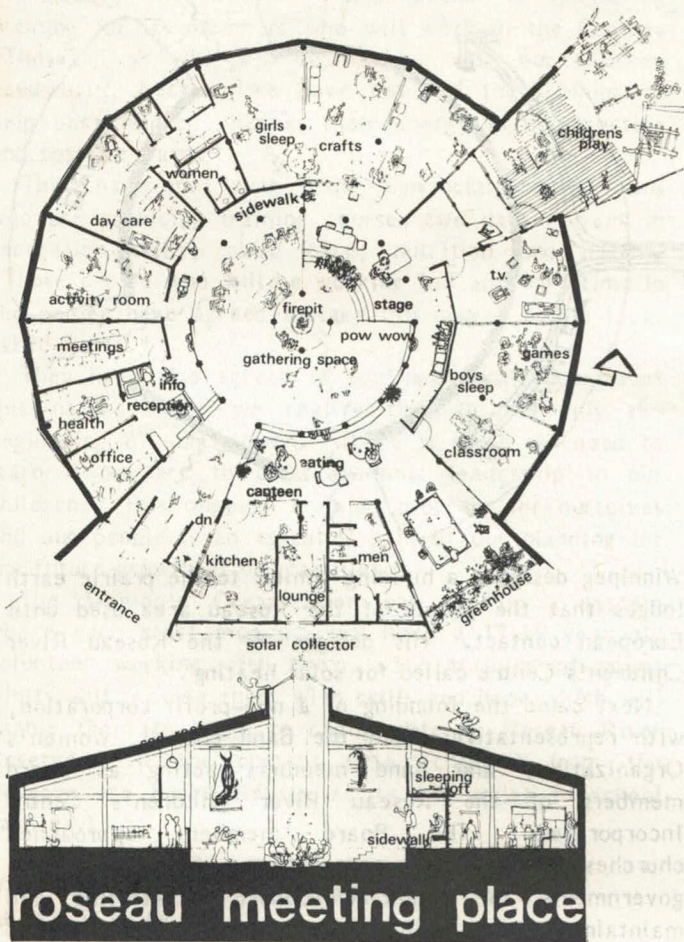
"We are helping the women on this reserve, and many reserves across Canada fight their evictions. Caughnawage is one case where we write to the band council quite frequently, especially when they come out with their eviction notices to old ladies, widows and other women who have a right to live and be buried on their reserves."

In the past few years band councils across the country have been serving more and more eviction notices.

"Old Ki-pitch" by Billy BRASS © Sept. 1977 ←



## The Lighter Side of the Bulletin



**roseau meeting place**

## Roseau River Women in Action

"WE WANT SO MUCH FOR OUR CHILDREN. WE WANT THEM TO HAVE A GOOD EDUCATION, AND TO HAVE OPPORTUNITIES WE NEVER HAD. BUT GIVEN THE CONDITIONS WE LIVE UNDER IT IS VERY DIFFICULT. THE DRINKING, THE VIOLENCE, THE BROKEN FAMILIES, THE INABILITY OF OUR CHILDREN TO COPE AT SCHOOL, THE FREQUENT VISITS TO THE HOSPITALS ARE A DIRECT RESULT OF THE PRESENT LIVING CONDITIONS. THE APATHY AND INDIFFERENCE WE HAVE FELT OVER THE YEARS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE HAD THE POWER AND MONEY TO HELP US INITIATE CHANGE FOR OUR CHILDREN LEADS US TO FEEL THAT WE MUST TAKE ACTION OURSELVES TO DETERMINE OUR OWN FUTURE FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN."

Tired of watching their children drop out of school, turn to delinquency and live under health conditions that the average Canadian would not tolerate, the women of Roseau River Reserve have taken matters into their own hands. They are planning and raising

funds for a community centre for their children. Roseau River Indian Reserve is in Manitoba, sixty miles south of Winnipeg, near the international border. There is no running water on the Reserve, and residents have to rely on a truck to deliver fresh water three times a week. Often the truck doesn't arrive, and people are forced to do without fresh water. There is no community well, and since the Red River is polluted, many families have to rely on water from contaminated sources.

The houses on Roseau River Reserve are built with substandard materials, and are too small to accommodate the average eight family members living in them. When the homes are built, no heat, water or washroom facilities are provided, and since many of the families are on welfare, most use wood stoves for heat. As a partial result of living conditions like these, 70% of the patients at nearby hospitals are from the Reserve.

There are few employment opportunities on the Reserve, and 85% of the residents are on welfare. The jobs that are available are seasonal, providing no stability or guaranteed annual income. Over half of the 485 people who live at Roseau River are under seventeen years old.

Joyce Littlejohn McArthur, a Roseau River Band member, returned to the reserve with her two children during the late summer of 1976. McArthur was born on Roseau River, was sent to residential schools in Brandon and Winnipeg. "After I had been out of school for a while, I got married. My husband came from Saskatchewan. After we got married, we moved there. It was okay for a couple of years, then he started drinking."

McArthur left her husband, and she and her two daughters moved back to the Roseau Reserve. Like all other Reserve residents, she faced a welfare existence because there were no jobs. It was a depressing time for McArthur, who found herself reflecting on how the Reserve environment would affect her children.

### SOMEBODY HAD TO GIVE THAT LITTLE PUSH

"I remember that one day a group of women met at a friend's house to welcome back someone who had come home from B.C. During that meeting, we talked about the situation on the reserve. We talked about how women had no input, no say on what was happening on the Reserve, or no say about our kids, education or health."

"The chief and council are all men. It was obvious

that there was no communication between reserve administration and the people. And the women at the meeting showed me they were really interested in doing something for our children.

"We discussed jobs, recreation, lack of children's activities, schooling and finally a building to bring the people of the Reserve together. It was at this meeting that the Roseau River Women's Organization was founded."

In September 1976, Joyce Littlejohn McArthur was elected president. "There is only one hope for tomorrow — our children today" is the sentiment which guides the Women's Organization.

Representatives from the Women's Organization, after many meetings, began attending band council meetings, and presenting their concerns about their children's welfare and future. "Some of the men found it difficult to accept women coming and talking like this. They said we should stay home and look after the kids. But we threw back at them that in our Indian culture the traditional woman's role revolves around the children, and that was what we were doing. We were putting the kids first for a change. We were not just pushing the kids aside and letting them make it on their own. We were trying to help them make it. Somebody had to give them that little push.

#### ORGANIZING BEGINS

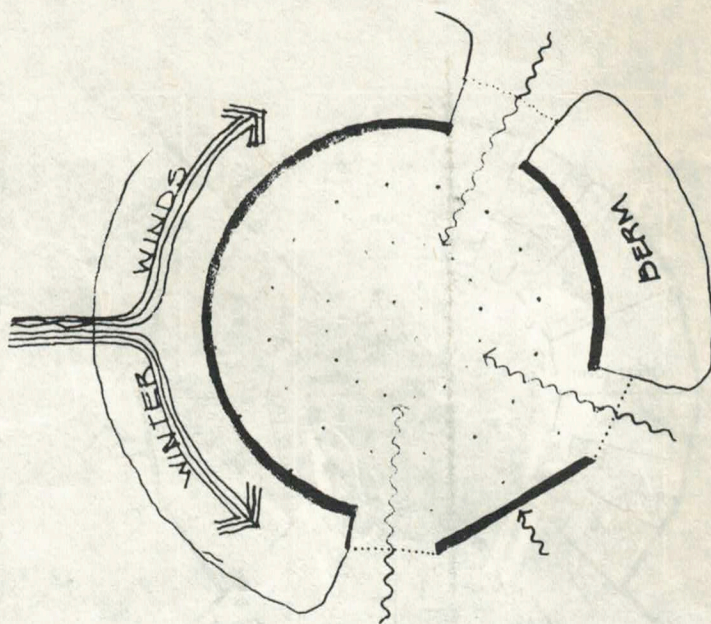
The Women's Organization decided that an Annual Christmas Party for their children was a move in the right direction. This had traditionally been looked after by the Children's Aid Society, but no one had contacted them to request presents that year. It also appeared to be too late to approach the local presbytery to ask for presents.

The women asked the Band Council for \$400 and Chief Felix Antoine and his council released the \$400.

With the help of Reverend Dorinda Vollmer, a United Church minister, the Roseau River Women's Organization also received \$1400 from the presbytery. McArthur said, "The women organized a shopping expedition into town. It was the first time the children had presents selected for them by their own people. Everyone was excited, a close bond was formed as the women shopped, wrapped the presents, and generally prepared for the party."

The Christmas Party was one triumph for the Women's Organization. But they still had to face the fact that their children lived in homes which had no running water, no regulated heat, and which were much too small. An annual Christmas Party wasn't going to improve their quality of life.

They decided to begin fund raising the \$230,000 necessary to build, and the \$80,000 required to operate a children's centre. An architect was contacted to prepare preliminary designs. Dudley Thompson of



Winnipeg designed a building similar to the prairie earth lodges that the people of the Roseau area used until European contact. His designs for the Roseau River Children's Centre called for solar heating.

Next came the founding of a non-profit corporation, with representatives from the Band council, Women's Organization, and band members acting as board members of the Roseau River Children's Centre Incorporated. The Board members approached churches, individuals, corporations, foundations and governments for financial support in starting and maintaining the Children's Centre. They expect construction to begin soon, and have raised over \$56,000. The United Church has pledged \$25,000.

McArthur said the Children's Centre will provide the children of Roseau River Reserve with many of the things that are currently unavailable. "We want our families to be strong again. We want to build in good feelings of community and support for one another. We want our children to feel that there are people who are concerned about them, and who are willing to get involved with them. We want our children to know there is a place for them to come when they need help — food, shelter, recreation, or just a friend to talk to — there is someone there for them, people who will listen and care."

The Centre has quiet rooms for children to study, people who are prepared to act as tutors, game rooms, a day care centre, a health office, craft rooms, and even a large firepit circle to hold pow-wows in.

#### PLANS FOR THE CENTRE

The Women's Organization isn't just content to see the building become a reality. They have made a much longer commitment to staff the Centre. They are working for \$400 to \$500 a month — much less than minimum wage, but higher than the welfare on which

they are now forced to live.

Already, the Women's Organization is sponsoring training for its members who will work in the Centre. "Those of us who will be working with our children need help, because we have not had the training to help our children channel their energy in constructive and positive ways."

They have met with many provincial organizations who are providing training courses two days a week in recreation skills, child care, nutrition and health. "Those people who will be working full and part-time in the centre have agreed to take this course and in fact, asked for it."

They have also agreed to continue taking courses of this nature, "for we realize that this is only the beginning of our growth. There is much we need to learn if we are to offer dynamic leadership to our children. This ongoing training program for ourselves and our people is an essential part of our planning for the future growth of our families."

The Women's Organization has set up a system where each staff member will have a 17-19 year old volunteer working with them. The training of young adults will provide them with skills and hope which will enable them to begin to change life on Roseau River Reserve. At the present time, children from the Reserve are bused fifteen to twenty miles to school each day.

#### WHAT DO OUR CHILDREN GO HOME TO AFTER SCHOOL?

"No one from our reserve had graduated from the Dominion City Collegiate. In fact, not one of our children has gone on to grade nine. They see children from other communities dressed nicely, clean and having all the things they want and need. Our children are exposed to a beautiful school with all the facilities. What do our children go home to after school?"

"It is not long before they see two lifestyles, their own and the way people live outside the reserve. Soon, their attendance at school drops off, their interest lags, they fight among themselves, and all too soon the drinking, sniffing and smoking starts. They feel troubled and uneasy at school. They don't fit in. They can't cope because they are physically sick a great deal of the time, and most of their families just barely managed to survive. Our young girls of fifteen start families.."

The Roseau River Children's Centre will provide hope and leadership skills for the children and adolescents of Roseau River.

.....  
THROUGH THE ROSEAU RIVER CHILDREN'S CENTRE, WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE OUR CHILDREN TOWARDS BETTER GOALS IN LIFE, AND HELP THEM TO DEVELOP THEIR ABILITIES. WE WANT THEM TO

KNOW THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT THEM AND WHO ARE HERE TO LISTEN TO THEM.

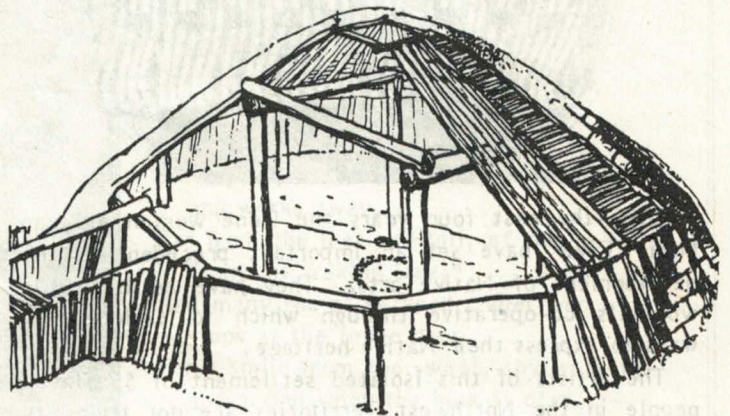
OUR PEOPLE NEED A GREAT DEAL OF HELP IN ORDER TO WORK WITH THE CHILDREN. WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE OUR PEOPLE TO CONTINUE TO LEARN AND GROW AND SO DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIAL.

WE WANT TO HELP THE PARENTS — OURSELVES — BECOME MORE AWARE OF WHAT OUR CHILDREN NEED, HOW WE CAN HELP THEM AND WE ARE WILLING TO ASK PEOPLE TO COME TO OUR RESERVE AND HELP US. WE WANT TO BRIDGE THE GAP THAT EXISTS BETWEEN OUR CHILDREN AND OURSELVES. WE WANT TO INTEREST OUR CHILDREN IN GOING TO SCHOOL AND GETTING AN EDUCATION AS WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE TOGETHER.

WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO FEEL THAT THEY ARE IMPORTANT PEOPLE, AND THAT THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR RESERVE AND OTHER COMMUNITIES. WE WANT TO BUILD INTO OUR CHILDREN A FEELING OF SELF WORTH AND SELF CONFIDENCE.

WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO REALIZE THAT LIFE ON OUR RESERVE CAN BE BETTER, BECAUSE THEY SEE US TRYING TO MAKE A BETTER LIFE FOR THEIR SAKE AS WELL AS FOR OUR OWN.

THERE ARE MANY RESERVES THAT SUFFER THE SAME PROBLEMS THAT WE DO. THEY MIGHT FIND A WAY, THROUGH OUR PROJECT, TO HELP THEMSELVES AS WE ARE STRUGGLING TO DO.

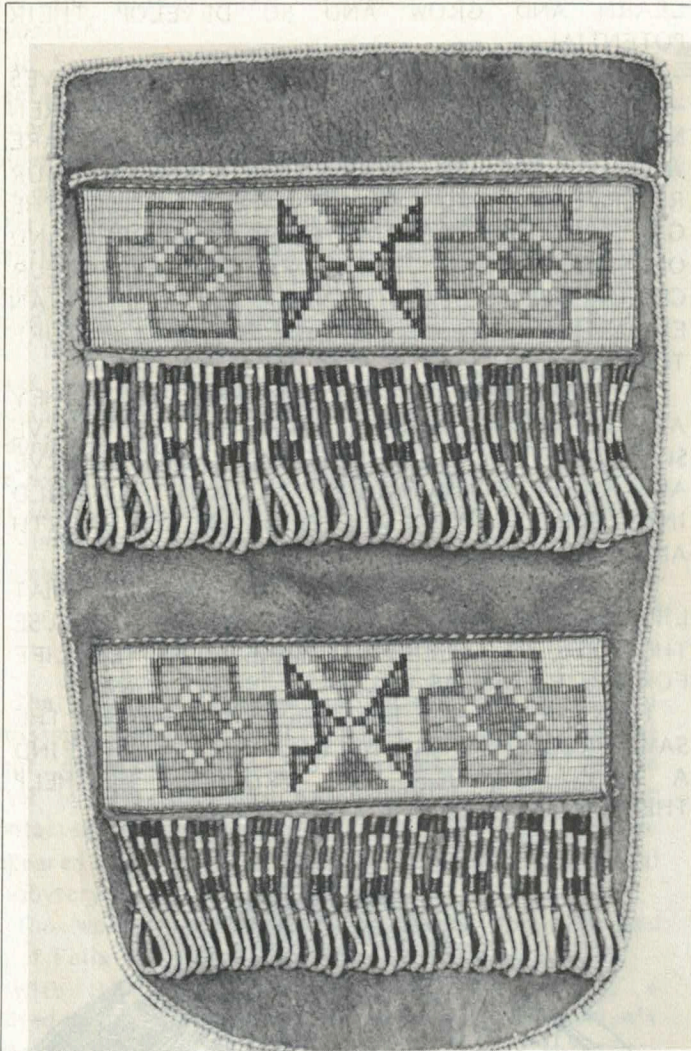


#### ROSEAU RIVER MEETING PLACE

The design is modified after the traditional prairie earth lodge. It attempts to blend the traditional form with renewable intermediate technology to provide a high level of comfort without destruction to the environment or overdependency on expensive energy sources.

# Jean Marie Native Arts

## A NATIVE WOMENS CO-OP



Credit : National Museums of Canada

Porcupine quill embroidery, an intricate and demanding art, may be seen as the only truly traditional art from of this Dene tribe. The porcupine quills are first carefully selected, then prepared and dyed with commercial or natural dye. Finally the quills are embroidered on a leather backing in floral or geometric designs.

The coordinator of Jean Marie Native Arts, Sophie Dikaitus, recalls the enthusiasm of former Governor General Roland Mitchener and Mrs. Mitchener during their tour of the Northwest Territories.

"They saw our work and said they were overwhelmed. They asked us for an exhibition."

The first national showing of the Jean Marie Native Arts was held in Toronto approximately one year ago. The show was preceded by a Royal Ontario Museum exhibition and both events were highly successful.

Jean Marie Native Arts involves 11 women, some of whom work as designers. Others tan the hides, make the dyes and do quill work or caribou hair tufting.

Says Dikaitus: "Sarah designs most of the works. A lot of our people have learned from her. It is she who really helped institute this cultural revival."

For Sarah and the other artists of Jean Marie Native Arts, starting the co-op and making it a success has been a struggle. The women, therefore, are justly proud of the fact that they have gained national recognition and success without the help of government grants.

"Jean Marie Native Arts is a way for us to show the rest of Canada what the Dene have contributed. We feel it is time to show what we can contribute, without government support.", Dikaitus says. She points out that everything the Dene do now is directed towards self-determination, "and an economically successful co-op is a start".

Dikaitus suggests that Jean Marie Native Arts is not just a vehicle for Dene politics but also a viable business. "We keep markets in mind when we produce our art. Some people will adorn their walls with mukluks in respect for the artistic quality, but they are designed as footwear."

Anticipating that some buyers will want to preserve their work, Jean Marie artists have designed porcupine quill pictures which can be framed and protected by glass. "This is a beginning and no doubt some changes will take place in the refinement of these pictures, but we have implanted into the Dene art form an original idea which we hope will grow and finally be accredited with its deserving recognition."

Over the past four years the Dene women of Jean Marie River have set an important precedent in the development of Native arts. They have established a women's co-operative through which to explore new ways to express their Native heritage.

The artists of this isolated settlement of 55 Slavey people in the Northwest Territories are not trying to recreate historical artifacts of the past in their art. They work instead to reflect the diverse moods of the decade in which they now live. This does not mean that they have ignored or abandoned the past. Their art illustrates the Dene culture as it is today - a compatible blend of past and present.

Jean Marie Native Arts, which is what the co-op is called, produces two primary types of work - porcupine quill embroidery and caribou hair tufting, both done on moosehide.



# The Quill Worker

by PAULINE JOHNSON  
(TEKAHIONWAKE)

Opposite page : Traditional Cree Quill Pouch ( before 1840 ). Made from tanned, smoked skin and two bands of woven porcupine quillwork.  
Below : Traditional Seneca-type moccasins from c.1830 decorated with porcupine quills.



Credit : National Museums of Canada

Plains, plains, and the prairie land  
which the sunlight floods and fills,  
To the north the open country,  
southward the Cyprus Hills;  
Never a bit of woodland, never a rill  
that flows,  
Only a stretch of cactus beds, and the  
wild, sweet prairie rose;  
Never a habitation, save where in the  
far south-west  
A solitary tepee lifts its solitary  
crest,  
Where Neykia in the doorway, crouched  
in the red sunshine,  
Broiders her buckskin mantle with the  
quills of the porcupine.

Neykia, the Sioux chief's daughter, she  
with the foot that flies,  
She with the hair of midnight and the  
wondrous midnight eyes,  
She with the deft brown fingers, she  
with the soft, slow smile,  
She with the voice of velvet and the  
thoughts that dream the while,—  
"Whence come the vague to-morrows?  
Where do the yesters fly?  
What is beyond the border of the  
prairie and the sky?  
Does the maid in the Land of Morning  
sit in the red sunshine,  
Broidering her buckskin mantle with  
the quills of the porcupine?"

So Neykia, in the westland, wonders  
and works away,  
Far from the fret and folly of the  
"Land of Waking Day."  
And many the pale-faced trader who  
stops at the tepee door  
For a smile from the sweet, shy worker,  
and a sigh when the hour is o'er.  
For they know of a young red hunter who  
oftentimes has stayed  
To rest and smoke with her father, tho'  
his eyes were on the maid;  
And the moons will not be many ere she  
in the red sunshine  
Will broider his buckskin mantle with  
the quills of the porcupine.

# Fishing Rights for Inuit Women

Credit : Public Archives of Canada



Inuit women fishing at the edge of the ice with three-pronged lances. This picture was taken when the salmon runs, (early Fall ).

by CONSTANCE HUNT

The plight of native women in our legal system has received growing public attention since Jeannette Lavell went to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973. She unsuccessfully argued that S.12(1)(b) of the Indian Act, which removes Indian status from a registered Indian woman and her children when she marries a non-Indian, was contrary to the Canadian Bill of Rights. Her case was opposed by several intervening Indian organizations that did not want the special status of their membership, as enshrined in the Indian Act further reduced.

Inuit women have, in general, not been faced with this dichotomy as the Inuit are not subject to the Indian Act. Although special provisions in certain game laws apply to Inuit, there is no general legislation which governs their legal status. In the past, hunting and fishing laws in the Northwest Territories accorded special rights to all Inuit, regardless of sex. This reflects the established customs of Inuit society, in which women traditionally played a key role in food-gathering.

With the stroke of an unthinking pen in June 1974, fishing rights for Inuit women in the N.W.T. were drastically altered. Previous regulations had recognized the right of Eskimos to fish for food for themselves,

their families and their dogs. Since the Regulations contained no definition of "Eskimo", women and men were treated alike.

In 1974, amendments to the N.W.T. Fisheries Regulations were made by Order in Council, without the consultation of the national Inuit organization, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (I.T.C.) and without public debate. The amended Regulations contained, for the first time, a definition of "Eskimo". Thereafter, special fishing rights would accrue only to: (a) males who were direct descendents of Eskimos; (b) legitimate children of Eskimo males; (c) illegitimate children of females who were legitimate children of Eskimo males; and (d) the wife or widow of the above. Eskimo women married to non-Eskimos would be excluded, unless they had been deserted, divorced or widowed.

## RAMIFICATIONS

The potential ramifications of these amendments were far-reaching. Not only would Eskimo women married to whites be treated as non-Eskimos, but, additionally, fishing rights might be removed from their children. In essence, the amendments forced an Indian Act type of definition upon Inuit women; the new law was based on the assumption that intermarrying Inuit women would automatically adopt the lifestyle of their husbands. Since 1971, a similar definition has been found in the Narwhal Protection Regulations; all other marine mammal legislation in the Northwest Territories has treated Inuit men and women alike.

Due to the method in which amendments were made, the Inuit were unaware of the changes until, three months later, they were discovered in the Canada Gazette. Regulations, as opposed to Acts, are made outside of Parliament and in most cases require only the authority of the Governor-in-Council (Cabinet). Regulations normally become public knowledge only after publication in the Canada Gazette. Immediate attempts were made to have the amendments removed. A letter of protest was sent to the Minister responsible for fisheries, the newly appointed Honourable Romeo LeBlanc. He was invited to attend the Annual Conference of the Inuit Tapirisat in Cambridge Bay in September, 1974, to explain and defend the changes. Neither he nor his officials appeared; nor was any reply received from him.

The amendments were discussed at length at the Annual Conference. Many male delegates criticized the changes, supporting the right of Inuit women, whether or not married to non-Inuit, to retain special fishing rights. A unanimous resolution was passed by the male-dominated conference calling for repeal of the changes in the N.W.T. Fisheries Regulations.

# Fishing Rights for Inuit Women

Credit : Pamela Harris



Inuit women's conference in Pangnirtung, 1975

## WHEELS OF JUSTICE TURN

The resolution was forwarded to the Minister; in subsequent meetings with fisheries officials, efforts were made to have the special status of all Inuit women restored. Little headway was made until several months later, when a story by an Edmonton journalist intervened to support the Inuit position. The reporter had attended the Annual Conference in Cambridge Bay, and filed a story which outlined the Inuit discussion of the Fisheries Regulations. In a circuitous way, the issue came to Cabinet attention. A reader had sent the story to the Honourable Marc Lalonde, Minister of Health and Welfare responsible for the status of women. Mr. Lalonde forwarded the matter to the Honourable Madame Sauve, who, as Minister of the Environment, held ultimate responsibility for the fisheries branch. Personally interested in the case, she sent her assistant to I.T.C. to inquire into the Inuit position on the issue. When the background to the amendments had been explained, the wheels of justice, for once, turned rapidly. In June 1975, further amendments were passed to the N.W.T. Fisheries Regulations and to the Narwhal Protection Regulations, restoring Inuit women to the same position as Inuit men, regardless of marital status. Ironically, a press release at the time of the

1975 amendments heralded the alterations as a victory for women's rights, and an indication of the non-sexist philosophy of the Liberal government. This, from the same government that had authorized the discriminatory laws in 1971 and 1974.

The Fisheries Regulations chronicle shows how the derogation of native women's rights can take place unnoticed. Vis-a-vis Inuit and Metis women, this is so because special rights are set out, for the most part, in regulations and not in Acts of Parliament. Amendments are often drafted by bureaucrats, then submitted to Cabinet where they are rubber-stamped. In the case of the Fisheries Regulations, one can speculate that Cabinet approval of the 1974 amendments did not indicate malevolent intent, but a failure to appreciate the effect of the changes. This example shows the desirability of enshrining special rights for all Inuit in a federal act, alterable only after public debate.

Native women in the Northwest Territories have, historically, received a more sensitive reception before the courts than Native women elsewhere in Canada. The first two judges of the Supreme Court of the N.W.T., Judge Jack Sissons and Judge William Morrow, both made decisions which supported the culture of the Inuit in matters of particular significance to women. In his decision re Noah's Estate, Judge Sissons put the judicial stamp of approval upon customary Inuit marriage; this decision permitted an Inuk woman and her children to inherit the husband's estate, despite the absence of a "legal" marriage. Government lawyers had argued, in that case, that the woman was a mere concubine. In Re: Adoption of Katie, Judge Sissons recognized customary Inuit child adoption, removing any necessity for formalized adoption through the social welfare agencies. More recently, in Re: Wah-shee, Judge Morrow approved customary adoption by an Indian's white wife who had joined her husband's band. These decisions have gone a considerable distance in melding native customary law with the English common law which is the fundamental law of the Northwest Territories.

Historical experience, however, reaffirms the view that native women must adopt a watchdog stance with government to ensure the continuing sanctity of their rights. In contrast to Indians, Inuit men have been supportive of the rights of Inuit women. They have retained the philosophy of their ancestors, who recognized the significant role played by women in a hunting society. One hopes that this trend will continue, and that Inuit society will not be plagued by the sexual inequalities found in southern life.

Constance Hunt is Associate Professor of Law at the University of Calgary. From 1973-75 she was legal advisor to Inuit Tapirisat of Canada in Ottawa.

# Yours is a Native North American Child

by BUFFY SAINT-MARIE

Native children who are adopted into non-native homes must be made aware of their cultural background. I was adopted. I speak from some experience.

To be a Native person is a wonderful thing. To encourage an adopted Native child in all aspects of his Nativeness is the greatest gift that adoptive parents can give. Everybody can help them to do this. We Native people must help them to bridge the cultural gap. Government, civic and church groups must support Native culture instead of tearing it apart.

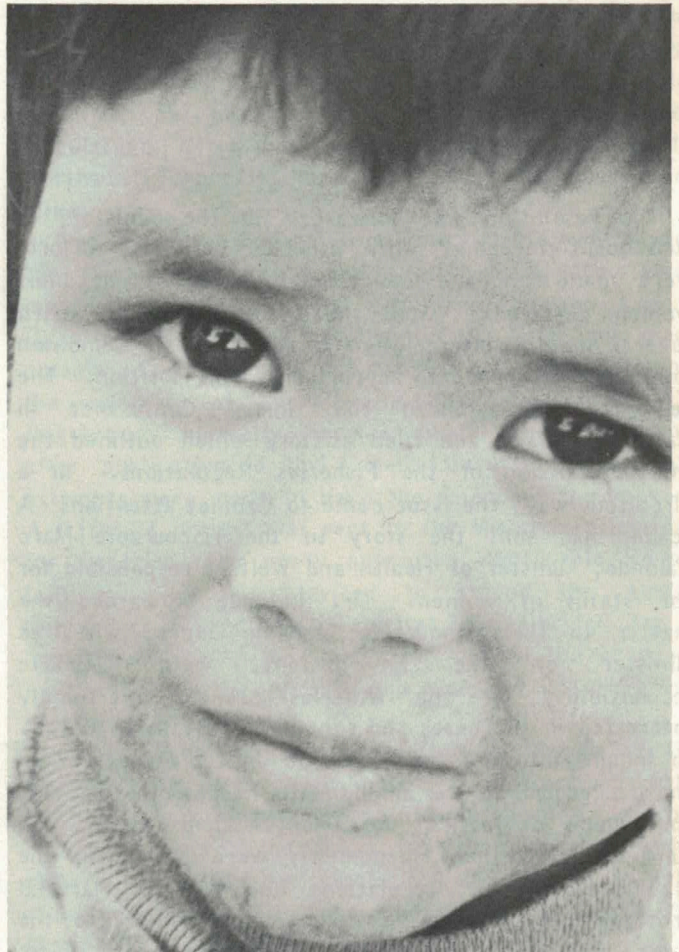
Adoptive parents of Native children are often afraid. They fear that they will lose their child. They think that by keeping him away from Native things they are protecting him from something frightening, and preserving him for themselves.

Adopted Native children live in a difficult world. It is hard enough to live in a home you were not born into. Every child needs loving care. It is even more difficult to live in a home with a different culture and race. Every person's identity is very, very important. Adopted Native children should not be forced to pay for their love by giving up their cultural identity.

One of the best ways to solve the problem, and to keep it from arising, would be to support the establishment of Native foster homes. I'm not entirely satisfied that the adoption of Native children into non-Native families is a good thing. The loving protectiveness which Native people feel for one another ought to be encouraged and financed so that fewer Native children are up for grabs. But if the intermediate agency in the adoption process at least is Native, the adoptive parents would always have somewhere to turn for guidance. A fluid and easy relationship between the white family and the Native community could develop.

When non-Native people learn to care for Native culture, they will be able to include it as part of the loving care they give to their adopted Indian children. A Native child, adopted or not, has a beautiful inheritance: The pride of being the country's original and continuing landlord...The beauty of Native songs, arts, literature and religion...The understanding that Native people were never savages, but know the "Creator of All Things" as well as anyone may...

Be proud of the heritage, and live up to it. Yours is a Native North American child.



Credit : Cliff Gaze

# NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

In August 1974, Native women from across the country gathered in Thunder Bay, Ontario for the First Annual Assembly of the Native Women's Association of Canada. The new association was the result of many informal meetings of Native women who felt that the time had come to organize themselves into a strong, cohesive group.

But Native women's self-awareness did not begin with the NWAC. It began with the coming of the White society to North America. The arrival of European settlers and technology disrupted traditional patterns in Native life. Roles were no longer defined by survival. As the Native woman's frustrations increased, she questioned her role and rights in both the Native and the White society.

"In the past, Native women have been looked upon as second-class citizens, doubly disadvantaged," says Margaret Thompson, past-president of NWAC. "First as a woman, secondly as a Native, she is the lowest of all on the totem pole."

Other Native organizations across the country have been slow to recognize the importance of the NWAC. In an interview with *The Native Perspective*, Bertha Allen, current president of the NWAC spoke of her organization's role in uniting the Native community: "We, the women, are leading in leadership. We don't distinguish whether you are Dene, Inuit or Metis. Anybody that makes those distinctions in our board meetings gets slapped down by the other members...We know we are all the same, we live in the same community. So why should we be disunited?"

The NWAC receives funding from the Secretary of State only on an ad hoc meeting basis - there are no guarantees. Many of the board members feel that they have proven their credibility and that the NWAC should be receiving some adequate guaranteed support.

Says Allen: "I think the government is looking favourably now on Native women. They've seen that we are a very concerned group of women that are mostly concerned about community problems and are willing to do some work, not just talk. They (the government) want to see some action, but in order to see that action carried out, we need some funding."

The concerns that Native women share, says Thompson, include education, health, land claims, aboriginal rights, urban immigration and pollution. "We (Native women) have to be aware of all the social, economic and political aspects of our lives. We are forced to do everything twice as good as a man to be recognized."



Margaret Thompson



Bertha Allen

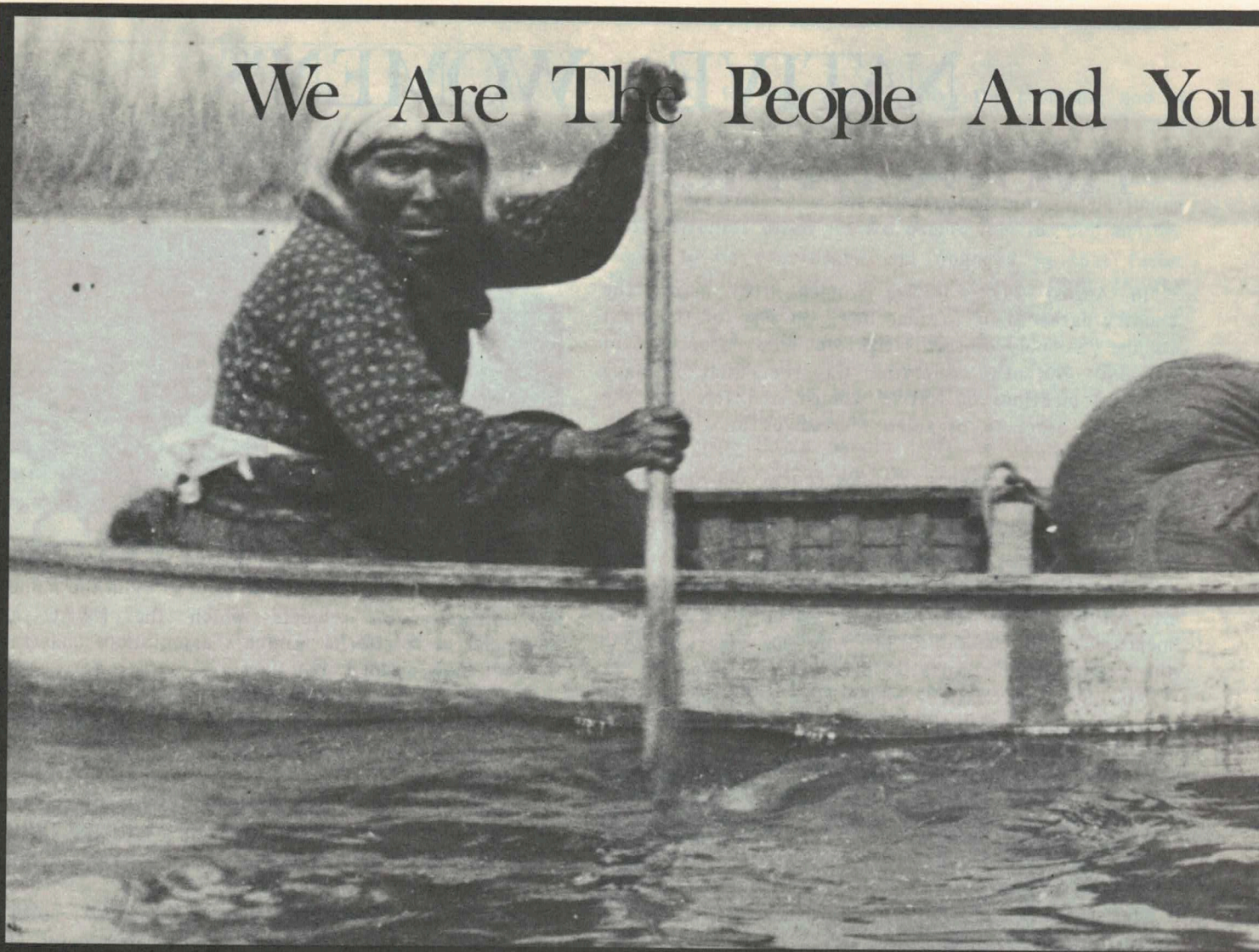
Courtesy: THE NATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Native women's concerns are mirrored in the number and diversity of projects which the NWAC and provincial or territorial women's associations undertake to meet their defined objectives.

The objectives of the NWAC are:

- To work toward a solution of problems and to promote the interests of Native women across Canada.
- To encourage Native women to assume a more positive and active role in assisting Native peoples to achieve their rightful place in society.
- To assist and encourage Native women to contribute ideas and skills to the social, cultural and economical development of Native society.
- To assist in the identification and stimulate interest in characteristics unique to Native culture, including arts and crafts, folklore, cultural tradition and all other aspects of Native heritage.
- To act as a forum between Native women's organizations, through which they can share and exchange ideas and research in areas of common interest.
- To assist provincial and territorial organizations in the development and management of their local projects.
- To operate as a national body, to represent provincial and territorial organizations and to disseminate information to these organizations.
- To study in conjunction with other Native organizations problems confronting Native women and to make representation to government on behalf of the provincial and territorial Native women's organizations.
- To act as a national representative for provincial and territorial Native women's organizations.
- To do all such other things as are incidental and conducive to the attainments of the objects of this Association.

# We Are The People And You



When I think of the roles, or tasks, that Indian men and women have had since the veil of time has been lifted, I am struck by how little attention has been given to the most important aspects of our lives. We learn about the wars and "important events", but historians and even our own recorders, tend to underestimate or overlook the obvious — each war or important event was only a very small part of the world of aboriginal people. Before and after these "important events" people have had to care for each other. Children had to be born, loved and cared for. The sick and dying demanded our attention and concern. Then, there was always the waiting. The waiting for the return from the hunt. The waiting during any war. Worse, there was the agony that followed the waiting as sons, lovers, husbands or fathers returned disabled, wounded, or perhaps did not return at all. These are important factors in our lives. The wars or the important events were but like a few heartbeats in the total lifespan of a person, they were fleeting moments. The greatness of the Indian Nation is not only in its history of great deeds, but of the emotional ties that we have with each other.

As original people of North America, we properly lament the invasion of the Europeans, and the destruction they brought with them. We cannot forget that they destroyed our traditional way of life. We cannot forget the agony they created as they slaughtered our people in battle. We cannot forget the diseases they brought with them. Because of their invasion, some of our Nations are no more. Because of their invasion, we have had to witness the degradation, and debasement of our women. Because of their invasion, many of our people are confused as to who they really are. While we cannot forget our history, we must not become so bitter and frustrated that we overlook the fact that we have survived with dignity. Our people and our Nations are tattered and bent, but we exist and we will continue to do so.

The agony, the struggle for survival, and our success at surviving has cost our people much. It is my firm belief that while we must continue the struggle for survival with dignity, we must begin to re-emphasize social activities which can relieve rather than increase these social costs. This, I believe, is

# Are Our Heart



Credit : Public Archives of Canada

the major role Indian women can play in today's society.

You have a unique ability given by the Creator, which makes it natural for you to act in certain ways. I do not think it is accidental that our Grandmother Moon acts the way she does in regulating the flow of the oceans and the changes of the seasons. I do not think it's accidental that our Mother Earth acts the way she does in providing us with nourishment and shelter. It is not accidental that our mothers are the place in which we are born. Our mothers are the ones who first give us nourishment, even within the womb, and this too is not accidental. As Meewee stated in praise of Dene women:

"Just as we get our strength and our medicines from our earth mother, we also get our strength and sense of well being from the love of our women. It is they who make life, living and freedom worth fighting and dying for."

Our mothers are our first teachers. From them we learn our culture, our life, and our social skills. Thus,

it is essential that our Mothers, our teachers be strong, for again to quote Meewee:

"They are the source of spiritual power, they are our inspiration; they are our backbone, they are the heartbeat of our Nations and we must have a strong and true heartbeat to be a strong people. If our heartbeat is weak, we will be weak."

These are my reasons for believing that you are uniquely suited for this special role or tasks in today's society.

Some of the things that I have talked about may have been unpleasant to hear again, and most of the problems which face us are very difficult to solve. But I am convinced that Native women are strong enough to hear the unpleasantness, and strong enough to do what would seem like impossible tasks to non-Indians. We are the People, and you are our heart. These are my words.

Don Whiteside (SIN A PAW)

# REVEILLE-TOI AUTOCHTONE

## Quebec Native Women Together For Unity



Gloria Polson-Nault, Treasurer, QNWA



Monik Sioui, past- President, QNWA

Courtesy : THE NATIVE PERSPECTIVE

"Reveille-toi, Femme Autochtone."; "Wake up Native Women is the motto of a small but dedicated group of Quebec Native Women who have come together in a loosely knit organization called the Quebec Native Women Association (Q.N.W.A.).

Monik Sioui, Abenaki, born on Odanak Reserve in southern Quebec is one of the founders of Q.N.W.A. She has served as President of the Association and has also been provincial coordinator.

"Quebec Native Women" she says, "was formed in 1973 at a time when all other Native organizations seemed to be splitting Indian people instead of getting them together. When we formed there was total agreement by the women from the nine different tribes of Quebec involved, that we would be working together for unity."

"Wake up Native Women was the name of our summer project. It was to survey the Native people of Quebec and see how much they knew about the Indian Act. We had heard about the revision of the Indian Act since 1973. We had doubts about how much the

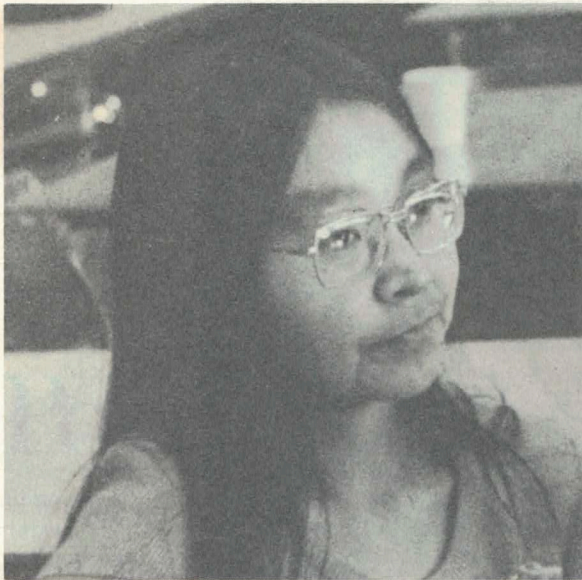
grassroots really knew about what the other political associations were doing about the Indian Act."

"People don't even know the Indian Act exists. There are Indian people in Quebec who don't even know if they are registered; some, who don't understand they can lose their status through marriage. We found bush groups who don't care about a law that says how they are supposed to live. The survey was to open peoples' eyes about what is happening."

Monik Sioui thinks the results of the survey were predictable. "We wanted to prove that grassroots people don't know what is in store for them. Any decisions about the Indian Act should not be decided nationally. There should be community hearings and the grassroots Native people should be making decisions about the Indian Act. They can't make any decisions until they have the information and know what's going on."

Sioui says she feels that Native women's associations "are the most Native associations. Any Native women in Quebec can become a member. We





Evie Ikidluak, vice-President, QNWA



Evelyn Lamirande, President, QNWA

don't care whether she is status or non-status Indian, Inuit or Metis."

The diversity of the Native people in Quebec is represented in the board composition of the Q.N.W.A. The board has to operate trilingually - in English, French and Inuttituit or other Native language.

"We have regionalized because this is such a big province. In the five zones two directors are elected and we have representatives from the nine Indian nations of Quebec on the board."

Indian Rights for Indian Women, also is on our board. We feel it is important to know what Indian Rights as well as National Native Women are doing so we have a place on our board for them."

The Q.N.W.A. tries to ensure that their information gets to as many Native women as possible. "Knowledge and awareness of the issues isn't enough. We have to be able to share the information as well. The Vice-President of Quebec Native Women is Evie Ikidluak. She is originally from Povungnituk but now teaches in Great Whale. Evie uses the northern radio and broadcasts Association news in Inuttituit for Inuit women. She also translates all our documents, on her own time, so Quebec Inuit women will have the information."

The Q.N.W.A. does not have an office and like most Native women's organizations it is dependent on volunteers. Funding for the Association has been on a small ad hoc basis from the Secretary of State and only covers board meetings and the yearly annual meeting when the Executive and board are elected.

Although financial resources have been scarce, this small, energetic volunteer group of women has become actively involved at the provincial level in several areas of Native concern. Q.N.W.A. has participated in the Advisory Council on the Criminal Justice System, Taskforce on Manpower Services to Native Peoples and the "Wake-up Native Women" survey.

"Each of the local groups involved in Quebec Native women is doing something different. The Montagnais, for instance, are involved in education. Other groups are involved in justice, land claims..."

Sioui says that the Parti Quebecois election has made little difference to the Q.N.W.A. "The Quebec Native Women's Association said they do not support separation. We are just beginning to negotiate with them (the Quebec Government)."

The Q.N.W.A. does not receive any funding from the provincial government, but every year the women reapply and hope that they will receive funding in order to open a permanent office.

Sioui and the other members of Q.N.W.A. are actively recruiting members who are energetic and can assist the Association to develop and progress. Q.N.W.A. wants to provide alternatives to Native women in both urban and rural areas.

Evelyn O'Bomsawin-Lamirande, elected at the fourth Annual Meeting in Levis, Quebec in November 1977, is the current president of the Q.N.W.A. The vice-president is Evie Ikidluak, with Gloria Polson-Nault and Audrey McLaren serving respectively as treasurer and secretary.



# Pauline Johnson·Tekahionwake

by Gabriella Goliger

"There are those who think they pay me a compliment by saying I am just like a white woman. I am Indian, and my aim, my joy and my pride is to sing the glories of my own people. Ours was the race that gave the world its measure of heroism, its standard of physical prowess. Ours was the race that taught the world that avarice veiled by any other name is crime, and ours was the faith that taught men to live without greed and to die without fear."

Pauline Johnson – Tekahionwake – 1861–1913

In 1861, on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford Ontario, one of Canada's most illustrious literary figures, E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake), was born.

She was the daughter of Mohawk Chief George Henry Martin Johnson whose title dated back to the creation of the League of the Iroquois, and an Englishwoman, Emily Susanna (nee Howells), relative of the Anglican missionary on the Brantford reserve.

Pauline Johnson received little formal education. Her childhood was spent at her parents' stately mansion called "Chiefswood" overlooking the Grand River where she occupied many happy hours reading, paddling her canoe and listening to her grandfather's tales of Six Nations history. Inspired by her parents – Chief Johnson spoke and read German, French, English, Mohawk and the five other languages of the Six Nations; Mrs. Johnson was devoted to good literature –

# Poet·Princess

Pauline took advantage of the excellent library at Chiefswood. She wrote that, "by the time I was twelve I had read every line Scott ever wrote, every line of Longfellow, much of Byron, Shakespeare and Emerson".

But although she became a connoisseur of English literature, Pauline was always fiercely proud of her Native birth. With the help of her grandfather, a distinguished orator and storyteller, she maintained her knowledge of the Mohawk language and collected Indian lore and legends.

At a very early age Pauline displayed a keen interest in poetry, but her first poem was not published until 1885 when she was 24 years old. Soon afterwards, Canadian magazines such as Saturday Night and The Week began to accept some of her work. However, real success did not come until 1892 and it came in an unexpected way.

Along with several other Canadian poets Pauline was invited to participate in a poetry recital at the Young Liberal Club of Toronto. Although lacking experience in public speaking, she gave her audience a powerful rendition of her poem, Cry from an Indian Wife. The performance confirmed her talent as a dramatic reader and enabled her to add a new dimension to her career. From then on she not only wrote verses, she brought them to life through her rich voice, her graceful figure and her expressive features.

Between 1892 and 1909 Pauline toured England, the United States and Canada, appearing in Theatres, churches, tent halls, and elegant drawing rooms.

Often hers was the only kind of entertainment available in the raw backwoods Canadian towns. Her face and voice were remembered for years afterwards by the farmers who drove their carts for miles to see the popular young Mohawk poet.

London, brimming with literary traditions and prominent intellectuals at the turn of the century received Pauline warmly. The July 17, 1906 edition of the London Morning Post wrote of the "admirable

manner" in which Miss Johnson "recited or rather enacted, a number of Indian stories – of which she is author".

One of Pauline Johnson's most important contributions to Canadian literature was her Legends of Vancouver, a collection of Pacific Coast tales told to her by Chief Joe of the Capilano tribe of Squamish Indians. She had met the chief during his trip to London to protest a British Columbia games act affecting ancient fishing rights. He and Pauline struck up a lasting friendship which led to his telling her tales "full of wild strange poetry – the kind of folklore, she wrote, "which soon will be heard no longer for the Indians are forgetting".

In all, during her lifetime, Pauline Johnson had three books of poetry published, as well as her book of legends and a stream of magazine stories and poems.

Today, much of her poetry seems dated; the style, which imitates that of the English romantic poets is often stilted and overly ornate. Despite these limitations, her poems are memorable expressions of her pride of heritage, her affinity to nature and her love of the English language. More artistically sound are her short stories, written in direct, simple and vivid language.

After many arduous journeys to Canadian frontier towns and villages, ill health forced Pauline Johnson to settle in Vancouver in 1909. Four years later at the age of fifty-two, she died.

According to her expressed wish, her body was cremated and her ashes buried in Vancouver's Stanley Park. At the news of her death, one of her admirers paid her tribute with the words: "How good she was. What a Princess in all respects, and how stately and generous as an intellectual celebrity. Her spirit lives among great trees..."

At the Mohawk Chapel on the Brantford Reserve a moving ceremony was held, and a boulder marked with an arrowhead was placed in the graveyard in memory of the poet-princess, Pauline Johnson.

# Survival in the Arctic

## -Sulaa Kublu's Story

Sulaa Kublu, an Inuit woman from Pond Inlet, N.W.T., is one of the elders of her community with a wealth of memories from the old days to share with younger generations. To her, dog-team travel, seal-oil lamps, igloos and the harsh realities of the North were once a way of life.

The following story is an adventure from her youth as told to Leah d'Argencourt, editor of the national Inuit magazine, Inuit Today.

On September 27, 1944 Sulaa Kublu, her husband, three children and two other families set out to cross Pond Inlet by sailboat in search of a new camp. Before long their vessel was caught in a treacherous storm and the trip, which should have taken a few hours, ended in disaster. Eight people – five of them children – died in the bitter cold waters of Pond Inlet that day.

Sulaa Kublu's survival is a story of strength, endurance and quiet heroism rarely encountered today.

As we were travelling to Qurlurtuq by sailboat, a big storm came up. My husband wanted us to head for land immediately, but Niaquttiaq, our leader (the captain and owner of the boat), wanted to continue sailing despite the storm.

Although he tried, my husband could not convince Niaquttiaq to take us ashore until the wind calmed down.

The storm grew worse and our little boat was driven back and forth on the waves by the strong North wind. At one point, when we were driven quite close to land, my husband and another one of the men (Idlauttannak) jumped into the water and struggled to shore. My ten year old son, Mattaq, wanted to follow them, so I pushed him and said, "Go ahead." That's why he is alive today.

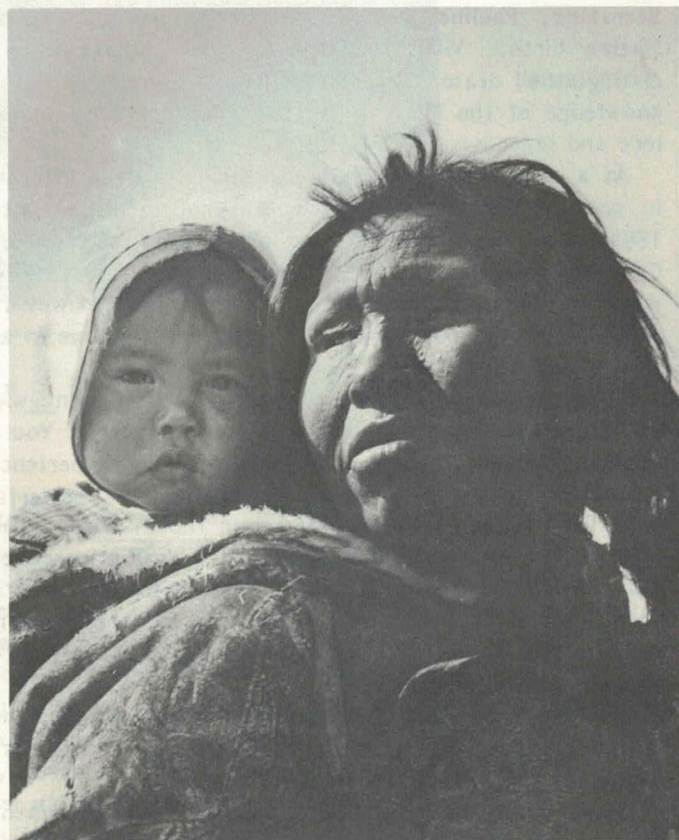
There were thirteen of us in the boat that day. Idlauttannak, his wife and five children; Niaquttiaq, his wife and child; and my husband and I and three of our children. I had my baby in my amautik, my four year old daughter and Mattaq.

I did much travelling by boat in those days and knew that the worst place to be during a big storm was close to a narrow point of land. This is where the strongest currents are and this was exactly where we were heading. I shouted to Niaquttiaq that it was dangerous to go close to the point, but he said he was used to

travelling by kayak and that these sailboats can be driven just like kayaks. (This was Niaquttiaq's very first sailboat.)

So we were driven right to the point by the strong wind. Suddenly we were surrounded by high cliffs and whirling winds. I knew that the thing to do at that moment was to loosen the knot on the rope that held the sail and I told Niaquttiaq this. But he only said, "Quiet, silly woman."

Right then the boat flipped over and, in an instance,



Inuit mother and babe in Amautik

Courtesy : Walter Rudnicki

I found myself under water. My feet were stuck under what I later realized was the seat of the boat and this helped save my life, for otherwise I would have been swept away by the current along with the others.

Instead, I managed to gulp some air while the big waves crashed down on me. I looked around for my companions, but none were in sight. I prayed to myself as I clung to the boat.

"God is watching us even though we are sinners. Let me be saved if there is a chance."

Suddenly, I realized that I had a little baby in my amauti.

Feeling that I had to save the baby, I struggled onto the top of the capsized boat. When I got to the top, I saw a woman with a baby in the water trying to reach me. It was Niaquttiaq's wife. I helped her onto the boat.

Because her parka was all wet, this woman held her baby close to her head instead of on her back. This made it difficult for her to cling to the boat.

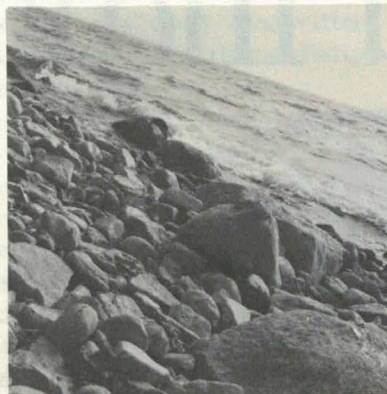
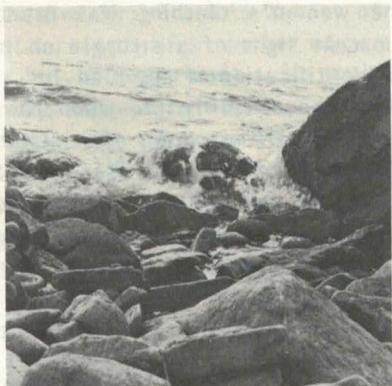
"If you put your baby on your back you will have a better chance to save yourself." I shouted.

I don't want to save myself if I don't see my husband again. I want to die." she said.

"We will probably both die anyway, but don't kill yourself on purpose." I told her.

Then I spotted Idlauttannak's wife in the water. I grabbed hold of her, but my hands had no strength. I even tried holding her hand with my teeth, but when the waves almost pulled us both down, I had to let go. She sank immediately. I looked behind for the other woman who was with me on the boat, but she, too, was gone. Far away in the water I spotted her arm above the waves. Finally she disappeared completely and I was left alone with my baby.

Towards evening, the boat began to drift to shore. I



loosened the rope still holding the sail and the boat started moving towards land as if someone was rowing it.

On shore, I saw a man. It was Kublu, my husband. As soon as he saw me, he threw off his clothes and plunged into the water to rescue me. He had a sealskin float with him which helped keep us above water.

Since it was late fall, it was very very cold, and my husband, who was naked, soon got chilled. I helped him onto land, then collapsed. My baby on my back was unconscious, but still breathing.

Snow was falling, but luckily we found shelter in a nearby cave. Fortunately too, some of our belongings had washed ashore, including some bedding with dry clothes. I realized it was a good thing I had packed as well as I did.

But there was no sign of our other companions. We expected our two year old baby to die; we were even prepared to bury him. For two days he was unconscious, but on the third day we saw a smile on his face. After that he began to recover and today he is a full grown man with children of his own.

The only other body found was that of Niaquttiaq's baby which was swept ashore by the waves. My dear little four year old daughter had so many clothes on - she had been wrapped in a sleeping bag and was wearing a duffle parka - that she probably sank very quickly. She was our only real daughter, because our older one was adopted. After the shipwreck, my husband and I searched for her body for a long time, even after the ice had formed, but we never found a trace of her.

# Just another dead indian



from THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ANNA MAE AQUASH

BY JOHANNA BRAND\*

\*Excerpts from the book, reprinted with permission from James Lorimer & Co.

THE WEATHER IN THE VILLAGE OF WANBLEE, SOUTH DAKOTA, WAS UNSEASONABLY MILD ON FEBRUARY 24, 1976. ROGER AMIOTTE WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE UNEXPECTED THAW TO BUILD A FENCE ON A RUGGED SECTION OF LAND HE HAD RECENTLY ADDED TO HIS 2,500-ACRE RANCH ON THE PINE RIDGE INDIAN RESERVATION.

The Amiotte spread straddles the Northeast boundary of the three million acre reservation...an hour's drive to the southwest is the village of Wounded Knee, built on the site where hundreds of Sioux followers of Chief Big Foot were massacred by the United States Army in 1890...Two hours to the Northwest are Rapid City and Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills, ancient Indian sacred ground.

Highway 73 runs north from the Eastern edge of the reservation toward its border but first winds by the

Amiotte trailer home and down a long hill, snaking among the jagged buttes. At the bottom of the hill, on the western edge of the pavement, is a shoulder just wide enough to park a car. Just after 2 p.m. on February 24, Amiotte was working his way along a dry creek bed paralleling this part of the highway at a distance of about 100 yards, concealed from the view of passing traffic by a steep, 30-foot embankment.

Suddenly, the rancher spotted a human corpse curled up at the base of the precipice. He went no closer but drove immediately to his trailer home and phoned the disturbing discovery to the police dispatcher in the village of Pine Ridge, 100 miles to the southwest. The police came quickly: sheriff's deputies from the nearby town of Kadoka, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) police from Wanblee, FBI agents and more BIA police from Pine Ridge. Within two hours at least ten law enforcement officials had appeared to inspect the body and examine the site.

What they saw was the body of a young Indian woman, lying on her left side, knees slightly drawn up. She was wearing a light-coloured shirt, dungarees and an off-red ski jacket. The fingernails were long and there was a large turquoise bracelet on her right arm. The police searched exhaustively and took photographs, but found only a hair clasp at the top of the embankment and bits of hair here and there down its face, indicating the woman had gone off the cliff. The woman's clothing was intact and there were no apparent signs of a struggle or foul play. She carried no identification of any kind.

At about 4:30 p.m. when the police had completed most of their work, Jim Charging Crow, the old ambulance driver from Wanblee, and his wife drove the body to the village of Batesland where it was transferred to another vehicle and taken the remaining distance to the Public Health Service Hospital in Pine Ridge Village.

Steven Shanker, the young doctor on duty, found the body quite decomposed. Upon removing some of the clothes he suspected immediately that death was not by natural causes and that the Indian woman had a fractured skull. When he turned the head, Shanker observed that the hair was matted with blood and a considerable amount of blood came off on his plastic gloves. He told a nurse to notify the police but did not examine the body further, sending it instead to the

refrigerated morgue. "I didn't go further because the smell was bad, and I assumed a thorough post mortem would be done. I thought it was a police matter," he later explained. Night duty nurse Inez Hodges, fearing that the dead woman might be her missing roommate, briefly examined the body in the morgue and got a handful of blood when she turned the head. She did not recognize the corpse.

The pathologist under contract with the BIA to perform autopsies at Pine Ridge was Dr. W.O. Brown of Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Notified of the case the evening of February 24, Dr. Brown flew to the reservation in his private airplane and proceeded to the hospital at about noon of the following day. He conducted his examination, deciding that the case was "lawfully routine"; so routine, in fact, that he had X-rays taken only of the woman's dental plate, not of her entire body. One of the chemical tests Brown did indicated that the dead woman had had sexual intercourse not long before her death. The pathologist noted a large abdominal scar due to previous gall bladder surgery and bodily markings that indicated at least one pregnancy.

Except for a small cut on the head, however, Brown reported no evidence of physical injury. He concluded that the woman had died of exposure and had been dead about two weeks and speculated that, like many other reservation residents over the years, she had gotten drunk fallen asleep and frozen to death. Laboratory analysis later revealed no alcohol or drugs in the woman's blood.

Before ending his perfunctory performance, however, Dr. Brown took an unusual measure. He cut the woman's hands from the body at the wrists, placed them in a preserving jar and turned them over to one of the FBI agents observing the proceedings.

Officially, the unidentified woman died of exposure. Her body was returned to the morgue. Hospital dentist, Bill Moss, checked Dr. Brown's X-rays of the teeth against the dental records of a number of persons known to be missing, but without result...No notice or description of the body was posted in any prominent place. On the reservation the normally vigorous gossip and interest in seeing who is dead was sharpened by remarks from hospital staff skeptical about the autopsy findings. There seemed to be no intensive effort by police to have the body viewed and identified.

#### PAUPER'S BURIAL

The body remained in the hospital morgue for five or six days. Dr. Shanker said he tried to keep people out of the morgue during that time. On Sunday, February 29, Elaine Quiver, a teacher in Pine Ridge, viewed the body at the hospital to determine if it were that of her cousin who had been reported missing. Sometime after that -- there is no record of the date -- the body was

sent to a mortuary in Rushville, Nebraska, 25 miles south of Pine Ridge.

Tom Chamberlain, the aging mortician who does most of the reservation business, estimated he kept the body in his garage for no more than two days before it was buried. But Chamberlain kept no records; instead of the usual handwritten notations, he later clipped newspaper articles relating to the case into the record book.

By the time the corpse arrived in Rushville, enblaming was out of the question, and Chamberlain placed it in his garage -- his only cool storage facility -- and sprinkled it with a strong-smelling disinfectant powder. This arrangement he judged perfectly satisfactory for preventing further decomposition, given the winter weather. To his surprise, he soon received orders from the BIA to proceed with the burial. Reservation Police Chief Ken Sayres, claiming to be worried about further decomposition, arranged for the reservation welfare office to authorize the funds for a pauper's burial.

At this point, Tom Chamberlain had neither an official death certificate nor a burial permit for the body. "It was the darndest thing I ever saw," he said later. "I've been doing this for over 50 years and haven't run into a case like this yet." He thought there was no compelling reason for the hasty burial of the as-yet unidentified body; in his long career he'd seen many more badly decomposed bodies and he said the body could have stayed in his garage as long as the weather remained cold.

Chamberlain had some problems finding a church and cemetery that would bury the woman without the usual documents, but finally Father Joseph Sheehan, the aged priest at Holy Rosary Mission near Pine Ridge village, consented to perform the task. Burial of the dead, he said, was one of the seven corporal works of mercy. Again no records were kept. Father Sheehan believes he performed the short Catholic ceremony on Ash Wednesday, March 3, 1976. But his altar boys say it took place on Shrove Tuesday, March 2. There were further difficulties when the rough box containing the coffin proved too large for the prepared grave, and it had to be made larger by hand digging on the morning of the funeral. With a few brief prayers and blessings the deed was done.

Little more than a week after its improbably discovery, the body of the young Indian woman lay beneath the cold, snowy ground in an unmarked grave. A few days later, on the evening of March 6, radio and television broadcasts announced that fingerprint analysis by the FBI in Washington, D.C. had, on March 3, identified the "dead-on-arrival" from Wanblee as Anna Mae Pictou Aquash.

(continued on next page.....)

## RESERVATION SHOCKED

The news sent shockwaves rippling through the reservation. Anna Mae Aquash, a Micmac Indian from Nova Scotia, was a well-known activist in the American Indian Movement and a close friend of prominent AIM leaders Dennis Banks and Leonard Peltier. She was a veteran of the 1973 Wounded Knee occupation and of many subsequent AIM actions. Since November 25, 1975 she had been a fugitive from the FBI. The Pine Ridge Reservation had been in a state of violent political turmoil ever since 1973; many local AIM supporters had been terrorized and some had been killed. That a national AIM organizer, whose home was not on the reservation, should be found dead of exposure on a lonely stretch of reservation highway was more than unlikely — it was bizarre.

Some Pine Ridge Reservation residents had learned before the public announcement that Anna Mae might be the "dead-on-arrival" from Wanblee. Early on the morning of March 6, Candy Hamilton, a worker with the Wounded Knee Legal Defence/Offense Committee (WKLDOC) — an AIM support group organized during the Wounded Knee occupation — received an unusual telephone call from St. Paul, Minnesota. RCMP officers had visited Anna Mae's relatives in Nova Scotia and Ontario, saying that she was the person found near Wanblee, the caller reported. Hamilton was asked to confirm and supply further information.

When she called BIA police chief Ken Sayres to ask if the dead woman had been identified, Hamilton received a peculiar response. "Sayres said there was no positive identification and that they were will checking out a number of leads from out of state." Proceeding cautiously because Anna Mae Aquash was a fugitive, Hamilton asked if the police were checking leads from out of the country. Chief Sayres ignored the question. He did supply a description of the dead woman, however, which bore no resemblance to the woman Hamilton knew. Sayres said that the dead woman was about 25 years old, five feet six inches tall and was wearing tennis shoes and a red ski jacket. Candy Hamilton, who had no reason to believe that Anna Mae had been on the Pine Ridge Reservation, was encouraged by this exchange. Aquash was just over five feet tall; she was too sensible to wear tennis shoes in the middle of winter; and Chief Sayres had said nothing about the distinctive rings, bracelet or medicine pouch which she always wore. Hamilton's hopes were dashed, however, by the official public announcement of the identification later the same day.

By early Sunday, March 7, Candy Hamilton and others had learned of Anna Mae's welfare burial and they went to confirm the location of the grave in Holy Rosary Cemetery. Hamilton was struck by the irony of the fact that her friend, a devout follower of

traditional Indian religion who hated the Christian churches, had been buried in a Catholic ritual. On Monday morning Hamilton and two friends tried to see BIA police chief Ken Sayres, who was unavailable. They were unable to elicit much information from the BIA officer in charge: after each question posed by the women he crossed the hall to confer with FBI agents and returned with a reply. Finally, in frustration, he told the little group to speak to the FBI since they had handled the case. The agents, however, refused to answer any questions.

By this time the reservation was rife with rumours that Anna Mae Aquash had died violently. Gladys Bissonnette, an elderly woman, claimed she volunteered to look at the body when she was at the mortuary picking up the body of a relative. She said Tom Chamberlain refused to let her do so, telling her he was under "orders" to show it only to "authorized" persons. She claimed to have overheard Chamberlain telling an unidentified person on the telephone that he would not bury the body without identification or without approval from the state licensing office in Lincoln, Nebraska. Still other rumours said Chamberlain had been asked to bury the woman under an assumed name, which he also refused to do. Chamberlain denied all of these conversations. Rumours were also beginning to surface that the dead woman had an obvious head wound. Candy Hamilton used this information to persuade the WKLDOC support group in St. Paul to take action.

WKLDOC attorney Bruce Ellison, on Monday, March 8, sought an order to exhume the body for a second autopsy. He was surprised to learn that the FBI was already in the process of filing an affidavit for the same purpose in U.S. federal court...Ellison did not file the WKLDOC application, and the FBI agreed to postpone the exhumation until a pathologist representing the dead woman's family could be brought in from Minneapolis to observe the second autopsy. At the exhumation, Candy Hamilton spoke to two men who identified themselves as FBI agents. According to the gravediggers, prisoners from the Pine Ridge jail who had assisted at the burial, these same two men had also attended the original burial of Anna Mae's body.

## SECOND AUTOPSY

The second autopsy was scheduled for March 11. That day a group of Anna Mae's friends, attorney Bruce Ellison and their pathologist, Dr. Gary Peterson, waited at length outside the Pine Ridge Hospital autopsy room for the FBI pathologist. Finally their enquiries revealed there would be no FBI pathologist; the Bureau planned only to take X-rays and if there were to be an autopsy, Dr. Peterson would have to do it. Unprepared to be more than an



observer, the St. Paul pathologist had not brought his instruments. The hospital could not provide the necessary equipment, and he had to buy a kitchen knife in the local supermarket before he could begin his work.

The concerns of Anna Mae's family and friends were quickly vindicated: even before he began the detailed examination, Dr. Peterson noticed a bulge in the dead woman's left temple and dry blood in her hair. He turned the head and could see that the back of the head had been washed and powdered. An area of dark discoloration was visible at the base of the neck. Further investigation and the X-rays revealed a wound at the base of her skull, behind the right ear. The physician soon recovered what he judged to be a .32 calibre bullet accounting for the bulge in the temple. There were signs of powder burns around the wound in the neck. Dr. Peterson's conclusion as to the cause of death was unequivocal. Anna Mae Aquash had not died from exposure. She had died from a bullet shot at close range into the back of her head...

The available evidence indicates that the body of Anna Mae Aquash could and should have been identified on the same day it was discovered. The cause of death — murder — could and should have been established the next day. Instead, Anna Mae Aquash's body remained unidentified in the Pine Ridge Hospital morgue for approximately five days and was still unidentified by the time it was hastily buried two days later. By the time the FBI finally identified her on March 3, there was a pathologist's official verdict that she had died of exposure and the body was six feet underground.

In this light, Dr. Brown's failure to find the bullet, the hurried severing of the hands, the unexplained delay in identification, the hasty burial without benefit of identification, death or burial certificate all suggest something far more serious than casual and undisciplined police procedures. The evidence suggests a conspiracy to prevent the discovery and investigation of the murder of Anna Mae Aquash.

## ANNA MAE AQUASH

Anna Mae Aquash,  
On your death, my heart weeps.  
Why does my heart beat so  
When yours has been snuffed out?

Anna Mae Aquash,  
I feel frustration as you die.  
I am almost afraid to live.  
Could I ever be as brave as you

Anna Mae Aquash,  
A victim of the unjust society.  
Could the white society every  
Repay for what it has done?

Anna Mae Aquash,  
Your soul will never rest.  
Will the American Indian Movement  
Ever forget its loss?

Anna Mae Aquash,  
The Indian nation mourns,  
Especially in Shubenacadie.  
I mourn deeply within myself.

Mary Mudd  
- June 10, 1978



# "Our Home is First"

## NATIVE WOMEN SPEAK TO THE HARTT COMMISSION ON NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

ONTARIO NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
SUBMISSION TO THE HARTT COMMISSION ON  
NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT  
Mr. Justice Hartt:

The Ontario Native Women's Association is most pleased to be able to make representation to the commission on behalf of its 845 members, and impart to the Commission what we feel are the issues facing us, vital issues which have not yet been expressed, from a sector of the Native population which is usually regarded as traditionally silent, yet equally important, and most directly affected by change — the women and the children.

Our organization is a young one; the venture is a notable departure from tradition in that Native women have had to organize themselves to meet today's contemporary issues and discuss them amongst ourselves and others, thus enabling the voice of Native women to be heard. Although we have adopted your ways to organize, we hold dearly the life lessons which have been taught us for generations by our mothers and grandmothers. We regard life here on earth like visitors, who have been welcomed into a friend's house and are invited to stay as long as we can, and use the house and its contents to make ourselves comfortable. We know that if we make ourselves unwelcome, by doing wrong things, we will have to leave. The world is our house, and we would not want to leave it in such a way, by showing disrespect and leave it in such a terrible mess.

It is the generations before us who have taught us how to live here and who were placed here to live within nature's laws in a natural and wholesome way.

We feel that it is important for us to be here, to explain our fears, to show that we care for the generations who shall follow us. More, to tell you how we see it and how we do not want to see it. I can only begin by telling you how it is today. Our history, as Native women, was once filled with dignity and respect, and we enjoyed a cherished position in our society.

We were endowed with gifts by our Creator. The

greatest gift of all one could receive was to be able to bear children, to nourish them, to teach them. We were given knowledge that allowed us to live in harmony with our mother earth, and we were charged to pass on our traditions that denoted respect for humanity and the earth. Our men fed us and protected us.

When the strangers from across the waters arrived on our shores, a sad chronicle of events followed. We Native women were object of, and witness to, an era which degraded Native women and still continues to do so. Historical accounts, however true, portray the Native women as loose, to be used and slept with, leaving them with child, and later left to fend for herself in a hostile atmosphere, outcast from her own and unacceptable to the other.

To all, we were the most vulnerable yet, at times, the most strengthful. We have survived a test of true endurance, having been stripped naked, over generations, of our dignity and beauty, by uncaring and unscrupulous voyageurs. We have maintained that last bit of self-esteem, which is so necessary to begin to rebuild our nation to the strong, independent and free people we must be.

We come here to tell you that we are sick of having our daughters raped, our sons beaten, our babies maligned by unknown and mysterious strains and diseases, of our old people who are left alone to fend for themselves because we are too busy collecting fashionable items instead of gathering wood and food to keep them warm and fed.

We have come to tell you that if we are to live in the same house, that you must share with me, and I, with you. That if one of us begins to rip the floor and tear apart the walls, dirty the water and infest the air, that we will having nothing left and will have to leave.

Such is the way it is becoming...

With development a given community experiences a form of trauma that requires it to readily adjust to a

new thrust of development which is usually imposed upon it. This new development brings to the community a large influx of workers, both married and single.

Married men bring with them their families, when relocating to a new job. Schools, existing facilities and housing become a demand to accommodate the new oncoming transient population and resulting shortages, overcrowding and discrimination emerge new problems. Although this new family life should have a stabilizing effect on the community, it does not occur immediately.

An element of the transient population lies mainly with the single men. The situation is different for single men. They live in campsites and share accommodation. Their concern lies mainly with their employer. They do not have or develop a sense of community spirit or loyalty. This, in fact, has a disruptive effect on the normal life in a community.

Native people placed in this new situation must make enormous attempts to adjust and accommodate the new arrivals. It has been and will continue to be so in the future.

Further, Native people have lived in a relatively safe environment and have kept their own lifestyles, values and traditions.

This new transplant upon this community will, and has, confused the values and way of life of Native people. The Native society has been there for generations and will still be there when the transient population has gone. The two groups living side by side will affect each other. This effect will be greatest on the Native communities because two completely different sets of values will be in conflict with the traditional community as it is.

Now, the residents must live side by side with each other. The fabric of a traditional community is disrupted and uprooted. Problems that already exist are further compounded by a multitude of new issues/problems, which are imposed upon the community. These problems caused by a transient community cannot hold for long.

By uprooting the basic fabric of a community, social deterioration is caused. It is this breakdown of a community I wish to emphasize. We are concerned with the human element of development. What in fact happens to our native families when this occurs?

Currently, Native communities in the North are experiencing some difficulty with alcohol and drug abuse. The incidence of alcoholism among Native women is becoming increasingly high. Social stability within a family and community is not stable.

The role of the "mother" figure has changed. Education has played a major part in changing this role. Children are taken away from their communities

to attend schools in larger centres because of the lack of suitable facilities within the communities. Parental control and involvement in the education of their children has been literally taken away. This leaves many Native mothers with roles which are lost and confused, and without purpose. As a result, mothers have too much leisure time and form of release is the consumption of alcohol, another imposed problem. Poor education methods and facilities has played a vital role in this social instability, creating shaky and broken marriages, difficulty in raising their children, financial stress and personal depression. It is clear these northern communities are experiencing some form of difficulty in coping with problems and have not the resources to be equipped to deal with the problems effectively.

Credit : Public Archives of Canada



# The Forgotten Women

Without them, the fur trade would have been impossible. They carried burdens, cooked food, pounded pemmican, fuelled fires, created wardrobes – and bore children. All this they did for white husbands who often abandoned them when it was time to move on. The Indian and Metis wives of the fur traders who opened the west between 1750 and 1850 have been forgotten – not only by the white men whom they served so well, but also by Canadian history.

Because of official policies which frowned on the taking of native wives, early records of these women were carefully censored from the fur traders' journals. What sort of women were they, these silent wilderness wives? It takes reading between the lines and perhaps reading with a woman's eyes and emotions, to recreate something of the people they were and the lives they led.

A few of the old journalists help us glimpse the lives of these forgotten women — men like Peter Fidler, David Thompson and Daniel Harmon, who showed a sensitivity to women as people. It is Fidler who recounts the story of "Kirkness' woman", an anecdote which shows the way in which the native wives were caught in the ruthless machinery of the fur trade.

As is the case with most of her counterparts, we know no other name for "Kirkness' woman", but she comes through as a spirited person. When she had a fight with Kirkness, her white husband, she ran away from him and their lodging at the Hudson's Bay Fort on Ile-a-la-Crosse Lake (in Northern Saskatchewan). Where to run at such a time? The Northwest Company Fort was nearby, and that is where she sought haven.

Fidler, the chief of the Hudson's Bay Fort, went across to the rival Fort to try to negotiate a settlement to the marriage dispute, and bring back "Kirkness' woman". Her willingness to return to her man was cooled when the Northwesters threatened to cut off her ears if she attempted to leave. If Kirkness wanted his woman all that badly, the Northwesters stated, he could come and work for them.

## BAD MASTERS

Kirkness did want his woman that badly: he went to work for the Northwesters. However, they were bad masters and it wasn't too long before Kirkness decided to return to Fidler and the Hudson's Bay Company. If he were to leave, the Northwesters vowed, "they would make every Canadian in their house ravish his woman before his eyes". Kirkness stayed.

Eventually, however, Kirkness managed to get away but without his "woman", who was again threatened with violence should she leave. When Fidler's party from the Hudson's Bay Fort were ready to leave on



Public Archives of Canada

their summer voyage to take out the furs, the poor woman made one last desperate attempt to rejoin her husband, only to be forcibly pulled back into the fort. The story was over then. And Fidler noted in this journal: "They have now given her to a Canadian – calm hot weather." (quoted by James MacGregor in Peter Fidler: Canada's Forgotten Surveyor.)

This incident was certainly not an isolated one in the story of the fur trade in the west. The native women were viewed and treated far more as commodities to be used than as people to be valued. Taking a man's "woman" away and giving her to another was a common method of discipline used by factors of the forts to keep their men in line. "Proper provision" made for a wilderness wife, when a white man left the west, usually consisted of giving her to another white man.

## Emotions Unrecorded

The silence of the record has led some historians to feel that the Indian women accepted their lot with passivity. What else could they do? Or who would there have been to tell us of their heartbreak – after the white man left? There is no reason to think of these women as having been stolid, passionless or unspirited.

The Indian women were no doubt refreshingly direct for men who had come from the over-mannered society of England or even of eastern Canada. They were attractive, with clear complexions, strong even features and sound teeth. And they were physically strong – able to work unbelievably hard, bear a child every two years, and still paddle their own canoes. Their culture had taught them to be undemanding of men; to take their place without complaint. And as we think of these women, we must also remember that they were young. Most of the white men speak of taking as wives girls of about 14 years of age. Because of their wealth, the white men could choose the most attractive of the girls: these wilderness wives were the flower of Indian society.

Thanks for this fine article goes to Maxine Hancock, and to "free" Heritage Magazine (ED.)

## THE CORN HUSKER

### MY OLD GRANDMOTHER

As I look upon the picture  
of my old grandmother  
I see love and understanding.

There is pain in those eyes,  
but there is also hope  
because of a belief in the Lord.

I had been strong at her funeral  
until I kissed her cold forehead.  
Everything I had, I lost too soon.

She spoke no English, had no teeth  
and her gray and thinning hair  
was usually captured in braids.

Grandma's favorite dress was black  
dotted with little yellow flowers.  
She wore that dress to no end.

She attended Church every day —  
Sunday Mass to Saturday Benediction  
with morning mass during the week.

Her life meant little to others,  
but Grandma left knowing  
she had done her best.

by Marie Mudd

— May 1973

Written for Mary Morin,  
my grandmother.

Hard by the Indian lodges, where the bush  
Breaks in a clearing, through ill-fashioned fields  
She comes to labour, when the first still hush  
Of autumn follows large and recent yields.

Age in her fingers, hunger in her face,  
Her shoulders stooped with weight of work and  
years,  
But rich in tawny colouring of her race,  
She comes a-field to strip the purple ears.

And all her thoughts are with the days gone by  
Ere might's injustice banished from their lands  
Her people, that to-day unheeded lie,  
Like the dead husks that rustle through her hands.

by Pauline Johnson



Credit : Public Archives of Canada

### LULLABY OF THE IROQUOIS

Little brown baby-bird, lapped in your nest,  
Wrapped in your nest,  
Strapped in your nest,  
Your straight little cradle-board rocks you to rest;  
Its hands are your nest;  
Its banks are your nest;  
It swings from the down-bending branch of the oak;  
You watch the camp flame, and the curley grey  
smoke;  
But, oh, for your pretty black eyes sleep is best,—  
Little Brown baby of mine, go to rest.

Little brown baby-bird swinging to sleep,  
Winging to sleep,  
Singing to sleep,  
Your wonder-black eyes that so wide open keep,  
Shielding their sleep,  
Unyielding to sleep,  
The heron is homing, the plover is still,  
The night-owl calls from his haunt on the hill,  
Afar the fox barks, afar the stars peep,—  
Little brown baby of mine, go to sleep.

by Pauline Johnson

poems

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# REVIEWS

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## Aquash Book Probes FBI Coverup - Canadian Indifference

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
ANNA MAE AQUASH  
by JOHANNA BRAND

James Lorimer and Co., 1978

Price:- Paper \$6.95; Cloth \$12.95

—Reviewed by JENNA HOFBAUER

The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash is a frightening expose of the actions and attitudes of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) towards members of the American Indian Movement (A.I.M.). The book examines one participant in the occupation of Wounded Knee — Anna Mae Aquash.

The book is an indictment of the Canadian government, media and public. It exposes their indifference to the fate of a Canadian citizen murdered in the United States. It is a story fraught with terror, injustice and unanswered questions.

Anna Mae Pictou Aquash was a Micmac Indian from Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia. In April 1973, she joined in AIM's occupation of Wounded Knee. In 1976, at the age of 31, she was found dead on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The events that followed the discovery of Anna Mae's body, through to its second burial, were macabre and highly indicative of a coverup on the part of the FBI.

A flyer advertising The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash wrote: "When a woman's body was found on the Pine Ridge Reservation in February 1976, the official autopsy attributed her death to exposure. Both hands were severed from the corpse and sent to Washington for fingerprinting. The unidentified body was then hastily buried without legal documents.

Only after the burial did the FBI reveal that the dead woman was Anna Mae Aquash, a Canadian Indian and an active member of the American Indian Movement. Friends demanded a second autopsy, which revealed that Anna Mae had in fact been killed by a bullet fired execution-style into the back of her head."

The Canadian government, despite pressure from some citizen groups and Anna Mae's family, has never demanded a full, impartial investigation of the murder. Is it, as Brand says, because, "The murder victim was, after all, poor, Indian, female and politically active...?"

The events dealt with in this book are unfamiliar to the majority of Canadians, and therefore the author went into them in some detail. The occupation of Wounded Knee is dealt with at length, as is the FBI's treatment of other groups they consider "dissident", such as the Black Panthers, the Socialist Workers Party, and Martin Luther King, Jr. There is, unfortunately, not enough background on related issues of concern to Canadians, particularly the questionable behavior of the Canadian government in the extradition of Leonard Peltier, an AIM leader who had played a prominent role in the occupation of Wounded Knee. An analysis of Canada's actions during this proceeding might have shed more light on Canadian-American, RCMP-FBI relations, which could have reflected somewhat on why Canada never demanded a proper inquiry into Anna Mae's murder.

This book could have more aptly been called The Death of Anna Mae Aquash, for despite a description of Anna Mae's life, she remains a shadowy character, never really coming to life as an individual. Brand treats Anna Mae more as a symbol of injustice than as a person. This is the only major flaw in an otherwise fascinating text.

All Canadians should read The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash, and start asking some of the questions raised by the book. Ask your Member of Parliament what he/she did regarding Anna Mae, and ask the Justice Minister, External Affairs Ministers, and the Prime Minister why there was no proper investigation of the murder of Anna Mae. As Johanna Brand says, "...the sacrifice of her rights weakens our own...".

# Traditional Cultures Viewed From 20th Century Bias

## MOTHER OF MANY CHILDREN

A Film by Alanis Obomsawin

Reviewed by Gabriella Goliger

Documentaries on Native peoples often tend to be anthropological studies that depict Native men and women as if they were species from another planet, and that leave the viewer feeling he is getting a last glimpse of vanishing tribes. A refreshing departure from this approach is Mother of Many Children, a new film on Native women by National Film Board director, Alanis Obomsawin.

Through scenes and sounds, voices and faces, Obomsawin explores the experiences of real people living in their present environment. Her film blends glimpses of traditional lifestyles with portrayals of women discovering new roles as teachers, students, artists, social workers and community leaders. At the same time the film reveals the eternal, universal rhythm of woman's life – from birth, to childhood, to puberty, to motherhood, to ripe old age.

Mother of Many Children is different because director Alanis Obomsawin, an Abenaki woman from Quebec, understands her subject from the inside. She is one of the "mothers".

The documentary got started, Obomsawin says, when a group of Native women asked her to make a film about their lives. She agreed to undertake the project which was jointly sponsored by the NFB, the Secretary of State and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Obomsawin then travelled to a number of locations across Canada, from Arctic Quebec and James Bay in the east to British Columbia in the west, interviewing Indian, Inuit and Metis women of all ages. Her purpose was not to convey a political message, but rather to show the strength, the beauty, the "best" in people. "Real politics are people who live, people who contribute to life. I wanted those people to be seen."

Obomsawin then took the raw material of her documentary back to her Montreal office, edited it, wrote a film script, and translated it into French and narrated both the English and French versions herself. The finished result is a 57-minute collage of moments pregnant with life – the hands of women weaving baskets, a child playing with leaves, the tender song a grandmother sings, the magic rhythm of a pow wow dance.

At the beginning of the film we see a Cree woman in Fort George, Quebec in the throes of childbirth. The camera spares us none of the pains of labour, but at the same time conveys the miracle of birth.

Scenes that follow deal with childhood, traditional life, education, social change, alcohol problems and religion. The final moments of the film deal with spirituality – what it means to different women. One woman finds inspiration in the beautiful rhythm of nature. Another speaks of the prayers her father used to say after killing animals for food. The most poetic statement of all comes from 108-year-old Agatha Marie Goodine from Alberta: "The Great Spirit created a woman and made her the mother of many children. The Great Spirit has sympathy and affection for the woman. And when a woman speaks, she should be highly respected. So should her children, because they are so precious."

Obomsawin says she hopes her film will be seen by women in isolated communities so that they can see what problems their children face when they go to the big city. But the director feels her film speaks to people of all races throughout the world, not only to the Native people of Canada.

"There is unity among all people", she says. "There are separations too, but the separations are artificial and come from the outside. They are not really part of people. The unity is real."

## Caught Between Two Cultures

### HALFBREED

BY MARIA CAMPBELL

TORONTO, McCLELLAND AND STEWART

REVIEWED BY LAVERNE MONETTE

What does it mean to be a halfbreed?

It is not purely a mixture of different blood coursing through your veins, nor is it merely being caught

between two cultures. It can be a constant inner war – two factions of yourself continuously fighting, neither able to live in harmony with the other. That is the inner conflict. Society teaches halfbreeds another reality. As Metis, we feel the discrimination to which all native peoples are subject. We are easily identifiable on the streets. But when you flip the

other side of the coin, we are not "Indian" enough to make it in that world. Many of us have rejected the Indian part of ourselves to be successful in a white society, only to find that we have robbed ourselves of half our strength. The answer is not a simple one. We have to look at our dual nature, accept and reconcile those differences.

In Halfbreed, there are times when I feel that Maria Campbell is talking to me personally. She watched the disintegration of a way of life that was comforting, proud and unique. After she left the safety of her home, and the familiarity of her culture, it was a long downhill slide.

After exploring various avenues, Campbell found that her only financially viable option was prostitution. The combination of a foreign lifestyle, and an ever-increasing feeling of self-disgust and worthlessness led her on to drugs and alcohol. How many of us are out there, or have been there? How many make it back? Maria Campbell climbed the long road back, and the story of that climb is painful.

There are those who have been lucky, and have not experienced the tragedy and horror which Maria Campbell has known. Halfbreed will undoubtedly hammer home the reality that there are less fortunate

of our people who live in hell many days of their lives. Others, such as myself, have Maria Campbells in our families and among our friends, and we can admire the courage and honesty of this woman. She has opened her soul to us and exorcised ghosts in our pasts.

There is despair, poverty and misery in her story, but there is much more. Cheechum, her great-grandmother, was Maria Campbell's past and her future. We all have Cheechums, and if we remember the lessons they taught us, we too can be survivors. No one can express this feeling better than Maria Campbell herself:

The years of searching, loneliness and pain are over for me. Cheechum said, "You'll find yourself, and you'll find brothers and sisters." I have brothers and sisters all over the country. I no longer need my blanket to survive.

Being a halfbreed is being a Maria Campbell, a Stan Daniels, a Louis Riel, as well as any one of those people who through sheer hopelessness will never return to us. Some of us are Metis, and some of us are band members. It may not occur in one or two or three generations, but in the future we may all be halfbreeds. Let us look at Maria Campbell and remember her story. She has left us with hope.

## Viewed By Female Anthropologist

### DAUGHTERS OF THE EARTH

THE LIVES AND LEGENDS OF AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN

BY CAROL NIETHAMMER

COLLIER-MacMILLAN PUBLISHER, 1977

PRICE: \$9.00

REVIEWED BY SYLVIA MARACLE

For years Native women have been written about by non-Native male anthropologists. Now, in this age of women's liberation and feminism, cultural introspection in literary form, by women about women, is in vogue.

Daughters of the Earth, by Carol Niethammer, promised to be a sensitive literary portrayal of Native women. But, if Native women were concerned about what traditionally non-Native male anthropologists have done to their self-image, they are going to be floored by what a non-Native female anthropologist can do.

Niethammer's book reads like a rough draft of a doctoral thesis - unedited. It is a thinly-veiled anthropological view of Native women (pre-European contact), by a writer who seems able only to relate to middle class, twentieth century values.

A quote from one chapter in the book illustrates her

desire to draw twentieth century parallels:

"Interestingly, the Iroquois ceremonial cycle celebrated only women's activities. At the time of the arrival of the white men to American shores, there were no festivals commemorating hunting or war, though they may have existed previously. Most of the dances and ceremonies were thanksgiving for the fertility of the earth, especially for the crops, which were the women's chief concern. But, unlike our present-day solemn church rituals, these religious celebrations were great fun. Dance was considered not only a spiritual rite, but divine art as well, designed by the Great Spirit for pleasure as well as for worship. And as if that weren't enough, these sacred-social celebrations also served to arouse patriotic excitement and keep alive the spirit of the tribe. Each dance was something like our Thanksgiving, Fourth of July and Fireman's Ball all rolled into one."

The introduction, which contains many unforgivable flaws, is one of the worst parts of the book. Niethammer's politics are glaring here.

The author says that male anthropologists have



treated Native women unfairly, and that the vast majority of information on Native women has been supplied by men – both Native and non-Native. "Occasionally male anthropologists spoke with women, but we must assume that the situation of a typically shy Indian woman talking to a white male tended to colour her story somewhat, perhaps in ways she did not even realize." The author laments how unfairly males have treated Indian women, yet one should ask why Indian women would accept any more readily a non-Native female anthropologist, sociologist or social philosopher? Surely not just because she is female.

Daughters of the Earth has legends from many North American tribes intermingled with the text to explain why things occur. They provide a traditional view of the social mores to be observed by Native women. They also provide a refreshing break from the author's condescending tone.

One of the major drawbacks of the book is that the author relies heavily on sensationalism. Often the reader is led to believe that Niethammer has used the most outrageous, extreme examples that were available to her.

Niethammer has a lot of trouble with definitions; for instance, she is totally unable to define satisfactorily feminism, communalism, witchcraft, politics, lesbianism.

One must face the fact, however, that Daughters of the Earth will be read. There simply is not any great wealth of information about Native women anywhere, and Niethammer's book does manage to cover many aspects of Native women's lives, however poorly.

The book follows women through their life cycle:–

from childbirth, education, taboos, courtship, marriage, widowhood, leaders, medicine, magic, economics, war, crafts, recreation, sexual mores, religion, old age and death.

Those who will be reading this book for research, information or pleasure should be aware that Native culture is being viewed with a twentieth century slant. It is impossible to compare two such different lifestyles. It is impossible to compare the many different Native cultures that Niethammer explores in Daughters of the Earth, yet the author not only insists on this comparison, but she also subtly continues to compare Native culture with her own capitalistic, liberal, middle class, reactionary one.

The author bows out of any responsibility for the tone of the book by writing, "I have attempted to present the facts in a fairly straightforward manner, refraining as much as possible from judgement, though surely there are places where my politics must glare from between the lines. I ask readers to remember with me that any woman, living or dead, can be judged properly only by the way she conforms to the ethical and social standards of her people, not by the measure of our own ethical or social standards."

One wonders what ever happened to responsible, ethical writing, where an author made an honest attempt to look at his or her subject candidly, and to present a just, sensitive and accurate account? There is something decidedly immoral and unethical about subtly judging any Native culture with values and attitudes that have almost destroyed them as a race of people.



## BOOKS BY AND ABOUT NATIVE WOMEN

Note: Books marked with an asterisk (\*) are authored by Native women.  
Those books are not necessarily about Native women.

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| ADVISORY COUNCIL<br>ON THE STATUS OF<br>WOMEN  | <u>Indian Women and the Indian Act.</u> Ottawa:<br>Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1976   |
| *ANAHAREO                                      | <u>Devil in Deerskins: My Life with Grey Owl.</u> Toronto:<br>New Press, 1972  |
| *ANAUTA, BLACKMORE<br>AND WASHBURN,<br>Mrs. H. | <u>Land of the Good Shadows: The Life Story of<br/>Anauta an Eskimo Woman.</u> New York: AMS, 1974<br>(Reprint of 1940 edition)  |
| ANDERSON, Ann                                  | Ann Anderson has written over 40 books on the Cree<br>language. A listing of her titles is available from:<br>Cree Productions<br>10170-100A Street,<br>2nd Floor,<br>Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0C8            |
| BADLEY, Jo-Ann,<br>et al                       | <u>Yukon Women.</u> Whitehorse: Yukon Press, 1975  |
| BARNETT, Don and<br>STERLING, Rick             | <u>Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel.</u> Richmond, B.C.:<br>LSM Information Centre, 1975  |
| *BEAVON, Daphne<br>(Odjig)                     | <u>Legends of Nanabush</u> Toronto: Ginn, 1971<br>10 volumes of legends geared for elementary school<br>readers  |
| *BENEDICT, Rebecca<br>and WAHL, Charis         | <u>St. Regis Reserve</u> Don Mills, Ontario,<br>Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1976  |
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| *CAMPBELL, Maria                               | <u>Halfbreed</u> Toronto,: McClelland and Stewart, 1973  |
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| CARPENTER, Jock                                | <u>Fifty Dollar Bride: Marie Rose Smith - A Chronicle of<br/>Metis Life in the 19th Century</u> Sidney, B.C.: Gray's<br>Publishing Inc., 1977  |
| CARR, Lucien                                   | <u>The Social and Political Position of Women among the<br/>Huron-Iroquois Tribes</u> Salem: Salem Press, 1884.<br>(Extract from Peabody Museum of American Archeology &<br>Ethnology Annual Report, 1884) |

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- CUTLER, Ebbit I Once Knew an Indian Woman Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973
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- \*FOX, Mary Lou Ko-Ko-Ko the Owl: An Ojibwe-Odawa Legend Manitoulin Island: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 1977
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- \*FRENCH, Alice My Name is Masak. Winnipeg: Peguis, 1977
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- \*GOUDIE, Elizabeth Women of Labrador Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1975
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- JAMIESON, Kathleen Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus Ottawa: Information Canada, 1978
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as of April 1978

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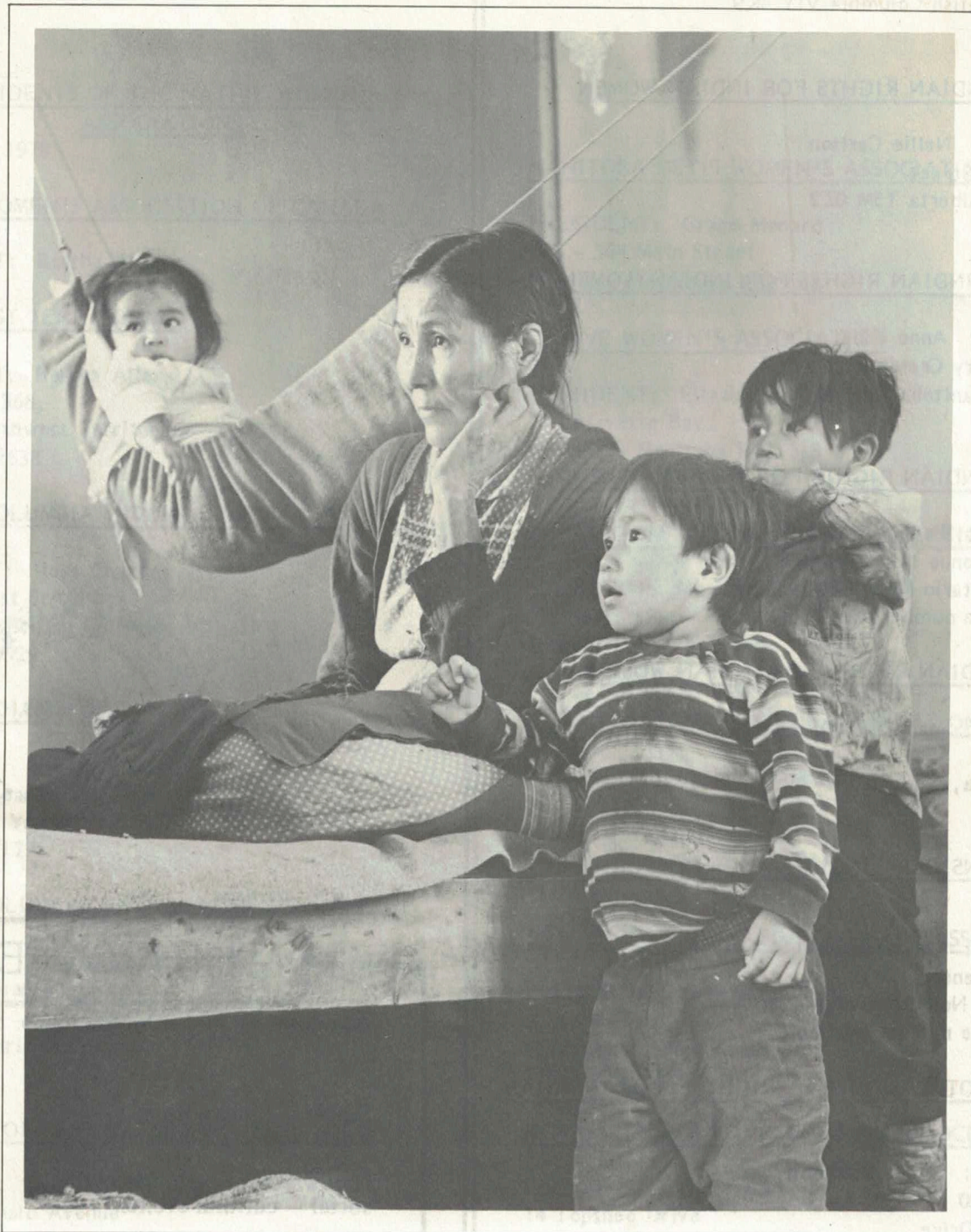


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“ The Great Spirit created a woman and made her the mother of many children. The Great Spirit has sympathy and affection for the woman. And when a woman speaks, she should be highly respected. So should be her children, because they are so precious.”

Agatha Marie Goodine  
from the film “ MOTHER OF MANY CHILDREN ”