

dominion, n. 1. Control or the exercise of control. 2. A territory or sphere of influence; a realm. 3. One of the self-governing nations within the British Commonwealth.

# The Dominion

NEWS FROM THE GRASSROOTS

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The media convicted Milosevic before the tribunal could.  
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**I**n May of 2003, Stewart Steinhauer informed the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) that he was stopping his payments on \$150,000 of loans, until Canada complies with international law and takes steps to stop the ongoing genocide against the indigenous inhabitants of Turtle Island. » *page 16*



## L'Oreal makes \$1.14 billion deal with The Body Shop

French cosmetic giant L'Oreal is set to takeover "profit with principles" beauty care merchants, The Body Shop. The £652-million (\$US 1.14 billion) deal has been approved by 43 per cent of The Body Shop's shareholders, and stands to net its founders, Anita and Gordon Roddick, 118 million pounds. The couple still have an 18 per cent stake in the company, but are no longer involved in the day-to-day operations.

L'Oreal chief executive Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones explains the reasons behind the deal, "A partnership between our companies makes perfect sense. Combining L'Oreal's expertise and knowledge of international markets with the Body Shop's distinct culture and values will benefit both companies."

News of the takeover has already produced financial benefits for shareholders in both companies: The Body Shop's stock price jumped close to 10 per cent in the last week, despite the fact that their sales last year were weaker than expected.

—Salvatore Ciolfi

## West Papua still struggling for independence

The Australian government has moved 43 West Papua refugees to refugee processing on Christmas Island, according to SBS News.

The island made headlines in 2001 when the Australian government moved 420 asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Sri Lanka to Christmas Island and refused to allow them to apply for refugee status.

The asylum seekers claim to have left Indonesia's West Papua province because of government violence. According to an article written by journalist John Pilger, 10% of West Papua's population has been killed since Indonesia began its occupation of the province in 1949.



Over 500,000 people marched for immigrant rights in Los Angeles following the Chicago March of 100,000.

LA Indymedia

West Papua, known in Indonesia as Irian Jaya, only comprises 1% of the population of Indonesia, but with 21% of the land mass, it is home to a wealth of natural resources, including gold, copper, nickel, wood, and oil. West Papua is home to the "world's largest gold reserve and third-largest copper deposit," according to Pilger. Life expectancy and government provisions, however, are lower than in the rest of Indonesia, and infant mortality is higher.

In January, four teenagers on their way to school were killed by the Indonesian military, according to activists stationed in West Papua. One of the teenagers was a close relative of members of the 43 refugees currently being held on Christmas Island. Nick Chesterfield from the Australia-West Papua National Authority suggested that the killings were in retaliation to the refugees leaving Indonesia.

—Geordie Gwalgen Dent

## Move over Hollywood: African film industry booming

The African film industry received another boost during the Academy Awards this year when the South African film Tsotsi took home the best

foreign language film award. Although the film was not the first academy award for South Africa, it comes at a time when African-made films are a booming domestic and international industry.

In the last five years, Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, has been churning out between 600 and 2,000 films a year, becoming the third-largest film industry behind the US and India. "Nollywood" has become a multi-million dollar industry both in Africa and in the US, which has almost a million African-born citizens.

Most of the Nollywood films are extremely low budget, costing less than \$15,000 US and usually shot with one digital camera over a two-week period. This, however, hasn't hindered their popularity in Africa. Nigerian actors from low-budget pulp films have become household names in Ghana and Zambia, while actors' guilds have seen a huge increase in membership.

—Geordie Gwalgen Dent

## 100,000 march for immigrant rights in Chicago

On Saturday, March 11, more than 100,000 people took part in a public protest against bill HR44367; a bill that is soon to be voted upon by the U.S. Senate.

The proposed legislation has controversially called for the creation of a fence along parts of the Mexican border and would also criminalize the action of assisting undocumented immigrants illegally remaining in the country.

More than 100 organizations representing Chicago-area immigrants organized the massive march just days before the event, with delegations also coming from neighbouring states and the northeast.

Starting at noon, the marchers chanted, "Si se Puede," which translates as, "Yes, it can be done," and eventually overtook much of the busy downtown Loop business district. There, the protesters waved multi-lingual banners, as well as American, Mexican, Asian and Caribbean flags, and cheered as numerous politicians spoke, including Chicago Mayor Richard Daley.

"Do not allow anyone to tell you that you're an immigrant. Everyone in America is an immigrant," the mayor said.

Governor Rod Blagojevich spoke next, and was treated like a hero when he said, in both English and Spanish, "You are not criminals. You are workers."

According to new reports in the U.S. media, the illegal immigrant population has grown from about 8.4 million people in 2000 to about 12 million.

Locally, the efforts of immigrants' groups have begun to pay off, as both state and city government bodies have already passed resolutions rejecting proposals such as HR44367. The state senate, in fact, has already requested an immigration reform that would allow undocumented people to be granted legal residency and eventual citizenship.

—Salvatore Ciolfi

## Charest, Harper Meet with Unelected Haitian PM

Gerard Latortue, the unelected Prime Minister of Haiti, visited Jean Charest in a private meeting on Saturday, March 11. Spokesperson for Charest said that "The premier wanted to thank him for what he did for Haiti and get an update on the situation there."

Amnesty International is one of many organizations who have accused Latortue of crimes against human rights, including the authorization of police to fire on demonstrators in Haiti, approving the jailing of hundreds of political opponents, and supporting the violent and repressive Haitian National Police in their crackdowns on poor neighborhoods and sporting events. The Haitian National Police are also widely believed to perpetrate ongoing attacks on the leadership and support base of the widely-popular political party, Fanmi Lavalas.

Serge Bouchereau, of the group Resistance Haitienne au Quebec, said that "By agreeing to meet with Mr. Latortue -- a criminal against humanity -- we believe that Mr. Jean Charest has become silently complicit... The people of Haiti want nothing to do with Mr. Latortue, who is an imposed prime minister who was parachuted into Haiti by Washington, Canada, and France."

Outside of the meeting, a group of about 70 protesters chanted "Latortue, assassin! Charest, accomplice!" and handed out pictures of Haitian victims of police violence laying on the streets of Cite Soleil, Haiti.

Yves Engler, of the group HaitiActionMontreal, expressed concern that Latortue's visit was an attempt to secure certain agreements between Canada and Haiti before the newly elected Rene Preval takes office.

The Haitian community in Quebec is the largest in Canada, holding some 75,000 Haitians. The province has spent just



Protesting Lotortue's visit in Montreal.

Aaron Lakoff

under \$5 million in "aid" for Haiti since 1997.

—Francesca Manning

## Event Cancelled Due to PMO Gag Order: Organizers

"Canada's Role in Afghanistan," a panel hosted by the University of Calgary's Center for Military and Strategic Studies (CMSS), was cancelled due to Prime Minister Harper's recent decision to place major limits on the media's access to ministers, organizers say.

CTV reported that the Prime Minister's Office issued an order restricting interaction with the press to discussions of the "five priority areas identified in the [Conservative] campaign."

"In order to keep a grip on such events (those that distract from priority areas), PMO will approve of all ministerial events," the order allegedly said.

A CMSS spokesperson told *The Dominion* that "only David Sproule, Canada's Ambassador to Afghanistan, was able to attend the panel. Therefore, we decided to cancel it."

The CMSS spokesperson affirmed that it is their belief that the decree made by Harper's office led to the immediate unavailability of the other speakers, which were to include

Omar Samad, Afghanistan's Ambassador to Canada.

At press time, the Foreign Affairs department had not responded to requests for information about Samad's cancellation.

—Anthony Fenton

## Deh Cho take Pipeline Review Board to court over reversal

The Deh Cho First Nation is taking the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board to court over the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline, CBC North reports.

The case has been brought to the Northwest Territories Supreme Court because of the way the board handled agreements related to the right-of-way for the proposed \$7 billion Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline.

The board initially said Imperial Oil had to enter into agreements with five Deh Cho communities to address the social and cultural impacts of the pipeline. The board later reversed this decision.

The Deh Cho First Nation is asking the court to cancel the reversal since it was based on Department of Indian Affairs information, to which they had neither access nor a chance to

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# The Life of A Clearcut

## John Haney collaborates with his environment

by Max Liboiron

It was “an especially obscene clearcut, one which came right up to the road,” remembers John Haney. “I figured that I could either get mad or deal with it somehow - and there was one way I knew [how to deal with it]. So I started making trips out to this clearcut with my camera.”

John Haney, a photographer currently living in St. John's, Newfoundland, has been working on a photographic series whose process is as noteworthy as its images. The process of the project has required a give-and-take between the artist and the life and agency of the project's subject: a New Brunswick clearcut.

“I knew that there had been countless pictures made of clearcutting, but I'm pretty sure nobody else has been stupid enough to haul around a 25-pound camera to do it with.” Haney's camera is an Eastman Kodak 11” x 14” view camera dating back to around 1928, complete with focusing cloth.

“My first intention was simple: to document the devastation as blatantly as possible. I wanted to show something sublime — in the original sense of the word — displaying something both gorgeous and terrifying.”

Haney was inspired by images he'd seen of the devastated landscape around Mount St. Helens in Washington State after it erupted; images in which all the trees were blown down in the same direction. He quickly realized, however, that his approach would have to be different. “First of all, there *weren't* any trees.” The objects signifying the devastation, “which I had imagined might be lying around, were probably two-by-fours being used to build houses in Mississauga. Secondly, I was immediately attracted to something far less obvious. I kept getting drawn to



Ice Formation in Skidder Track, November 2005.

©2005 John Haney

subtle things, to the evidence of life growing back.”

Haney decided to go back to the clearcut three months later to continue to document this process. “I wanted to see if there was some sign that beauty and life were returning. I realized that if I didn't find this, the project would be one-dimensional and would fall flat.”

There have been thousands of documentary-style photographs depicting clearcuts and the devastation they cause, and this familiar mode of depiction was Haney's original intention. But the landscape began to show him something else.

“Returning to the clearcut in November was interesting. Many of the leaves of the living trees had yellowed and fallen off, the ferns were brown and dying, and there was ice on the water that filled the skidder tracks. I felt that the place had changed — it was coming back slowly. So if there's an underlying motive to the work, it is to show how fortunate this is. Also humbling. It points to the poignant fact that all the environmental/ecological issues that we are concerned about in regards to the earth ultimately point to us.

“The truth of the matter is that we will only kill ourselves off, and take a handful of species with us. In time, this place is going to keep on going — and,

in fact, it will come to *thrive* — without us. As I thought about this I realized that my original intent had actually been turned on its head. That my pictures weren't an epitaph for a forest, but rather for humans — for us.”

It wasn't that Haney's images had become less political — Jacqueline Rose, a feminist film critic, states that all images are political. These images of a clearcut landscape go beyond the already familiar political images of outrage that have no relation to their opposite: the equally ubiquitous and romanticized painterly landscapes of rebirth and salvation. Haney's interaction with this place and an audience's interaction with the images push careful observation into a more nuanced political-geographical-cultural-natural space. This space has an integrity — not borrowed from moralizing “nature,” but from a narrative of observation. This space is more complex but also more simple in its decay, growth, re-growth, shift and pull. The space is hybridized by the passage of machines, not destroyed by them or triumphant over them. The space is a collaboration of events that have taken place within it, including Haney's photographing of it. This multiple collaboration is the subject of Haney's work.

“I made a photograph of

a skidder track [a skidder is a huge, log-hauling machine], whose tires had made a pair of deep trenches in the ground. It was one of the first pictures I made that looks, in some way, like a completely natural landscape. There's even a slight degree of abstraction in the way the ground is divided by a wedge of sky reflected in the water of the trench. “The image achieves a sense of dichotomy that Haney was aiming for. “It looks like a natural landscape, and it doesn't seem to bear any traces of humanity, except for the fact that, in actuality, the whole landscape is a human landscape; it was made that way by machines, and is now left to its own devices. There is no obvious evidence that one is looking at a ruined landscape, except that the entire subject of the picture *is a product* of that ruining.”

Haney hopes these photos will provide a space for studied inspection of a place that usually doesn't get a second look. “I don't necessarily expect people looking at the pictures to go through the same stages of thought that I did, which is to say, to begin with anger, then come to wonder, then arrive at epiphany. However, I do hope that viewers will be able to get a sense of the slow and considered approach of photographing the clearcut with a view camera, and that they will afford the pictures the same consideration, paying *attention* to the small and interesting details in a huge, chaotic mess of a landscape. I think that there is a quality about the pictures that speaks of process — both the processes of method and thought, and the slow process of renewal.”

The first public showing of the work, currently with the working title *Clearcut*, will be at the Emerson Gallery in Berlin from July 12 to 22, 2006. Images are currently available at [www.johnhaney.ca/clearcut/](http://www.johnhaney.ca/clearcut/).



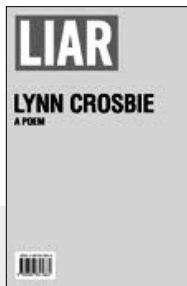
*Seal up the Thunder*  
Erin Noteboom  
Wolsak and Wynn, 2005

Erin Noteboom's poetry consistently exceeds expectations and stretches beyond its own limitations in this awe-inspiring collection. The poetry featured here is not religious per se, but is inspired by the Bible and focussed on the language and stories of Christian scripture. Traditional metaphors and tropes come into play here: stones on tongues, milk and honey, salt, wounds, blood. Yet Noteboom also employs a fresh, contemporary set of images: "grey and greased dishwater," "Queen of morphine drips," "the light that loves the bowl of

spoons," "My God of the ragbag/ with the needle in your mouth." Some individual poems are simply superb: "Delilah, on contradictions," "O Wisdom, this world," "The sparrow child," and "How even the holy cover their faces." This last poem fuses the Old Testament story of Abraham and Isaac with the real life story of Deanna Laney, a woman who killed her sons with stones because she believed God commanded it. The poem's rhythm, understatement, and repetition are masterful: "How she woke near midnight/ and took the oldest first onto the lawn/ how

the sprinklers came on, how they ran/ to the rock garden./ How she had decided on stones." Seal up the Thunder is more than the sum of its parts. It is more than prophecy, more than devotion, more than reclaiming or retelling, more than praise. It is a heartfelt and wise meditation on the disparity between the quotidian and the eternal, the past and the present, and the infinite gaping maw between the human and the divine.

—Matthew J. Trafford



*Liar: A Poem*  
Lynn Crosbie  
Anansi: Toronto, 2006.

This book-length poem catalogues the circumstances surrounding the end of the speaker's seven-year relationship, with its attendant welter of emotions. Unfortunately, *Liar* has neither the poetic attentiveness nor the narrative arc required to sustain a reader's interest for 149 pages. Crosbie's diction tends to be flat: "The Beanie Babies are still boxed at my parent's (sic) house:/ limpid animals, with birth-date tags and names like Cheezer, Blessed, and Schnitzel./ She began collecting them and it soon became an obsession." Where lines do reach for

the poetic, they often overshoot the mark, so that images are unearned or unexplored; there's a bit about love being like the "dangerous brinkmanship" of watching a grilled cheese sandwich burn, which somehow gets summed up by the phrase, "Like broken vessels, an astronomy of refusal." These kinds of abstractions, paired with overly mundane details of the lovers' life together, serve to obscure rather than to illuminate the character of the beloved, and without this sense of intimacy it's difficult for the reader to enter the narrative. What do gleam through,

surprisingly, are the thumbnail portraits of other people: the neighbour who used to work "in the Maritimes on a fishing boat, dressed like Elton John", the woman whose foot the speaker steps on while wearing stiletto heels. Occasional turns of phrase also burn bright: "the short movements of a newborn squirrel, who,/ in falling from its nest,/ cried with grief as wasps entered its mouth." Closer attention to craft and avoidance of repetition would have made this a more rewarding read.

—Linda Besner

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# Throwing Tomatoes

## Field workers in Florida target McDonald's buying policies

by Carole Ferrari

After winning a four year long boycott against Taco Bell for better wages and an enforceable code of conduct, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a community of tomato pickers in Immokalee, Florida, is now targeting McDonald's.

The CIW and its allies are campaigning for McDonald's to negotiate socially responsible working conditions directly with them-- the people who are directly affected by the McDonald's buying policies-- as Taco Bell agreed to do.

The deal made with Taco Bell requires the company pay one cent more per pound for the tomatoes bought from Florida growers. This increases the workers' wage by almost double, to about 2.3 cents per pound. The agreement also includes a tracking and enforcement process, along with consequences for growers who do not comply with the new policy.

McDonald's refuses to negotiate with the CIW, however, and instead, has signed onto Socially Accountable Farm Employers (SAFE).

SAFE is a grower lead certification body made up of the member growers of the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association and the Redlands Christian Migrants Association, the latter a childcare and education provider for migrant families. Growers that are SAFE-certified are required to abide by general labour standards. These standards are basically the standards already required by law.

SAFE is a very new organization that was created soon after the Taco Bell boycott ended. It did not include the CIW or any other labour organization when it formulated its standards.

"As it stands today, we believe SAFE cannot sincerely



Field workers are paid pennies a pound for tomatoes picked.

photo: CIW

be said to hold any real promise for the expansion and protection of workers' rights," states the CIW. Rather, the CIW expresses concern that "SAFE stands as the primary barrier today to hopes for the continued expansion and protection of workers' rights created by the settlement of the Taco Bell boycott."

SAFE did not come from a concern for labour conditions on the field. According to Ray Gilmer, spokesperson for SAFE, it came from a concern for the reputation of Florida growers. "There was a realization that corporate grower responsibility was extending all the way down to the farm and companies like McDonald's would be asking for an assurance that workplace conditions are meeting certain standards."

Consumer awareness of the working conditions of tomato pickers has increased as a result of the CIW campaign, but the reputation of many Florida growers had been tarnished before the campaign.

Ag-Mart, a tomato operation with fields in Immokalee, is one such grower. According to Source Watch, a project of the Center for Media and Democracy, Ag-Mart was ordered by the Florida Department of Agriculture to pay \$111,200 in fines in October for pesticide misuse.

These fines were the result of an investigation initiated by the Environmental Protection Agency in connection with the deformities of three children of Immokalee tomato workers. One baby was born with a cleft palate and facial abnormalities, another was born so disfigured that her sex couldn't be determined and died soon after birth, and a baby boy was born in December with no arms and legs. All three of the mothers worked for Ag-Mart during their pregnancies.

Ag-Mart has also hired Yolanda Cuello, wife of convicted slaver Abel Cuello Jr., as a labour contractor. Cuello was convicted of involuntary servitude in October 1999 for enslaving migrants. Workers at Ag-Mart say Cuello is their acting supervisor. Ag-Mart was contacted and directed the Dominion to their lawyer, who did not respond to requests for an interview. Ag-Mart supplies grape tomatoes to McDonald's.

The CIW's campaign for better wages and greater control of their livelihoods began by targeting the tomato growers themselves. With hunger strikes, marches, tours and intensive coalition building, the CIW fought for the improvement of their livelihoods. Despite

these efforts, conditions did not change. "The growers are very protected from pressure from traditional labour organizing because farm workers are excluded from the National Labour Relations Act," explains Greg Asbed of the CIW. "Growers don't sell to the public. They were able to ignore us because consumer awareness has no impact on them."

The CIW realized that to change working conditions in the fields, they would have to target the buyers. The result was the Taco Bell consumer boycott, which resulted in increased wages for tomato pickers. This, in the face of extreme poverty, as noted by a United Nations special envoy to the community, is a small but important gain for the Immokalee workers.

Bridrigo Oregon, who left fieldwork for construction in 2002, describes the conditions he worked under. "You work in the sun, you run all day, 12 hours... I look at my people working hard. I tried to find a good job. I can't find a good job. I need vacation, I need benefits, but the company says 'no.' It's a big problem," he says. "One bucket of tomatoes is 40 cents. That's \$45 all day! It don't make no sense to work for \$45 a day."

Growers are concerned that these penny-per-pound deals, like the one made with Taco Bell, will scare away other large buyers like McDonald's, explains Gilmer. "We're worried [that] if enough of these penny-a-pound deals are crafted, then large corporate buyers will look at the extra money they're paying and see Florida as the higher cost provider. If this is not applied to the entire industry, including Mexico, a corporate accountant can say we need to buy somewhere else, not Florida."

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# Shell Shocked

## People of the Niger Delta fight back against violence and corruption

by Hillary Bain Lindsay

“Nothing has changed,” says Patterson Ogon, founding director of the Ijaw Council for Human Rights in the Niger Delta. “Since 1995 when Ken Saro-Wiwa was hung, [Shell’s] public relations and glossy reports seem to indicate that they’re doing so much in the Niger Delta. But we are still waiting to see any practical change.”

Over a decade has passed since the Nigerian government killed Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists. Saro-Wiwa led a non-violent struggle against Royal Dutch Shell and other oil multinationals whose operations in the region were devastating the environment and livelihoods of local people. In a statement made to the court before his verdict, Saro-Wiwa predicted that the end of the struggle was near, but warned, “Whether the peaceful ways I have favoured will prevail depends on what the oppressor decides, what signals it sends out to the waiting public.”

Ten years later, the Niger Delta is once again making international headlines. The struggle remains the same but the tactics have changed. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) is a well-armed, well-organized group of youth who aim to localize control of the Niger Delta’s oil wealth and are demanding compensation for communities environmentally devastated by oil operations.

MEND is targeting the oil multinationals that export 2.5 million barrels of oil from the region each day, specifically Shell, which is responsible for nearly half of those exports. The group kidnapped four foreign oil workers on January 11th and nine more on February 18th. MEND is threatening to bring oil exports from Nigeria to a

halt.

The group has already shut down nearly one fifth of the country’s oil production; a significant feat considering Nigeria is the eighth largest oil exporter in the world. “Violent attacks by militants in the Niger Delta” are affecting oil prices, the New York Times noted on February 20th.

The “violent attacks” refer to the blowing up of oil infrastructure in the region, including pipelines and loading platforms. Not mentioned in the article are the Nigerian soldiers which have been killed during skirmishes between the military and MEND. According to MEND, they “deeply regret” the deaths. In an email sent on January 17th MEND states, “We understand and sympathize with soldiers being sent into this conflict, that they are there without choice. We do not wish to kill them unless absolutely necessary and urge them to be passive observers so they do not share the fate of their colleagues in Benisede [an attack which destroyed one oil flow station and two military house boats].”

Ten out of the thirteen hostages taken have been released unharmed and MEND has publicly stated that it has no intention of killing hostages. “The hostages are being treated as well as we possibly can,” read an email statement MEND released on January 20th, “But they must live under the same conditions we have been subjected to for the last 48 years.”

These conditions, argues Ogon, are a different kind of violence imposed daily on the people of the Niger Delta. The region’s environment has been devastated by oil operations, “It has affected agricultural and fishing yields,” he says. “When people can no longer depend on fishing and farming, when they can no longer depend on the land, when they can no longer

depend on the rivers and creeks that have fed them and their fathers and grandfathers... What do you expect them to do?” he asks. “We are talking about the security of the future.”

“People feel like they are pushed against a wall,” explains Annie Brisibe, founding Director of Niger Delta Women for Justice. Though she does not condone the hostage-taking, MEND’s tactics do not surprise her. “It’s come out of frustration, anger, and complete marginalization,” she says from her home in the United States where she is now living. “This has created a lot of anger in the young men and women of the Niger Delta... People are forced into doing things that they’re not supposed to do because of poverty.”

Despite the region’s oil wealth, seventy percent of people living in the Niger Delta survive on less than \$1 US a day.

There have been many attempts to non-violently address the harsh inequality in the Niger Delta. Most recently, Ijaw communities took Shell to court. “They wanted to take a judicial path,” explains Ogon. Nigeria’s public assembly had previously passed a resolution compelling Shell to pay 1.5 billion for ecological damage. The case went to court after Shell refused to pay.

One of MEND’s central demands is that Shell pay the 1.5 billion. In an email statement released on January 20th, MEND stated, “This money is to be paid directly to the affected communities and we ask no part of it. Shell must pay this sum or in the alternative, provide a firm commitment of its desire to settle this claim immediately.”

At the end of February, the federal high court in Nigeria ordered Shell to pay the 1.5 billion to communities in the Niger Delta for damage caused

to their environment by Shell’s activities. Shell is appealing the decision.

Although MEND’s tactics have caught international attention, neither their demands nor the government’s reaction to them are anything new, says Brisibe. “Retaliation is always the same,” she says. “Always with force.”

Two weeks after the first four hostages taken by MEND were released, Nigerian military helicopters attacked what the government says were barges used for smuggling oil. However, MEND accused the military’s attack, dubbed “Operation Restore Hope,” of targeting civilians, and accused Shell of providing the airstrip as the staging post for the helicopter attack.

This does not surprise Brisibe, who notes that the Nigerian military provides Shell with security. “The government has a better relationship with the multinational corporations than it has with its own citizens,” she says. “Shell provides the guns and the helicopters and the pay and the government provides the military.”

Ogon reports that the government response to MEND has had a far graver impact on communities than the tactics of MEND itself. “It’s worse when federal troops invade local communities and subject innocent people to all forms of harassment and extrajudicial killings. It has made it really difficult for local people who depend on fishing and farming to go about their normal business.”

According to a 2005 report released by Amnesty International, this kind of government response is not unusual. “Government security forces continue to kill people in the Niger Delta with impunity. Excessive force is used to protect the oil

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# Canadian Dis-Content

## Examining CANCON's role in our film industry

by Ezra Winton

CANCON: a strange and mysterious compound highlighting the cultural, the Canadiana, and even some elements that may be at odds with economic globalization. An abbreviation for Canadian Content, CANCON is a bold protectionist policy featuring a quota system that is applied to various areas of Canadian cultural creation to ensure that a minimum of cultural product in Canada is homegrown.

This policy has done wonders for the Canadian music scene. With a mandatory minimum airtime for our artists on radio airwaves, singers and songwriters alike have enjoyed a guaranteed audience in this country.

So Canadians have a system for protecting their music, but what about their movies?

Try to name five Canadian films you have seen in the last year. Most of us cannot name five Canadian films we have seen in the last decade. Is it because Canada does not tell its own stories through film? Is it because audiences are simply not interested in those stories when presented with the options available to them at the megaplexes? Or are all the Canadian films being made actually American productions that trim their budgets by coming up north?

When one considers that less than two per cent of all films screened in English-Canada last year were truly Canadian, these questions become quite pressing.

Canadians do make films, and damn good ones at that. This country is the birthplace of the documentary, and the National Film Board is a respected institution modeled by several countries around the world. At any given time, there are dozens of Canadian



Why aren't Canadian films being shown in Canadian theatres?

Rob Maguire

film productions being planned, produced, distributed and even exhibited. So why isn't anyone seeing them?

Film distributors and exhibitors repeatedly state that until Canadians start producing Hollywood-type blockbusters, their films won't be in demand for paying audiences in this country. This is particularly the argument of the three largest film exhibitors – Cineplex Entertainment (which owns Famous Players), Empire Theatres, and the American, owned and operated by AMC Loews.

These exhibitors control roughly three-quarters of Canadian movie screens. With their connections to American multinational media corporations and Hollywood studios, these cultural powerhouses have vested interests in marketing, promoting and screening mainstream American films in their Canadian theatres.

Canadians went to the movies 60 million times in 2004 – that's a veritable river of money going back to shareholders in Hollywood and the US in general. There is a good chance shareholders do not even know where that money is coming from, as Canada is considered part of the domestic American market for box-office sales.

So Hollywood studios make Hollywood films, distribute them with Hollywood-owned and connected companies, and screen them in Canadian theatres owned by or connected to Hollywood. Could this rather incestuous, self-serving system have anything to do with why we're not seeing any Canadian films on Canadian screens? Mainstream industry pundits posit a resounding "no" – Canadian films just aren't good enough.

This argument misses a factor, which is now bringing international recognition to Canada: diversity. In Quebec, nearly one third of films seen at all cinema houses are home-grown products, and Canadians from coast to coast to coast came out in droves to see domestic productions *Atanarujat (The Fast Runner)*, *The Corporation* and *Where the Truth Lies*. Clearly, when a Canadian film makes it into the theatres and people find out about it, audiences show up and pay to see it.

Since the exhibition companies in Canada seem to answer more to Hollywood and their American shareholders than they do to the average Canadian moviegoer, maybe it is time to level the playing field a little. Perhaps a little CANCON-like

intervention needs to happen in this multi-billion dollar industry.

As cultural products, how can Canadian films even begin to find a foothold in a terrain that is mapped out entirely by multinationals outside our own borders? As we have seen, Quebec is an exception, partly because Hollywood doesn't speak French, but also because of protective policies penned by the provincial government. In English-Canada, filmmakers are not given many choices when considering markets for their films. It is either straight to video or one of the three principle television broadcasters.

Getting Canadian film on the big screen should not be a lone battle against Hollywood. The forces of convergence and concentration of ownership in the film industry are coming up against grassroots and alternative methods, like community film screenings, but eventually theatres in this country will need to support our own filmmakers. When that time comes, it will be up to audiences to decide whether Canadians make good films or not. At this point in time, there's no way of knowing, if there's no way of showing.



# Milosevic the Guilty?

The media convicted Milosevic before the war crimes tribunal could

by Dru Oja Jay

The Associated Press, Reuters and the CBC refer to him as the “Butcher of the Balkans.” Making light of his recent death, the Daily Show’s Jon Stewart referred to him as a “madman” and a “genocidal maniac”. The Globe and Mail’s Doug Saunders said that he was “considered responsible for 250,000 deaths and the descent of the former Yugoslavia into terrible ethnic warfare.” The Globe and Mail compared him to Hitler and named him a “war criminal” in an obituary. “Few of history’s dictators can match this grim record,” wrote the Toronto Star.

The death of former Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic will, it seems, go down in history as the final verdict on his guilt as a mass murderer on the order of Stalin and Hitler.

There’s only one thing missing from all the claims of Milosevic’s guilt: evidence.

The Associated Press, for example, notes that all “witness testimony is on public record”—indeed, full transcripts of all testimony are available online—but their 1500 word report on Milosevic’s crimes does not refer to any of it directly. In an oversight of broad and systematic proportions, precious few of the dozens of stories about Milosevic in the Canadian or American press refer directly to the hundreds of hours of witness testimony.

One can speculate about the reasons for this lack of the most elementary evidence. However, the fact that evidence is not presented in newspapers and broadcast reports threatens to undermine what journalists, politicians and intellectuals from all points on the political spectrum seem to know without any doubt: that Milosevic was a monster.

The media’s assertion-



Seven years after the fact, the media should be pointing to evidence instead of repeating accusations.

based case against Milosevic could be further undermined by journalists who reported on the trial itself.

Neil Clark, covering the UN War Crimes Tribunal for the *Guardian* in 2003, wrote that “not only has the prosecution signally failed to prove Milosevic’s personal responsibility for atrocities committed on the ground, the nature and extent of the atrocities themselves has also been called into question.” In the worst massacre that Milosevic had been charged with—at Srebrenica in 1995—the prosecution “produced nothing to challenge the verdict of the five-year inquiry commissioned by the Dutch government—that there was ‘no proof that orders for the slaughter came from Serb political leaders in Belgrade.’”

“The trial has heard more than 100 prosecution witnesses, and not a single one has testi-

fied that Milosevic ordered war crimes,” wrote John Laughland in the *British Spectator*.

These kinds of verifiable claims threaten to undermine what thousands of Canadian and American journalists, politicians and intellectuals apparently know to be true. Accounts like Clark’s and Laughland’s are trivially easy to disprove—to prove them wrong, all that is needed is to refer to the testimony that contradicts their claims.

During the breakup of Yugoslavia, previously overlapping and coexisting ethnic groups fought over territory. During the war, it is indisputable that thousands of Muslims, Croats and Serbs were killed in massacres, battles and NATO bombing raids. And hundreds of thousands were indisputably displaced by the conflict. It remains to be proven, however, that Milosevic was singularly

responsible for the humanitarian disaster. Some facts suggest otherwise. For example, many Muslim refugees—who the Serbs were accused of “ethnically cleansing”—settled in Serbia in government-funded housing, which NATO later bombed. That said, it remains possible that Milosevic is guilty of the genocide that NATO leaders accuse him of, but evidence needs to be shown of his guilt before it can be concluded. Incidentally, NATO leaders exempt themselves from prosecution in the court where Milosevic stood trial for war crimes prior to his death.

Lacking evidence that Milosevic ordered war crimes to be committed, media reports speak of his “ultra-nationalist” appeals to Serbs and his desire for a “greater Serbia”. Reuters, the Associated Press and many other outlets frequently refer to a 1989 speech as evidence of Milosevic’s embracing of Serb nationalism. Reuters provides the following fragment without context: “They are not armed battles, though such things should not be excluded.” The *Guardian* uses an even smaller fragment, describing how Milosevic “mesmerised the mob by assuring the minority Serbs in the ethnic Albanian province that no one would ever ‘beat them’ again.”

During the same speech that is widely seen as Milosevic’s defining moment as an ultra-nationalist, whipping Serbs into a frenzy that led to ethnic cleansing, Milosevic also claimed that “no place in Serbia is better suited than the field of Kosovo for saying that unity in Serbia will bring prosperity to the Serbian people in Serbia and each one of its citizens, irrespective of his national or religious affiliation.”

Milosevic continued in his

*continued on page 20*

“Milosevic the Guilty?” is part one of a five part series on the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. The remaining five parts can be found online at [www.dominionpaper.ca/media\\_analysis](http://www.dominionpaper.ca/media_analysis)

### Part 2: The Origins of the War in the Balkans

The role of the US and Germany in destabilizing Yugoslavia

### Part 3: The Media War

PR firms, unnamed government sources, and the media

### Part 4: The Good Guys

If Milosevic was the culprit, who was the west supporting?

### Part 5: Peace from Above

Why did NATO drop 20,000 tonnes of bombs on Serbia?

# Great Bear Deal is Defeat for Environmentalism

A reader counters last month's article and the author responds

I am very disappointed to read Yuill Herbert's "Bear of a Deal" in March's Dominion. The Dominion purports to be a 'grassroots' newspaper, but Mr. Herbert's article panders blatantly to all the big professional enviro-corp hype about what is basically an awful compromise/collaborationist sell-out of the world's largest remaining tract of temperate rainforest.

People need to understand that the Weyerhaeuser's of the world (the largest logging company on the planet and a signatory to the deal) have only one single objective, and that is to provide the largest possible return to investors. Weyerhaeuser only talks to environmentalists when it knows that if it doesn't, its forest-consumption rate will be impacted. That means that BC's environmental movement was on track to severely damage Weyerhaeuser and its destructive logging ideology. We should have stayed the course.

Ten years ago, the BC environmental movement was a widely inclusive, diverse, predominantly grassroots effort which had accumulated a powerful stock of political capital from its actions against the destruction of BC's forests. More than 800 individual activists were arrested at Clayoquot Sound [an ancient temperate rainforest in BC that was being clearcut]. We had a lot of traction towards turning around the voracious wanton destruction of our forests.

Since then, the power of BC's environmental movement has gradually slipped away. The RSP [Rainforest Solutions Project] groups spent 10 years negotiating secretly behind closed doors with Weyerhaeuser and ilk, and have sucked up the vast bulk of BC's enviro-buck. They agreed to suspend support for campaigns anywhere else while they worked on the deal, and grassroots efforts were starved



Clearcutting continues in British Columbia at an alarming rate.

*Forest Ethics*

and marginalized as a result. There is virtually no opposition to the destruction of forests going on anywhere in British Columbia today, and they are logging at the fastest, most voracious rate ever. The future of logging has been greenwashed by the as yet an undefined pipe-dream of "Ecosystem Based Management" in the Great Bear Rainforest (GBR).

The RSP groups--Greenpeace, Sierra Club of BC, Forest Ethics and Rainforest Action Network, have squandered all of BC's hard-won grass-roots capital in exchange for the GBR deal-- a deal which has enriched their professional organizations, but nevertheless, in the end, a shoddy tragic deal. Today, British Columbia's once-proud and effective grassroots volunteer activist community has been reduced to licking fundraising flyer envelopes in RSP offices and signing groveling petitions destined straight for Gordon Campbell's shredder.

**Ingmar Lee**  
British Columbia

*Author Yuill Herbert responds:*

Thank you for your response. On many points I agree with you.

relationship between humans and the forest.

(3) It represents a new level of respect for indigenous peoples in Canada and

(4) The conservation fund initiates an innovative support mechanism both for people who are put out of work and for people without work in the region.

Obviously, your opinion is considerably more severe. So long as it encourages people to aim higher, all the power to you.

I do think you have to be wary of over-simplifying the nature of the agreement, if for nothing else but to respect the work of a wide range of people in BC. The protected areas in the GBR were negotiated at two land use tables that included representatives from unions, small business, recreation, tourism, local government, and provincial and federal governments (members are listed at: [http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/cr/resource\\_mgmt/lrmp/cen-coast/contacts.htm](http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/cr/resource_mgmt/lrmp/cen-coast/contacts.htm)). The consensus land use plan that came out of these tables was then negotiated between the provincial and First Nations governments, who had developed their own land use plans, which was highly significant for the First Nations.

So, at least from what I understand, it was not some sort of conspiracy between environmentalists and large corporations, but rather a complex, participatory process that spanned a decade and involved representatives of a wide range of people.

**Yuill Herbert**  
Environment Editor

**Bear of a Deal:**  
[dominionpaper.ca/environment](http://dominionpaper.ca/environment)

**Letters to the Dominion:**  
[dominionpaper.ca/letters](http://dominionpaper.ca/letters)

This agreement is not perfect from an ecological perspective; I believe I reflected that in the article, highlighting both the David Suzuki Foundation and Raincoast Conservation Society's perspectives. I agree with your analysis of Weyerhaeuser; its aim is to maximize profits. Certainly the companies involved did not voluntarily enter into negotiations, but were forced to the table by environmental activism; I also pointed this out in the article. While I'm not sure about the inclusivity and diversity of the environmental movement during the Clayoquot protests, these protests clearly played a key role in setting the stage for the GBR negotiations; and I reflected that in the article.

I suspect your disappointment lies in its tone. And this highlights the fact that a writer is never neutral. In my opinion, the GBR deal is a significant milestone, but not a panacea, for the following reasons (which I stand by):

(1) It unarguably sets a new global precedent in terms of ecological protection for a region.

(2) It has initiated steps to create a new type of management regime that has the potential to transform the rela-

# Potable Politics

## Will water bring *Zapatismo* to Mexico's big city politics?

by Van Ferrier

The 4th World Water Forum has drawn to a close in Mexico City, but the debate over who will provide clean drinking water in regions throughout the country has only just begun. In Guadalajara, Mexico's second most populous city, drinking water is a private business. The local water company was sold to multi-national corporations in 1998, since then the price of water has doubled, causing public uproar.

The Jalisco state government and the federal government devised a plan--called Arcediano--to build an elaborate water diversion scheme costing nearly \$US 1 billion.

Mexican President Vicente Fox is expected to visit Guadalajara in April to finalize the deal that will divert water from Rio Santiago. However, Jalisco's state water authority and non-governmental organizations have warned that Arcediano is doomed to fail; their studies show that the river is highly contaminated with heavy metals. The project is also expected to flood a large section of forestland that is already threatened by poorly planned urban sprawl.

"We're in a difficult position here," says a Guadalajara taxi driver. "Nobody wants to privatize water but nobody trusts the government to manage the water." Scientists say there are other, cleaner, and more affordable ways to bring potable water to the city, leading citizens to demand an alternative plan.

Guadalajara is not alone in its struggle for clean water. With a population of over 100 million, Mexico has fewer than five million citizens who live in cities with a high availability of water. According to Mexico's Secretary of Social Development (SEDESOL), 26 million Mexicans live in cities where



**Mexicans protest against the privatization of water and the 4th World Water Forum** IndyMedia Mexico

water availability is "extremely low."

A column in Guadalajara's Público newspaper argues that Mexico needs a broader approach to its commitment to clean water, tying in the scientific and technological components, with the legislative and the educational components. Despite the hype of the forum and the vocal concern of citizens in Mexico's cities, however, political candidates at the local, state and federal level have been largely silent on the issue.

*La otra campaña* ("the other campaign") could offer a response to the politicians' silence and give citizens a voice. Over the past four months, *La otra campaña* led by Zapatista Subcomandante Marcos (whose name has recently been changed to Delegado Zero) has been travelling across Mexico. The aim of the campaign, leading up to the July 2nd presidential election, is to gain a better understanding of citizens' concerns in different parts of the country.

Denouncing all political candidates in favour of direct action to protect indigenous rights and local self-determination, Marcos has tapped into widespread political cynicism and is building support for reducing the plight of Mexico's indigenous people.

According to University of Guadalajara sociology professor Dr. Jorge Regalado, citizens across the country are looking for the kind of resistance the Zapatistas have developed in their home state of Chiapas.

"The people from the government ignore us. We are interested in water, not money, because we can't drink money," says a campesino woman in Querétaro in central Mexico.

When *La otra campaña* visited Querétaro in central Mexico, Marcos proposed that followers form brigades to stop the drilling of 14 industrial wells in El Batán, which threaten to disrupt the area's most important aquifer.

Such calls to action are not

uncommon in rural areas where the Zapatistas have advanced local self-determination in autonomous communities they call Caracoles. However, residents of Guadalajara have difficulty seeing the relevance of a peasant-based movement in a cosmopolitan city of eight million people.

Perhaps the biggest question facing *La otra campaña* is how to inspire Mexican solidarity along the principles of an open social movement. According to Regalado, one of the major drawbacks to the Zapatista movement is the fact that the Sixth Declaration of the Lacondon, the Zapatistas' constitution from below and to the left, excludes a significant portion of Mexican society.

"People are tired of political corruption and feel the economy is not fair to the average person, but the Zapatistas are limiting their message to an indigenous struggle and excluding the rest of us," says a student in Guanajuato.

Dr. Jorge Regalado says one of Marcos' central objectives should be creating the "urban Zapatista."

The potential is here, says Regalado. He notes that despite its traditionally conservative voting record, the citizens of Guadalajara have demonstrated the power and potential of citizen-based movements before. After organizing a massive movement of "the indebted" following the peso crisis in the mid 1990s, Regalado says Guadalajara and the state of Jalisco have the ability to pull together a diverse crowd around common goals.

There are strong indications that adherents to *La otra campaña* may achieve the results they seek by showing the applicability of the Zapatistas' "other way" to Mexico's big city problems like water accessibility.

# Living In Our Land

The Tshikapisk Foundation aims to promote Innu culture and safeguard Innu land

by Kim Petersen

Tshikapisk Foundation provides experiential, cultural and spiritual learning programs for Innu youth. photo: Etienne Pastiwet

"We want to become independent, be normal, have our own culture and preserve who we are," Napes Ashini says simply. Ashini has hunted for over 30 years in Nitassinan (Our Land). He is now a spokesman for hunters and ordinary Innu.

Living in harmony with the land is the foundation of Innu culture, says Ashini, and hence, it also holds the key to the recovery of Innu society. The Innu are in the midst of a struggle to regain the land that was usurped from them by Canadian colonizers, despite the fact that no treaty ceding land was every signed.

Of the land claims negotiation process, Ashini says bluntly: "It was designed to rip off [the Innu]."

Ordinary Innu have been left without a voice, says Ashini, since the Canadian government recognizes only elected "leaders." This imposed system conflicts with traditional Innu culture, which is based on an egalitarian nation without chiefs.

Ashini describes how Innu consultants and the federal and provincial governments kept the Innu in the dark about land claim negotiation developments. "All our legal advisors or non-legal consultants were pressuring us to cede our land to the governments.

"They want us to extinguish our rights and our lands altogether, so that in the future our descendants won't be able to sue or have lawsuits against the governments." According to Ashini, the majority of Innu will never accept this.

Ashini believes the whole



**Tshikapisk Foundation provides experiential, cultural and spiritual learning programs for Innu youth.**

*Etienne Pastiwet*

process is a deliberate government ploy to trap the Innu into settlements, a situation that has imperiled their culture.

Approximately 90 per cent of people living in the settlements are unemployed, says Ashini. This has led to "rampant" problems of substance abuse and a high rate of youth suicide, issues unheard of in the past.

The federal government, he says, has "thrown money" at the problems in the settlements, promoting sweat lodges and other "bogus" treatments. Ashini has also seen many mega-projects come to Nitassinan, promising "development" but bringing only more hardship for most Innu.

The key to revitalizing Innu society is getting back to its cultural roots, believes Ashini. "In the past we had our own culture, our own identity, our own history."

"We want to start our own ways to find a long-term

solution," he says. Ashini is a co-founder of the non-profit Tshikapisk Foundation. The foundation aims to promote Innu culture and safeguard Innu land by providing experiential cultural and spiritual learning programs for Innu youth.

"In order to retain our own culture we must go back in the country and teach our young people about their identity, about Innu culture, Innu values, Innu history," says Ashini. "We have a history that dates back close to 10,000 years." This history and rich culture is not taught in Newfoundland schools, says Ashini.

Considering its importance in preserving the Innu way of life, Ashini believes the Tshikapisk Foundation is not getting the support and attention it deserves. He estimates that the foundation needs at least \$1 million to complete an Innu Cultural Centre, money that has not been forthcoming from the government.

Ashini finds this ironic considering the federal government was hoping to put \$500 million into a NATO Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Centre in Nitassinan in the 1980s. The proposed project, which was hugely controversial and met with strenuous objections from the Innu, was eventually stopped.

The Innu seek to end dependency and re-establish their culture and society, says Ashini. To achieve this, the Innu need an economy that corresponds to Innu needs and aspirations. The Tshikapisk Foundation hopes to help build a self-supporting rural economy, emphasizing traditional Innu knowledge and skills.

# Against The Grain

## Speerville's bioregional ethic supports local economies



Manitoba Government

by Hillary Bain Lindsay

"We feel that more people in Atlantic Canada should be eating more food that's produced in Atlantic Canada," explains Todd Grant, manager

of Speerville Flour Mill.

"Eat local," is the oft repeated mantra of grassroots agriculture, environmental and food security organizations, but *businesses* that embody that ethic are few and far between.

The organic grains and cereals produced by Speerville Flour Mill in Speerville New Brunswick are not available outside the Maritimes. Although having more people in British Columbia or Ontario eating food produced in Atlantic Canada might increase Speerville's profit margin, Grant does not see it as a choice the Mill can justify.

The average meal travels 1500 miles from field to table. Almost one third of transport trucks on Canada's highways are carrying food. Less than one per cent of the Atlantic region's available cereals and flour are actually produced in the region.

This system degrades the environment, explains Grant, and is devastating to local economies. "If you drive through Atlantic Canada, the farms are

disappearing left, right and centre." Grant understands the depth of that loss more than the average city slicker: "I grew up on a farm. It's a way of life I believe in and want to see available for young people to experience." Speerville has made a significant effort to ensure that this will be the case in the Maritimes.

When the mill was founded over 20 years ago, almost no organic grain was being grown in the Maritime region. Today, with harvests destined for Speerville Mill, small farmers in the region grow almost 1000 acres of organic grain.

At the mill the grain is stone ground, a milling process that uses the entire kernel. The result is a high fibre, nutritious, delicious tasting whole grain flour, says Grant. "It's the old fashioned way of doing it."

It's obvious when talking to Grant that he believes 'the old fashioned way' has more to teach modern industrial agriculture than most would care to admit. Heavy pesticide use has resulted in land so depleted and chemicalized that "it's not able to produce healthy food any more," says Grant. But to his dismay, 'organic' no longer means healthy or natural either: "Do you know that they have organic white cake mix?!"

### Speerville's Whole Wheat Bread

**Place in a bowl:**

**Makes 3 large loaves**

**1 Tbsp Baking Yeast**

**3 cups Warm Water**

**1/4 cup Honey**

**Add: 3 1/2 to 4 cups of Stone Ground Whole Wheat Flour**

**Stir the mixture (from outside inward), folding in air.**

**Cover with a damp cloth and set in a warm place for about an hour.**

**Fold in:**

**2 tsp Salt**

**1/4 cup Oil**

**3 to 4 cups Flour**

**Knead for 10 minutes using 1 to 2 cups of flour until the dough is smooth and elastic.**

**Place dough in a lard oiled bowl, cover with a damp cloth and set in a warm place for about one hour - or until double in size.**

**Punch down with your fist until air is worked out of the dough.**

**Cut into loaves. Let sit for 5 minutes.**

**Shape and place in baking dish.**

**Cover and let rise for 15 minutes.**

**Bake bread at 350° F for 50 minutes.**

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# Non-Status Quo

Years after being brutally arrested, ten non-status Algerians and two supporters are found not guilty

by Gordie Wornoff

"This is a coup," said defense lawyer Yavar Hameed after the non-guilty verdict of 10 non-status Algerians and two supporters was announced in an Ottawa courtroom on February 24th. The group was brutally arrested in May 2003 for occupying the immigration minister's office.

Besides being an obvious right in a free and democratic society -- the judgment -- says Hameed proves that it is not a crime to peacefully wait for a public official in his waiting room. The subtext of the Crown's position was that the broader activities of the Action Committee on Non-Status Algerians in Canada are disruptive and unlawful, says Hameed. The court's decision puts these suggestions to rest. Because all of the accused were acquitted, Hameed continues, the excessively violent and abusive arrests will now become a matter of even greater public concern and scrutiny. In cases like these, the police's broad powers of arrest lose credibility in the eyes of the public and the courts, he says.

On May 29th, 2003, a delegation of non-status Algerians and their supporters from Montreal were waiting in the lobby of the immigration office in Ottawa. The group was delivering a letter outlining the plight of non-status Algerians in Canada and requesting a personal appointment with the minister and a just solution to those facing deportation to Algeria, a country still marked by extrajudicial killings and civil strife. Because Denis Coderre, then Minister of Immigration, had personally intervened in the past to address the situation of non-status Algerians in Canada, the accused were hopeful that they could secure an appointment with the Minister. They had been there 10 hours when



Protesters were Tasered and beaten during arrests almost three years ago.

CMAQ

the Ottawa Police Services tactical unit moved in.

A police video shows the police leaping over cubicles, choking protesters, twisting arms, using Taser guns, and insulting the non-status Algerians and their supporters. The police punched out one man's tooth and scarred several others with Taser burns and gashes from beatings. Most of the accused were French-speaking, yet the police shouted profanities and instructions in English. Those arrested were charged with "mischief under \$5000" and released from jail the next day.

Crown attorney David El Hadad attempted to prove that by waiting in the lobby, the group was distracting government workers and thereby preventing them from doing work. This, argued the Crown, constituted mischief. After three years of adjudication the judge ruled that it did not.

The trial "stopped my immigration case," says Tarik Abderrahim, one of the accused. "Over the last three years, there has been so much stress." As a non-status Algerian, Abderrahim has faced many barriers to establishing himself in Canada. "Two years ago, I wanted to go to school to study to be a machinist," he explains, "but I

can't because I have no papers." Working, studying or receiving social support is almost impossible for anyone in Canada who is not recognized by the government as having status.

"I hope and pray [achieving permanent status] will be faster now," says Abderrahim. If found guilty, Abderrahim would likely have been deported to Algeria.

Human Rights Watch estimates that over 100,000 people have been killed and over 7,000 disappeared in Algeria over the last decade. Several thousand Algerians fleeing state torture and execution have come to Canada seeking asylum.

Canada put a moratorium on deportations to Algeria in March 1997, recognizing that Algeria was not a safe country for people to be deported to. The moratorium was lifted in April 2002 on the heels of then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's trip to Algeria where he was seeking business contracts. Groups like the Action Committee For Non-Status Algerians argue that the moratorium was not lifted because Algeria had become a safer place, but to benefit Canadian corporations. In April 2002, for example, just after the moratorium ended, SNC-Lavalin, a Montreal-based engineering firm and arms manufacturer was awarded a \$150

million contract by the Algerian ministry of water resources.

The Action Committee For Non-Status Algerians has been organizing out of Montreal for several years. After the moratorium on deportations to Algeria was lifted, they launched a hugely successful campaign that resulted in Immigration Canada introducing a special program through which 89 per cent of non-status Algerian applicants were granted status in Canada. Their efforts continue and the group demands a speedy regularization of all non-status Algerians, an end to deportations and a return of the moratorium.

On February 24th, over 70 people crammed into a small Ottawa courtroom for the verdict; people perched on laps and supporters poured out the back doors. The court finally decided to move the verdict announcement upstairs into a larger room--one that required the police to search everyone with metal detectors. The crowd was evenly split between carloads of Montrealers and Ottawa supporters--all of whom stood up and cheered when the verdict was announced. Chanting, applause, embraces and flower offerings followed the verdict.

Hameed says the victory is significant because it reveals that despite the fact that the group was being peaceful and lawful, it was met with an excessive police response. That leaves the door open to the conclusion that the accused suffered cruel and unusual punishment at the hands of police," says Hameed. The cases implications will "give good direction for the future."

Nourdine Belhadj certainly hopes so. He is one of the acquitted and has been waiting to receive his status for eight years. "It will make everything easier now," he hopes. "Now they don't have any reason to say 'no.'"

# A little story about direct action against the third largest corporation in Canada

## Excerpts from correspondence between Stewart Steinhauer and CIBC

In May of 2003, Stewart Steinhauer informed the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) that he was stopping his payments on \$150,000 of loans. By “playing the credit game just right” and “looking white,” Steinhauer had acquired unsecured credit “unheard of on reserve in Canada.” Why did Steinhauer decide to give up the line of

credit he had gained through years of work?

Steinhauer writes that “After ‘discovering’ genocide in Canada, I searched for the villains, and my search led from my reserve, here at Saddle Lake, to the top of the international financial community.” As the primary beneficiaries of genocide and the expropriation of indigenous land that

continues to drive it, Canada’s financial institutions had to be held accountable.

“Unable to ignore, or deny, the incredible suffering being visited upon my family, friends, and all of the rest of the peoples who make up indigenous nations within the boundaries of Canada,” wrote Steinhauer, “I began to look for something that I could actually do to affect

the situation.”

In the exchange of letters, Steinhauer layed out his case for withholding payment, and the CIBC responded to his demands. The following is an incomplete set of excerpts from the exchange.

The letters, along with Steinhauer’s original introduction, can be found on his website, [www.indigenius.biz](http://www.indigenius.biz).

John Hunkin, CEO CIBC  
Toronto, Ontario

Dear John,

I regret to inform you that today I am asking my local accounts manager to freeze activity on all my CIBC accounts. This seems to me to be an extreme action, given the fact that I owe your corporation \$150,000. It’s also extreme given my personal history; you can look up the record of my performance while a client of the corporation that you manage, a record spanning the period 1980-2003.

Like my father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, I have worked hard all my life, tried to make a meaningful contribution to society, done as little harm as possible, have no criminal record, and have tried, in my own small way, to build social bridges between Euro-Canadian society, and indigenous society.

However, like my father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, I have lived my whole life under the colonial rule of the nation of Canada, and, in 2003, am still dominated by Canada’s “Indian Act.” This is a piece of colonial legislation coined during a period of open genocide, intended to oversee the “extinguishment” of my people, a piece of legislation which the U.N. calls “atrocious”.

I live and work on reserve, and I see what goes on here every day, and in my opinion, the genocide continues. In the 1990’s, Canada officially apologized to indigenous peoples for having committed a long list of atrocities, and commissioned a 58 million dollar study, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). The leading recommendation from the study was the immediate repeal of the Indian Act, and the beginning of a new relationship between Canada, and indigenous Peoples.

In 1998, the U.N. released the findings of a 25 year study, “Treaties, Agreements, and Constructive Arrangements Between Indigenous Peoples and States”, affirming, for the first time, at the international level, that some minimum requirements of democratic process must be met in order for nations, for instance Canada, to be

able to legally claim title to lands and resources, and sovereignty over such territories. In other words, fully informed indigenous nations must freely give consent to such, before it can become legally binding. No such action has yet occurred.

...

Canada could be a great nation. Canada could be an international leader. The question is how can democracy take root on stolen land, where genocide has taken place, and where shattered nations of peoples are held prisoner, in torturous conditions.

...

I’ve studied Western Civilization, out of the sheer necessity to survive, and I’ve discovered that, indeed, there is a privileged group of propertied males who wield political power, and who have devised a malignantly clever system for “manufacturing consent” amongst populations in so-called “liberal democracies.” This elite group also specializes in manufacturing war, and requires war as a means to drive their economic structure.

Now we wind around to the relationship between what I’m doing today, at the local level, and the “big picture”. Watching the events on the global stage, I can’t help but notice the similarities between, say, the recent events in Iraq, and the events in what is now western Canada, 127 years ago. Starvation and war, forced subjugation of a peoples, stripping of resource, colonial rule, all under the guise of bringing civilization to a “lesser” people. Who benefits? I can see only one group of people who can possibly benefit, and then only in the short term. This group is the people you work for, John, a group whom I’ll call the investor class. I don’t

mean the mass of small or institutional investors, like the ones ripped off in the Enron scandal; I mean the 100 million dollar plus net worth investors, but really concentrating in the billionaire league. So I raise my concerns to you, using the only thing you are obligated to care about, money. By Canadian law, I owe your corporation about \$150,000.00. I’m formally refusing to repay that debt, and I draw your attention to the relationship between the Indian Act and Canadian banking. That debt is fully unsecured.

Doug Reynor, at CIBC risk management in

***“I regret to inform you that today I am asking my local accounts manager to freeze activity on all my CIBC accounts.”***

***By Canadian law, I owe your corporation about \$150,000.00. I’m formally refusing to repay that debt, and I draw your attention to the relationship between the Indian Act and Canadian banking. That debt is fully unsecured.***

*continued on next page »*

**“CIBC” continued from previous page »**

Toronto, pointed this out to my local accounts manager, Lorie Hartley, St. Paul, Alberta CIBC, in a tone and manner, which can only be described as humiliating, both for Ms. Hartley and for myself. To her credit, Lorie Hartley has chosen to see me as a human being, caught in an unjust situation, and has done exactly as all my previous account managers have done for the past 23 years; found ingenious ways to bend, not break, unjust regulations. I've legitimately

***If I was to assess what Canada has drawn, illegally, from my land, at the cost of much death and suffering to my people, this sum would be staggering. This wealth is accumulating in the hands of the investor class, the group you are obligated to serve.***

qualified for all the credit that CIBC has extended to me, and, over the years, have probably paid more in interest to your corporation than the principle amount I currently owe.

If I was to assess what CIBC has “earned” out of the Canadian economy, and assess my legitimate share, as one of 600,000 “registered Indians” who still legally hold title, I’m sure it would be much more than \$150,00.00. If I was to assess what Canada has drawn, illegally, from my land, at the cost of much death and suffering to my people, this sum would be staggering. This wealth is accumulating in the hands of the investor class, the group you are obligated to serve.

As the Noble-prize winning economist, Milton Friedman, says,

***Genocide is an unacceptable “market externality.” Wholesale destruction of the planet’s ecosystems is an unacceptable “market externality.”***

CEO’s have one obligation only, and that is to their shareholders. Shareholders, in turn, want one thing, only, and that is “profits”. The “invisible hand” of the market place is supposed to magically turn the grossest form of personal greed into a greater good for all humanity. Somehow, market economists like Milton Friedman forget to mention the accompanying “invisible boot” that holds us “grassroots peoples” down by our necks. It’s the heel of the conqueror.

I may be absolutely powerless in your world, the world of “real people,” but I still have my one little voice. I’m asking you, in the most humble way possible, to bring my message to your “large” shareholders. Genocide is an unacceptable “market externality.” Wholesale destruction of the planet’s ecosystems is an unacceptable “market externality.” If Margaret Thatcher’s famous TINA acronym about capitalism - There Is No Alternative - is true, then it’s not cause for rejoicing amongst wealthy elites, and their “hired

***I will be delighted to repay my debt to your corporation in full, when these structural issues briefly mentioned here are addressed in full, and to my complete satisfaction.***

guns;” they should be weeping with the rest of us because it spells suicide for the human species.

I, for one, do not for a moment believe that the current economic structure is the only possibility. We humans need to overcome our institutions of racism, gender oppression, class division,

and “human-centricism,” in order to survive on into the future. We already have everything we need to build “share” economies, true democracies, and other features of sustainable living systems. Everything is at hand, in abundance. We just need to shift our perspective. I invite you, John, to join myself, and many others, in reenvisioning a world which humans are part of, not dominant over.

I will be delighted to repay my debt to your corporation in full, when these structural issues briefly mentioned here are addressed in full, and to my complete satisfaction. Please help me stop the genocide of my people. I can no longer continue to live as a tactic collaborator in that genocide. Can you, and the shareholders you represent, continue to “profit” from our death and destruction?

In friendship,

Stewart Steinbauer

c.c.: Prime Minister Jean Chretien, Honourable Robert D. Nault, Future Prime Minister Paul Martin, David Dodge, Bank of Canada, Gordon M. Nixon, Royal Bank of Canada, W. Edmund Clark, Toronto Dominion Bank, Peter C. Godsoe, Scotia Bank, Tony Comper, Bank of Montreal, Globe and Mail, CBC, Amnesty International, Special Rapporteur For Indigenous Rights Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues, U.N.

*CIBC responded:*

**CIBC**

**Customer Care**  
5650 Yonge Street, 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M2M 4G3

Tel. 1 800 465-2255  
Fax. 1 877 861-7801 416 218-9440 (Toronto)  
email: customer.care@cibc.com

June 3, 2003

**PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL**

Stewart Steinbauer  
Stewart Steinbauer Stone Sculpture  
Onicikswapowinihk  
Saddle Lake Cree Nation  
FOA 310

Dear Mr. Steinbauer,

I refer to your letter to the Chairman and our telephone conversation of May 29 regarding your intention to 'freeze' activity on your CIBC accounts based on your belief system

Dear Mr. Steinbauer,

I refer to your letter to the Chairman and our telephone conversation of May 29 regarding your intention to 'freeze' activity on your CIBC accounts based on your belief system and values. Thank you taking the time to speak with me in this regard.

Mr. Steinbauer, although we empathize with the plight you have detailed, as you mentioned, you did apply for and qualify for the credit products for which you chose to use. Therefore, CIBC looks to you for repayment of those debts in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contracts you signed.

Your May 21, 2003 letter has placed CIBC on notice that you do not intend to honour your financial obligations to CIBC. Unless the June 2003 payments are made as agreed, demand will be issued. As you are aware, your actions will negatively impact your credit.

Yours truly,

Clarence Layne  
Senior Manager  
Director's Office, Customer Care  
1-877-861-7801 ext. 5942

c. John Hunkin, Chairman & CEO



“CIBC” continued from  
previous page »

*Steinhauer's second letter:*

Stewart Steinhauer Stone Sculpture  
Onicikskwapowinihk  
June 9 th, 2003

Clarence Layne  
Senior Manager  
Director's Office, Customer Care

Dear Clarence,

The empathy which your corporation has for my plight

***When I say Canada is in breach of Treaty 6, I mean genocide. Genocide is not a “slight” breach, and I think your major shareholders should be very concerned about that, too.***

ignores the fact that your corporation is a third party to an international agreement between Canada as the second party, and my nation, the Cree nation, as the first party. That agreement is known in Canada as Treaty 6, and both Canada and the U.N. have recently acknowledged that this international agreement is valid, and currently binding on all parties.

Any contract which I have signed with your corporation hinges on your corporation, and the country of Canada, abiding by the spirit and intent of Treaty 6. As the country of Canada (second party) is seriously in breach of its obligations under international treaty, all third parties are automatically so. Unfortunately for your corporation, and your shareholders, you do not have legal title to any of the Canadian-based assets which you claim to have title to. I should think this would be of real concern to your major shareholders.

Perhaps inside your “world” of “rational wealth maximizers,” you see my actions as an attempt to “maximize” my own profits; I realize that what I am motivated by is completely obscure to you, and I'm not trying to blame you, or anybody else, for this state of affairs. It is a truly unfortunate situation which has been allowed to arise. The question is: Who will have the courage to make the changes needed to “rationalize” human existence, here on our beautiful Mother Earth?

Although I am a Cree man, that doesn't make me “child-like in perpetuity.” At the time of Treaty 6 signing, my ancestors rec-

***Unfortunately for your corporation, and your shareholders, you do not have legal title to any of the Canadian-based assets which you claim to have title to. I should think this would be of real concern to your major shareholders.***

ognized the absolutely essential need for learning “the cunning of the white man.” We had 100 years of residential school.....imagine having your children forcibly removed from your home by the RCMP, placed in institutions where they were subjected to every possible form of abuse, where annual mortality rates ranged from 30% to 60 %, and, when they were returned to you at age 16, they were permanently traumatized, spoke a foreign language which you didn't understand, and they hated you, and everything about

your way of life. 100 years, Clarence. When I say Canada is in breach of Treaty 6, I mean genocide. Genocide is not a “slight” breach, and I think your major shareholders should be very concerned about that, too.

I'm going to stop beating around the bush now, and get to my point. You can jail me, you can kill me; if it was good enough for Big Bear, it's good enough for me. Canada is not a democracy. Canada is a plutocracy run by people like the major shareholders in your corporation. They also run the U.S., U.K., and all other so-called liberal democracies. I realize that you aren't allowed to agree with me, but I also realize that you know I'm telling the truth.

Yes, my concerns are political, and that's why I am trying to bring them to the attention of the real rulers of the world. Ask John Hunkin to tell his bosses that they are endangering their own future existence by their current actions. It's not too late. My people

***I realize that you aren't allowed to agree with me, but I also realize that you know I'm telling the truth.***

have survived 510 years of genocide, and we can't be killed off. In signing Treaty 6, my ancestors agreed to share the richness of our lands with your ancestors, the Europeans. In spite of all that your nation has done to us, we still agree to share. We await your decision to join us on the next evolutionary level.

In friendship,

Stewart Steinhauer

c.c. Paul Martin, future Prime Minister of Canada, David Dodge, Governor of Bank of Canada, Gordon M. Nixon, RBC, W. Edmund Clark, TD, Peter C. Godsoe, Scotia Bank, Tony Comper, BMO, Rudolpho Stavenhagan, Special Rapporteur to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the U.N.

*The CIBC responded:*

Dear Mr. Steinhauer,

I refer to your email to Clarence Layne August 21, 2003 regarding collection of your CIBC debt. I have been asked to respond in his absence.

CIBC has contacted the bailiff service and the collection agency that is acting on CIBC's behalf, to ensure that they are aware of Section 89 of the Federal Indian Act and to notify them that, in your case, your loan does not fall within the parameters of the act. Therefore, CIBC has requested that they close their file and CIBC's National Recovery Area will send your file to lawyers, to pursue legally.

Mr. Steinhauer, CIBC does not accept your offer to repay the principal of your debt only upon the establishment of a Cree Business Development Bank but will continue to pursue the debts owed to it, as allowed by law.

Thank you for making us aware of your concerns.

Yours truly,

Joanne MacLeod  
Senior Manager, Director's Office, Customer Care

*continued on next page »*

“CIBC” continued from previous page »

Then the bailiff called. I warned him over the phone that he had no legal right to enter my reserve. A week later he drove into my yard, accompanied by a tow truck. I wrote up this report immediately after he left:

**Report on attempted seizure of personal property, August 22, 2003**

At about 6:00 P.M., a small grey car approached my home, somewhat hesitantly, stopped, backed up, drove forward, and finally pulled up behind my pick-up truck. A man, who subsequently introduced himself as Dick White, from Serv-It Bailiff Services Inc., headquartered at 9844-106 St. Edmonton, AB T5K 1B8, was writing on a piece of paper as I approached him.

As we talked, he walked to my pickup, and placed the paper under the windshield wiper on the driver's side. I began our discussion by informing him that he was trespassing, and could be charged; he seemed nonchalant about my statement, and described what he was about to do. Then a tow truck pulled up along side my pickup, awaiting Dick's orders.

A long discussion followed during which I made my position as clear as possible. Finally, Dick White phoned his superior at head office, and after a lengthy conversation with him, asked me to talk to his boss. The phone man introduced himself as Martin and we engaged in a long discussion of my purposes for refusing to make current payments. I referenced genocide, and gave examples of what sort of conditions we face, here on reserve.

After my long phone conversation with Martin, Dick sent the tow truck driver away; I reiterated the illegality of his presence on my reserve several times. He chose to ignore my comments about trespassing, but eventually began to ask for help with formulating a response to give to CIBC. I asked him to write up a request to meet with

the regional director general of Indian Affairs, whomever the bank wanted to send, and my legal counsel. He refused to write that request down, but instead tried to get me to name a time of repayment. I stated several times that I intend to repay in full whatever I owe CIBC when I am satisfied with Canada's actions in relation to Indigenous peoples, specifically the immediate repeal of the Indian Act, and the honouring of Treaty Six, including back payments, royalties, up-dated annuities, and whatever may be necessary to reverse the genocide.

At about 7:00 P.M., Dick White left my residence, to return to the city. He seemed tired. He did at one point have a short private conversation with the tow truck driver, and I did feel that they were planning something for later.

...

I'm not sure what caused them to change their minds about repossessing the truck right there and then. In part, it must be because I look white, in part it must be that, even though they aren't sure of my position, they may be concerned, for themselves, that I'm right.

The whole event felt very confrontational, although Dick's manner was "professional" at all times.

End of report. A week later, I visited the local CIBC (St. Paul) on a separate matter, and, in conversation with the local bank manager, heard confirmation that the bank does indeed know all about how Canadian law relates to Indian reserve lands. Bluff. I'm not interested in stealing money from the CIBC, I'm interested in stopping Corporate Canada from making a killing off indigenous lands, and indigenous resources.

And that's my little story.

## The Secret To Survival

### Three years after the CIBC action

by Stewart Steinbauer

As the US built up towards their invasion of Iraq, an event eerily echoing life in the Rez Zone in occupied Alberta, I began restructuring my sculpture business to consolidate my property holdings exclusively on reserve. Paying down \$70,000.00 worth of debt, withdrawing from the professional galleries that represented my sculptural work, drawing out the last of my unsecured lines of credit in cash, I made my announcement to CIBC, through the local branch manager in St. Paul, Alberta.

I had the indigenus.biz website built with some of the \$153,000.00 that I called a temporary "time out" on repaying, part of my direct action. If you read the little story mentioned above, you will see that CIBC huffed and they puffed, but they couldn't blow my straw house down. In my opinion, the attempt at direct action was a failure, as two years of silence followed a threatened deadline for starting a legal action against me.

Although no CIBC officials have come to visit, I do get a lot of visitors to my house of straw, a timber-framed straw bale house, more accurately, including architects and engineers, interested in seeing what an untrained unassisted individual could do in a desperate situation. I don't own the studio/residence that I built, on my ancestral land; according to Canada's Indian Act, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II holds title to all reserve lands, and all personal effects of any individuals living on reserve lands.

What a fool I am! I built the Queen a house of straw, from drawing board to interior furnishings, with my own hands, a project that consumed all of my time and energy for 11 months. Simultaneously I managed my sculpture business, which in

that period was generating over \$250,000.00 at retail, per year. My share, after galleries, tool companies, stone suppliers, transportation networks, and infrastructure suppliers had taken their cut, came in somewhere around the \$65,000.00 mark.

At that point, I had been self-employed on reserve for 23 years, then exactly half of my life; like my father and grandfather, and great-grandfather and great-great grandfather, I had found a way to live my life in an unnoticed interstice between the Indian Agent cum Chief and Council's officialdom, and starvation.

Why would I suddenly rock such a tippy canoe? The forces of modernity were lined up solidly against me. By calling a temporary halt to the "business as usual" part of my life, I was responding to Big Bear's call, coming to me across the gap of time, carried mysteriously by my spiritual grandfathers.

In 1875, speaking in council, under the threat of mass starvation, Big Bear said:

"If we want to trap a fox, we scatter pieces of meat around the trap. When the fox is in the trap, we knock him on the head. I want none of the Queen's presents. Let her representatives come and talk to us like men."

Big Bear also talked about his fear of the "rope around the neck", a metaphorical statement describing what he saw as the coming domestication of "wild" people. First there was snaring, with the Queen's presents, and then there was haltering, with the reserve system. In the background there was the threat of hanging, for those "wild" ones who refused the halter. Canada's largest ever mass hanging occurred near North Battleford, where eight indigenous men were hung at the same time that Louis Riel was hung in Regina. One hundred years later, Big Bear's grandson, Bob

Smallboy, was still talking about “the rope around the neck”, leading a movement away from the reserves at Hobbema, back to the spiritual lands in the Kootenay Plains.

Bob Smallboy’s movement caused a revival amongst Indigenous Peoples, including my family. The Steinhauer family, currently over 1000 strong at Goodfish Lake/Saddle Lake, descends from an Ojibwe boy raised by Methodist Missionaries in southern Ontario, arbitrarily given a German surname to honour a German Pennsylvania industrialist who made a large donation to the Methodist Missionary movement. In 1871, Henry Bird Steinhauer, and his son Aurther, my great grandfather, signed the following petition, addressed to Canada’s Lieutenant-Governor Archibald:

“We as loyal subjects of our Great Mother the Queen whom your Excellency represents, wish that our privileges and claims of the land of our fathers be recognized by Commissioners whom your Excellency may hereafter appoint to treat with the different tribes of the Saskatchewan... our friends the plains Crees, who have not been taught as we have, think that their lands and hunting grounds shall be taken from them without remuneration. As loyal subjects of our Great Mother the Queen, we pray that all the privileges and advantages of such subjects may be granted to us as a People by your Excellency’s Government.”

A lot of water has flown under the bridges on the North Saskatchewan River, since that time; 135 years later, here’s a Steinhauer saying: “Recognize Indigenous title to property”.

Who should I be speaking to? CIBC officials say that my call for a temporary time out on orderly repayment has nothing to do with my stated reasons for doing so. Correct me if I’m right, but here’s how I see the inner workings of the power structure. Currently, whoever controls money controls power. Corporations exercise the great-

est amount of money power. Financial corporations are the most powerful corporations in Canada, all five of Canada’s chartered banks making it onto Canada’s list of the top ten largest corporations. Combined, they make the most powerful single “special interest” group in Canada.

By calling a temporary halt to my orderly debt repayment, I am pointing out, to the real power guys who orchestrate the polyarchy type pseudo-democracy currently mismanaging Canada, that CIBC and the other four chartered banks do not have uncontested title to the money that they lend out. I’m pointing out that the people, really many nations of Peoples (the group) who are contesting this claim to title, have been and continue to be controlled by Canadian State forces who are:

- (a) Killing members of the group.
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Those points, of course, make up the definition of genocide set out in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, and ratified by Canada in 1952. However, (b), (d) and (e) didn’t make it into the Canadian Criminal Code.

In May of 2003, I acted without full knowledge of what I was up against, an action I’ve subsequently referred to as an example of idiot-savant social activism. The time out from my business as usual life has given me the opportunity to research, communicate, dialogue, and think critically about my little matter of genocide. I see now,

that, for Turtle Island’s indigenous Peoples, assimilation into capitalism’s laws of motion causes genocide.

Here’s how it works. The basic capitalist laws of motion are: the imperatives of competition and profit-maximization, a compulsion to reinvest surpluses (profits), and a systematic and relentless need to improve labour productivity and develop the forces of productivity.

These capitalist laws of motion operate within a world view that sees the so-called natural world as a source of raw material to be transformed into commodities. Human beings are seen as the most essential of all commodities, the one that builds all other commodities. At one time this most essential of all commodities, the human beings, were bought and sold, a form called slavery. How-

***I am pointing out... that CIBC and the other four chartered banks do not have uncontested title to the money that they lend out.***

ever, it was discovered that in the industrial factory setting it was cheaper to rent these most essential human commodities by the hour, rather than to own them outright. This led to the current situation, where we see the factory as a model for reality, where the industrial factory combines capital, raw material and labour to produce “thing” commodities, and the social factory produces that most essential commodity of all, fresh new human beings.

Contrast this world view with a view that says that the universe is a spiritual place, with a creative guiding force, and that humans are just one of billions of types of spiritual beings, for instance also the spruce tree, the pipestone rock, the sweetgrass, the water flowing past in the river or falling as rain from the sky...all spiritual

beings, joined together by a guiding creative force running throughout the entire universe. Gifted with an opportunity to experience a human life, we walk upon our Great Mother, the earth, who nurses us at her Great Breast, flowing to us everything we need to survive in this world. Gathered wisdom from our Old People tells us that we will do well in this world if we pay heed to a few words of advice, a few words which inform our true identity.

Humble kindness, sharing, honesty, and determination... these are what we need to study, practice, and perfect in order to really live the life gifted to us. These simple guiding words define who we are, as the Peoples of Turtle Island. Our true identity is not based on narrow racist notions of skin, hair, or eye colour. Our true identity is not based on notions of language and culture, although these are essential parts of our identity. Our true identity is based on our way of life. Our way of life is based on our spiritual relationship with our Great Mother, the earth, and our fellow spiritual beings, literally all of creation.

This spiritual relationship is deeply felt; if it is interfered with in any way, it causes a spiritual sickness that manifests as despair, addictions, mortal illness and suicide. We cannot physically survive the destruction of our identity as expressed in our spiritual relationship with Mother Earth.

Looking about me, around the world, at my human sisters and brothers, I believe I see these same conditions applying everywhere. As the Old Man, Peter O’Chiese, who just passed away at 100-plus years old, liked to say: “There is not enough in this world to satisfy even one man’s greed, but there is enough to satisfy all of life’s needs”. The secret is to share.

**“Milosevic” continued from page 9 »**

allegedly genocidal fever pitch:

Serbia has never had only Serbs living in it. Today, more than in the past, members of other peoples and nationalities also live in it. This is not a disadvantage for Serbia. I am truly con-

vinced that it is its advantage. National composition of almost all countries in the world today, particularly developed ones, has also been changing in this direction. Citizens of different nationalities, religions, and races have been living

together more and more frequently and more and more successfully.

The entire speech, with translations by both the BBC and the US Commerce Department, is widely available. Perhaps there is other evidence available

that Milosevic was a rabid nationalist and supporter of ethnic cleansing. Journalists who quote the 1989 speech to support the case, however, are either being disingenuous, or have not read the speech for themselves.

**“Tomatoes,” from p. 6 »**

The context for this concern is the North American Free Trade Agreement. Gilmer explains, “Just after NAFTA was signed, the Mexican government devalued the peso. It made it incredibly attractive to buy [in Mexico] and it hammered the industry [in Florida].”

A 2001 USDA report stated

that labour costs in Mexico are markedly lower than in the United States. As of 2000, the daily wage rate of a farm worker in Mexico was \$3.60 US compared to \$66.32 US, earned by the farm worker in the United States.

In 2005, McDonald’s revenues reached a record high of over \$20 billion.

**“Deh Cho,” from page 3 »**

respond.

The head of Imperial’s Mackenzie Valley Gas Project recently told the NWT chiefs that the proposed pipeline was well on its way to becoming a reality.

Chief Kenya Norwegian of the Deh Cho isn’t so sure. The company, she said, has failed

to reach an agreement with the Deh Cho First Nation. “My concern is you are moving forward and not respecting us as the Dene people of the land,” Norwegian said, as reported by CBC North.

–Hillary Bain Lindsay

**“Shell” cont’d from p. 7 »**

industry and restore law and order—and the human rights of communities are regularly violated.”

Effectively confronting the impacts of oil multinationals in the region is almost impossible with a corrupt government that is benefiting from the oil wealth, says Brisbane. “The international community needs to pressure the government,” she says. “All we’re asking for is good governance. A government that

respects human rights and eradicates corruption.” That said, she continues, the international community has not often been a positive force in ending corruption and oppression in Nigeria. “The truth is the international community has a double standard when it comes to Nigeria. If you put pressure on Shell it will have to conform to international standards, which will decrease their profits. Is the international community ready to do this?”

In the meantime says Ogon, Shell is doing everything it can to project a facade of corporate responsibility. A recent posting on Shell Nigeria’s website says that the company “is concerned about the likely effects on the environment of the oil spills resulting from the recent attacks on its pipelines and manifolds... As soon as it is safe to do so, we will commence immediate assessment of the environmental impact of such attacks and take necessary steps to clean up

the affected areas.”

Ogon is confident that Shell’s glossy pamphlets and tokenistic “development” projects no longer fool the people of the Niger Delta. “The level of understanding and coordination in the communities gives me hope,” he says. “They are saying ‘We cannot let this go on.’ They’re not sitting down and allowing it to go on.”

**Vancouver Olympic budget woes only the beginning: critics**

The Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) for the Olympic Games in 2010 has recently announced that construction costs for Olympic venues have risen 23% to 508 million. On the same day, the city of Montreal announced that it has finally paid back its debt for the Olympic games that were held there 30 years ago.

Critics say that in addition to plunging cities into debt, the Olympic Games have a history of purging downtown areas of poor and homeless people, while pushing up housing costs. Rabble.ca reported that Salt Lake City, Los Angeles,

Atlanta, Seoul and Beijing have all evicted and removed people from low-income neighborhoods near the locations of their Olympic games. During Expo 86, Vancouver evicted hundreds, and reports suggest there will now be similar development pressures in the Downtown Eastside. A community based watchdog group, the Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC) has formed to monitor the developments.

Attempts at institutionalized monitoring of Olympic spending and development have been cut short. In 2003, the Vancouver Sun reported that five Liberals MLA’s voted against a motion that an “auditor of record” be appointed to keep track of costs for the 2010

winter games. One of the five MLA’s that voted against the bill, Ida Chong, argued that to pass such a motion would “set a precedent.”

Originally, Vancouver’s Olympic bid stated that a large part of the “athlete’s village” that is to be constructed for the games would be redirected afterward towards low-income housing. This plan has been reevaluated by the newly elected city council, which recently announced that most of the dwellings created for the village will be sold at market prices.

Vancouver’s Olympic plans also include the construction of a new rapid transit line to connect downtown Vancouver with the suburb of Richmond and the city’s airport. This project has

been credited as key to Vancouver’s successful Olympic bid. InTransitBC, a limited partnership between Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec and the multinational engineering firm SNC Lavalin, is in charge of construction and operation of the line for the next 35 years.

Social justice activists have attacked SNC Lavalin for supplying bullets to US forces in Iraq; undertaking oil, hydroelectric, and mining projects on Cree and Innu territories in Quebec; and the construction of nuclear reactors in China and South Korea.

Vancouver pledged \$600 million for their Olympic Games and is, so far, \$110 million over budget.

–Francesca Manning