

Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs'
Initial Response
Re: Canada's Civil Society Consultations
for the
World Conference Against Racial Discrimination,
Xenophobia and Related Intolerance 2001
September 8th, 2000

Introduction

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) is pleased to contribute towards Canada's Response to the World Conference Against Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance scheduled for South Africa in 2001. Given the short notice, we hope you will accept this prepared Response as our initial effort with hopes of further input and direct involvement on your Advisory Committee. We take note of the special Aboriginal Strategy currently being developed and look to direct involvement in this strategic process as well as the Civil Society consultations.

In this Submission, we will introduce specific contexts in which to view the "contemporary manifestations of racism" as outlined in the first of five Themes of the Conference. These contexts are framed by historical knowledge; experience and the perspective that formed the roots of belief systems in Canada founded on racial bias, ideas of racial supremacy and racial purity. This framework of racist ideology led directly to xenophobia and related intolerance.

We will not do justice to our people if we simply identify victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance as stated in the second of five Themes. We prefer to be more informative and outline specific aspects of the relationship of victim/victimizer and refer to techniques that affirm racist beliefs imposed and forced upon victims. We will connect these behaviors to current societal dysfunction; trauma and destructive acts victims impose upon themselves or each other.

We will outline specific "corrective" measures that Indigenous individuals and groups within Canada are undertaking to reclaim our cultural identity as Indigenous Nations and to assert our jurisdictions over our lands in reference to the third of five Themes of the Conference. Most of these measures are effectively being carried out separate from Canada's structures, programs and policies as a necessity. In reclaiming our cultural identity, we put forward our premise that by reclaiming our power as nations and asserting self-determination in our philosophy and beliefs, we eradicate racial discrimination, intolerance, racism and xenophobia. In various and concerted attempts to eradicate our culture, and therefore our identity, powerlessness opened the door for racial discrimination to legitimize many forms of abuse that diminished us as human beings. With regard to measures that Canada is or may be undertaking, we leave these to Canada to outline.

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs will focus the fourth of five Themes on International concepts in examining what effective remedies are or should be. Combined with this discourse, we will link these developments to regional work being implemented. In outlining key concepts of redress, recourse and remedies, it is important to show what is effective and what is not through accepted principles of decolonization, reparations, prevention of ethnic cleansing, reconciliation and instruments available to the international community since the formation of the United Nations after World War II.

Throughout our 30 years of consistent hard work at the International level in United Nations forums, Non-Governmental Agencies, co-operation with other Indigenous Peoples and, first-hand experiences of racial discrimination, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs will define "equality" based on our needs and recommend strategies that would be effective. In these forums, we've had ample opportunity to come to grips with the harsh reality of international lobbies, of establishing International organizations and encountering the struggles of other "peoples" for self-determination.

From reviewing the Web site of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, it is clear that many Nations in the world experience extremely destructive acts of human degradation due to racial intolerance. Ethnic cleansing, rigid positions that inevitably end up in the death of 'innocents', tyrannical rule of new 'colonizers', all forms of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual abuse are evident. Furthermore, many Nation-States now face the onslaught of Indigenous Nations' whose demands for full recognition of 'sovereignty' and 'jurisdictions' are becoming more forceful. While United Nations' documents, reports and covenants demonstrate in-depth analysis, and heavy commitments of time, energy and resources to documentation, nation-states' internal rage and chaos block sincere efforts for peaceful co-existence in many places despite genuine concern and sacrifice by UN representatives.

Canada is poised on such a line drawn by 633 Indian Bands in Canada called 'First Nations' who suffer from Canada's colonization and identify with 'colonized peoples' in Nation-states throughout the world. While Indian Bands are living in 'chaos', leaders and resource people at the community level desperately look for long-term and healthy solutions. In the meantime, individuals and families continue to suffer terrible abuses, remain in poverty, endure neglect and often turn to homicide/suicide as alternatives. The endless exploitation of our resources, lands and people for extraction of wealth is astounding. From oil & gas development that threatens to devastate the porcupine caribou herds of the Gwich'in, who have been one with each other since creation, to the total annihilation of the Beothuk in Newfoundland. This Indigenous story of genocide is critical to a 'Canadian' understanding of the local, regional, and national outrage of aboriginal peoples in Canada today.

Finally, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs qualifies this presentation with a proviso that discussions, dialogue and participation in Civil Society Consultations on racism must not be used by the Government of Canada to dilute the full inherent right of our Nations to self-determination. We express our desire to decolonize, to enjoy the sacred trust of civilizations and to achieve recognition of our jurisdiction to lands, resources, civil and political rights as identified in international forums for the past 508 years.

We honor our forefathers who walked this path before us for the health of our children yet to come.

Theme I: Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance:

In the spring of 1995, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples experienced an internal crisis when its aboriginal and non-aboriginal staff united to stop publication of the Suicide Report drafted at that time. The staff threatened to walk off the job en masse and hold a press conference if the Commissioners did not rethink the premise upon which this draft Report based their explanation for the high rate of suicide among aboriginal people. While the Commissioners place the onus of suicide on social conditions and despair, the aboriginal staff believes suicide is a symptom of centuries of practice of 'cultural genocide'.

It is not surprising that many top experts in this country are ignorant of the extent of genocidal practices in relationships between Imperial Governments and "Indian" Nations. In the unhealthy relationship between victim/abuser, the abuser remains in denial of the abuse inflicted on the victim when confronted. Because the shame and guilt suffered by the abuser is so devastating, making the abuser aware of his/her behavior is often painful for those disclosing the abuse or bringing it to light. Indeed, scholars who study genocide refer to a 'collective' denial in the dominant society.

In nation-state democratic societies, the term 'racism' is normally used in the context of a domestic issue that affects 'minorities'. At the international level, "peoples" were identified and targeted by Imperial Crowns of Europe for 'civilization' during a 500-year colonization period. In the Americas, the French/English Crowns were equally determined to 'civilize' the natives of the Americas as they were planning to do on other continents.

Consequently, "peoples" on the African, Asian, Australian and American continents share an unholy devastation of minds, bodies, spirits and emotions that awaken a terrible sense of deja vu in witnessing the destruction of "peoples" in Bosnia, Serbia, Herzegovina, Sudan and other geographic areas around the globe. For this to end, we, as Indigenous Peoples of North America, must speak out clearly, loudly and unequivocally to end the insanity.

In the end, the Commissioners listened to the aboriginal staff and a compromise was reached. When you read "Choosing Life", the Royal Commission's Report on Suicide, you will read that suicide is a symptom rooted in the practice of cultural genocide.

In the 508 year history of 'civilization'/colonization, Canada inherited a terrible legacy of genocidal practices from the English/French Crowns who legitimized these practices by colonial acts & policies of Parliament to extinguish and terminate our rights as "peoples".

▪ **Racial Purity as a Justification for "Civilization of the Non-Christian Peoples"**

Western Democratic institutions and nation-states look to Greek Philosophers for origins of thought related to "people" rule 500 years before Christ. Thales, Socrates and Plato are quoted extensively but Aristotle is often thought of as the brilliant one. In thinking so, it bears mentioning that in recognizing Aristotle's brilliance, we also recognize:

"The doctrines of natural inferiority and of female inferiority, justified, or helped to justify, slavery and the inequality of the sexes until our own time. His great authority also helped to defend tyranny, in the name of 'benevolent' despotism and his doctrine of ethnic inferiority helped to justify racism."¹

There are very few people in North American society who admits to being racist. Yet strangely enough, those who adhere to doctrines of "White Supremacy" rally forth publicly and loudly to express their "right" of domination of people of color. We are sometimes exposed to their overt expressions of hatred because we exist. On the evening news, we see them wearing white robes and pointed hats burning crosses by the banks of the Fraser River in the dark of night. Or, we see bald, young men with no hats, their arms tattooed with swastikas standing in front of a large portrait of Adolf Hitler or a Nazi flag wearing a replica of an SS uniform, right arm stiff in salute in some basement gathering.

Psychologically and emotionally, it is clear as can be "white supremacists" feel the powers on their side of the ledger that allow them to freely behave in this overt manner. Sometimes behaviors are not so overt as espousing Nazism but the bravery to openly defy "Indian" rights under Canadian Law is cause for concern when we exercise our 'inherent' rights. The 'Oka', 'Gustafsen Lake' and 'Burnt Church' Crises attracted bullies who believe its okay to retaliate violently when an Indian Nation's people assert their right to be self-governing, self-determining and to live decent lives.

A Legacy is more than a simple account of an event in history, in memory, in time. The term "legacy" is used to inform us of "something handed down by a predecessor" as defined in "The Concise Oxford Dictionary". Individuals in our society who become instruments of white supremacist ideology are inheritors of a deadly legacy.

This perspective of history is very well documented by international scholars who have studied 'racial' and 'supremacist' ideologies and written extensively. They study the origins and trace the events of history to impart a chilling story.

George M. Fredrickson is a William Smith Mason Professor of American History at Northwestern University and author of "White Supremacy - A Comparative Study in American and South African History". To put the concept of 'white supremacy' in context for this paper, the following quote proves adequate. After describing the landings of small ships in May of 1607 to begin tracing this ideology, he says:

"The basis for our first comparison, therefore, is the common fact of a long and often violent struggle for territorial supremacy between white invaders and indigenous peoples. Starting from the small coastal settlements of the seventeenth century, the whites penetrated into the interior of North America and southern Africa; by the end of the nineteenth century they had successfully expropriated most of the land for their own by extinguishing the communal title of premodern native societies and transforming the soil into private property within a capitalistic economy. The indigenes were left with collective ownership of only a small fraction of their former domain in the form of special reserves. Divesting the original inhabitants of their land was essential to the material success of those settler societies. In the American case, it made available the land and resources for the economic development of what was to become the world's richest nation."²²

"To help provide the frame for an analysis, it may be useful to distinguish between five kinds of white perspectives on the 'native frontier'. First in time but least in long-range historical importance was the point of view of those Europeans whose primary interest was trade. Whether the trade was in furs and skins, as in English North America, or in cattle and ivory, as in South Africa, it was clear that the traders *per se* had no incentive for dispossessing or enslaving their indigenous partners. The expansion of white farming communities and the destruction of native economies and societies was in fact directly contrary to their economic interests. In the end, however, the traders not only lacked the power to stop the extension of settlement but unwittingly contributed to it by inducing the indigenes to exhaust the animal resources on which the commercial relationship depended.

A second and much more significant perspective was that of the frontier farmers themselves who invariably wanted access to land still occupied by indigenous peoples and hoped for the rapid extinction of native title by any means necessary. A third point of view was that of the responsible political authorities, whether they represented a chartered company, direct imperial rule, a self-governing colony, or an independent republic. As we shall see, governments could vary greatly in their responsiveness to frontier opinion, depending to a great extent on how democratic or representative they were. But all of them had some stake in regulating contacts

between settlers and indigenes in order to prevent unnecessary wars that could represent a substantial and even disastrous drain on the public purse. Hence, they sometimes found themselves at odds with the frontiersmen on the issue of whether, when, and how further expansion should take place. Fourthly, there were the special concerns of missionaries and the religious and philanthropic groups that supported their work. The paramount interest of missionaries was of course the conversion and 'civilization' of the indigenes. This objective could lead them to favour a protective insulation of indigenous societies from the usual kind of frontier pressures and incursions so that their 'civilizing' efforts could be carried on without the demoralization they characteristically associated with encroachment by unscrupulous traders or land-hungry settlers. When a certain state of economic development was reached in areas already settled, the possibility arose of a fifth perspective, that of large-scale entrepreneurs with an interest in land speculation and the control of natural resources for capitalistic accumulation.

An awareness of the interaction and relative strength of these perspectives - representing the diverse and sometimes divergent aims of development - can help provide an understanding of the comparative dynamics of white expansion in North America and South Africa; provided, of course, that one also recognizes that the character and strength of the indigenous peoples was an autonomous force to which ambitions of all white elements or interests had to adjust themselves"³

Does the boldness of white supremacists come from a secret knowledge they will not be denounced by society, or, does it come from a past based on justification of thievery and destruction of Indian lands, communities, resources, and citizens with the ideology of a 'pure race'? A past where laws, policies and actions were enacted to diminish Indian peoples' cultures in the name of 'civilization'. Indian agents behaved freely and openly in their evaluation of Indian generosity and how it could be used to implement these policies freely. Their Reports and Letters to Ottawa over decades outline their attitudes of domination, greed, power, and disregard for basic democratic principles and human dignity in raping our minds, bodies and souls. Honorable A.C. Hamilton, Fact Finder, for the Minister of Indian Affairs, wrote in his 1995 Report entitled "A New Partnership:

"Instead of enjoying the freedom of the past, no Indian could leave a reserve without a written pass from the Indian Agent. Indian people could be arrested if they did not have a pass and could not even leave the reserve to fish or hunt without permission. Religious ceremonies and celebrations were forbidden, Indians were prohibited from wearing traditional costumes and peoples were stopped from visiting extended family members on another reserve.

The Indian Agent was the enforcer and judge of alleged misconduct and the one who called the Band Council meetings and set the agenda for the Chief and Council. The method of selecting traditional Chiefs was replaced by a requirement for regular elections."⁴

▪ **Diseased Blankets**

Frank Chalk is associate professor of history and Kurt Jonassohn is professor of sociology at Concordia University, where they direct the Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies. In their book entitled: "The History and Sociology of Genocide - Analyses and Case Studies", they take the framework of George M. Fredrickson a step further in documenting the diseases from Europe that devastated Indigenous populations throughout the Americas:

"The native peoples of the New World were devastated by their contacts with Europeans, and the charge of genocide is frequently leveled at the colonial powers. The scale of the Indians' population decline is still being debated by scholars, but whether the losses suffered by the aboriginal population amounted to 50%, 95% or some figure in between, the catastrophic demographic impact of the European exploration and settlement of the New World on the Indian peoples is an undeniable fact.

The part played by genocide in the destruction and crippling of so many societies spread over a vast area and colonized by settlers of many different nationalities and social systems is complex and still poorly understood. The opinion of many experts is that genocide was one of five major factors that undermined Indian civilizations; the others were disease, warfare, geographical removals and relocations, and the destruction of traditional Indian ways of life (Thornton 1987, 42-53). Of these major factors, epidemic disease undoubtedly accounted for the greater number of Indian deaths. Its massive toll began with Columbus' first landing in the Caribbean and rolled on inexorably into the nineteenth century, ending - in the case of North America - only after American settlers had reached the Pacific Ocean and another round of epidemics had devastated the Indians of the West Coast."⁵

On December 11th, 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada came down with its Decision regarding "Delgamuukw" (A Case brought before the Canadian courts by the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Nations regarding their Title and Jurisdiction). One point of law the Judges ruled on was that "oral histories now must be respected by the courts". The oral evidence of our Elders tells stories of massive graveyards where thousands of our people were buried from epidemics of smallpox, typhus, and influenza. Some can walk you through a graveyard and point out when different epidemics occurred. They make mention of trading pelts for blankets which would have blood on them. In their return home, people became hot and feverish, and died.

"Some American Indian peoples were even brought to extinction or the brink of extinction by warfare and genocide, or, perhaps it is more accurate to say, by genocide in the name of war."⁶

▪ **"Heathens" and "Savages"**

For Aboriginal people in Canada, the term "savage" is a familiar term. The lie began with school texts and teachers openly telling us our ancestors were savages. It continued with priests who characterized our belief systems in the same light. This is a basic characteristic of the residential school systems that no matter where you go in this country some aboriginal person will relate this piece of information - "we were called savages".

The emotional and psychological scars this idea leaves upon the minds of children and youth about our parents, our grandparents and ancestors of long ago devastated us. The idea that we would have to wake up in the morning to this knowledge is repulsive and promoted hatred, shame, rage and low self-worth.

The Department of Geography at the University of Victoria put out Volume 31 in 1995 as part of their Canadian Western Geographical Series. Edited by Peter H. Stephenson, Susan J. Elliot, Leslie T. Foster and Jill Harris, Volume 31 entitled "A Persistent Spirit: Towards Understanding Aboriginal Health in British Columbia", Chapter 5 covers issues regarding "Resistance Knowledges: Therapy with Aboriginal Persons Who Have Experienced Violence" by Allan Wade, Family Therapist in Independent Practice. In the section called "Colonization and Psychotherapy", we quote from pages 190 and 191:

"This relationship has a long history, as is evident, for example, in remarks made by a 17th century French writer who described "the aboriginal" as

'a statue of flesh and blood, an artificial man who could only be moved by the use of force. He was without heart for his natural responsibilities, had no eye for the beauties of nature, did not even have names for paintings and sculptures.'

On the basis of statements such as this, Europeans provided themselves with a warrant first for the undertaking of conquest, (including direct annihilation, displacement, and ethnocide), and subsequently for establishing themselves in a whole series of 'positional superiority'.

Two hundred years later, this portrayal remained essentially intact. For instance, the reverend William Duncan, whose 'successes' as a missionary are today publicized in the Royal British Columbia Museum and in an historical display aboard the Queen of the North (the B.C. Government ferry that runs between Prince Rupert and the Queen Charlotte Islands) had this to say about the Aboriginal persons he encountered on the north coast of British Columbia:

'The dark mantle of degrading superstition enveloped them all, and their savage spirits, swayed by pride, jealousy and revenge, were ever hurrying them to deeds of blood. Thus their history was little else than a chapter of crime and misery.'

The Reverend Good, a man who admired the Reverend Duncan, decided to establish a residential school in the Lytton area, later to be known as St. George's. He determined that the Lytton Indians must end 'all their manifold hypocrisy, uncleanness, and idleness, and many other sins and evil practices'. St. George's school was to instill 'habits of instant obedience.' Some 35 years later, George Ditchum, then principal of St. George's school, commented in his annual report:

There has been no serious trouble with the morality of the school and the conduct has been excellent when one considers the natural deformities of these Indians.

Thus, in addition to providing a warrant for conquest, the 'natural deformities of these Indians' made it possible for Europeans to portray their own actions as beneficial, originating in the best of intentions. Acts of violence and domination could then be portrayed as progressive, educational, necessary, and beneficial - that is, as 'civilizing'. In effect, a political relationship was disguised as a helping and caring one."ⁱ7

From the time of Pope Paul III in 1537 to the rise of the Anti-Indian Movement of right-wing extremists in this millennium, the terms 'heathen' and 'pagan' were acceptable expressions to describe the Indians of the Americas. Whether sanctioned in a Papal Bull, debated at Valladolid, Spain or validated by right-wing extremist groups receiving corporate funding, the Indian savage was discussed as to whether "he was human", whether "he had a soul" and, if so, "was he the possessor of the land?" Undoubtedly, the role of the church, education and politics (as will be described later) were as handmaidens to Boards of Trade for the taking of lands, our resources and wealth.

This lust and greed for greater and greater power and wealth underlies the justification for dehumanizing the Indian people of the Americas. If the Popes in Rome could sanction such denigration of Indian identity, what was the poor white citizen to do? This form of dehumanization opened doors for others to believe it was and is okay to denigrate, exclude, deny and insult our way of life, our intelligence, our historical truths and our self-worth. It is through denigration, this idea of a 'civilized' superior race is implied as our culture is diminished and ridiculed with the expectation that we would behave as 'savages'.

In the name of 'Jesus Christ', young men and women were raped and brutalized by priests, nuns, deacons and teachers at residential schools. We did not know that "savage" Rome, as a city, was conceived in utter chaos with a "Hundred Years War" which brought about the necessity for rule of law and order. George M. Fredrickson, in his book "White Supremacy", says:

"The official and orthodox view seemed, on the surface at least, to be clear and unequivocal: the Christianization and civilization of native peoples, however 'wild' and savage they might be was not only deemed possible but was enjoined on colonizers as a positive duty. In Letters Patent establishing the Virginia companies of London and Plymouth in 1606, the King endorsed a plan of colonization 'which may, by the Providence of Almighty god, hereafter tend to the Glory of His divine Majesty, in propagating of Christian Religion to such people, as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God, and may in time bring the Infidels and Savages living in these parts to human civility and to a settled and quiet Government.'"⁷

In the book "The History and Sociology of Genocide", Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn outline preconditions to genocide, on page 28, which says:

"Thus, in order to perform a genocide the perpetrator has always had to first organize a campaign that redefined the victim group as worthless, outside the web of mutual obligations, a threat to the people, immoral sinners, and/or subhuman."

Further on, they review the three definitions of Genocide put forward by Raphael Lemkin who coined the term 'genocide' after World War II. Of the three definitions, the aboriginal people of Canada would relate very quickly to the second definition:

"A second type of genocide, one that had emerged in the modern era, was characterized by the destruction of a culture without an attempt to physically destroy its bearers."⁸

The message of this paper is: *This method is the practice of genocide in Canada and brought about 'extinguishment' policies, laws, programs and intentions to leave the body standing but destroy the 'Indian' soul through cultural destruction. Indian people in Canada call this process 'assimilation'. The outcome is the same regardless of the term we use.*

Diminishing our self-worth and identity are emotional attacks that set the stage for individuals and families to become self-destructive or, destructive toward one another in hatred of self and hatred of being 'Indian'.

The July 2000 issue of the native newspaper "Windspeaker", has a front-page article about a discussion held at Montreal's Jewish General Hospital sponsored by McGill University's Institute of Community and Family Psychiatry. This was an attempt to deal with mental health issues in indigenous communities. We quote:

"Practitioners are realizing they're going to have to confront the painful realities of colonial history before they can begin to effectively treat Indigenous people and communities".⁹

Professor Ernest Hunter is a psychiatrist and professor of public health (mental health) in the Department of Social and Preventative Medicine at the University of Queensland in Australia. He delivered a paper, which has a telling quote:

"In this paper I return to the original project - to consider medical professionals as perpetrators and bystanders to victims of the trauma of the holocaust and colonization. I argue this history is critical to understanding the social and political context of professional work with these traumatized populations, and that to not do so may lead to complicity in rationalizing and trivializing the harm done".¹¹

In a Paper called "Canada's Dirty Little Secret - A Race-based Policy to Extinguish Aboriginal Nations with Finality", the author, Eagle Shield, says on page 3:

"Unvarnished racist sentiments as a justification for extinguishing the collective rights and powers of Aboriginal Nations were once openly declared as a 'White Supremacist' mandate".¹²

▪ **Forced Removals & Relocations**

To quote Eagle Shield on page 7 of his Paper called "Canada's Dirty Little Secret - A Race-based Policy to Extinguish Aboriginal Nations with Finality":

"Canada's colonial legacy offers numerous examples of the kind of racist violence against Aboriginal Nations that was applied in other colonized countries. For example, the same Francis Bond Head who was quoted previously took time off in 1837 to write a funeral oration for a disappearing Aboriginal people. Having just succeeded in dispossessing the Nations around the Great Lakes of millions of acres of land, Head wrote to summarize the progress of White civilization up to that date. He reported:

'We have now succeeded in exterminating their race from vast regions of the land; the race barely lingers in existence - it should continue to wither, droop and vanish before us like grass in the progress of a forest of flames.'

A racist attitude that dismissed Aboriginal Nations as a vanishing race in a just White cause was openly declared by Canada's officialdom till the 1960's. Duncan Campbell Scott, a Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs in the 1920's described Aboriginal peoples as "a weird and waning race." In 1947, Canada's Prime Minister, MacKenzie King spoke in the House of Commons favouring what amounted to a White Canada policy. Dozens of forced relocations of established reserves to accommodate the demands of White farmers, the resource extraction industry and Canada's other 'national building' priorities took a heavy toll in Aboriginal lives. Uprooted and demoralized Aboriginal communities frequently were decimated by suicides and early death, directly attributable to the trauma of deportation to distant and unhealthy regions."¹³

To date, there are at least 100 documented cases of forced relocations in Canada with some 40 of them in British Columbia. These relocations were mandatory due to the need for railroads to unite the country and hydro dams needed for electricity. These forced relocations ended up in a system of 'reservations' which continue to be the home of 'bands' of Indians to this day. There are some 1600 reserves in B.C. held by 198 Indian Bands. These reserves were meant to be 'concentration camps' for Indians who were perceived to be roaming too freely. In the debate of liberal democracy in European nation-states in the 1850's, Indian "freedom" and the colonizers' need to manage and control the "Indians" formed part of the debate. Of the total acreage of land in Canada, Indian reserves comprise some 6.5 million acres that, if taken altogether, is about 1/2 the size of Nova Scotia.

Our confinement to reserves has created an exact mirror of 'refugee' camps in Palestine and other parts of the world. Overcrowding, limited resources and 'indirect control' from on high has resulted in terrible social conditions that routinely get cited by the Human Rights Commissioner for Canada in his Annual Reports. Unhealthy social conditions are one of the manifestations of "Racism". Hiding these facts from the world is another.

▪ **Residential Schools**

According to the Indian Act, Ministers of Indian Affairs have a choice in who will educate Indian children in Canada. One of the choices in addition to School Boards, Provincial Governments and charitable organizations, are State-recognized Religions. According to Federal Justice Department discussion papers, "the Province of Canada published a report in 1847 based on the ideas of Egerton Ryerson, the Chief Superintendent of Common Schools at the time. This report formed the basis of Canadian policy on native education. The recommendations in his report laid out a complete theory and methodology for the achievement of assimilation".

The federal government commissioned a study in 1879 by Nicholas F. Davin to study the American system of Indian residential schools. His report described the schools as "the principal feature of the policy known as 'aggressive civilization'. He seemed to approve of the belief that "Indian children were best prepared for assimilation into the dominant society if they were removed from the influences of home, family and community." Davin recommended that the 'churches should operate the schools to the extent possible because of their established commitment to the 'civilization' of the Indians. Justice Canada's interest in the issue of 'residential schools' was to advise the Government of Canada that liability exists in the abuses that took place and measures were outlined and recommended for the Government to limit its financial liability and legal obligations.

Contemporary policy makers saw education as the major instrument of assimilation, the principal mechanism by which the values of white, Christian society would be transferred. Public Schools were illegal for 'Indian' children to attend. To go, one would have to 'enfranchise'. That is, give up 'Indian Status' for legal recognition as a 'Canadian citizen'. In the annals of Canadian history, 'residential schools' were the most destructive force that set the basis for chaos and dysfunction to follow. From brutality, denial of basic needs & rights, unbelievable punishments, every imaginable form of abuse, constant diminishment of self-worth, no affection or healthy form of recognition, the children who emerged were in the same emotional shape as 'holocaust' survivors of WWII death camps in Europe.

Pulled from our homes, and transported either by cattle truck or cattle train, hundreds and hundreds of Indian children were taken to these distant schools. Parents were threatened with a fine or jail term if they resisted. Children, from ages 5 - 18, were institutionalized in this way - completely alienated from our culture and loving family support, abandoned, lonely and helpless to fight the domineering adults.

People emerged from the schools in enormous pain and went home to strangers known as their mother and father, grandmother and grandfather. Some never recovered. Many turned to alcohol, drugs, sexual promiscuity, crime, gambling and life on the streets.

Children of 'residential school survivors' suffered much worse abuse and neglect at home due to the rage the survivors carried. Our rage is multigenerational and many of our people continue to live in dysfunction due to their pain and memories.

The United Nations adopted the Genocide Convention on December 9, 1948, and, Article II outlines the following:

Article II

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (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.*

Article II (e) should be of serious concern to Canada.

▪ **Contemporary manifestations:**

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs is providing sketchy outlines at this time due to the short notice we received. We have sufficient data to substantiate our arguments of legal, government-sanctioned extinguishment of our cultures. With more time, we could have prepared a substantial Document for your perusal.

We begin this segment with 2 fundamental questions to Canada:

1. Are cultures and belief systems of the aboriginal people of Canada worth preserving?
2. Are we, as Nations of Indigenous peoples, worth preserving?

These questions are the backdrop to every Indian who walks into an office, down a street, into a store or restaurant, looks for a job or looks to rent a place to stay. If it is acceptable, in Canadian society, to put us down, diminish us, and citizens believe the freedom is there to violate us, then we all have some hard thinking to do. The point is this: Canada has, from its beginnings, pursued a policy of 'extinguishment' of our culture, rights, title and governments. Each successive government looked for ways and means to achieve this end but the 'Indian Problem' continues to plague each administration.

If, in fact, our cultures, our world-view and belief systems are important to the World's peoples, then Canada must reverse its policies, procedures, laws and programs that continue to tear our roots of identity and destroy our humanity. If it continues on this dreadful path, then both cultures can forget about going to South Africa.

Attempts at reconciliation won't work if only the Government responds to calls for reason, discussion and debate about critical issues of life and self-determination. Two cultures means two peoples will have to work out the problems and issues and design solutions and part of combating racism is for us to help the government strengthen its listening skills. Governments and Canadian citizens will find it very difficult to hear these allegations and stories but truth is the beginning of our healing and the backdrop for reconciliation.

If these policies are to persist, there is only one conclusion we can arrive at: *Canada wants to pursue this racist ideology against us and extinguish our cultural identity and our nations.* As time goes by, history is teaching us that survivors become stronger yet the cruel march of Nazism and racism continues in some of Canada's younger generations. We note that neo-colonialism is a major product of colonization and Canada, so far, has shown absolutely no qualms in using new colonizers to continue to subdue us intellectually, spiritually, politically, legally, economically and socially. The psychological/emotional warfare continues unabated. Every Indian home is a battleground and every community, called a reserve, is a war zone. Our battle is for the hearts and souls of our people.

Manifestations of Colonial practices & genocide that we witness and experience today are:

▪ **Sterilization**

In mid-October 1980, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs' Social Development Team hosted a Health Conference at the Georgia Hotel in Vancouver. Over 850 community people came to participate. Within a half-hour of opening one workshop for people to bring forward their health concerns, the young women in the workshop mentioned thirty separate incidences of sterilization of young Indian women. They raised incidences of other women in their communities who disclosed similar information. They described their visits to doctors and hospitals throughout the province where they were told they had to have an operation for one physical problem but found much later that they were sterilized. Upon further investigation by our staff and leaders, older women came forward in private with stories of doctors' visits where they were advised to get their tubes tied, have hysterectomies and other techniques that cause sterility. Granted there are medical problems that merit drastic operations but how informed are medical practitioners of the consequences to Indian populations already decimated by disease and attrition.

Article II (d) of the United Nations Genocide Convention should be of concern to Canada.

▪ **Urbanization (civilization) i.e. ghettoization**

For young Indian people growing up in a modernized society, metropolitan cities are the place to be if they have access to televisions on-reserve or live in isolated regions of Canada. Most young people in smaller towns look to the cities as their way out of poverty and dream of a life of wealth, power and privilege as seen in movies and on television.

In "A Persistent Spirit: Towards Understanding Aboriginal Health in British Columbia" edited by Peter H. Stephenson, Susan J. Elliott, Leslie T. Foster and Jill Harris, we quote Jill Harris from the Chapter she edits "Rebuilding-Listen With The Ears Of Your Eyes", on page 359:

"I was devastated when I first went to public school after being with my own people in an Indian school for six years. Until this time my fantasy of being like a white person was based entirely on movies, magazines, books, and distant observations. I was so thrilled at finally having the chance to be with the 'white people'. I just knew that I would meet my Prince Charming who would take me away from my terrible life I had on the reserve-of course he would be blond and have blue eyes."

Indian people who live on reserve lands, in Canada, maintain their closeness to the land, closeness to their traditional pursuits of hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering food, and practice of cultural ways. In a society with intense concentration on 'instant gratification', the cultural and spiritual ways of Indian Nations offer a different form of satisfaction. The pride of being a 'whole' human being, connected to the universe in an 'individual' way, connected to our ancestors and to those yet unborn, content with nature being in control is misunderstood by many in mainstream society. We are often seen as unwilling to change, advance and progress. If we ask someone, "where do you want us to advance to?" they can't answer. We know they mean technologically. The emotional needs of the young and not-so-young between these two existing ways of life begin to conflict very early in life.

In fact, this conflict is not rooted in a modern, technological way of life versus an indigenous traditional way of life. The basis of the conflict is actually rooted in the needs of the colonizers (i.e. oppressor) vs the needs of the colonized (i.e. oppressed). In situations where the "oppressor" presents a proposition/solution to the "oppressed" to help, mistrust and resistance form the response. If the oppressor is being "nice", liberal and sensitive to the underprivileged, this "nice" oppressor is confused when liberal programs are rejected by the "oppressed".

In the guise of being classified as an "ethnic" minority in a nation-state, we are put on the rosters of nation-state 'goodness'. We are classed in policies and programs as so-called disadvantaged, underprivileged minorities i.e. women, physically/mentally handicapped, unemployed, illiterate, homeless, aboriginal and immigrants.

Historically, the Government of Canada considered Indian people under the law as "aliens" in the same manner that "immigrants" were considered "aliens" under Immigration laws respecting immigration to Canada. Consequently, some older Indian people, still living in urban areas, consider themselves "immigrants" because they have emigrated from their homeland to live in one of Canada's cities. As such, they take on Canada's societal standards in the city they reside in far from their roots.

In the same way that Canada opens its doors for people from other lands to seek political asylum, refuge and safety here, so Indian people are forced to leave their homelands and move to the cities for similar reasons. Laws restricting Indigenous rights to hunt, fish, trap, and gather force our people, in their homelands, to break Canadian law, be called criminals and exhaust their limited resources fighting in court for the simple need to feed their families. Housing lists on reserve are a joke. Many families grow old waiting for a house and they end up in nearby towns or cities living in low-income housing. Meanwhile, their children grow up in foreign environments, alienated from their cultural roots.

Following a nationwide rejection by Indian Chiefs of the "White Paper Policy" of 1969 due to its proposal for statutory termination of Indian rights in Canada, Prime Minister Trudeau proposed a process of consultation with Indian tribes and non-status Indians. The policy developed in 1970 provided Core financial support for political organizations, cultural education centers and, in urban areas, friendship centers.

While the intent of these policies were 'consultative' in nature to work out joint policies and programs, the effect was damaging to Indian identity in attracting young Indian people away from their homelands to urban centers. These policies/programs were to help Indian people adjust to city life and integrate into mainstream society where our institutions would eventually disappear as we adopted mainstream societal values.

Once more, Indian children were raised far from their cultural roots, alienated from their people, their knowledge base and their historical truths.

In 1993, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples commissioned a nationwide study on Cultural Identity that was carried out by Indian people from coast-to-coast and north-to-south. In focus groups, the youth talked about identifying with MacDonald's, movies and city streets, but they did not know their own culture or identity.

Of thousands of pages of evidence presented to the Commissioners by Indian people nationwide, the youth talked about losing their identity and the elders talked about language/culture being the key to their health. The effect of losing one's sense of identity is manifested in rejection of one's self as meaningless, of life as rootless, of betraying those who stayed back home and of betraying one's self.

The emotional and psychological pain of rejection of self underlies the addictive behaviors of alcohol/drug addiction, gambling, sexual abuse or promiscuity, all forms of abuses, crime, suicide and homicide. These behaviors relieve the emotional pain momentarily but the thrill that relieves the pain in the short term must be constantly sought after and becomes addictive for this reason in the long-term. Many Indian people who ended up in the urban centers in the 1970's lived in as much chaos as did people living on-reserves. This is so because 'cultural genocide' is the root cause of the pain. In reclaiming our culture, the pain of rejection disappears. The Maori film "Once Were Warriors" is an accurate depiction of the reality of urban life for many Indian people and families in Canada during this policy period of the 1970's.

About the time Indian people in urban centers added their voices to the Indian struggle for recognition, many families stabilized. Individuals began to seek help for their addictions and to heal from their pain of victimization. That is the process we are engaged in now throughout Canada. The careful path we must tread is to ensure the victims of genocide control the healing programs. Canada cannot propose solutions since it is the Government of Canada through its policies and laws that caused the traumas.

▪ **Adoptions and Foster-Care**

In our collective rage and outrage, we are often accused of hatred and racism in our anger towards the dominant society's control of our lives. But the onslaught is never-ending. Even in the 1960's, when residential school survivors collectively worked to shut all of these schools down completely, the Department of Indian Affairs continued to remove children from their homes in a policy known as the "Sixties Scoop".

In Geoffrey York's book "The Dispossessed - Life and Death in Native Canada", Mr. York says on page 206 of Chapter 8: From Manitoba to Massachusetts: The Lost Generation:

"From the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, an estimated three thousand native children from Manitoba were removed from their homes and adopted by families outside the province. In most cases, the adoptive parents were white and urban. There was a strong demand from these families, so it was easy for the child welfare authorities to place the children in white homes. The Indian and Metis children were submerged in another culture, and their native identity soon disappeared. They became a lost generation.

By the early 1980s, about 40 to 60 percent of all children removed from their natural families in western Canada were Indian or Metis.For the country as a whole, aboriginal children were being taken from their families almost five times more frequently than non-native children. By 1980, about 15,000 native children were under the control of child welfare agencies across Canada, and three-quarters of all adopted Indian children were placed in non-native homes."

On page 207 "Indian and Metis communities had virtually no control over the children who were seized from their homes. Until 1976, there was not a single native-controlled child welfare agency in Manitoba. Decisions about the future of native children were made by white social workers and urban-based bureaucrats."

And finally, on page 213/214: In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Manitoba's native leaders became increasingly angered by the province's child welfare policies. They protested the permanent loss of their children-the disappearance of a generation whose cultural identity had been wiped out. They called it 'cultural genocide'.

On March 6, 1982, under severe pressure from the media and native leaders, the Manitoba government agreed to impose a moratorium on the export of native children outside the province. A provincial inquiry, headed by family court judge Edwin Kimelman, was appointed to study the fate of Indian and Metis children in the child welfare system.

Child welfare officials had always scoffed at the Indian leaders who said the native children were victims of 'cultural genocide'. But to their amazement, Judge Kimelman agreed with the Indian leaders. After reviewing the file of every single native child who had been adopted by an out-of-province family in 1981- a total of ninety-three children-Kimelman said he could state unequivocally that 'cultural genocide has been taking place in a systematic, routine manner.'

Kimelman also agreed with native leaders who said the provincial child welfare policy was remarkably similar to the old policy of sending native children to residential schools. Indeed, the seizure of Indian children began to escalate just as the residential schools were winding down in the 1960s.

In October 1980, a young Chief of the Spallmacheen, Wayne Christian, led an Indian Child Caravan of 175 vehicles with people from Indian Bands throughout British Columbia to demonstrate at the home of Minister of Social Services, Grace McCarthy. The issue he publicized was the Child Welfare policy in B.C. with respect to adoptions and foster-care regarding Indian children. His personal story highlighted the Caravan and Minister McCarthy was persuaded to involve Indian people in British Columbia in the Child Welfare system. At that time, 3000 Indian people came to Vancouver to attend an emergency UBCIC meeting called by Grand Chief George Manuel. Among those who came were children brought to the meeting. These children rose to speak and shared their stories with 188 Chiefs of the UBCIC. Since that time, UBCIC has worked on this issue with its member bands to reclaim our children.

A major resource to the UBCIC is an Indian woman who travels to Indian bands and works with people suffering from trauma. She travels year-round, and is loved and respected by people everywhere she goes. In her travels, people share their deepest pain. She is finding that children who have been fostered out and adopted out have equally horrifying stories of severe sexual abuse as children who were in the residential schools. The only difference is the church hired adults working in the residential schools whereas the state welfare authorities chose foster and adoptive parents with no input from the parents or community leadership.

For these children, they cannot sleep in the dark and while their electrical bills are already high and their annual income is about \$4800.00 per year, they have to sleep with their lights on all night. Many of them cannot walk down dark hallways, some lock themselves in basements, almost all of them have their spirits leaving their bodies because the body is not safe to be in, and they have difficulty being in a room full of people as their memories get triggered very easily. They have raging outbursts, some have memory blanks and are often homicidal and suicidal. In her experience over five years of constant travel to communities, 99.9% of the hundreds of people she has worked with have disclosed sexual abuse and live with brutality of the worst kind. It is not unlike the pictures coming out of Bosnia and Serbia today.

These survivors demonstrate the same manifestations as the survivors of residential schools throughout Canada. This is NOT the kind of equality we are looking for.

Like residential school survivors, these 'survivors' have a need to tell their stories, and to be validated. Should all of our people have the opportunity to tell their stories, there is absolutely no doubt, this country would conclude that 'genocide' is occurring.

We have yet to produce a champion of our cause who will establish a centre to help our people document these atrocities. We don't have a Steven Spielberg as yet to help fund a Foundation for such a purpose but there is no question our people need a safe place to speak, to be heard, to be believed and to be helped.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is funded on the pain of Residential School survivors, yet few are actually involved in its decisions.

▪ **Neo-Colonialism**

In the past 5 years, Indian agents, who are invited to band meetings, have said they are not required to go to meetings on-reserve anymore. They are now protected from abuses heaped on them by raging members in meetings on-reserve. In reality, their job is done. In many instances, our own people are doing the Indian agents' jobs for them. We have become so good at carrying out policies and procedures ingrained into us by government, the agents no longer need to come to a reserve to ensure policies are being adhered to. It is a fact of colonization that colonial governments encouraged domination behavior in people with specific emotional/psychological needs. Annual Reports of Indian Agents in the field that were passed on to Ottawa illustrate their thinking. Indian Agents routinely recommended to the Minister that they take the brightest children from the communities to train them in civilization so these children could be sent back home to persuade their parents to give up resisting. True to this belief, on returning home, many individuals behaved like the colonizers in ruling our communities.

All of the procedures, policies and guidelines of Indian Affairs promote 'elitism' and 'exclusion' at the reserve level. This places power in the hands of individuals to deny their people benefits, rights and the freedom to disagree with the reigning regime. Some communities have gone for years without proper meetings of the people. Often, the government has simply thrown large amounts of money at social problems and all this has done is attracted corruption in its finest form.

New colonizers are seen as traitors, sell-outs and 'white' on the inside, because they put down Indian people who continue to practice their cultural ways. This is so, because many are used to manage and control of their people, of promoting the policies and programs of government, and, being a 'show piece' when the government needs to show other countries how liberal it is. Other times, specific individuals will openly collaborate with the government in designing and implementing strategies to bring Indian people into the mainstream of Canadian society. For those who want to assimilate the Canadian way of life and integrate into its society, every policy, law and resource is there for integration to happen. For those who don't want to integrate, the struggle to survive is daily.

For people who want to integrate into mainstream society, it must be a free choice and those who want to live in it should not be used to coerce others into a life not freely chosen.

Following are other manifestations not expanded upon at this time:

1. **Individuals:**
 - a. **Our communities are divided because of over 25 definitions of 'Indian';**
 - b. **Chronic unemployment;**
 - c. **Resistance to authority;**
 - d. **Alienation, abandonment, betrayal, jealousy and mistrust;**
 - e. **High stress levels;**
 - f. **Need for revenge and retaliation;**
 - g. **Heightened sense of threat to identity;**
 - h. **Results in 'ethnic cleansing';**
 - i. **Drop-out of school, home, work and social activity;**
 - j. **Internal chaos in the communities and homes;**
 - o. **Mistrust of Governments and agencies;**
 - p. **Inability to communicate;**
 - q. **Sense of loss, grief and emptiness;**

2. **Community:**
 - a. **Internal power struggles;**
 - b. **"Random Chaos"**
 - c. **Reactionary - limited or no community planning;**
 - d. **Family in-fighting or Families fighting;**
 - e. **Enormous stress on leadership and employees**
 - f. **Mistrust of the dominant society;**
 - g. **No clear structure of authority and accountability;**
 - h. **Corruption;**
 - i. **Cultural and Ethnic Betrayal;**
 - j. **Conflict over cultural practices;**
 - k. **Misuse of spiritual and cultural practices;**

Perhaps the most important work Canada could do at the present time is to examine all of its actions from the perspective of 'genocide'. In doing so, Canadians will find there won't be anymore confusion as to why Indians don't want to 'advance'. There won't be any reason to rationalize destroying our culture and forcing us into a mainstream lifestyle. We could actually exercise our inherent right to self-government and self-determination.

▪ **Discussion of Manifestations of racism AND addressing the Victims & Victimizer:**

To put these point forms into context, there has to be consequences to any belief system and practice. In the process of genocide, there are patterns of survival that emerge and knowing these open the door for certain strategies that can be designed.

We know, for example, that:

- **Oppressed peoples survive with incredible will, and skill.**
- **Each generation becomes stronger and more skilled the longer oppression goes on.**
- **There is a limit to abuse, at which point, there is prolonged reaction and resistance.**
- **Children take their cues from how adults cope with pain. With the whole family in emotional and psychological pain, children observe adults coping and do the same.**
- **The oppressor can't ever win;**

In saying this, the danger of continued oppression is that victims are suicidal, homicidal, sexually active, or, sexually aggressive at younger and younger ages. We also know the longer the pain has to be endured, the less value will be placed on a life. At the point that any form of life has no more value, terrible tragedies will occur. If Canada decides to do nothing to acknowledge it's complicity in the genocide of Indian peoples as defined by the UN Genocide Convention of 1948, we will see children attempting suicide and homicide. As each generation endures, the role models are younger and younger until we see the very young act out 'violent' behaviors.

Those who survive a holocaust have incredible strength. While the dominant society looks at a violent community as "bad", we know that particular community is one of the strongest in the country because of its capacity to survive the violence. Oppression affects even babies. The messages they receive in the crib remain for life. Should they survive, they develop an incredible capacity to unmask their oppressors.

People who are strongly rooted in their cultural identity pave the way for everyone. People who are experiencing Canada's oppressive tactics are finding their strength in their culture and this is as it should be because that is what is under attack.

The conclusion of the Cultural Identity project was a consensus by every single focus group that our culture is not lost, diminished nor destroyed. We have a 'medicine path', as they called it, that revives our culture.

To quote once more from George M. Fredrickson's book "White Supremacy - A Comparative Study in American & South African History"

"The long perspective of three hundred years of rising white supremacy can of course lead to resignation or pessimism, and those hoping for an easy or quick resolution of the racial problems of South Africa will find little comfort in the pages that follow. But the historical record is above all a record of change and human adaptability to new circumstances, and if things can change for the worse-as has been the principal experience of nonwhites in South Africa-they can also change for the better, as shown by the recent successes of the Afro-American struggle for basic civil rights. Because of the fundamental differences in the two situations, it is doubtful that the Afro-American example provides a direct model for black liberation from apartheid; but it strongly suggests, at the very least, that human beings who struggle valiantly and persistently for freedom and equality cannot forever be denied."¹⁴

The United Nations should note that European Crowns who set the world on such a disastrous path took 508 years to assert its dominance. In world opinion, the Nuremberg Trials following World War II were carried out to try Nazi War criminals for crimes against humanity in the killing of six million Jews. These trials became a forum for people of conscience to express their condemnation of horrible medical experiments, killing Jews en masse with poison gas, using gas chambers and ovens to eliminate their bodies, and performed mind experiments upon defenseless individuals.

Similarly, people of conscience took up the banner of black people in South Africa in their fight against Apartheid. Nation-states condemned the nationalist government of South Africa and put economic sanctions in place. We witness the struggle of the Irish against British rule in Northern Ireland because of the overt violence occurring regularly. We watched young Irish men in prison die of hunger to attract worldwide attention.

But what of the Indigenous people of Canada? Who carries out trials to condemn war criminals for crimes against humanity. Did not millions of Indian people die of starvation, diseased blankets and internalized violence? Is it 10 million, 25 million, 50 million? Was not the apartheid system in South Africa based on Canada's Indian Act system? And, did not the British use techniques on the Indians in the Americas that succeeded with the Irish 800 years ago? It will not take 500 years to decolonize. Domination cannot kill the soul.

In our expression of 'righteous anger' against the injustices committed against us, the best form of medicine is to correct these wrongs.

Whether we win or lose,

- **When our people, young and old, defend our rights to land, resources, cultural practices and family, we win.**
- **When our people go into Canada's courts to defend our inherent rights and put Canada's laws on trial, we win.**
- **When our children tell our history in the classroom and get a failing grade, we win.**
- **When our grandmothers continue to tell our stories and teach our languages, we win.**
- **When Indigenous peoples from around the world come to our homelands and share in our culture, we win.**
- **When our young men go fishing, hunting and trapping, we win.**
- **When a community defends its territory against aggressive economic interests, we win.**
- **When our leaders and community people are thrown in jail for defending our lands and our rights, we win.**

We are a people who cannot be denied.

Finally, let the people of our Nations teach you the value of our rituals for these allow us a truly healthy means of being one with our spirit; our rituals allow us to feel every emotion we are given and sets us free to be human. Let our people teach you the value of life itself in the form of stories, traditions, songs and oral understandings. Let us not concern ourselves with times past but in that which breaks the veil of time to serve our purpose of survival today and which will continue to serve our generations in the future.

Let us acknowledge all of creation now!

Theme II: Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia & related intolerance**▪ The Victim/Victimizer Relationship:**

As discussed in the Introduction, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs believes it would be more helpful and informative to outline the relationship of victim and victimizer in the context of racial discrimination. The primary effect of racism on a human being is diminishment of that individual's self-worth and identity. It bears examining what our identity is all about so we can know exactly what is being attacked.

North American Society as a whole and Canadian Society more specifically gives very little attention to concepts of 'identity'. And when one child picks up a gun to kill another child, questions are asked about what did the parents do wrong but no one asks about Society's tolerance of behaviors which diminish an individual's self-worth. North American society extols the value of 'individualism' and is even more accepting if the individual adopts an aggressive, competitive and domineering attitude. The cultural messages for all of us are to consume what will make us thin, rich, and powerful with endless material wealth.

Christian concepts that diminish an individual's self-worth and identity are those of sin, good and evil, and, good and bad. Ideas of 'good' and 'evil', or, 'good' and 'bad' have conditioned society in a way people think nothing of saying to a child "you're a bad boy" or 'you're a bad girl'. These messages have powerful psychological effects on a child's mind that they can carry for the rest of their lives.

Concepts of justice condition us to accept the law as 'good' and the implications are that we will be accepted when we obey the law. We punish people and label them as 'criminals'. Try as they might, they find respectability a very steep climb to attempt.

Democracy has processes which exclude the 'minority' no matter how worthwhile their ideas are or how productive they are as citizens. Just voting for the 'wrong guy' will leave a person out of the loop. It takes an incredible amount of energy to be included again.

The English language is highly effective as a tool of racism. There are English words that have killed like no other language in the world can. Children in school talk about words that hurt and destroy their self-esteem and self-worth.

School is a battleground of insults that have literally driven young people to kill. Even in the classroom, intelligence is used as a psychological and emotional weapon to put-down so-called less intelligent students.

The Economy sets up the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. People who are considered "have nots", expend enormous energy striving for big financial payoffs, security of home and family. When we accept our role as consumers, we are accepted as long as we view our job as one of being a consumer. The bigger the house, the bigger the car, the more acceptable we are.

Work diminishes people who are unemployed. The ones who pay 'taxes' use this as a club to never let them forget where their unemployment cheques are coming from.

Welfare is an absolute state-controlled system of control and denial. Everything in this system makes the welfare recipients feel small and unworthy.

What are all these observations communicating to us for our entire lives. Television and films are sources of information to us of the acceptable ways of dressing, behaving and living well. Pain sells big time on television these days through talk shows. Revenge sells big time at the movie box office when the big tough guys' on screen get even.

The point is, our identity and self-worth are at risk of being trampled on every day and a lot of it appears to be legitimate because there is no recourse, no remedy, and no corrective measures evident. We eventually build tolerance toward violations of our identity.

In all of these scenarios, there is a 'victim' and 'victimizer'. In all of these scenarios, where does racial discrimination become okay as part of the dialogue?

As Indigenous people, our value as human beings is paramount. Our rituals, beliefs, ceremonies and languages exist to enhance each one of us in our individuality and purpose on earth. We are not made for racial slurs, insults and condemnation.

Working with young people in the schools is often an emotionally painful experience. Just witnessing the names they call each other is painful enough, but for the ones who cannot fight back, these attacks are more vicious. Upon leaving school, the slurs don't stop in the work place, sports arenas, stores, restaurants, or encountering the police.

Victims are people who grieve, mourn and feel their loss deeply. Victims are individuals or a whole Nation who have experienced a violation of self. There are a number of ways this happens and we know when we are being violated because we feel the pain immediately. If we don't articulate our pain that doesn't mean it hurts any less. All victims are about pain and anger. Our anger can turn to rage, outrage, revenge and hatred, which come from: exclusion, abandonment, abuses, betrayal, rejection, alienation and denial of basic needs. The rage is associated with helplessness, powerlessness and fear. Being a victim is very serious as the outrage can manifest itself in suicide, homicide, and total abandonment of self from self-hatred. It is important not to ignore a victim.

Victimizers are abusers or abusive. Victimizers feel pain as well. They are individuals and can also be a whole Nation exercising naked aggression. Victimizers feel shame, guilt, meanness, and hatred of self. The shame puts victimizers in denial of the abuse.

Who are the victims of racial discrimination?

The Canadian Human Rights Commission keeps reporting annually that 'aboriginal' people are. Aboriginal people say they are and we can outline in detail the forms and types of discrimination visited upon our peoples.

The Indian Act discriminates against women and female children. It discriminates against people who refuse to live confined to a reserve. It discriminates against those who live on reserves as well. Further, it set up generations of on and off-reserve, and, status/non-status Indians to fight one another. The recent Corbiere Decision from the Supreme Court has neatly set up on- and off-reserve to be at each other's throats for years. The courts have determined the Indian Act discriminated against an off-reserve member of an Indian Band because he has a right to participate in the affairs of the Band. The document outlining the full implications of how the Judgement discriminates is in the hands of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and can be made available at a later time.

While it is easy for many Canadians to pass judgement on our behaviors, what judgement will they make on whole populations of 'victims' of genocide? Residential school created victims of whole communities. Grandparents had no grandchildren to teach and love. Parents had no one at home to bring joy into the home as children normally do. Children were far away from home, family, friends, and, as we are quickly finding out, the children of survivors who came out of the schools were victims as well.

People who endure enormous pain learn to disconnect their bodies from their minds. In this way, they can't feel when they are being forced to take a beating or to eat rotten foods. Most survivors of the residential schools are in this state. Lots of anger but no tears. Before all of the acknowledgement of residential school trauma, survivors would try to relate their stories to an unsuspecting public and would be told "I went to a private school that wasn't much different and I'm doing okay", or, "I've been through the war so what are you whining about?"

The fact of the matter is children were being punished for speaking their own language and not English. In Canada, there is no law against speaking one's own language nor is there any commandment in the Bible that says 'thou shalt not speak thy language'. It was and still is hard for a child to understand what the problem was. Being punished for talking about a little animal in your language was a difficult connection to make especially if a priest was pushing a pin through your tongue.

The classrooms were in the school as well so everyone had to go to church services every single morning before going to the classroom. In the classrooms, teachers would force a child to stand strictly at attention with a book balanced on his/her head. He would then take a long wooden ruler and hit the student across the face and continued to hit if the book moved at all. Sometimes two or three teachers would come together to punish a student and experiment with techniques to cause the most pain. When children sit in these classes at ages 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 years old, what teacher image would they have?

Then we worked in the kitchen or laundry until mealtime. No meal was safe and we had to eat everything on the plate - no matter how disgusting. We learned to force our food down without tasting to avoid punishment. Our meals cost .33 cents a day which amounted to .11 cents a meal. We were told to be grateful by the cook, bottle washer and supervisors.

Some children died in these schools. Others lived with the incredible pain of broken bones or severe cramps. We experienced the public showers, shaving of the heads and DDT put all over us to kill the lice, which we didn't have.

Meanwhile our parents were back home with NO children in the village. There was no one to take through a rite-of-passage or to teach on the land. There was very little laughter and lots of quiet. Some children never, ever went back home.

▪ **Ethnic Cleansing:**

The greatest consequence in our time of cultural genocide and victimization is the practice of 'ethnic cleansing'. Colonization and genocide are about destroying a person's identity. When a person's self-worth is low, certain behaviors result. These behaviors have their own consequences which are:

1. Acquiescence in surrendering your will to any other individual because they are all better than we are;
2. A desire to please others and anything is a go just to get the 'rush' of recognition or of acceptance by another human being;
3. Need to control surroundings and other people who might be threatening self-worth in its low state;
4. Attempt to take on the personality of someone who is accepted, or, fads that are popular in order to get recognized;
5. Self-hatred and rage against one-self for not being acceptable;
6. Resentment and jealousy at others who can accept themselves;

In the context of Cultural Identity, aboriginal people are caught in situations involving betrayal of self because of the dominant society's norms. Betrayal is a huge issue especially for our leaders. Indian identity becomes the measuring stick of whether your in or out. In our need to be culturally relevant for acceptance by our own people, there are pockets of people who become xenophobic because of the threat of a dominant society to our identity as Indian people. Foreigners can be made scapegoats if we don't know what is happening in terms of identity issues. People are measured as Indians by whether one can speak their language, carry out rituals (like so many hail Marys) except with sweetgrass and sage. We must hold the feather a certain way and everything is done in a Circle. We are so seriously threatened at being annihilated that everything we do and who we are are constant issues. If someone wears a suit and tie, he's a traitor.

The fact that someone, somewhere, has a 'perfect' image of who and what an Indian should be and how we ought to behave informs us that 'ethnic cleansing' is on our doorstep. We may not be as extreme as Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia or the blacks in South Africa in overtly killing someone we believe has betrayed our cause but all the features are here. When spiritual ceremonies become measuring sticks of identity rather than rituals of thought and reflection to strengthen us, we reach a danger point within ourselves. When an individual sets him or herself up as the perfect "Indian", and "culturally pure", the next step is to condition "followers" in this image.

When a Bosnian individual was interviewed on a TV news show one night regarding the violent nature of killings that took place in his village, he responded that one of the individuals killed was accused of betraying the Moslems' beliefs over 45 years ago during the war. While resentment ran deep at his betrayal, nothing happened as long as Yugoslavia remained a Nation-State and held the violence in check. Once the lid of the Nation-State came off and Tito was executed, the rage of the colonized could no longer be contained and chaos ensued. In the midst of their rage and sudden freedom, he was killed.

The heightened fear of people in Indian communities today is for self-government to be realized in a colonial framework. Even now, horror stories are coming out of some communities about individual getting political positions and using their position to wreak revenge unabated. We witnessed the same explosion of outrage in Africa when the Imperial governments withdrew under Decolonization in the 1960's and '70's. While still under apartheid, black people were ritually killed by having gasoline-filled tires put around their necks then set on fire.

Even now, Fisheries Canada will agree to a First Nation taking over management of a fishery resource knowing full well, the internal chaos will prohibit success. Unfortunately, the chaos opens the door for Fisheries to come back later and say to the public, see the Indians can't look after the resource so we have to take it back.

Indian Agents are not required to come on to reserves anymore and why should they? Now there are Indian people who have become the 'new' colonizers. Now our people will oppress us and Canada gets to say, "you do it too" without accepting any responsibility for the suffering and pain of our people.

All these behaviors relate right back to our identity and self-worth. Moving out of the stage of victimization into a full, confident and culturally intact human being is the next step and this takes us to the next theme

The outrage we feel comes from Canada's violation of our most basic self - our identity. In the process of trying to destroy our culture, Canada and its policies and institutions have sown seeds of destruction in the form of ethnic cleansing and revenge.

Theme III: Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international levels.

All cultures react to cultural genocide in similar ways therefore it's a simple leap to the understanding that we must share our experiences with one another as well as our goals for the future. It stands to reason colonized, oppressed peoples are not going to disappear and we must focus our efforts on continuing to help one another as we have been doing for the past 30 years. We are not helpless. We are survivors who have come through incredible violence by sheer force of determination and will.

The "Colonizer"/"Oppressor" cannot solve the rage borne of oppression. It is an inherent contradiction to seek solutions from the source of our entire trauma and chaos. The response by Canada to Residential School Survivors seeking justice is a good illustration on point. Some people were offered positions to work with consultants in establishing the basis on which an Aboriginal Healing Foundation would be set up for the survivors. Those positions were rejected on the basis that the very Agency that is the source of all this terrible legacy of tragedy and waste would now be the one making decisions on the healing aspects of the survivors. This is worse than putting the wolf in with the chickens. It is insanity to be a part of such a shameful display of protectionism and self-interest. No thought is given to the Survivors, let alone the next generation who have paid a high price just for being born. Only an oppressed person can rise out of the depths of pain and despair for none of us know where others have been.

We liberate ourselves and this is the first principle of decolonizing. We cannot decide for others when our basic position of life-sustaining beliefs is that of self-determination.

While Canada is seeking input for this World Conference, it should not forget that we cannot talk about prevention and protection unless we have defined the measure of comfort within a democratic nation-state. When it is acceptable for Canada to continue with its colonial attitude, it cannot pretend to know what prevention measures are effective.

Victims of racist acts should be able to tell their story. It is important in the prevention of further violations. All these victims' stories should be compiled and information should be extracted from the stories that assist in prevention measures.

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- **The first measure of prevention is the individual victim - whether at 6 months old or 96 yrs. Old. Each person must be treated with respect and trust and only the victim can say what is safe and what is important in the exercise of prevention;**
 - **The diminishment of self-worth and identity is the second measure of prevention. Each individual must know in themselves what diminishes and weakens him/herself. Also, a person may find offence in behaviors that are seemingly innocent but are not;**
 - **The third measure of prevention is inherent in the powerfulness of the individual rather than the dependency on an agency or law. Not to diminish the usefulness of these mechanisms but 'victims' are usually 'victims' because these agencies are not available when an offender offends.**
 - **"Righteous anger" has its place in the scheme of things as 'victims' especially are put in positions of powerlessness. Utilizing 'righteous anger' to draw a line across abuse at any level is fundamentally important for self-esteem;**
 - **Compassion for the offender is also fundamental. We are all human beings and from time to time we need one another. Compassion allows an offender to bring his/her walls down safely and to often seek help;**

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs spearheaded development of the Institute of Indigenous Governments. Students who attend the courses are provided a wide range of information related to colonization and decolonization. The faculty is multi-racial but all are schooled in the international principles of self-determination.

Similarly, the Centre for World Indigenous Studies continues to carry out important work throughout the world between indigenous nations and nation-states. Their Right-Wing Study on Extreme Right-Wing Movements on the Tribal Frontier created such an awareness in the Northwest that these groups were not able to propagate their message.

Continued relations must develop with the Canadian Jewish Congress in forming alliances on information and studies which help us to understand the extent of racism at different levels of society regionally, nationally and internationally. Other work should take place with professionals who worked with victims of the death camps in recovering.

Further education with the Irish and South Africans that can culminate in Speaking Tours should continue to be a goal as well as increased "oral history" presentations;

Assign Observers to South Africa in their Land re-distribution process, which will help us to understand the issues between the former colonizer and former colonized;

Work more on the principle of Decolonization rather than focussing simply on racism. If we can eradicate colonialism here, a large percentage of racist dogma would be gone;

Identify all the extinguishment and termination policies, laws and processes in Canada at all levels of Government and design a process of reconciliation based on the findings, ways of eradicating and phasing these out and replacing these with true bilateral processes.

Enhance the concept of mediation.

Continue to reach out to other Holocaust survivors and explore alternative lifestyles that enhance, validate and strengthen self-worth. Continue to study techniques, which help trauma victims.

Even as we reclaim our power, we must be ready for the time when our children come forward to tell their stories of victimization. The enormous amount of sexual abuse is outrageous and must be acknowledged.

Lastly and most importantly is that we continue our work in Indian communities where our people at every age level are working on their rage, reclaiming their power and their self-worth. In the process, they become self-sufficient and self-determining.

At the heart of our aspirations is the desire for revitalization of our spiritual and cultural well being. Our freedom to exercise our relationship to our Great Island in peace is not a threat to the Canadian identity nor should it displace anyone.

Theme IV: Provision of effective remedies, recourse, redress and other measures, at the national, regional and international levels;

In October 1975, Indigenous peoples from all over the world met in Port Alberni under the political leadership of George Manuel. From his efforts, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples formed. Mr. Manuel argued at the time that we must extend our vision beyond Canada's borders to embrace other Indigenous peoples experiencing devastating colonial practices as well. He explained to the young people on staff that by involving ourselves in other people's culture and joining with them we would learn and experience the world.

His passion and compassion were moving and persuasive. While many of us simply came to the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs for the privilege of working for him, we could not grasp his dynamic and powerful vision of Indigenous Nations leading the way in promoting peaceful coexistence among nations. He believed strongly in the work of Indian Nations at the International level to assist in brokering peace in 'hot spots' throughout the world. He worked on the premise that Indigenous Nations survived in 47 different Nation-States throughout the world and were in a unique position to broker peaceful relations.

He made it a practice of taking one or several of his staff members on his trips so we could broaden our experiences throughout the world. He sent members on trips as well to places on the verge of overthrow such as Nicaragua and El Salvador. He traveled to Chile with the underground at its most dangerous times and succeeded in meeting with people in their homes and churches to bring hope and aid. He worked closely with the Miskito Indians in Nicaragua, the Mayans in Guatemala, the Sami in Scandinavia. He traveled to Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico to provide publicity and security for leaders whose lives were in danger from chaotic and despotic regimes.

To our minds, at the UBCIC, he wasn't just spewing passionate rhetoric from his office chair. He was role modeling for us what leadership takes, what vision takes and the opportunities to form strong relationships with other nations and other cultures. We loved him dearly and his armchair entreaties to us continue to motivate our actions a decade after his passing. From his efforts, member Chiefs of the UBCIC have traveled to countries throughout the world in the spirit of peace. Our Chiefs have been to Africa, the Middle East, countries throughout Europe, South America, Central America and in all our travels we promote our rich cultural diversity.

In November 1980, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs organized 1000 of its people to travel to Ottawa by train and plane to protest the patriation of the Constitution. All 188 of its member Chiefs were there along with 7 top-notch teams to work under the direction of Grand Chief George Manuel. Those 1000 people, and the 7 teams, worked round the clock to raise money and prepare messages that would be heard round the world.

The purpose of the Constitution Express was to lobby at the National and International level, and, to delay Prime Minister Trudeau's agenda for patriation. Mr. Manuel wanted his people to have such an experience of freedom and power that they would never want to go back to their homelands and blindly accept the Indian Act Regime ever again. The Constitution Express succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. As people around the world expressed to Mr. Manuel, they had never seen such a "people" movement as that Express as the train rolled across our Nations to arrive in Ottawa 26 November 1980. This Express succeeded in every aspect of its goals including meetings with 21 different nation-states at the United Nations in New York after the train stopped in Ottawa. No one has been able to duplicate what the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs achieved under his leadership.

For one year after, the people of the Constitution Express raised money to travel en masse to Europe one year later. George had anticipated the patriation of the Constitution and wanted his people to make Europeans aware of the Indian Nations in Canada, lobby the European Nations, put pressure on England and Canada with publicity and create the climate for government-to-government relations.

From his great efforts and the efforts of his people at every level, Sections 25, 35 and 37 were entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982. Mr. Manuel did not accept these sections as reflective of our position as Nations. He wanted to take the governments of Canada far beyond what they could imagine Canada to be. He wanted to bring the 'Fourth World' to Canadians.

In the process of strategizing, he had a series of strokes after January 1984 until he died in 1988. The people of the Constitution Express and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs have kept his spirit alive! In the context of his dream and vision, our international strategy is based on his experiences internationally.

▪ **Concepts of Redress, Recourse and Remedies**

- a. **Decolonization:** When the United Nations designed its Trusteeship System to help in the process of decolonization, a Committee of 24 was established to oversee the process. When 'colonized peoples' go to this Committee, it appoints a Trustee whose purpose is to assist the colonized people's in re-establishing its own systems and rebuild its foundations. When the colonized peoples go back to the Committee of 24 to devolve the Trust, it is deemed ready for self-determination regarding its political status. Micronesia followed this process and the United States was the Trustee.
 - b. **Sacred Trust of Civilization:** Canada already has a legal fiduciary obligation as Trustee to protect the interests of the Indian Nations against Third-Party interests. Canada and the Indian Nations can agree to cast this obligation in the same frame as that of the United Nations. A process of revitalizing our institutions and defining our self-governing structures could be outlined in a Framework Agreement toward defining a bilateral relationship based on self-determination.
 - c. **Reparations:** International law allows for war damages to be paid by an aggressor when a nation suffers enormous damage and loss. Rather than throwing money at the problems we raise, Canada can negotiate reparations with the Indian Nations to assist in the rebuilding of our nations.
 - d. **International Observers and Watchdogs:** Canada and the Indian Nations could agree to Indigenous nations or mutually agreed-upon Nations approved as official United Nations observers to ensure principles and rules are properly followed.
 - e. **Indigenous Cultures:** Canada could host forums for Indigenous peoples throughout the world to come together for exchanges of information related to decolonization and sharing information on establishing alternative institutions.
 - f. **Brokering Peace:** Indigenous peoples have an open-door with many nations who are fighting oppression. We share similar experiences that these nations can relate to. In this environment, Indian elders, spiritual leaders and negotiators can assist in brokering peace between warring Parties.
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Theme V: Defining 'equality'

Canadians have their perceptions and beliefs on what "equality" and "equity" means in the law, in morality and in society. Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms ensures all Canadians have "equal protection and equal rights under the law regardless of religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, mental or physical disability". In large measure, it is left up to the courts to decide how 'equal' we all are under the law.

In considering this question, there is another way to look at the principle of equality. In our reality, Indian people have been decimated so that we are considered as a minority in relation to politics, the law has not favored our rights even when we fight in the courts and win. Socially, our communities are in chaos and economically speaking, we might as well not even talk about that one. In this sense, Indigenous peoples seem rather unequal and on the weaker side of the equation. In this scenario, we ask the question "What is the equalizer that will level the playing field?" What will balance the scales?

In our present circumstances, the one 'equalizing' factor is our culture and our languages. If there is anything that will level the playing field between Canadians and ourselves, our culture is it. When we engage our cultural ways in our debates with Canada, and, when Canadians experience the wealth and power of our traditional ways, equality becomes a reality. There is no culture in the world that can match Indigenous cultures in the practice of democratic principles in our ceremonies and functions. No science in the world can match our knowledge in its refined intellectual framework when viewing the universe in its wholeness. There are no education systems that teach in the way we do for a child to learn his and her true worth. There is no power we cannot match, no idea we haven't learned and what we explore in the universe contributes to the principles of peace, friendship and respect. What we offer to the world is our gentleness, our kindness and generosity.

In the wholeness of time, everything and everyone operates in cycles. Like the sun, moon and stars, the heavens are there for everyone to see. Whether it is 5000 years ago or today. One lone Egyptian standing on the banks of the Nile or a spiritual elder on a mountaintop. We all see the same heavens and have the freedom to interpret it in our own way. And like peoples all over the world through time, space and memory, we have interpretations of the universe to share. In the wholeness of time, we know the colonial circle has been a very large one. But like all circles whether large or small, they come round and close.

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