

letters

Ojibway

If I had not seen the letter of Bissell and Nimmons entitled "Ojibway, meet Marx" (26 Sept.), I would not have thought it possible that such brazen ignorance could find a way into print. And not only ignorance is expressed in the letter but also a callous disregard for the overwhelming poverty in which most Indians and Metis are forced to live.

One of the main points of the letter is that the Ojibway Warrior Society is incorrect on guessing when whites might first have invaded their territory. I could point out that the O.W.S. used that date only to mark the period which is generally acknowledged as the discovery of North America by whites.

But the obvious ploy of Bissell and Nimmons in discussing the Columbus versus Cabot argument is to make light of the very real and very military conquest to which the Indians were subjected by the whites. Perhaps I could point this out to readers who still have ears to hear and eyes to see, by recounting the process by which the Ontario Ojibway were forced to cede all the lands surrounding Lake Superior and Lake Huron.

The area around Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, was not settled by whites until the 1850's. However it was always one of the major meeting points for the Ojibway nation. Experts believe that Sault Ste. Marie was the "capital" of the Ojibway nation for hundreds of years until economic and demographic pressures after the coming of the whites led them to disperse further afield.

Until 1850 however, the Ojibway nation still claimed this entire land area around Lakes Superior and Huron. In the 1840's, the government of Upper Canada (Ontario) began, with benign neglect of Indian claims, to distribute mining rights to white entrepreneurs, especially to business cronies of the politicians. One of these areas was Point Maimansee.

Not unreasonably, the Indians protested against this intrusion on their lands. Led by a Metis named McDonald, the Ojibway sped off in two canoes towards Point Maimansee. They numbered some 50 warriors.

However a certain Major Wilson, an employee of the Upper Canadian government living in the area, got ahead of them and reached the mine speculators, warning them to surrender "as there were neither weapons or ammunition in the camp....". This last sentence does not indicate a peaceful attitude on the part of the whites but only a lack of war material.

On 2 December 1849, a detachment of troop led by a Captain Cooper was sent to Point Maimansee. This force "immediately placed the leader and four others under arrest..." The next day the prisoners were taken to the provincial jail at Penitanguishene. Thus ended the Ojibway desire to preserve their independence and separate nationality - by force of arms.

The upshot of this incident were the Huron and Superior Treaties of 1850 by which the Ojibway ceded "the north shore of Lake Superior and Huron and inland through the height of lands separating the territory of the Hunson's Bay Company of Canada."

Of course the mining speculators and their government friends had been thoroughly frightened by the incident so a clause was inserted which expressly prohibited the

fourum five



Ojibway from preventi persons "from exploring or searching for minerals or other valuable production..." The Ojibway were generously allowed the right to hunt and fish on the lands ceded "excepting only such portions of the said territory as may from time to time be sold or leased to individuals or companies of individuals."

It must not be thought that the Ojibway leaders were satisfied in the treaties. Long after 1850, Ojibway chiefs such as Shingwauk and Bukhwujenene condemned the white takeover of their land. Since they could not retain it against superior military might, they asked for improved conditions as compensation. By and large they did not get what they asked for, and that is why to this day the Indians are bitter and that is why the Anishinabe Park incident and others like it are endemic.

As for the Bissells and Nimmons of this world, let them answer their conscience. I, for one, would like to prod that conscience a bit.

Sincerely Yours,
David Nock
Prov. Ph.D. Candidate

rebuttal

I should like to set the record straight on what really happened when the Ojibway Warriors' Society representatives met with the Students' Union Council Monday, September 23.

After a straightforward presentation in which the main speaker outlined some of the grievances that had provoked the armed occupation of the Cache Creek Reserve, questions were invited from the Council members. In the course of replying to some of these questions it became obvious that most council members had little or no idea of the conditions of life which are a reality for the majority of native people in Canada today.

For example, one member expressed incredulity at the possibility that a Canadian police force, in this case the Ontario Provincial Police and the R.C.M.P., could resort to systematic harassment and intimidation of native political groups. Another member disclaimed any idea that the rights of native people had been violated by the Provincial or Federal Courts, and to prove his point, cited the Morrow decision in the N.W.T.

Such willful ignorance of the real and tragic facts of life for native people today, in what is often represented as an institution of higher learning, is plainly inexcusable.

However, after sitting through a continuing Council agenda for over two hours, the request of the O.W.S. for a resolution of support in principle for the native Caravan, as well as for financial support, finally came up for debate.

Some of the councillors were apposed to the resolution from the start because they believed that the Caravan was a violent protest group which was trying to blackmail the Federal Government into making concessions. Others on the

Council supported the Caravan because they perceived it as an exercise in the use of the constitutionally provided rights of freedom of speech and association. All of the councillors repeated, however, that they could not support any political group that was associated with violence.

At this point the chairman of the meeting invited the O.W.S. speaker to make some concluding remarks, and it was then that she accused the Council of holding a sham debate. She did so because the Council had assiduously avoided facing the real issues.

The native Caravan has not gone to Ottawa in order to exercise a constitutional right, but to protest the intolerable conditions under which the majority of native people are condemned to live and die. They have gone to protest the inadequate housing, shortage of medical care, unemployment, police brutality, second class education, as well as the erosion of hereditary land rights.

They have gone, in other words, to struggle against a system of organized repression in which the overwhelming number of white Canadians are complicit through their racism and indifference. The slightest acquaintance with any of the statistical rates on longevity, alcoholism, suicide, homicide and incarceration for the native people, paints a picture of a nether world that is gratefully concealed from most of us.

These then are the real issues. And when the Students' Union Council chooses instead to debate whether or not the leaders of the Caravan have exhausted all other channels of communication, or whether or not there exists a threat of possible violence, then they may rightfully be charged with holding a sham debate.

Having watched the Students' Union Council for many years now, I was not unduly surprised on this occasion by the levity and paternalism shown both by those who opposed as well as those who "supported" the motion last Monday. For too long now, the Students' Union Council has been an apprenticeship for the whizz kid set destined for Boards of Directors or Government Office. It is these people and their political pamphleters whose noses were so severely put out of joint by the O.W.S. representatives, and simply because the Indians did not come with cap in hand to plead for support.

Had they done so, the Students' Union Council, reassured of its own self-importance, would probably have unanimously supported the resolution.

Support such as that, however, is not needed.

Tony Simmons
Graduate student

Gateway

Vol. LXV, Number 9
October 1, 1974.

Published bi-weekly by the University of Alberta Students' Union, in the Gateway offices, Room 282, Students' Union Building.

SENIOR EDITORS

Editor-in-chief: Bernie Fritz
News Editor: Greg Neiman
Arts Editor: Harold Kuckertz
Sports Editor: Paul Cadogan
Photography Editor: Morrie Eaman

STAFF

eter Best
Rick Bilak
Nancy Brown
Rhys Davies
Elizabeth Herbert
Cynthia Ho
Mike Jeffrys
Marilyn Kanee
Michael MacNeil
Maccperri
Deena Mitchell
Doug Moore
Eli Neitch
Ray Popikaitis
Norm Selleck
Donna Seniu
Kim St. Clair
Ken Turner
Berry Wesgateway

CIRCULATION

Circulation 18,000. The Gateway publishes on Tuesday and Thursday during the Fall and Winter Session. It is distributed to the students and to the academic and non-academic staff on campus.
Subscription rates: 54 issues, \$7.00
Circulation Manager: Jim Hagerty

PRODUCTION

Ad make-up, layout, and typesetting done by Student Media, University of Alberta, Room 232-4, Students' Union Building.
Production Manager: Loreen Lennon
Typesetter: Margriet Tilroe-West

ADVERTISING

No mats accepted. National and local advertising \$.28 per agate line. Classified ad rate \$1.00 per issue. All classified ads must be prepaid.
Advertising Manager: Lorne Holladay
432-4241

FOOTNOTES

Publicizes campus events or those of interest to students, without charge. Footnotes forms available at the Gateway office and should be submitted before 2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays.

Footnotes Editor: Cathy Zlatnik

LETTERS

Submit all letters, typed and double spaced to the Editor, who reserves the right to edit the copy. Regular copy deadlines apply.

Editorial comments are the opinion of the writer, not necessarily that of The Gateway.

GRAPHICS

Submit all graphics and cartoons, by copy deadlines to:
Graphics Editor: Gary Kirk

COPY DEADLINES

Monday noon for the Tuesday edition, Wednesday noon for the Thursday edition.

TELEPHONES

Editor's office
432-5178
All departments
432-5168
432-5750
Student Media
432-3423

The Gateway is a member of the Intercollegiate Press and The Earth News Service.



Berry wesGateway

* Sometimes you just don't think it could happen but regardless of all intentions, things don't get done. We inadvertently overlooked the most popular fraternity on campus in last week's paper and I think they warrant attention. I refer of course to I Phelta Penis, which has long been the hardest driving of all frats around. Being a co-ed group, they promote (and practice) social intercourse where ever and when ever possible (in bathrooms, parking lots, theatre balconies, etc.). And further, they're very

versatile. Sometimes they have all-girl parties, sometimes all boys. The "Dorks", as they are affectionately called, do not restrict their activities to campus, but make fieldtrips to zoos and barnyards to satisfy the enthusiasm generated by their activities.

Membership in the frat ensures that all individuals get the lion's share of the ins and outs of a well-rounded education. Don't you believe them when they say it's a drag!

* Get loaded on the SUB Cafeteria's "fraternity special"

this week. Cold rat intestines smothered in fresh strawberries and chemically-simulated cream. Limit of 14 per customer.

* Hank came around with another scoop the other day. That little blue toll booth being set-up just off 116 street is a University employment opportunity to provide meaningful jobs for Engineering students. Apparently with the job market being what it is, engineering grads will be given priority by the employment placement office, but apply now because the competition is stiff.

