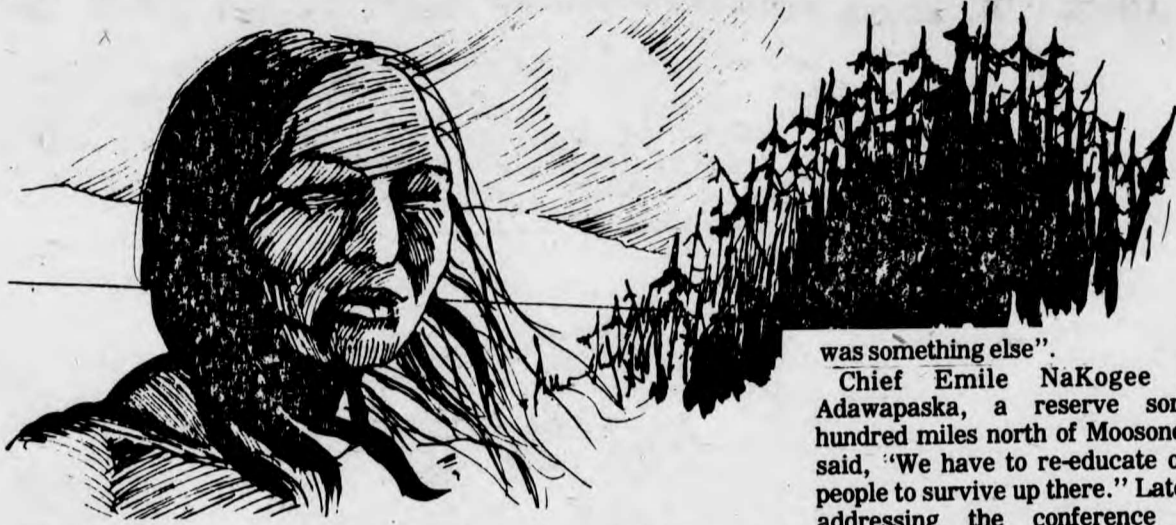


Northern conference probes native issues



"The first white people to come to this land were welcomed with open arms, and who got the dirt? The Indians. They say we are the scalpers" Clara Pratt, 76, told a conference on Native Affairs hosted by Vanier College last week.

"Encounter Canada: Northern Images" was a two-day conference that brought together native people and academics from all parts of the province around the subject of Northern Affairs.

Mrs. Pratt was not in fact a scheduled speaker, but took the discussion period to put forward her point of view, probably the most straightforward and blunt voice that was heard at the conference.

In the main, the conference pointed to the erosion of native cultures that has been taking place over the years. Roger Obonsawin, executive director of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, told the opening session that there was a basic lack of understanding between native and non-native people.

"Right from the beginning, people migrating to Canada did not

know how to deal with native people", said Obonsawin. He went on to say that at several points through history, and especially at the time of Confederation, native people were assured of their rights in the areas of justice, education and religion.

"The respect was never there, and these promises were hypocritical. In Toronto, my own marriage is only recognized as common law," he added. Obonsawin also mentioned that the native people only won the right to vote in 1952, the year they became full-fledged Canadian citizens.

Teachers on the reserves did not have very much insight into the Indian way of life, said school teacher, Angela Shishish and Justice of the Peace, Marylou Inhtai. All those who wanted to get any education beyond the little that was provided on the reserves had to attend residential schools several hundred miles away. This would alienate the students from their own culture. Basil Johnson of the Royal Ontario Museum tersely told the audience, regarding the residential schools, "we had to integrate and assimilate into a culture which was not ours, which

was something else".

Chief Emile NaKogee of Adawapaska, a reserve some hundred miles north of Moosonee, said, "We have to re-educate our people to survive up there." Later, addressing the conference in Swampy Creek, while fellow Adawapaskan, Marylou Inhtai translated, the chief did offer some brighter news. "I would say that it is easier to follow our way of life now, because of technological progress. Because of the skidoo we can travel faster. Before, 30 miles would be a two-day journey with overnight stop, now it's two hours".

This highlighted one benefit to Northern development, a side of the story which is often left out.

Obonsawin pointed out there was a lot of attention being given to the problem of national unity. He suggested that the problems of native people should be given as much consideration. One reason for the low priority, alluded to by Professor Ed Dossman of York's Political Science department, is that the region carries "very few votes" hence, he said it has very little political clout and cannot command the attention it deserves. Their land was taken away from the native peoples, they were left with relatively minute reserves and lavish promises which have not been fulfilled.

"There are pots and pots of Indian money in Ottawa", com-

mented Clara Pratt. Her daughter Rose McInnes, editor of the Toronto Native Times, later explained this was the money never given out for the "free education and free health care that was guaranteed to us. "One may ask: why take care of the Indians — why can't they take care of themselves? The answer lies in the treaties not being fulfilled by the Canadian government, and in the whole area of land claims which is not treated seriously enough."

The most critical case in point regarding the Indian people is the celebrated court case of Janet Lavell. In 1973 she married a non-native in Toronto. This, according to the Indian Act, caused her to lose her status. In effect, after her marriage she was no longer an Indian woman, despite her own Indian ancestry. When she began appealing that section of the Indian Act, she was told by the County Court judge before her trial: "You know it isn't fashionable to be an Indian in Canada. As far as I'm concerned, you should be glad that you're no longer Indian."

The Federal Court of Appeals decided she should have her own choice on whether to maintain her Indian status. The Attorney General then took the matter to the Supreme Court, where the previous decision was overturned, and Janet Lavell ultimately lost her status as an Indian. She despondently says of the whole affair, "I have very strong reservations about the term justice." When she now visits her own home reserve, or within the Indian community, she is in effect trespassing. Conflicts within the reserve, or within the Indian community, are not totally unheard of. When Norval Morriseau began the now famous Woodland Indian Art, painting was considered taboo by the elders.

They regarded the "depiction of legendary figures as an intrusion into the private culture and beliefs of the native people", say an explanatory pamphlet put out by the McMichael Canadian Collection.

Now this artform is probably the epitome of Indian culture, as witnessed by the majesty of the work exhibited in the winters Art Gallery last week.

Some areas of development have unavoidably infringed upon native culture. Professor Graham Rowley, of Carleton's department of Sociology, explained that in the case of the Eskimos, "families have deserted their hunting camps and have moved to larger settlements because of the concentration of schools." This naturally causes a dilemma: The alternatives between education, and a certain way of life are in conflict "I do encourage education", pointed out Chief Emile.

The problems of our native people are numerous and varied. At the base of the problems, as Janet Lavell put in for all of us."



Within the Indian community, reaction was mixed. Lavell feels the media had a major role in the distortion of her case. Womens' groups across the country told her they couldn't help, telling her, "It's an Indian issue." Even when she approached Prime Minister Trudeau at the time, he flippantly told her, "You go convince your Indian men and then convince me."

All letters should be addressed to the editor, Excalibur, Room III Central Square. Letters must be typed, triple-spaced, on a 66 stroke line. Letters are limited to 300 words (seven column inches). Name, address, or phone number must be included or the letter will not be published. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for grammar and length.

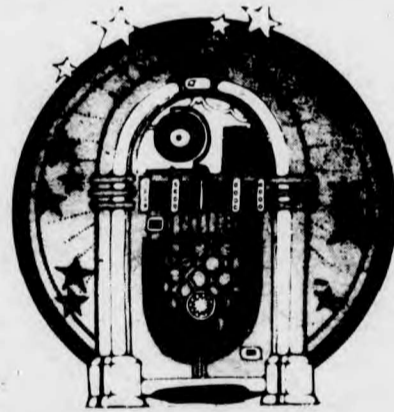
Deadline Monday 4 pm

letters

Radio York talks back

Having read your article concerning Radio York, "Hearing them out at Radio York", let me express my profound feeling of stupidity at having wasted my time speaking with your reporter, Gord Graham. He has succeeded in misquoting or taking out of context, every statement of mine, he chose to include in the article. He has managed to portray our position with the broadminded intelligence of Idi Amin. He has also succeeded in making the difficult task of running Radio York, beset with the difficulties we are now facing, that much harder. He has insulted the forty-odd students who put a great deal of effort into the operation of this radio station; and this is what hurts the most.

There is no point in refuting what was said in the article—it is so



homogeneously ignorant, that one would have to start from scratch, which would result in too much space being occupied in your newspaper. I hope that in the future you will locate journalists to write for your paper, and leave science fiction to the creative writing kids.

A useful guideline in selecting reporters is to reject the ones who are foaming at the mouth. Steve Rimmer
Manager, CKRY

Not all students were cheaters

This is in reply to the article on the controversy over the exam fiasco. I agree with Messrs. Emsley and Jerry that there was a lot of cheating and disturbances during December 18th Economics 340.3 examination. But this does not mean that all the students cheated. The idea of reporting the examination controversy to The Globe and Mail an over-reacting attitude by Doug Emsley....

...Messrs. Emsley and Jerry should have written the optional examination of January 18, 1979, rather than take the militant view that the examination must be made compulsory. The only reason the examination can be made compulsory is if the majority of EC. 340.3 students wanted it that way. I wrote the optional examination because it was an opportunity for me to improve my grade. I think any student who didn't like his/her grade in December 18th examination should have written the optional examination.

There are many ways in which an examination result could be invalid. An example was the Econ. 321 3B Fall '78 (Development Economics). The method used by the Econ. 321 3B professor in grading the final examination was inadequate. He was in a hurry to get the grades ready for the student programmes department before the due date for submitting final grades. The professor didn't read the final examination answers thoroughly....

...I cannot write a letter of petition to the Chairman of the Economics department to declare final grades of EC-321.3B as invalid and order that the examination be re-marked. This can only be possible if it is the majority opinion of the EC.321.3B students.

Perhaps the controversies in EC.340.3B and EC. 321.3B can be avoided in future if university authority can make some changes in the grading

system of Economics courses. The term tests and assignments should be worth 70% and final examination 30%. As a result of this, a hard working student would have passed a course before writing the final examination. Less emphasis should be placed on final examinations.

David Agbo Esho
Founders College

Dog never walked: Master

An Excalibur reporter approached my office one evening, approximately ten days ago. Her mission, it appeared at the time, was to find out how I felt about a grievance my secretary, Miss Ingrid Dagis, had filed, back in November. In response I indicated it would not be fair (or proper) for me to comment on this matter. My position today is essentially the same. But some innuendoes that appear in your article (January 25) ought to be placed in perspective. The passage that concerns me reads: "Such duties as writing personal letters, handling service representatives, getting coffee, not to mention walking the dog were not tabulated (sic) in her job description".

Since my Old English sheepdog, Melissa, is well-known by many in this community - and since she is congenitally unable to speak for herself - I must inform you of the following.

Melissa assures me Miss Dagis has never walked her. And I, for one, am inclined to believe her. For two reasons:

1) no grievance has ever been filed by Miss Dagis concerning this insinuation;
2) no one has ever seen Melissa sauntering about in the company of Miss Dagis.

Knowing, as I do, Miss Dagis to be above the sort of pettiness implicit in the passage quoted above, I ought to add that Miss Dagis has never, to my knowledge, written letters for me - personal or otherwise. I would not have Miss Dagis blamed for my sometimes-

irreverent turns of phrase.

If what Excalibur alludes to is the typing of personal letters, I can assure you Miss Dagis has not typed one single personal letter for me during the present YUSA contract. The fact that Miss Dagis' November grievance does not raise this particular complaint supports this.

One last, small thing. My somewhat limited imagination has not been able to decipher the meaning of the phrase "handling service representatives". But whatever it is supposed to mean, Miss Dagis has never raised a complaint or grievance regarding this mysterious task

R. Barreto-Rivera, Bookstore Director

Want to trade pictures?

I was told that if I wrote to you, this ad for correspondance would be printed. I know that you're very busy and I don't want to take up much of your time so I'll make this short.

My name is Jack Relliford, I'm from Haysi, Virginia, I'm 39 years old, 145 lbs 5'7" tall, and have black hair and blue eyes.

I would like to receive photos and will send one of myself in return.
Thank you for your time and trouble.
My address is 151-655, PO Box 5500, Chillicothe, Ohio, USA 45601.

JECK Relliford

This Thursday night C.Y.S.F. presents The Rocky Horror Picture Show in Curtis Lecture Hall "L" at 8:00 p.m. The Cost will be \$1.75.

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