

Parker, and an Iroquoian thunderbird interpreted by Georges Beaupré.

### The Iroquoians

The Iroquois, or Six Nation Indians as they are known today, developed a highly organized political and social system. They comprise the Mohawk, Cayuga, Seneca, Oneida, Onondaga, and Tuscarora tribes living in southern Ontario, Quebec, and New York State; yet a general classification, the Iroquoians, includes the Huron, Erie, Neutral, Conestoga, and Tobacco Indians.

Because the Iroquoians depended on farming for their staple foods, they established permanent homes and villages surrounded by stockades within which they built their famous "long houses". The men's forages from the village to hunt large game for their hides occurred only when absolutely necessary, as the women, who did the farming, carried the greatest responsibility for providing for the families. The basis of the society was a matriarchy.

### Significance of wampum

Iroquoian political life gained a complex structure with the arrival of a Huron prophet named Deganawidah and his Mohawk translator, Hiawatha, in the 1400s. Hiawatha introduced "wampum" (beads made from shells strung together) to the Iroquoians at the time of the founding of the five nations or Iroquois confederacy. (The Tuscarora joined in 1724 to make the sixth nation.) Wampum became sacred and a symbol to bind people together in peace. The message given on a wampum belt or string was never challenged when used as a symbol of friendship or given in a treaty.

### Great Law

When the "Great Law" was given to the Iroquoians by Deganawidah and a

constitution devised to prevent any misinterpretation of the political structure, it was recorded on wampum and this collection became the most important record in the history of the Iroquois confederacy.

The Great Law goes into detail about all the affairs of the Iroquoian people. Some of the most interesting points are given in symbols. For example, one very important broad, dark belt of wampum known as the Hiawatha belt, was the symbol of unity and peace within the five nations. The belt incorporated a white beaded heart in the centre with two white squares on either side, joined by rows of white beads. The white heart stood for the Onondaga Nation and also the great peace shared by all five nations.

When Deganawidah presented the

Great Law to the Iroquoian people, he requested that all 50 chiefs stand in a circle and join hands while he ordained that all should remain equal in rank and title. So that no individual would forget his title or position within the confederacy, certain men were appointed to learn the Great Law as recorded on the wampum.

Thereafter, every law passed by the Iroquois confederacy was recorded by a certain string or belt of wampum. Because of the introduction of wampum, the laws of the Iroquoians were seldom challenged, and they became one of the strongest Indian nations in North America.

Although many of the wampum belts are lost or have been destroyed, there are still elders who can recite the Great Law from memory.

### News briefs

- The Canadian Labour Congress has set October 14 as the date for a day of protest against wage controls, calling for a day-long work stoppage, mass rallies and parades. Not all CLC affiliates are supporting the protest, among them the Public Service Alliance of Canada, the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of the U.S. and Canada, and the Ontario Teachers' Federation.
- Premier William Davis and Industry Minister Claude Bennett of Ontario are going to Europe next month in an attempt to obtain foreign industrial investment for the province.
- George Ignatieff, former disarmament negotiator and ambassador to the United Nations, received the World Federalists' peace award at the end of August. Other Canadians who have received the award are former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and Paul Gerin-Lajoie, President of the Canadian International Development Agency.
- Canadian manufacturers produced 5,056,327 phonograph records in June, an increase from the 4,429,284 produced in June 1975. Production of pre-recorded tapes increased to 1,145,696 from 849,928.
- Wage settlements in the second quarter produced an average annual increase of 11.5 per cent in base rates over the life of the contract, the lowest rate since the end of 1973, according to the federal Department of Labour. The second-quarter rate was well below

the 14.5 per cent recorded in the first quarter, the record of 18.7 per cent in the second quarter of 1975 and the average rate of 16.9 per cent for the whole of 1975.

■ Air Canada plans to eliminate all first class seats on its 52 short-to-medium range Douglas DC-9 aircraft and to reduce the number of first class seats on its Boeing 747 jumbo jets and Lockheed *Tristars*, according to President Claude Taylor. With the changes, the seating capacity in the Boeing 747 will rise from 365 to 431 and that of the *Tristars* from 257 to 284. The purpose is to increase the productivity of the planes to counter the severe costs that all airlines are facing.

■ An eighteenth century recruitment poster, a nineteenth advertisement for *eau de cologne*, as well as works by Jules Chéret, Alphonse Mucha and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec will be part of an exhibition called "Three Centuries of French Posters", at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, September 17 to October 17.

■ Radio Canada International, the short-wave voice of Canada, is broadcast in 11 languages, 150 hours a week, reaching countries in all main regions of the world. In English and French it is heard in the U.S., the Caribbean, Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Southeast Asia, as well as in Western Europe. In Russian, Slovak, Czech, Ukrainian, Hungarian and Polish it reaches Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It also broadcasts in German, Portuguese and Spanish.

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