LUBICON LAKE NATION: SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE

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Nye: weh Shogwayadihhs 'oh. Nye: weh to my light, my inspiration, my daughters, Amber and Ashley. Nye: weh to my grandmother, Ellen Martin and mother, Yvonne Martin - my strength and courage. Nye: weh to my brothers and sisters, my extended family. Nye: weh Arvol - dreams do come true.

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In Memory of

Seneca Chief - Faithkeeper - Friend - Hubert Buck

ABSTRACT

There are four objectives of this dissertation. The first is addressing the Native perspective and how that influences both the methodology and theoretical context. The second is developing a context that is both relevant to the Lubicon and myself, as well as the social sciences. The third is describing the field research in Little Buffalo, Alberta over a five year period, and how spirituality and culture shapes not only perceptions but human behaviour which is identified as resistance to dominant ideology and oppression. The fourth is providing the Lubicon Cree men and women with an opportunity to tell their story from their own voice. The conclusion brings together the spiritual-theoretical collective voice to address issues of representation and more importantly the very real experience of "genocide."

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CHAPTER 1: INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

INTRODUCTION

I am a Native woman, Mohawk, Wolf Clan, a member of the Hodenosaunne people of Six Nations of the Grand River. My name is Dega ge ja whistja gay--Flower by the River. I live and walk in my grandmother's footsteps. I walk with my ancestors, listen to them and love them. It is my ancestors whom I obey first--even at the expense of personally losing a great deal for a greater purpose. I will tell you about this later.

Being a Native woman, I also live with all the negative social problems associated with our people: high rates of alcoholism, violence, suicide, ill-health, high mortality, poverty, and despair. They are not statistics to me. They are real--a part of me, my everyday life. Writing this dissertation as a requirement for my Ph.D. in anthropology is also a part of my reality. The two worlds are at times oceans apart; my experiences and thoughts often become obscured in the dominating people's world. The two worlds talk past one another; Native reality becomes lost, subjugated to the European academic discourse that was set in motion during the early conquest period. Within a European-English context, our ways of knowing, our extraordinary relationship with the environment, and our spiritual philosophies are degraded and used as symbols of Indian inferiority. The "paganism" which we practised in our "primitive world" was not only disregarded but systematically undermined by the church and state as they vied for our land and resources. By the early nineteenth century, our ways were outlawed and policies

were set in motion to completely silence us by eradicating the Indian cultures. That history has left a people scarred in ways no science can measure, no monies can compensate.

Over the last 500 years, Indigenous philosophy, ideology, and knowledge have been misrepresented repeatedly by Eurocentric scholars. Only recently have Indigenous people been provided avenues to express and communicate their culture to each other and to the dominant audience. Recent history shows us that the dialogue between the two peoples remains mired in a debate similar to that between Las Casas and Sepulveda in Valladolid, Spain in 1550. The debate centred on whether Indians were human beings with organized civilized societies. Defining the relationship as an "Indian problem" has patterned the way in which the dominant peoples represented and thought about the Indian. Today the debate is about "progress" and "development." Canadian Justice Thomas Berger offers a way around that closure:

> The history that we will celebrate is the history of the progress we have made. That progress has been made at the expense of the Indian; for them that history is one of suffering, of massacre, disease and devastation. Europe has cast a long and terrible shadow over the Native people of the New World. Today they are emerging from beneath that shadow, and they have a tale to tell not only of subjugation but also of survival, for they still live among us, and they have a claim on our consciences, a claim that we should honour the principles by which we profess to live. (Berger, xii, 1991)

I ask you to honour the principles by which you live and I will honour those by which I live. I have been schooled for nine years in the non-Native university education system. I completed all the requirements demanded of me, all the courses,

the examinations, and the thesis writing. Now, I ask that my voice and lifetime of Indian education be recognized and acknowledged by the very discipline that has concerned itself with understanding and explaining the "Native."

I realized that the work I had been producing was attempting to get across a Native perspective and failed to do so because it was lost in a discourse far removed from Indigenous thoughts and reality. Writing and rewriting this story to speak a truth cannot happen unless I speak from my inner voice and experience. In past years I was silenced academically, fearing my Indigenous intellect would not be acceptable in the academic framework of the non-Native. In short, I will attempt to demonstrate not only the empowerment of the Lubicon Cree but also my own, as a Native woman.

The originality of my work rests in my challenging the social science that proclaims to represent the "other" by allowing an "other" to speak. This work evidences a reality that exists outside dominant institutions to be acknowledged as it is, a social reality. As a Native woman I bring into the research a whole series of experiences and thought which not only encompass the "other" but also operate from a spiritual dynamic.

I was directed to the Lubicon in 1989 through a dream. The Lubicon Cree in northern Alberta are in another world far from mine, yet in so many ways are closer to my reality than to that of my non-Native peers. Together, we will try to tell our story to you. At times it has seemed an impossible task.

First, I will explain some things that I feel I need to say. Most stories have a beginning and an end; this one does not. The story begins long before I came into this world and will continue long after I am gone. That is our circular way of thinking. All

I can do is capture a single moment in time and present it to you from within my context. The Lubicon story emerges from my context since I am the one who writes the story. It is also influenced by the anthropological context within which I am writing since it is anthropologists for whom I am writing--three worlds in one story.

This whole process reflects a reality I tried to hide for fear of reprisal. I have now decided my voice will not be silenced. I am not afraid any more. I want to tell you a story that is not meant to take away from the Lubicon. Rather, as is our tradition, I will tell you a story about how our perspective operates on a spiritual level. Often, elders will use a personal story to teach people a way of thinking. I am telling this story to prepare you for the Lubicons--how we crossed paths--so you understand the paradigm, the consciousness, the power, and the context which frame this work.

INTER-WOVEN WORLDS

> "You can't quit now, it's in the cards for you to do this work. The Lubicon need you, for a little while longer anyway. But your fate is decided. You're just too young to see it. [I asked him just what was my destiny? He said,] You will help many nations, not just ours or Lubicon, but many. Time is running short for our people, all people. Soon, I won't be here, so remember what I tell you. You don't believe it now, but when I am gone you will. You cannot quit. Your children will be well cared for. You are doing work that is for all children, not just your own. They will be alright. People will talk about you, step on you. You must be strong and wise. The truth will be

> revealed to people. Those that step on you will see they hurt themselves, not you. You have no choice. I'm sorry for you but in time you will see. " (Field Notes, Chief Buck, Sept. 1992)

In March of 1993, Hubert Buck passed away. I was in Little Buffalo that day. I was at Bernard's daughter Jennifer's trailer. Bernard called to give me the news. I called home, trying to get a flight back to Six Nations. I tried to leave but the doors of the trailer were locked. I could not open them. Jennifer came home and tried to open them with a key. They would not open. Eventually, the back door unjammed. I sat there, numb, with Louise, Jennifer's mom. She said, "I think he [Hubert] does not want you to leave." Just as she spoke, the Nintendo game flew off the TV set, though no one was near the T.V. We looked at each other. She said, "You see, he is here already. Stay with us." (F.N., L. Ominayak, March 1993)

The boys came to fetch us; the sweat was ready. We went in and each person spoke about Hubert, how we loved him and how losing such a great elder was a great loss to all of us. Choking back the tears, I said,

> We must finish this work. Hubert wanted us to finish our work, he wanted us to carry on. I promised him I would, no matter what. We must come out of this slump together. We can win a future for our children. Hubert wanted that. (F.N., Hill, March 1993)

We held ceremonies into the night at the Longhouse built in Hubert's honour.

In August of 1993, I ended up in the Alberta Rockies through a series of events I cannot go into here. I decided to fast and pray, fearing for my children again. It was a full moon. I begged the grandmother to have pity on us, to help my children,

all children--to help me see. That night, in a dream, an old woman appeared holding a white walking stick. She took me many places and showed me things. She walked with me. She told me not to worry about my children, they would stay by my side. She told me about the work I have been prepared for, and showed me a glimpse of what lies ahead. She also said my work inside the Lubicon people was finished. Now I must regain my strength and work for them on the outside; that is where I will help the most. She said for me not to feel sorry for myself but to be grateful, for the spirits have been with me all this time and I'm never alone. She said to thank them for all they had provided. She said that in a year's time I would be rewarded if I obey and do as I am told. She also told me which spirits to pray to for guidance. When I woke I was frozen, holding something in my left hand.

What the old woman said came to pass exactly as she said. I won custody of my children. Offerings were made that winter to give thanks to the spirit of the Buffalo, the Horse, and the Bear. I have stayed out of Little Buffalo for the most part. I have followed the old woman's instructions as best I could. I tried to write about the Lubicon but the words never really came; it was an unbearable experience. So much could not be said because of the legal situation of the Lubicon. So many things could not be said because of the sacredness of events that took place. So much could not be said because of not wanting to hurt people any more than they had already been hurt.

For a while, it seemed as if this work should not be written. Pressured to meet deadlines, I submitted drafts. I kept the words of the men who were on trial uncontextualized for fear of giving information that might hurt them. In that way

I would not be offering information that might be used against them. For the women the process was easier. They were not on trial, they did not perform the ceremonies; with them, I could contextualize how events took place.

Despite all the constraints, I managed to piece together a work that seemed not to reflect a whole reality, a work that instead reflected like a broken mirror--fragments, pieces of reality, pieces of three worlds that made no sense when placed together. Telling this particular story has been a two-year, agonizing ordeal--doing justice to the Lubicon remains a top priority for me.

In the spring of 1994 I had landed a full-time teaching position at McMaster University and contract work with the Grand River Polytechnical Institute, and won an Exploration Grant from the Canada Council. The old lady had told me I needed to find "the original instructions." I had a dream about a bear. It marked a bear's paw on the top of my hand. The skin was removed and a paw was scarred into my hand. The letters "IVAN" had been clawed into the bottom of my hand. I told many people about this dream, searching for the spiritual meaning.

The grant from Canada Council allowed me to travel and visit all the elders I wanted to and to attend ceremonies. I hoped it would be an opportunity for the girls and me to heal together. I returned to the mountains and gave thanks for all they (the spirits) had provided in that one year, and for my family, and to ask for healing for my children.

We went to visit Fraser Andrew in Mt. Currie, B.C., and held more sweats. We managed to visit their yearly bear sweat, where 104 lava rocks are placed in a

sweatlodge and the door does not open for four rounds. We sat around a fire, hidden in the mountains. There were elders from Mt. Currie exchanging stories. It was so beautiful, peaceful. There, everything made sense. Only in the white man's world does it get all mixed up.

We had the sweat in the morning and sat around eating the feast food. One of the men was trying to understand what my work was about. I tried to explain. He said, "Why are you afraid to tell about the Creator?" I said, "They won't understand. They will dismiss the work. I can't." He smiled, saying, "But you will." (F.N., V. Shanoose, July 1994) We left that afternoon, stopping at the Squamish Falls. My daughters and I climbed the falls and found a path where I could stand underneath the ice-cold falls. The land is so very powerful.

When we visited Washington, a woman told us about an Ivan Looking Horse, who lives near Bear Butte, South Dakota. She said Ivan was putting up a Sun Dance at Big Mountain and we should go. The girls and my travel companion, Pat Hess, just looked at me, smiling. I told the woman of my dream.

From there we visited the Grand Canyon. Climbing out there helped free our spirits. We visited the Hopi and the prophecy rocks. Hopi elder Thomas Banyacya gave me the same message that Hubert Buck had given me. He said we have to work hard to help unite all our people spiritually. Time was running out on us; the fourth world is arriving and we haven't fulfilled our duties. I thought that was a pretty tall order.

In New Mexico we had to make a decision regarding our route back home. I asked Pat if I should call this Ivan and go to South Dakota instead of south-east as we

had planned. She said, "Yes." I spoke with Ivan's father, Stanley, who said we would make it in time for the Pow Wow, and that we should come up there and talk. We drove west and ended up at the Eagle Butte Pow-Wow. I did not know these Lakota Sioux people and sat there wondering if I had "lost it." Just then, Arvol Looking Horse approached us, introducing himself. He is the Keeper of the White Buffalo Calf Woman Pipe, and brother to Ivan. Ivan joined us and told us of his vision on Bear Butte. Part of the vision was to hold the Sun Dance and re-assert the original instructions of the sacred ceremonies.

Arvol told us to stay overnight at his trailer and leave in the morning. We went back to his trailer and were shocked to see all his windows broken, glass everywhere. He told us a hail storm had done this, maybe a sign. He also told us about the Sacred Hoop that was broken when the soldiers massacred his people at Wounded Knee, and how it had been foretold by Black Elk that the nation's hoop would be broken at Wounded Knee, 1890. Arvol said he was told of the seventh generation that would restore the nation's hoop and wipe the tears of the seventh generation. Arvol was one of the spiritual leaders in the Bigfoot Memorial Ride, which laid to rest the spirits that had been killed ruthlessly and buried in a mass grave at Wounded Knee.

Now, the prophecy says the people will unite and mend the nation's hoop and restore peace within all the nations. They would restore the seven rites, some of which had been lost through the killing of spiritual leaders during the resistance led by Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, and Crazy Horse. Arvol said that when they were growing up they used to sneak around to do their ceremonies, never speaking about them. The Lakota

religion had been outlawed long before and the fear of getting caught was great. Even today elders have a hard time speaking about these things. The beliefs were considered pagan, devil worship. Arvol said, "I know that affected all our people. We are afraid to speak the truth. They have really silenced us; they took away our power, our pride." I told him I was just beginning to realize how much our thinking and our spirituality are suppressed, so much so I am even afraid to say what really happened to us for fear of ridicule and reprisal.

I asked Arvol if they had the Horse Dance. He said, no, that it was one of the ceremonies that had been lost. I told him about Bernard and the Lubicon, who had the Horse Dance. Arvol nearly jumped out of his chair, saying he never met anyone who still had that ceremony. I told him that what had happened to his people was just now happening to these people, only they were being destroyed in a different, more sophisticated way; that if what he said was true, we would get together as the prophecy says, and that we would pray together.

They invited us back to the Sun Dance in August of 1994. I told them about the Lubicon and that I was trying to find help for them. I arrived home and informed Paul George and Chief Ernest Sundown from the Joseph Bighead Nation in Saskatchewan about the brothers I had met and the invitation to the Sun Dance. I had told Paul of my bear dream when I visited earlier in the summer and thought he would be pleased to know I had found the dream. They said they would go with us to the Sun Dance.

Pat and I travelled back to South Dakota and attended the ceremonies. There, we were asked to pray for the return of the Buffalo and the strength of the Sioux people,

of all the red people. We also prayed hard for the Lubicon on the fourth day; women could give flesh offerings. Ivan was taking the flesh. I stood in line, praying, waiting. My dream really made sense now, as they cut my arm and took my flesh to hang as an offering on the tree of life. I was praying for the Lubicon to live for the children and for the Creator to have pity on us. I have four scars, like a bear's paw.

After the Sun Dance was over they brought out the sacred bundle, the White Buffalo Calf Woman Pipe, which was given to the Lakota Sioux 19 generations ago by a beautiful spirit woman. As I closed my eyes, sitting not far from the Buffalo bundle, I knew it was time to tell this story.

Eagles flew with our car all morning as we returned home from Green Grass. That was perhaps the most powerful ceremony I had ever attended. As soon as I came home, the phone rang. It was an elder, Lorna McNaughton. She said that a White Buffalo had been born. The Sioux prophecy had come true.

Several weeks later, Arvol and Ivan travelled to Janesville, Wisconsin, where the buffalo was born. Pat, Lorna, my eldest daughter, and I met with them and together we had ceremonies on the farm with elders from all over.

On the way home I saw for the first time the whole picture, another vision. In this vision everything fell into place and I cried. I was told: "Now you can tell the story, starting with the White Buffalo. We'll give you the words." Perhaps if I had been shown this before I would not have believed it. I would have feared it myself. One year later the words of the old lady made perfect sense. It is time to reclaim our voice, our knowledge.

I thought all this time I was "protecting" our sacred knowledge by not speaking of our true ways in this place where they would have the chance to treat it with disrespect by questioning, patronizing, and, in the end, further demoralizing it. The power of the White Buffalo shows us those days are over. We are no longer underground--it is safe. It is my responsibility to tell this story. I am not afraid anymore.

THE ACADEMIC WORLD

When I set out to research the Lubicon land claim in 1989, I was forewarned by academics and leaders that these people, the Lubicon, might not exist by the time I completed my research. The technical undermining of the Lubicon membership and its political leadership by Indian Affairs is well known both nationally and internationally. The very real possibility of total destruction of the Lubicon Nation drives home the serious nature of this research. The fact that the Lubicon are still in existence and restructuring their society to accommodate outside encroachment is testimony to their strength and determination. Rarely have the human consequences of modern colonialism been as clear as in the case of the Lubicon.

Because of my heritage, I have paid attention to the reality of dreams, visions, and spiritual experiences which have influenced this work at several levels. The spiritual and ideological context we operate in assumes a "total way of seeing." This circular view incorporates the past into present and the ordinary and extra-ordinary realities into a cohesive whole.

The main objective of this research is to establish the Lubicon's voice and spirit of resistance. I refuse to justify or reduce their experiences, to academic rhetoric or advocacy anthropology, to subjectivism or to dialogism. By using the Indigenous perspective, we can better comprehend the cultural richness, depth, and strength of the Lubicon people. Examining how this particular nation has managed to survive the immense destruction to their lands and lives will give all of us a greater understanding of the human spirit. Understanding how the Lubicon faced these challenges, by using their traditional knowledge and wisdom and the depth of their integrity, allows us an appreciation of their culture and society which has helped them survive the onslaught of modern colonialism. By bringing to life on these pages a people who know their identity, their culture, and their way of life, we can appreciate the value and meaning of their struggle.

The issues raised in this research are multi-faceted. The primary focus is the Lubicon people, their culture, beliefs, and life experiences. These have been overlooked by both academics and journalists such as John Goddard who wrote Last Stand of the Lubicon (1991), and Boyce Richardson who wrote "The Lubicon of Northern Alberta." (in Drumbeat, Richardson, ed., 1989) These works focus on the political, legal, and moral issues surrounding the Lubicon. Anthropologist Jim Smith's "The Western Woods Cree," (1987) mentions the ethnohistory of the Lubicon in his argument that the Western Cree were not recent migrants to the area. Ward Churchill's "Last Stand at Lubicon Lake" in Struggle for the Land (1992) stresses the ongoing colonialism in practice today. A co-authored article by anthropologist Joan Ryan and Chief Bernard Ominayak "The Cultural

Effects of Judicial Bias" 1987 stresses the legal aspects and cultural constraints of the dominant system respecting or understanding the Lubicon and their land claim.

To date, there is scarcely any literature available which focuses on the Lubicon's complex cultural practices or traditions and how that affects their economic, political, and spiritual institutions. Their relationship to the land and how "development" and exploitation of the land have impacted on their society has been marginally addressed by the latter authors. For the most part, the Lubicon have been represented by non-Natives (excluding Churchill, Ryan and Ominayak). In some cases, the authors have never visited the Lubicon. Churchill includes the Lubicon in his book as an example of a modern-day struggle for the land. He never visited Little Buffalo, though the Lubicon are a case in point of colonialism. The Lubicon did not have a problem with his work and, in fact, enjoyed the recognition.

Although writers such as Richardson never visited Little Buffalo, because of his publication he is now viewed as knowledgeable. Journalist John Goddard did spend considerable time in Little Buffalo. His work is factual and meticulous. He emphasized, however, the male context and did not take into account the role of women. Goddard was concerned with the legal, political, and moral implications of the handling of the Lubicon land claim by "his" government.

There is a problem with representation by authors who have done authoritative work which can be damaging to the people. Richardson's review, for example, and his response to John Goddard's book, Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree, insulted and attempted to demoralize the Lubicon.

Richardson states:

> In the end, the Lubicons appear to have blown it. They came to within a few inches of a really satisfactory settlement and yet they have let it slip away from them over an argument of future funding for the rebuilding of their community. While admittedly what was offered was less than ideal, and the federal government is manipulative and untrustworthy, was the deal so bad that the Lubicons were justified in throwing everything away, including the 90-square-mile reserve, as they appear to have done? A certain lack, of intransigence of spirit brought them to the brink of success in their struggle: is it possible the same spirit carried them through to failure? (Canadian Forum, March 1992, p.30)

Lubicon long-term advisor Fred Lennerson and Goddard responded to Richardson's review. Richardson's reply was that

> . . . their office goes unstaffed for days, many families are enormously damaged, their leader, Ominayak, his marriage broken, so anguished that he has to spend much of his energy simply trying to keep body and soul together. (Canadian Forum, June 1992, p.3)

Richardson and others have overlooked the cultural-spiritual component of the Lubicon struggle and reduced spirituality to a sort of Indian "fundamentalism." Their "falling apart" because of their own actions feeds into a blaming-of-the-victim perspective which western authors so often use to explain the "demise of the Indian," thus absolving the state from charges of genocide or ethnocide. The issue of representation, as Richardson and others have shown us, has political and ideological impacts which often burden the oppressed group.

This work attempts to bridge the gap between the "Western representation" of the Lubicon and the "Native representation" of Lubicon. The body of information is established largely through the Lubicon people's own accounts.

THE PRESENT STUDY

In order to present Lubicon history, I must first outline the theoretical context within which I will place their story. Western assumptions have historically posed the "Indian" as an "inferior other." (Berkhofer 1979; Brody 1987; Dumont 1990) Civilization equals industrialism, capitalism, progress, and development, thus justifying the displacement, appropriation, oppression, and destruction of Indigenous populations and land.

As a Native person, I am unable to accept much of the Eurocentric thinking which is also pervasive in Western social science. I have found many Western paradigms assume at various levels the "primitive factor," a linear model of evolution and development which places "civilized man" at the highest level and "primitive" "man" at the low end. (Hill 1990) Hunting cultures are viewed as "doomed." (Brody 1987) There are a few anthropologists who contextualize the hunting culture within the Indigenous cultural context. (see Ridington 1988; Brody 1987) It is, however, more common to abstractly remove the Native culture and place it into a foreign Western "anthropological" framework.

Native scholars have found themselves at odds with the majority of "dominant Western thinking" which has served ideologically to validate, naturalize, and justify colonial oppression. Native scientists have developed an alternative conceptualization of social reality. There are the innovative works of Brody, (1987), Riddington (1988), Hallowell, (1967) and others who are working towards a better understanding of the

Native perspective. Native scientists are also seeking to build bridges to narrow the gap between "marginal" voices and the dominant paradigm, thus influencing shifts.

"Native Science" Colorado, (1988) draws from the traditional forms of knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous peoples who share a common world-view. The Native perspective assumes a Native civilization and consciousness exist. This is significant both to academic research and in its direct relationship to resistance. Resistance is the subtext of this research, from my perspective both as a Native academic resisting dominant ethnocentric analysis and as a researcher examining Lubicon resistance, the latter informing the former.

It is my objective to study resistance in the "fourth-world context." I will refer frequently to the studies of third-world resistance to colonial domination. My analysis of Lubicon resistance demonstrates the ways in which cultural consciousness informs resistance to colonial domination.

There will be five sections comprising the dissertation. A Native perspective which provides the overall context will be outlined in the theory section. The analytical framework will demonstrate an interaction of the three worlds: mine, Lubicon, and Western science.

The theoretical premise is that traditional Lubicon knowledge, which is fundamentally spiritually derived, as opposed to Western knowledge, which is de-spiritualized, is the primary informer of their consciousness. It is a consciousness which motivates the political, social, ecological, and economic substance of their society. Their spiritual and cultural consciousness informs their institutions, values, and identity.

I will use the work of James Scott and Jean Comaroff to establish the colonial and cultural analysis of resistance. I will also be examining post-modernism in terms of Edward Said's concepts of the anthropological structure of power and domination and Trinh Min Ha's concepts of the "other" and how western theories excluded the true voice of the "other." I will draw upon the work of Native scholars to outline the Indigenous framework.

I will explore how an Indigenous researcher brings a new voice and perspective to research. As a Native woman, my experiences both influence and shape the nature of the research. The process of articulating my voice and the Lubicon voice is significant in that it challenges the assumptions and authority of non-Native authors such as Richardson.

For the Lubicon, the objective of demonstrating the human cost of resistance to colonialism remains in the forefront. In the Lubicon case, genocide--total destruction--is a very real threat. Genocide (as defined by Article II of the U.N.'s 1948 Convention on Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide (UN GOAR Res. 260A [III] 9 December 1948; effective January 1951) is defined as specified acts committed with the intent to destroy in whole or part, a national, ethical, racial or religious group...(Geneva Convention: UN Doc.A/1706, Dec.13,1950). It is appropriate here because it correctly describes Canada's ongoing handling of the Lubicon case. As I will show, the institutionalized, technical attempts of the government to "erase" or create alternative bands threatens to have the real human consequences of destroying the Lubicon as a

distinct people. The real contribution here is to show the reader how it feels to experience injustice and how one tends to do more than just survive.

The methodological section will connect with the theoretical analysis in several ways. First, my approach to my field research will be outlined. Issues such as advocacy anthropology and collaborative research will be addressed. My methodology in gathering data, interviews and general experience in the field was influenced by my cultural background, which, as stated earlier, influences and shapes an Indigenous representation. The dialogic nature of the field research was further enhanced by the Lubicons' willingness to direct the research gathering in a way that was steeped in the Native traditions of reciprocity. My background and connection to the Hodenosaunne Confederacy influenced the type of interaction the Lubicon had with me and my community. The Lubicon elders requested spiritual support from the elders of my community. I was asked to arrange meetings between the two, which resulted in an ongoing relationship I facilitated. Therefore, field notes taken from such events were directly shaped by my background. The Lubicon took what they valued from me; for the most part, this was not my training as an academic. Because I cooperated with their agenda, they, in turn, were willing to trust and share their culture and lives with me. The anthropological techniques employed, such as interviews and notes from public and private meetings and ceremonies will be discussed extensively in the methodology section.

The third section will deal with the Lubicon experience and will form the core of the dissertation. The Lubicon section will be divided into four chapters. The first is a short historical overview of the Lubicon from existing literature and archival

information, the "official history." The second chapter will draw from ethnological data collection; it will be, in other words, the Lubicon history which is not in official records. The ethnology will be contextualized within a Native perspective. The Lubicon people provided a holistic representation of their history. I have divided the ethnology chapter by gender for reasons that will become clear within the historical events. The ethnology will demonstrate the human cost of the land claim and how that in turn affects the political, economic, social, and spiritual life of the Lubicon. The fourth chapter elaborates upon the traditional forms of resistance the Lubicon employed to resist domination. It also examines the ways in which the Lubicon used their traditional ideology to reconstruct their community. The last chapter brings all the information full circle, presenting a synthesis and conclusion.

He Burnt

a swastika on her grass
He was drunk he said he didn't know
that her family died in the Holocaust
burning through the sod Cries of burning bodies
children whose hollow eyes are caught briefly
in old newspaper photographs being loaded to die
Music burnt Philosophy burnt Memory burnt
burning through us the stench of kerosene
Could we continue
to live here
digging up the black remains near rosebushes
Always the grass will have a faint trace
unless it is entirely dug up and replanted
Every morning as her children go to school
she glances with a burning shudder
putting sandwiches in bags
She remembers her mother's memories
of Rosa Sarah Claire Hannah Nora Ruth
Judith
She remembers their flight to south america
where Nazis followed
when it seems they had lost
Their symbol covering jackets of teenagers on street corners
my eyes burn I know the nazis won
as the slaveowners have
We see the evidence of their victories
in every morning's paper burning with stench
that fills our lives
Not so long ago some boys burnt a cross
on the grass of a Black family
less than thirty miles from the grass of my home
I have dead I carry on my own
I'm sorry he said I didn't know what I was doing
Oh but
he did

Chrystos (Menominee) (Churchill, Oct. 1994)

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY: THE MOHAWK ANTHROPOS

INTRODUCTION

The question of what kind of assumptions I, as a Mohawk woman, brought into the "field" needs to be addressed. I do assume the Lubicon are a thinking people. I assumed the Lubicon are a strong, spiritual people that belong to the land there. I assumed their hunting way of life was an excellent subsistence economy. I assumed progress and development were the white man's legendary myth. I assumed the world is connected into a large whole and everything is dependent on everything for life. I assumed there is a Creator and the grandfathers will help these people; perhaps that is why I found myself a part of their distant world. I assumed the government is not honest and continues to try to undermine Native rights and self-determination.

The Lubicon learned quickly of my assumptions, or, where I was coming from. They did not need to "explain themselves to me." I listened and watched as they explained their situation to an endless trail of "outsiders." I watched their movements, the rhythm of the community, the dynamics, the connection to their land.

I learned a great deal by taking part in their world, on their journey. I learned first the beauty of their reality. I learned how to speak softly, listen intently, show compassion quietly. Later, I learned the art of body language, how to communicate with just the slight movement of eyes, the hand, the subtle waves of their communication.

I began to understand the colours of their world and the meaning of those colours. I heard the sounds: the thunder, the northern lights hissing above, the drums and rattles that emulated and honoured all creation including the animals--the bear, moose, fox, and eagles. I came to know the land and animals, and interact with their environment as the Lubicon did. I came to know some of the spirits of the Lubicon, from their rocks to their willows.

I learned in the end how to communicate with them through dreams--spiritually. Words, spoken words, are only a small portion of Lubicon reality. Some of the levels of consciousness they operate on are often out of an "outsider's" grasp or even comprehension. I knew about this level of consciousness as a Mohawk, but, through the Lubicon I was situated to not only know of, but also to rely on this spiritual level for survival. I learned to "see" and remember the various essential moments which often revealed the true nature or character of Lubicon culture. The problem for the purposes of this work is that there were no words spoken; time and space are filled with a specific energy and connection to a consciousness not easily described--if it can be described at all.

I also learned the harshness of their world. As the beauty lay buried underneath the waste and destruction left by the path of progress, the damage was also so visible. As Maggie Auger solemnly told me, "I dreamed John and I were on a road, driving, excited to be going, and then a great fire crossed our road and we had to turn back. We were stopped once again from going where we wanted." (M. Auger, Dec. 1992)

The reality of sickness, never-ending flues and colds, death, alcohol, and violence--the ugly side of the human condition--would appear time and again. There were times I dreaded visiting Little Buffalo. I felt weak and vulnerable. I felt like all my strength was absorbed into a vacuum of darkness and I could not stand to know they lived with this on a daily basis. How can one describe a community experiencing war when there are no firearms visible? How can you describe the casualties when the bombs the corporation and government drop are considered development? How can you describe and participate in a society where the entire community is traumatized? Again, words seem inadequate. The only possible solution is to pose the Lubicon people themselves as the authority, the voice, the story tellers.

More than anything, the translation of Lubicon thinking and being poses the greatest challenge in this work. The problem of falling into an autobiographical account has hounded my conscience. I did not want to take away from the Lubicon experience, to diminish their private world or dignity. As a Mohawk, I could easily engage in a dialogue that presumes non-ordinary discourse and experience. I could presume the collective over the individual: my extended family and elders surrounded the work and this was understood completely by the people. But while my people's experience with the Lubicon was significant, it should not be the focus of this research. I attempt to rely on my heritage to enhance and provide context rather than content.

The strength of this study is the Lubicon. It is their articulation of their world that provides the possibility of knowing the rich reality of the Lubicon. The social

analysis is intertwined with my Mohawk world-view. As Gunn Allen correctly points out:

> My method is somewhat western and somewhat Indian. I draw from each, and in the end I often wind up with a reasonably accurate picture of the truth. And in that context I would caution readers and students of the American Indian life and culture to remember Indian America does not in any sense function in the same ways or from the same assumptions that western systems do. Unless and until that fact is clearly acknowledged, it is virtually impossible to make sense out of the voluminous materials available concerning American Indians. (Gunn Allen 1986: 7)

There is no question that had I been a non-Native it may have taken me years to realize the "Lubicon reality." I may not have been so readily included in ceremonies during which many of the political decisions were made. And, I would not have been readily trusted by the chief and council and people, which is the key in terms of the depth and richness of interviews they gave and which form the core of this work. It was due to their trust and spiritual guidance that I was placed in an honourable position. If we had not received a whole series of dreams and visions regarding all of us, Mohawk and Lubicon, the outcome of this research may have been altogether different. In this way I could not be "separate from" the dynamics, the picture. Because of certain dreams and ceremonies which rendered advice through the grandfathers, I played a role seemingly central, yet marginal to the entire Lubicon history; central in terms of organizing the Lubicon women, organizing political and spiritual gatherings, and attending meetings with the government officials. It was marginal in that, compared to the elders and leadership, and the women, my activities were really insignificant from the perspective of their decades of struggle.

Thus this work is a reality that evades advocacy anthropology. What is an issue is that my understanding of kinship systems and reciprocal obligation shaped my interaction with the Lubicon. By being considered one of them--including spiritually so--I know I am obliged to work in whatever capacity possible to help them. Yet, they have helped me in professional and personal ways.

I did not set out intentionally to "become one of them." Yet, I knew there was a spiritual connection and this was reinforced upon my arrival and in subsequent experiences. For example, I became ill, very ill, and it was known by my elder, Hubert Buck, and others that dead people were bothering me. Yet, no one understood how to appease the spirits so that I might get well. It wasn't until much later, through a dream, that an elder from Six Nations (totally disconnected from Lubicon) realized what needed to be done. She said there were dead people who needed to be fed and they were Lubicon, not Mohawk. She said the feast for the dead must be performed in Little Buffalo. A series of events led to our elders and Lubicon elders putting through a ceremony for the dead at Lubicon Lake. It was in their best interest to perform the ceremony. The ancestors simply worked through me to ensure the ceremony was performed. In a way, it was an honour.

Within the Native paradigm, advocacy would be contextualized as clan membership or kinship affiliation. I have a set of responsibilities and obligations to certain Lubicon members who regard me as family, as kin. They, in turn, assisted my research and tried to help me whenever possible. The problem this resolves is best explained by Audre Lorde:

> Traditionally,...it is the members of oppressed groups who are expected to stretch out and bridge the gap between the actualities of our lives and the consciousness of our oppressor. For in order to survive [we]...have always had to be watchers, to become familiar with the language and manners of the oppressor, even sometimes adopting them for some illusion of protection. (Lorde in Kirby and McKenna, 1989: 65)

Is there any room in social analysis for the Native method or should I twist reality to fit the language and consciousness of the oppressor as Lorde states? In terms of exactly which method, I used both. Operating in the material world, I used video and tape recorders to conduct one-to-one interviews even though who I interviewed and when may have been spiritually and culturally guided. The moment I knew someone needed to talk came through no book-learned skill but through a moment when I knew we had connected and they were ready to talk. At other times, it might have been after a ceremony when we shared our deepest thoughts, fears, and feelings that I would write down our collective thoughts. At times the experience was highly individual and had no place in the research but indirectly would affect friendships or interactions. The interviews in the Lubicon section is directly transcribed from the audio tapes. The collection of interviews is structured according to families and kinships systems.

The Lubicon were always aware that I positioned them as the authority. I was no more than a young woman who was willing to assist in whatever area they needed. In that sense, I submitted to their authority and regarded myself as no more than a secretary, jotting notes and listening.

The historical sequence will shed light on the field research experience. When I arrived for the first time in Little Buffalo, I knew for academic purposes I had

to come out with a "research project." As I began my Ph.D. work, I knew I really must put forth a "collaborative research design" for the bureaucratic purposes of the university and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council research team within which I worked. In the next section I'll describe just how Lubicon translated collaborative research into Lubicon research.

COLLABORATIVE? THE LUBICON WAY

I first visited Little Buffalo in the fall of 1989. I spent only a week there but the relationship grew as the chief visited Six Nations the following month to discuss his issues with the traditional governing body of Hodenosaunne. The following December I found myself on a plane with elder Hubert Buck on our way to assist the chief and council in a ceremony. From there we travelled a dozen times back and forth to answer their calls for spiritual help and moral support. I decided to continue my work with the Lubicon which meant continuing my education which sponsored many of the trips. The Lubicon were the reason I continued my education. The research team I worked with articulated a "partnership" with the "Aboriginal communities" the academics worked with. In this sense, technically, the Lubicon chief signed on as Aboriginal partner. The agreement set out by the research team had in effect already been practised in my relationship with the Lubicon. But, the team wanted an articulation, a collaborative research design. This posed a difficulty. I continually hounded Chief Ominayak and the council to assist me in articulating our "research project," the design goals, time frame, etc. I was never given an answer, just silence and grins. In time I came to realize that the Lubicon

chose to "show" me what they thought important rather than "tell" me. As I spent more and more time with them, they invited me to their sweat lodge ceremonies, seasonal Tea Dances, Feasts, Round Dances, and quiet meetings with elders held in the bush by Fish Lake. They often explained the significance of each event in one-to-one discussions or formal interviews.

I had attended, for example, two Tea Dances in the summer of 1991. The Tea Dance is the yearly fall and winter seasonal social and spiritual gathering. The medicine bundles are brought in for blessing as are all the newly picked medicines. I understood the basic concept of the Tea Dance, to bless all the medicines, the people and feed the ancestors. The medicine man hosting the Tea Dance hires cooks and invites relatives and friends to share in the all-night ceremony. The social aspect of the is important for sharing information and providing help to those in need. At the Tea Dances in Little Buffalo, the social and political exchanges, between the various leaders that attended these ceremonies were critical to the moral support of the Lubicon's land claim.

Most often the same leaders and elders that attended Lubicon Tea Dances were also present at their court proceedings or other important political meetings. I was repeatedly asked to bring elders from Six Nations to help in ceremonial matters and to organize meetings between the two nations. The Lubicon not only hosted the ceremonies but often travelled to other areas to attend ceremonies: Sun Dances in Saskatchewan, feasts with Mohawks that had been involved in Oka, Round Dances in Hobbema, and Longhouse socials at Six Nations. There were quiet deliberations between spiritual leaders, elders, and political leaders that took place in these ceremonies. Political

information was exchanged but also spiritual and moral support was affirmed through many of these traditional avenues. The Lubicon not only received support but in turn pledged to support their like-minded "friend's" agendas. The Lubicon, for example, quietly maintained a "sacred fire" for the Mohawks during the stand-off at Oka. In turn, the Mohawks attended several court appearances of the Lubicon members on trial. The historical moment of my arrival no doubt impacted on the exchange given the traditionally based reciprocity system which served to reaffirm the collective struggle for the land.

As I stated, at the time of my arrival at Little Buffalo, the Lubicon appeared to resist verbalizing their ideas of what type of "collaborative" research they would like me to do. Their approach was to show me what they wanted rather than tell me what to do. For over two years, I was unsure of what it was they wanted and, academically, I was becoming nervous about the agenda or research focus. It was not until 1991 that I realized they had an agenda all along. They just didn't tell me what it was. The subtle waves of communication of the Lubicon result in a more profound and thorough understanding than that of written agreements.

At an elders meeting in the bush near Fish Lake, I sat and listened as they discussed everything from the land claim offers and what impact that would have on their grandchildren to community breakdown and also their vision for the direction of the community in general: politically, socially, and spiritually. The elders, specifically Felix Laboucon, stressed to the younger men the critical need to save and promote

cultural/spiritual ways if the Lubicon wanted to survive, and how the land, animals, and people were suffering from the exploitation of the land.

To my surprise I learned from a friend that this same group had decided several years ago to focus on saving the culture through bringing back the old ways of doing things in the modern setting. There was a "hiding" of ceremonies since the 1950's because of missionaries' disapproval. This led to some spiritual suppression by the 1990's. The task of recreating the modern community through establishing the traditional social/cultural arrangements includes re-instituting the political, spiritual, and philosophical ways by restructuring the newly-imposed colonial community institutions. The Lubicon's hidden agenda became crystal clear. The political body of the Lubicon had been directed by elders to stop the process of colonization and outside domination. The elders advised the political body to recruit suitable outsiders, if necessary, to bring back ceremonies that had been lost and also to find other ways to conduct business. I had arrived shortly after the Lubicon had set out to not only save their traditional ways but to restructure their community in a non-Western, "traditional" context.

The Lubicon have often taken pride in the lack of power the government has over them, which is why they are being held up as examples of "bad Indians." The ceremonies sponsored by the political body further served to seal the symbolic and cultural collective conscience of everyone involved. After one such ceremony, the ex-chief, Walter Whitehead, said to me,

> You see, this is what the government is really afraid of. They have no power here, no control, they don't own this - our minds and souls become so strong, we are reminded with each ceremony that honours all the creations, the animals, the trees, the water, all life, what we are really fighting for. The

> spirits, the grandfathers, let us know who is really in power. (F.N. Whitehead, 1989)

The children are often persuaded to participate in the ceremonial gatherings. Young drummers from Joseph Bighead Reserve, Saskatchewan, were frequently brought into the community to drum and sing as well as informally teach young Lubicon how to sing and drum. The long-term desire is to some day have their own drummers in the community so that they will not have to be dependant on outsiders.

In these settings, the lawyers, advisors, and government officials were marginal. The informal discussions were often about what responsibilities the elders had passed on, how the struggle was not about the adults getting a treaty card but about the children having the land to live on and, thus, a secure future. The women speak of the importance of learning about the land, respect, and how material things are not important.

LUBICON WOMEN

The Lubicon women had often questioned me about clanmothers and the role of women in my society. The chief approached me in the early summer of 1992 requesting I help the women get together. The women also had stated they wanted to "help the chief, the land claim, and each other." (F.N., Women's Meeting, July 1992) The Lubicon Lake Nation Women's Circle began to meet bi-weekly, attending political meetings and assisting with speaking engagements. They are in the process of developing a community-oriented social service program, sponsoring healing circles, cultural survival (crafts, learning bush skills), teen dances, and many other community events. They hired

me as their part-time coordinator to begin a project that would train several women to take over coordination and facilitation of human services at Little Buffalo.

Writing about the women was a far easier process in that they were not involved in sensitive political negotiations. I could speak freely with them because we were like-minded and did not have the spiritual (sacred ceremonies) and political constraints the men had.

After five years with the Lubicon, I realized they have maximized my presence in all areas: as a woman, a Mohawk, and a professional. I no longer ask them what they want from my collaborative research project.

Interaction with the men was difficult in that women normally don't interfere in the men's business. I understood this position. Traditionally, Native women, Lubicon included, are with children, and that is a honourable and good role. We support the men and work as interdependent entities, one never disrespecting the other's roles.

I feared upsetting the dynamic I knew well and walked very carefully in the men's world, acknowledging the sensitivity of it. In writing about the men, I followed their dynamic, removing myself from their arena, allowing them to contextualize the information. In writing about the women, I identified with their experiences and felt more comfortable with the presenting the information. This male-female dynamic shaped the gender context of Lubicon representation. As a consequence, the subsequent chapters on the men and women are separated. This reflects a Native tradition which has been misunderstood by Eurocentric scholars projecting Western cultural degradation of women onto our ways. Unfortunately, some Native men have adopted the dominant society's

sexist view of women. (Jamieson 1987) The separation of the Lubicon men and women in the chapters, however, reflects the reality of my relationship in the field. The first draft of this written work was given to the Chief to review and pass onto community members, if there was any interest. The feedback from the community was minimal, most wanting to read only their interviews. Few changes were made by the women or the Chief. The only response was, "You think they are going to pass this in that place. Just tell them what you need to and later write the book saying what you want." (F.N., B.Ominayak, 1993) I knew his advice was wise not to get caught up in small issues. But he also understood my values and left the decision up to me.

I researched the issues through documentation provided by the band council and Fred Lennerson, who had worked well over twelve years gathering information. Lennerson has a basement full of every letter, memo, or record of Lubicon history. I knew they did not want me to spend too much time "reinventing the wheel" as my research partner told me. "That has been done by Lennerson and Goddard. I don't think you should focus on gathering more stuff, papers. Being in the community is better." (F.N., Ominayak, 1991) I realized he was right. In sifting through box loads of information--"papers"--I realized something critical was missing from the writings on the Lubicon: the Lubicon people weren't present. Their culture and everyday reality was missing! Gunn Allen articulates the problem I experienced in reviewing the literature. She states:

> Whatever I read about Indians I check out with my inner self. Most of what I have read- and some things I have said based on that reading-is upside-down and backward. But my inner self, the self who knows what is true of American Indians because it is one, always warns me when something

> deceptive is going on. And with that warning, I am moved to do a great deal of reflecting, some more reading, and a lot of questioning and observing of real live human beings who are Indian in order to discover the source of my unease. (Gunn Allen 1986: 7)

I spent as much time with the people as possible. Young and old, everyone had important voices. From the Lubicon and my perspective, this is the contribution of our study. Only the Lubicon could articulate what impact the destruction of the land had and continues to have on them.

There were no interviews with the Woodland Cree because I was identified as a "Lubicon supporter." There were tensions between the Woodland Cree and Lubicon which I had no interest in getting caught in the middle of. The interviews were initially granted by the Lubicon leadership as they were most accustomed to representing the people and land claim. It took time and effort to gain the confidence of the people less use to "talking to outsiders," but I found they had significant contributions to the overall text.

TIME FRAME

The actual time spent in Little Buffalo from 1989 until 1994 adds up to 10 months. The longest duration we (meaning my immediate family) spent in the community were the summers of 1991 and 1992. Since 1992 I travelled to Little Buffalo twelve times for no more than fifteen days and no less than a week. Lubicon in turn have travelled to my community eight times from 1989 to the present. I still have not moved out of the "field." I keep in touch by phone, bi-weekly or monthly, with the women and

continue to take notes and receive information. There is not a set time frame. One might call it Indian time which is referred to as timeless. In this way I never felt "out of the field," rather there were physical visits and also spiritual interactions on a frequent enough basis that I continually knew pretty much who was sick, who was having a hard time, and what was happening politically and socially. The context would be equivalent to having a close-knit family that keeps in touch and therefore continually affects your world. At times the distance between us was not easy, especially when there was a death or, as in one instance, a close friend attempted suicide and I couldn't afford the airfare to be there when I was needed. In fact, the person that attempted suicide told me they had tried to contact me that morning before the incident happened; I felt guilty about not being home. Another time I was away when an elder died. When I arrived home my sister said they had been phoning, I knew there was trouble when they phoned relatives looking for me. It cannot be interpreted as dependency or "going Native." They do not look to me for solutions or I to them for identity. I know who I am. Again, this must be placed within a kinship framework of which I now belong. To state, I was "in the field for exactly 10 months" would be twisting the reality; that I've been with Lubicon for five years is more accurate. More than likely, I'll be with them as long as time permits. This work seems to be incomplete, a superficial time frame that has imposed a "conclusion" when the story is far from over. What I capture is no more than a moment in their lives. The Lubicon voice is the most critical contribution to this work, in the end they tell their story and that is the only method possible here. Huron scholar George Sioui illustrates this point asking in his book, For An Amerindian Autohistory:

> What method could we use to write about them [EuroAmericans] in a respectful manner, given that their written tradition is unreliable and that, besides, we do not know them and are unable to comprehend their feelings and values? The reply of autohistory is that we should let **them** talk, talk about themselves, and thus avoid developing weighty, risky theories. (Sioui 1992: 102)

As I stated earlier, what is written here is only a brief moment in time, a glimpse if you will. I do not presuppose an ability to represent more than what I know, acknowledging that I can only offer what is known by them given to me. We shy away from talking about things that have not been passed to us by elders or what we do not **know**. It is good to admit there is limited knowledge and only the Creator knows the whole story, we know very little. I tried to write with honesty and respect. That is our method.

CHAPTER 3: THE CONFLICT OF WESTERN AND NATIVE THOUGHT

Brother we have listened to your
talk
Coming from our father the great
white Chief in Washington

And in the winds which pass
through these aged pines
We hear the moanings of their
departed ghosts
And if the voice of our people
could have been heard
That act would never have
been done
But alas though they stood
around they could neither be seen
nor heard
Their tears fell like drops of rain
I hear my voice in the depths of
the forest
But no answering voice comes
back to me
All is silent around me

("Words of Fire, Deeds of Blood", Robbie Robertson, 1994)

THEORY

Western social science is the construction of social actors of European culture. In their enlightened moments, the "Fathers of Social Science" as they are referred to, created a Eurocentered mythology of the universe. In other words, the founding fathers

of social science attempted to define and explain foreign lands and peoples, producing concepts which ideologically served to justify the enslavement, oppression, and displacement of Indigenous populations. They were, in part, acting and reacting to biblical authority. They developed a "scientific consciousness" of the imperial order to explain, justify, and naturalize (survival of the fittest, manifest destiny) their right to domination in the "New World." The social sciences evolved in part as a reflection and manifestation of the colonizers' power relations with the colonized. The colonial mentality of the dominant intellectual elite "assumed" many things about the powerless, primitive, peasants and mindless mass of "others." One of the fathers of social science, Emile Durkheim, demonstrates this "enlightenment" in his book The Division of Labour in Society (1960), stating:

> In some societies, female functions are not clearly distinguished from male. There is even now a very great number of savage people where the women mingle in political life. That has been observed especially in the tribes of America, such as the Iroquois, the Natchez; in Hawaii she participates in a myriad of ways in men's lives, as she does in New Zealand and in Samoa...One of the distinctive contemporary qualities of women, gentility, does not appear to pertain to her primitive society. (Durkheim 1933: 58)

The inherent hierarchy of Western social science placed the primitive/Native at the "low" end and the civilized Westerner at the "high" end. (Hill 1990) While Natives of North America shared their concepts with Europeans, Europeans appropriated not only Native lands and resources but also their knowledge and cultural heritage, which is now finely interwoven into Western culture. The oppression of North American Amerindians has had many forms: the decimation of the Indigenous populations through disease warfare, the exploitation of the vast natural resources, the resettlement of whole nations,

forced relocation, assimilation policies, and lastly, appropriation of Indigenous cultures and knowledge. (Weatherford 1988; Wright 1992; Barreiro 1992; Berkhofer 1979; Churchill 1992)

Post-colonial intellectuals are beginning to rethink, reconstruct, and revise ethnocentric social scientific paradigms. The ontological has given way to the epistemological. Monopolies of truth are crumbling as more and more Natives, Africans, Asians, and women begin to enter the Western intelligentsia. The post-colonial era of social science is a reflection of the current political and social reality. Social agents of the "other" kind are inquiring into the subjective, biased, and ethnocentric assumptions made about "them."

The Western yardstick used to measure all "others" is beginning to reveal its ethnocentricity. Development, industrialization, and technology--all formerly considered signs of the advancement of a civilized society--are beginning to be revealed as destructive forces which endanger all life forms, not just Natives. Some scientists are turning to "Indigenous" wisdom to raise the consciousness of Western people and their institutions in areas such as the environment, feminism, health, and conflict resolution. At the same time, social and natural scientists have begun to slowly grasp their failure to understand, respect, and acknowledge Indigenous knowledge, consciousness, and power. (See citations in Knudtson and Suzuki, 1992)

The theoretical crisis in anthropology, or in the social sciences in general, is developing around the issues of resistance, representation, authority, textuality, analysis, and post-colonialism.

This chapter will outline the current debates in resistance, representation, and post-modernism, examining literature by contemporary scholars which is related to these issues. I will argue the need for a Native paradigm--for the Lubicon story to be placed within. I will use both Native and non-Native sources to develop a working framework for this story. Perhaps we can make room in the dominant discourse by just being ourselves, using each other for reference points rather than for anthropological theoretical arguments. Before I can make room for "our" voices to tell this story I must engage in a non-Native academic dialogue to simply get to "our point." I will do this for the sake of the dominant institutions for whom I write, so you understand why this is not relevant to "our" discourse. What follows is my Western scholarly voice. It is an attempt to explain "Native" perspective within the dominant English rhetoric. We can explain our thoughts completely within an Indigenous framework which may converge with some "progressive" anthropologist. The voice is direct. For example, we know oppression because we live it not because we study it. We know "the conservative anthropologists" are part of the problem and we must engage in common ground if we are to be part of the solution. It is the non-Natives that have been appropriating our lands, resources, and culture, it will up to us to work towards them giving it back.

An example of how powerful the non-Native voice is on "our stuff" became abundantly clear at the once-yearly ritual of the Canadian Anthropological Society Conference Association I attended two years ago. I had just come from Lubicon territory and was committed to give a paper on my work sponsored by the SSHRC funded research team. I arrived late and looked at the program. Wow, Native everything--land claims,

culture, religion, poverty, health--you name it, it was on their program. I expected to see representatives from all the Indigenous peoples listed. Two days later I heard there were a few Native women there. I never found them. It seemed to be only non-Native professors milling around discussing our cultures, land claims, and so forth. Everyone there was an authority on Dene or whatever, hundreds of non-Natives with such prestige and authority. I was overwhelmed and very, very alone.

I felt like that when I went to Indian Affairs in Ottawa earlier that year. Here was this big building full of non-Natives in charge of "our stuff." I got odd looks that seemed to ask, "What are you doing here?" I felt like apologizing, "Sorry, didn't mean to intrude. I'm just a little lost." You know that feeling when you accidently walk into the wrong gender public rest room; well, that's it, that is what it felt like.

RESISTANCE, CULTURE AND ETHNOCENTRISM

Jean Comaroff's Body of Power of Resistance (1985) seeks to understand the cultural/structural interplay of resistance. James Scott's Weapons of the Weak (1985) and Domination and the Arts of Resistance (1990) demonstrate the abilities of the powerless to demystify reality as asserted by the dominant. Each of these works will be analyzed in terms of the issues of power, consciousness, and resistance. The subtext of this analysis will be understanding contemporary resistance theory and the need for a Native framework. Edward Said's "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors" (1989) points out that "power" is prefigured in the social sciences. The colonized often remain victims of their past in the post-colonial era. The new awareness of the imperial

power in anthropology has led to understanding the power relations between the Western anthropologist and the "primitive," "less developed," non-Western social reality. (Said 1989: 207) The colonial structuring of social sciences moves beyond mere ethnocentrism. Said points out:

> In such cases it is irresistible to argue that the vogue for thick descriptions and blurred genres acts to shut and block out the clamour of voices on the outside asking for their claims about the empire and domination to be considered. The native point of view, despite the way it has often been portrayed, is not an ethnographic fact only, is not a hermeneutical construct primarily or even principally; it is in large measure a continuing, protracted, and sustained adverbial resistance to the discipline and the praxis of anthropology (as representative of "outside" power) itself, anthropology not as textuality but as an often direct agent of political dominance. (Said 1989: 220)

Said argues that new work such as Scott's demonstration of everyday forms of resistance is a paradox because it reveals the resistance to the oppressor. The work of Scott is significant in anthropological theory for its account of everyday forms of resistance to hegemony.

Scott's Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Resistance (1988) questions the treatment of resistance in the theoretical literature. He declares that revolutions in the Marxist mode have been few and far between. Resistance of the everyday kind, however, is a different story:

> Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and so forth. These Brechtian forms of class struggle have certain features in common. They require little or no coordination or planning; they often represent a form of individual self-help; and they typically avoid any direct symbolic confrontation with authority or with elite norms. To understand these commonplace forms of resistance is to understand what

> much of the peasantry does "between revolts" to defend its interests as best it can. (Scott 1985: 29)

Scott takes issue with the intellectual's attention to the institutionalized or "active violent" resistance movements. He argues that this form of resistance, which is covert and informal, is significant in effecting social change.

It is at the level of meaning and behaviour that the role of hegemony and ideology are related to the issue of consciousness. The relationship between thought and action is complex. Scott raises two issues. The first is that acts and thoughts of resistance are in constant communication with one another; there is constant dialogue. Second, practices of consciousness are difficult to discern but in constant tension. (Scott 1985: 322) Scott questions the elitist monopoly of consciousness. The effort to impose "Marxist" or non-Marxist visions of social order rest not just on the behaviour of elites but on the supposed inabilities of non-elites to achieve true consciousness. According to Marx and others, the inaction and failure to organize military rebellion demonstrates the "false consciousness" or mystification of the oppressed. (Scott 1985, 317) Scott clearly demonstrates the complexity of resistance in the absence of organized rebellion. Ethnocentric intellectuals assume that those in power in ideological institutions produce ideology and that it readily becomes hegemonic ideology because they don't "see" rebellion. Symbolic production of hegemonic ideology enslaves the powerless/subordinate group's thoughts and, therefore, actions. For Gramsci, the poor are enslaved in thought, which explains their complicit behaviour. (Scott 1985: 322) The assumption of the Marxist analyst is that the oppressed accept the vision of the elite. The official intellec-

tual version of resistance only recognizes overt public forms of organized, often violent, and institutionalized resistance.

Scott reveals everyday forms of resistance in their cultural context, and exposes how the powerless consciously seek to undermine the acceptance of the ideology of the powerful. He places social agents at the centre of this analysis. Scott argues that "to omit the experience of human agents from analysis of class relations is to have theory swallow its tail." (Ibid.) He argues that "to dismiss all principles of human action that contend with class identity as 'false consciousness' and to wait for Althusser's determination in the first instance is likely to wait in vain." (Ibid.) Scott concludes:

> Just as peasants...do not simply vacillate between blind submission and homicidal rage, neither do they move directly from ideological complicity to strident class-consciousness. If, behind the facade of behavioural conformity imposed by elites, we find innumerable, anonymous acts of resistance, so also do we find, behind the facade of symbolic and ritual compliance, innumerable acts of ideological resistance. The two forms of resistance are, of course, inextricably joined. (Scott 1985: 304)

Scott states there should be a serious "rethinking" of the concepts of hegemony or ideological domination for all subordinate groups. Abercrombie's critique of the "dominant ideology thesis" makes a persuasive case that neither feudalism nor capitalism is successful in achieving internalization of dominant ideology. (Scott 1985: 320)

Peasants, or the marginalized, often exist outside of those institutions that perpetuate the dominant ideology -- such as media and education systems. Often the cultural traditions (festivals, millennial movements, etc.) form a pattern of resistance to hegemonic incorporation. Scott sums up his argument:

> A number of assumptions lie behind this position, each of which requires examination. The first is that dominant classes **do**, in fact, share a well-defined and coherent ideology. I will not examine this claim here, but it is worth suggesting that such ideological coherence may be quite rare--perhaps even among intellectuals whose stock in trade is the formulation of systems of thought. To what standard of coherence the consciousness of the working class is being compared, in other words, is not entirely clear. A second, and more nearly explicit, assumption is that revolutionary action can follow only from a thoroughly radical (Marxist?) consciousness that is not only diametrically opposed to the dominant ideology but that envisions an entirely new social order that will take its place. This assumption is certainly true, but tautological, if we define revolutionary action solely in terms of the consciousness of the actors. (Scott 1985: 341)

The issue of ethnocentrism is not explicit in Scott's analysis. He addresses the deterministic economic and ideological logic of Marxist and non-Marxist critical thought. There are several key issues Scott raises but leaves unattended. Scott points out that Western intellectuals have developed a system of social action based on "imposed visions." What I ask is, how can Gramsci, Althusser, and other Marxist thinkers develop a paradigm for the oppressed that assumes the peasant or proletariat is not conscious of his/her oppression? From a Native perspective, the intellectuals are part of the dominating force. Why should the peasant embrace "their" vision, ideology, or assumptions when they have positioned themselves as the powerful, all-knowing Western colonial force? As an "other," I am asked to embrace their ideology and to accept, of course, that we have none of our own or that what we have is false. The deep-rooted ethnocentrism of Western consciousness is pervasive in such assumptions.

Comaroff's Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance (1985) is a detailed analysis of the relationship between social practice, historical process, and cultural mediation. She is concerned with the cultural logic of interplay between human action and structural

constraint. According to Comaroff, internal transformations of colonialism and of Indigenous systems of thought and action are shaped by power relations. (Comaroff 1985: 1) She argues:

> I attempt to rethink the relationship between the ideology as explicit discourse and as lived experience; to be sure, this is unavoidable in the Tishidi case. I examine their reactions to their changing context as a problem of symbolic mediation, tracing in detail the effects of the fracture of a precolonial cosmos, itself devoid neither of struggle nor of change...I have focused primarily upon social action as the communicative process, in which the pragmatic and semantic dimensions are fused. It is in practice that the principles governing objective orders of power relations take cultural form, playing upon the capacity of signs... (Comaroff 1985: 5)

Comaroff's analysis is concerned with documenting the consciousness of the Tishidi, a South African Nation. (Ibid.) Comaroff suggests the Tishidi resist colonial subordination and proletarianization through "novel modes of practice." (Comaroff 1985: 12) She argues that the Tishidi transformation and reconstruction of the colonial culture presupposes a specific conception of resistance. Contemporary resistance concepts have opened up debates over the construct and meaning in both Western and colonial contexts. (Comaroff 1985: 194) She states:

> The debate turns on the definition of the prior constructs of "power," "consciousness," and "intentionality," and positions range along a predictable continuum from a crudely literal, mechanistic view of agency to iconoclastic texts and "semiotic guerrilla warfare" (Eco 1972)...Moreover, "resistance" is typically neither an all-or-nothing phenomenon nor an act in and of itself; it is frequently part and parcel of practices of subjective and collective reconstruction. (Comaroff 1985: 195)

Comaroff questions the term "realpolitik." She states:

> The **realpolitik** of oppression dictates that resistance be expressed in domains seemingly apolitical, and the dynamics of resistance among oppressed people elsewhere have shown that the connection between seemingly unworldly

> powers and movements and the politics of liberation is subtle and various, denying simple dichotomization in terms of resistance and compliance... (Comaroff 1985: 261-2)

Comaroff does not suggest that Africanized Christian Zionism is escapism or a form of "preparation" for real liberation. (Ibid.) Power, resistance, and consciousness as defined by the Tishidi context are seen by some analysts as "primitive" and "prepolitical," which is "vulgar and ethnocentric social science." (Ibid.) She argues that the binary division between resistance and nonresistance is an unreal one in the opposition between symbolic and instrumental practice. (Comaroff 1985: 195) Comaroff suggests that the "vulgar" view of power (primitive) and resistance is the extreme of ethnocentrism of social science. She argues:

> It calls for a methodology that takes account of the interplay of subjects and the objects, of the dominant and subservient, and treats social process as a dialectic at once semantic and material. (Comaroff 1985: 263)

Comaroff's analysis of power, resistance, and consciousness is perhaps one of the few that "actually" bridges the traditional dichotomies ingrained in Western science. She reconstructs a social reality that encompasses both western colonial power and consciousness and African power, consciousness, and resistance. The interplay of the dominant and subordinate alludes to the dynamic of socio-cultural interaction, reaction, and consequences. Comaroff reveals the dynamic of ethnocentrism as much as she reveals the Tishidi consciousness.

To review, the power relations between the colonizers and colonized are manifested in classical social science. The classical theories of social science reveal

themselves as ethnocentric and, at times, vulgar. Said correctly points out that post-colonial theorists must consider the imperialistic, historic nature of social theory. The most recent analyses attempt to rethink the traditional ideological assumptions regarding intellectuals' consciousness, power, and resistance. The marginalized are beginning to voice their claims. They face barriers, however, which those who claim to be raising these issues have positioned in front of the "others." I will address this issue in the next section.

VOICES FROM THE OTHERS

Can anyone hear us?

Resistance
resistance is a woman
whose land is all on fire
perseverance and determination
are her daughters
she is a palestinian mother who
hands her children a legacy of
war together with the
weapons to fight in it
she is the black woman draped
in purple satin who strolls
down a runway allowing only
the clothes she wears to be sold
resistance is the absent native woman
who died at the hands of
a white artist
who lives inside herself
while thriving inside of me
resistance is a girl child
who witnesses her mother's death and
swears to survive no matter
where the hiding place
she is a woman beaten with hate
by the man she loves who

decides to escape to a world
where touch is sacred
resistance is the woman who defies
the male definition of love
and loves another woman
then heals an entire nation in doing so
she is a woman torn apart by
the barbed wire surrounding her home
who plots a way out
despite the consequences
resistance is every woman who
has ever considered taking up
arms writing a story leaving the abuse
saving her children or saving herself
she is every woman who dares
to stage a revolution complete a novel
be loved or change the world
resistance walks across a landscape
of fire accompanied by her daughters
perseverance and determination

(Connie Fife, 1993)

The crisis in ethnology is bound up with the historical, social, and political climate of Western post-colonialism. The voice of the "other" was not sought after so much as merely permitted into a discourse that cast, coded, objectified, and dichotomized "others," in an inferior position. The goal of anthropology, "to grasp the Native point of view," is a contextualized goal. The classic, anthropologically objectified, and dissected Native is used to promote one theory or another. (Berkhofer 1978; Churchill 1992) Sioux scholar Vine Deloria articulates this point. He states:

> Underneath all the conflicting images of the Indian one fundamental truth emerges: the white man knows he is alien and he knows that North America is Indian - and he will never let go of the Indian image because he thinks that by some clever manipulation he can achieve an authenticity which can never be his. (Deloria cited in Churchill, 1992: 39)

Modern anthropologists are beginning to account for their link to colonial power (the ownership and appropriation of Native culture) and are acknowledging the authority of the "other." Minh-Ha Trinh's Native, Women, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism (1989) points out:

> The Great Master wrote, to grasp the Native point of view...to realise his vision of his world. This has become the famous formula of the Nativist belief, the anthropological creed par excellence...In other words skin, flesh and bone--or if one prefers the Great Master's terms in reverse order: skeleton, flesh-blood and spirit...Keeping such cannibal anthropological rites in mind, one can only assent to the following remark by an African man: "today...the only possible ethnology is one which studies the anthropophagus behaviour of the white man. (Trinh, 1989: 73)

As a Native woman "other" in anthropology, I know that even my voice is inherently obscured and consumed in the discourse of my "other."

In this context there is a contradiction in being Native and an anthropologist; being the subject/object and an "authority" is, of course, impossible. As a Native woman I have been socialized to defer to elders as the "authorities." I have been raised to be humble and respectful. Academia urges me to be "critical" and, therefore, disrespectful. Going for the jugular is rewarded. Anthropologist's pressure me to define a Native perspective or build a grand Native paradigm. My conscience tells me only the Creator has that ability.

The key is not to be consumed by the hegemonic or to alienate myself in either world, and, more importantly, to redefine my role as an anthropologist. Being a Native anthropologist, in my terms, has the potential to make perfect sense. First, as Mohawks of the Hodenosaunee people, we refer to ourselves as Ongwehoewe, "human

being or real person" and we are taught to respect others and use our minds in a good way, which is explained in our Great Law as "Having a good mind and good heart; to share and respect life." (F.N., Thomas, 1992) It made sense, therefore, when Dr. Alex Christakis, a Greek anthropologist I met at a conference in Washington D.C., explained to me the term "anthropos" translates into "human being" and "ology" means "the study of." He went on to say that as a Native person, or real human being, I was the true essence of the original meaning of anthropologist. He also stated:

> As you said you're a human being concerned with gaining wisdom and understanding human beings, we [western society] on the other hand, strayed, and became concerned with owning, changing and dominating rather than respecting and understanding. (F.N., Christakis, 1994)

I will address the Native perspective, after demonstrating from a Native anthropologist's perspective that Western theories are not working, and how a Native paradigm may solve some of the questions or crises in anthropology when addressed within a Native context.

THE ANTHROPOLOGIST PROBLEM FROM A NATIVE PERSPECTIVE

James Clifford and George Marcus's Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography (1986) addresses the crisis in representation. Clifford argues that since Malinowski, the method of participant observation is firmly biased toward the "objective distance" while recognizing the subjective. Classical ethnographies separate the "subjectivity of the author from the objective referent of the text." (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 13) The classical conventions of authoritative ethnographies often enlisted histori-

cal allegories to construct representations that spoke to each another and not with "their subjects." Whether it was a question of origins, evolutions, or primitive society, ethnographers often "used" others to understand theories of origins or project European "primitive selves."

Asad's article, "The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Anthropology" (1989), argues that functionalist anthropologists were concerned with explaining rather than with describing. Their definition of primitive thought was misleading for several reasons First, their evaluative measures polarized the civilized and the savage. They transformed their subjects' coherence in their discourse, and this construction was an exercise of power. The structural ethnocentrism transforms the subjects into objects. (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 142-6)

The sixties disturbed the balance between the subjective and the objective. Clifford's analysis of classic and recent ethnographies defines the problems inherent in the new dialogical modes. The shift from the "authority" of the author who narrates "over" the voice of the "other" in order to represent them "correctly," causes a "polyvocality text" to emerge. Clifford argues:

> Once dialogism and polyphony are recognized as modes of textual production, monophonic authority is questioned, revealed to be characteristic of a science that has claimed to **represent** cultures. (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 15)

Clifford's analysis of previous ethnographic analysis is summed up in his "On Ethnographic Authority" (1983). He concludes that the monological authority reflects an "ethnographic consciousness" monopolized by Western culture. (Clifford 1983: 52) The representation of the other must begin by sharing positions of authority and voice.

Rabinow, in "Representations are social facts: modernity and post-modernity in anthropology" (in Clifford and Marcus 1986), argues that Clifford is a parasite, guilty of what he accuses other anthropologists of. He says:

> The other for Clifford is the anthropological representation of the other. This means that Clifford is simultaneously more firmly in control of his project and more parasitical. (Rabinow 1986: 242)

Rabinow accuses Clifford of creating his own authority from feeding off the works of "other" ethnographers. Rabinow points out that the works of ethnography are "situational"; Clifford does not examine his own writings and situation. This does not invalidate his work. (Ibid.) Rabinow argues that this solution to dialogism is weak. He states that the representations of dialogues are still controlled contextualizations. Beyond dialogic texts are heterglossia texts, those that accord the collaborators' authorship. (Rabinow 1986, 246) Rabinow outlines the shift from Clifford's modernism to post-modernism, which involves the refusal of hierarchy, flat history, and the use of images. Rabinow argues that post-modernism is, as located by Jameson, culturally and historically beyond stylism. Post-modernism is a "period marker," the beginning of a new era of thinking and writing. (Ibid.) Jameson argues that the third world and unconsciousness are now eliminated from nature and that restructuring will take place on a massive scale. In other words, the notion of primitive other has no place in social analysis today and speaking about speaking for the other is no longer useful. Rabinow's analysis of Jameson finds:

> Although Jameson is writing about historical consciousness, the same trend is present in ethnographic writing: interpretive anthropologists work with the problem of representations of others' representations, historians and meta-

> critics of anthropology with the classification, canonization, and "making available" of representations of representations of representations. The historical flattening found in the pastiche of nostalgia films reappears in the meta-ethnographic flattening that makes all the world's cultures practitioners of textuality. (Rabinow 1986: 250)

In short, Rabinow suggests that Clifford's own dialogue is in fact not about the "other" as much as it speaks "to one another." The problem within dialogism then has little to do with two subjects engaging in discourse. It is not speaking to other cultures; it is meta-anthropology. The basic focus remains shifted from the voice of the "other" to "our" voice. Indeed, perhaps the anthropological behaviour has turned on itself. Clifford and Rabinow devour one another in their attempt to understand the other.

Rosaldo offers some insights into the crisis of representation. Rosaldo's Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis (1989) proclaims subjective humanity. True to post-modernism, Rosaldo finds out over time that experience is significant in an ethnographer's abilities to interpret alien cultures. All interpretations are therefore provisional, situational and historical.

Rosaldo states:

> The agenda for social analysis has shifted to include not only eternal verities and lawlike generalizations but also political processes, social changes, and human differences. Such terms as **objectivity**, **neutrality**, and **impartiality** refer to subject positions once endowed with great institutional authority, but they are arguably neither more or less valid than those of more engaged, yet equally perceptive, knowledgeable social actors. Social analysis must now grapple with the realization that its objects of analysis are also analyzing subjects who critically interrogate ethnographers-their writings, their ethics, and their politics. (Rosaldo 1989: 21)

The importance of the new ethnography is the realization that the "others" are now the ones who are situating the ethnographers. They are "raising the consciousness of the unconscious." Self-reflection cannot be entirely credited to those who are self-consciously self-reflecting since it has also been stimulated by the "other."

Rosaldo cleverly turns literal ethnography on his own culture. His analysis of a family breakfast exemplifies what objectification cannot do to help one culture understand the other. He asks, "Why does the highly serious classic ethnographic idiom almost inevitably become parodic when used as self-description?" (Rosaldo 1989: 22) The validity of objective ethnographic descriptions can both reveal and conceal aspects of social reality. (Ibid.) The accuracy of classical defamiliarized ethnographic descriptions are neither true or humane. The humanization of ethnography is perhaps the biggest dilemma of the study of other humans. Rosaldo suggests that there are dialogical potentials which entail critical reflection and reciprocal perceptions, but these rarely reach open anthropological discourse.

He argues for processual analysis which refrains from claiming a monopoly of truth. He emphasizes perspectives which are not necessarily able to achieve summation. Geertz and Turner played key roles in developing the processual analysis. The central role of social drama and case studies allowed other theorists to demonstrate their lack of analysis of power relations and social inequality. (Rosaldo 1989: 94) The works of Kenneth Burke highlight processual analysis as an "ongoing conversation" that is already in progress and will continue after one departs. Rosaldo states:

> Recent social thinkers have updated Burke's style of analysis by identifying the interplay of "structure" and "agency" as a central issue in social theory.

> Most central for them, in other words, is the question of how received structures shape human conduct, and how, in turn, human conduct alters received structures...Marx's dictum stresses the interplay of structure and agency, rather than granting primacy to one or the other...to focus on the unfolding interplay of political struggles, social inequalities, and cultural differences. (Rosaldo 1989: 104-5)

The structure and agency interplay analysis is incomplete in areas. One of those areas, signalled by Pierre Bourdieu and others, is in "feelings," or humanness, which are under-analyzed. Raymond William's structure of feelings imagines that society cannot be reduced to fixed norms. He states, "Structures of feelings differ from concepts such as 'world-view' and 'ideology' because they are emerging, still implicit, not yet fully articulate." (Rosaldo 1989: 105) Understanding the human social interaction and the everyday have significantly influenced contemporary works of social theory. (Rosaldo 1989: 108)

The question remains, what does this say about the "Native" voice? Does the "other," who is not yet allowed the privileged position of consciousness, get to "feel" the oppression, and is it the unconscious cognition which determines their behaviour? Have Natives as humans with feelings ever had the opportunity to express their wisdom in understanding social reality?

Post-modern theorists have acknowledged their own power positions, subjectivity, and historic moment in the process of social analysis. Perhaps it is time to open up the crisis in anthropology to the "other."

Thick descriptions of post-modern and anti-imperialist literature continue to drown out the "other's" voice. The notion of grasping the Native point of view is

obscured by self-justifying, self-reflection, and global interpretation of the self rather than the other. There is little room for the other to make a true presence within the theoretical debates over analysis currently underway.

The first and foremost problem lies in the privileged position of the ethnographer and the "unconscious other." Until those in privileged positions allow not only the voice but the knowledge and consciousness of the "other," the Native point of view will always be a construct of and by the ethnographer. Said states the Native point of view is not "ethnographic fact"; it is a "sustained adverbial resistance to the discipline and...political dominance." (Said 1989: 220)

The problem with the Native voice entering into the debates constructed by the "dominant" discourse is in danger of intellectual assimilation. Hegemony is subtle, the incorporation of the Native voice into a processual analysis can assimilate the Native point of view into a hegemonic ideology. In other words, our voice will only serve to affirm or reaffirm one dominant theory over another, yet another form of appropriation and objectification will emerge in the anthropological text. Minh-ha Trinh reveals that the segregation of the other inherently signifies they (the other) are a deviation from us (the Euro-American). She exemplifies this:

> Such an attitude is a step forward; at least the danger of speaking for the other has emerged into consciousness. But it is a very small step indeed, since it serves as an excuse for their complacent ignorance and their reluctance to involve themselves in the issue. You who understand the dehumanization of forced removal-relocation-reeducation-redefinition, the humiliation of having to falsify your own reality, your voice-you know. And often you cannot **say** it. (Trinh 1989: 80)

Yes, I do know, as a Native, Mohawk woman. I know more than I would like to admit here. I will address the Native perspective since, as stated in the introduction, I am no longer afraid to speak the truth as a Native woman. We live and breathe our ways yet have been too afraid to come up from underground to really "say it like it is," for fear of reprisal and for protection of the sacred. Part of the power of domination is ruling in fear, the oppressed living in that fear. The security is in the oppressed hiding feelings and thoughts in the sense of protecting themselves, until realizing that silence is the oppressors' goal. It is not false consciousness; it is what we had to do to survive and nurture ourselves into the twenty-first century. However, as the latter exercise demonstrates, we no longer can afford to remain silent. At the same time, if we enter into the "scientific" arena--cause and effect--our voice then will be denied by the larger context. The Lubicon know, for example, that destroying the land, and thus, the animals, is directly related to their ill-health. If as a "scientist" I state that the destruction to the Lubicons' land base is directly responsible for their social-ills, I would be expected to "measure" the impact of development. As in the Grassy Narrows case, one cannot isolate variables to demonstrate direct correlation of cause and effect on human beings. Thus governments and corporations leave the "burden of proof" on the backs of the oppressed. As legal laws historically served the dominant, so too do social scientific laws. However, if the oppressed change the "context" from Euro-North American to Indigenous, recognizing their own "natural-spiritual law" then Indigenous knowledge--oral testimony--is formally recognized as legitimate. Native science contextualizes the spoken word as fact and places the experiences of the people as a social truth.

In saving ourselves, we just might help our brothers and sisters save themselves. I earnestly admit my concern is with my children and what the seventh generation will inherit from our mistakes. That is the law by which I live.

> Perhaps you think the Creator
> sent you here to dispose of us as
> you see fit
> If I thought you were sent by the
> Creator
> I might be induced to think you
> had a right to dispose of me
> But understand me fully with
> reference to my affection for the
> land
> I never said the land was mine to
> do with as I choose
> The one who has a right to
> dispose of it is the one who has
> created it
> I claim a right to live on
> my land
> And accord you the privilege to
> return to yours
>
> ("Words of Fire, Deeds of Blood", Robbie Robertson, 1994)

NATIVE KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

> But once more, **they** spoke. **They** decide who is "racism-free or anti-colonial", and they seriously think they can go on formulating criteria for us, telling us where and how to detect what they seem to know better than us: racism and colonialism. Natives must be taught in order to be anti-colonist and de-westernized; they are, indeed, in this world of inequity, the handicapped who cannot represent themselves. Whatever the issue, they are entrapped in a circular dance where they always find themselves a pace behind the white saviours. (Trinh 1989: 59)

Native knowledge is by no means a simple, universal, "Indian" knowledge that can be placed in the dominant society's lab to be taken apart and put together again. The diverse cultures, histories, symbolic orders, and "world-views" are not a set of identical experiences which establish "a Native Perspective." Rather, Indigenous peoples have a set of assumptions about social reality, dynamics, and values systems which are immersed in spiritual relationships with the natural world, a tradition of ideas that when brought together form a common adherence to the Creators natural law (Hill 1992). Resistance to Euro-North American domination is a result of the traditional Indigenous consciousness which informs and thus reveals the injustice of colonization. Seneca scholar John Mohawk addresses this issue. He states,

> It is said that the Conquistadors spilled more blood than any other group of people ever spilled up to that time, and that would be quite a contest if you know history before that time. That mentality also said that they had to dehumanize the victims of the conquest. Two things were born of that. One was racism. Even modern scholars identify the period of conquest as the birth of racism in the modern world. It was the first time that arguments were seriously put forward in the courts of Spain, especially Valladolid, arguing Indians were biologically inferior human beings, that they were not even human beings at all that they were really beasts of burden, that they were subhumans and therefore subject to the treatment of subhumans...This denial of thinking among peoples other than Europeans was so great that when these two worlds came together, the people who wrote the history wrote the Indian thinking right out of the history because by the theories of the conquistador, the Indian could not think, a burro cannot think. So the very idea that Indians could have helped thinking among Europeans has been negated. There are still people who would swear to you that there were never any Indians who ever did any thinking that contributed in any concrete way to any of the institutions of the West. (Mohawk in Barreiro 1992: 25)

Mohawk refers to the development of the Iroquois Great Law, which established the Confederacy with the principle of peace. The Peacemaker convinced the

Five Nations that thinking with reason and a good mind was more powerful than ruling through fear. This was taking place at about the same time the Europeans were developing their conquistador thinking. (Ibid.) The concepts developed by the Iroquois, precontact, demonstrate the consciousness that existed prior to arrival of Europeans. It also illustrates how the philosophy of the Peacemaker promoted strength through unity. (Weatherford 1989; Barreiro 1992) It is only recently, however, that scholars of the West have examined the First Americans as interdependent societies with political, social, and economic structures which operated on intellectually developed sets of principles.

Huron scholar Georges Sioui's work, For An Amerindian Autohistory (1992), elaborates further, discussing the ideas of social evolution and the widespread assumption of inferiority:

> First is the belief in the superiority of the European culture and morality, which has served as a foundation for the acquisition of other peoples' territories and resources. Its scientific name is the theory of social evolution, which puts forward, as a truth, the principle that those peoples who possess the most "advanced" technology and the "capacity of writing" are in the vanguard of the process of "evolution", and thus have the right, inherent to their culture, and the responsibility, to bring about "development" of the "less advanced." I call this theory the evolution myth...
> I intend to explain the system of values proper to Native American societies, with particular reference to those in northeastern North America, and to demonstrate the persistence of the ideological traits so defined. Put simply, the Amerindian genius, acknowledging as it does the universal interdependence of all beings, physical and spiritual, tries by every available means to establish intellectual and emotional contact between them, so as to guarantee them - for they are all "relatives" - abundance, equality, and, therefore, peace. This is the sacred circle of life, which is opposed to the evolutionist conception of the world wherein beings are unequal, and are often negated, jostled, and made obsolete by others who seem adapted to evolution. (Sioui 1992: xx-xxi)

Indigenous people have ancient thought systems which share commonalities yet are culturally distinct from one another; this is one facet of the Indigenous context which I work within. Another is how Natives not only maintained their systems of thought but used their knowledge to survive the ethnocidal and genocidal campaigns of dominant Euro-America. Creek scholar Tom Holm states:

> At this point, it would be well to emphasize the significance of ceremonies to the maintenance of Indian identity and the individual's sense of people-hood. Indigenous nations are holistic societies. That is to say religion, land, language, ceremony, and kinship structures are all part of an organic whole on which rests the continued well-being of the particular society...Like land, traditional ceremonies are inextricably linked with identity. To the Lakota the Pipe and its attending rituals are one and the same as religion. If central ceremonies are lost, then the power and thus the Lakota identity are equally in peril. Variations on the same theme apply to every indigenous culture in North America. (Holm in Jaimes 1992: 358-9)

The common bond between Indigenous people rests not only in their collective colonial experience but also in a belief system based on collective consciousness which empowers the people. Spirituality is central to the understanding of the whole. Balance and harmony is the ideal objective. Ceremonies reproduce and reaffirm Indigenous ideology and identity. This is the commonality between Indigenous peoples.

BRIDGING A TRUTH

The Indigenous societies of North America hold a specific fundamental awareness about their relationship to the universe. The Native perspective is undoubtedly a spiritual view of the universe. It includes understanding that humans beings are not

endowed with rights to dominate others or destroy that which is around them. The belief that all life forms have spirits and should be respected fuels their discontent with the ideology that "man dominates nature." Russell Means elaborates:

> In terms of despiritualization of the universe, the mental process works so that it becomes virtuous to destroy the planet. Terms like progress and development are used as cover words here the way victory and freedom are used to justify butchery in the dehumanization process...Most important here, perhaps, is the fact that Europeans feel no sense of loss in all of this. After all, their philosophers have despiritualized reality, so there is no satisfaction (for them) to be gained in simply observing the wonder of a mountain or a lake or a people in being. No, satisfaction is measured in terms of gaining material [goods]. (Churchill 1986: 21)

The Native view takes into account the humanization/subjectification of not only people, but animals, plant life, rocks, all of Creation. This is not "mythology," or even religion; it is a way of life, a Native consciousness. The "awareness" is complex in that it not only accounts for this world but acknowledges the guidance of the spirit world. "Knowing" involves a developed sense which can inform behaviour and influence social action. Dreams, visions, and prophecies still direct and inform Indigenous people in their everyday consciousness. More than that, "knowing" empowers the Indigenous consciousness.

The Indigenous conceptualization of power differs from the Western notion of power, as would the notion of powerlessness. Sacred knowledge is power and demands respect; to be ignorant is to be powerless. A clear example can be seen in Feit's analysis of Cree power:

> The quest for power is a metaphor the Cree might use for the life as a hunter...The concepts of the wind persons mediate and link several series of ideas that serve to order Cree world in space and time...'Power' is a

> relationship in thought and action among many beings, whereby potentiality becomes actuality. Hunting is an occasion of power in this sense, and the expression of these gifts, with many givers...The Cree have a distinct system of rights and responsibilities concerning land, resources, community, and social relations - a system of land and resources tenure, and of self-governance...The land and animals are God's creation, and, to the extent that humans use or control them, they do so as part of a broad social community united by reciprocal obligations. (Feit in Morrison and Wilson, eds., 1986: 182)

It would be erroneous to define power in terms of material possessions. In "our" arenas, to be powerless is to not even "know" who you are; to be weak is to display disrespect and ignorance.

For Westerners reality is linear and this view is limited. The circular view accounts for the dynamics of coexistence and interrelationships; progress and development are not logical concepts in the circular model. The past, present, and future inform everyday actions, including political, social, economic, and spiritual spheres, which are a related whole. Ojibway scholar James Dumont states:

> It is important to understand that it is not confined to a certain group, but is a comprehensive, total viewing of the world and is essential for a harmony and balance amongst all of creation. This is, then, a primary kind of vision...What is essential is not an impossible cross-the-cultural leap of understanding but rather a return to a primal way of seeing... A Mide' shaman from Minnesota expressed this same thought in this way: In the beginning, while the races still lived together as one, each of the races had to come to a decision as to what direction he would choose. During this time White Man and Red Man found themselves walking together along the same road. At some point in their journey they came to a division in their path. One of the two possible roads before them offered knowledge and growth through accumulation and mounting of all that could be seen ahead (a one-hundred-and eighty-degree vision). This is what the White Man chose and he has developed in this 'linear' and accumulative fashion ever since. The other road appeared less attractive materially and quantitatively, but offered a whole comprehensive vision that entailed not only vision before but also vision behind (a three-hundred-and-sixty-degree-vision). This is a circular vision that sought to perceive and understand the whole nature of an object or event

> - its physical reality as well as its soul. The Red Man chose this road and he has developed in this circular and holistic way ever since....In modern times, especially, it is the one who chose the straight-ahead vision who must recognize the ultimate value of the all-around-vision, and, must see the necessity of returning to this more primal and total way of "seeing the world". (Dumont, 1990: 32)

The fundamental beliefs shared by Indigenous peoples require an adherence to natural laws that direct and guide their knowledge and philosophies. Traditional knowledge is shared and reiterated in ceremonies. The cultural expressions of Indigenous thought are diverse, but the assumptions and consequences are the same. The holistic approach offers a loose paradigm of a circle. In the heart of the circle is the spiritual understandings of the Creator's gifts. Each sphere of the circle: the social system, ceremony, economy, and political structures are fuelled by the centre. For example, the Potlatch of the Coastal Natives is not just a ceremony. It was the spiritual, political, economic, and social life of the people.

The central issue is land and control of resources which allow their societies a degree of self-governance and self-determination. The political dynamics are often informed by traditional beliefs. The assumption, even in the Lubicon case, is that their rights are conferred by the Creator. The resistance to colonial forces is, again, not a reaction to material colonial domination, but an expression of sacred knowledge given to the people by the Creator. The strength of Indigenous "power" via ceremonies is witnessed in the repeated efforts of colonists to wipe out such practices. The Potlatch, Sun Dance, Ghost Dance, and many other ceremonies were outlawed and punishable by law. It was not until 1978 that the U.S. allowed ceremonies to be practised openly.

(Jaimes 1992) Elders often refer to ceremonies as a source of knowledge the way Western scholars refer to their "classical" literature. Being able to live off the land and practice "a way of life" is the central privilege many Native groups seek as an inherent right to self-determination. Native knowledge is alive in practice because of the oral mode of transmission. Indeed, there is an ongoing conversation in which Indigenous peoples have long participated. The experiential nature of Native knowledge fosters a rich and total sense of understanding **process**. Individuals are recognized as being "wise and experienced" and are respected by their community as "keepers of the culture." Once one enters the Indigenous mode of learning it is holistic and accumulative, not deconstructive. The subjective, human nature of inquiry is defined by several truths an individual must be prepared to accept.

The objective here is not to deconstruct Western thinking but to construct a Native paradigm that assumes the total way of seeing. The physical, spiritual, meta-physical are realities co-existing within a holistic framework. The framework abides by spiritual laws and not human-man-made laws. This work seeks to explore the issues raised rather than solve them all. James Dumont elaborates on the significance of placing historical events within Native historical understandings. He outlines events that took place in an Odawa camp prior to a battle, which involved using a pipe to transform braves into bats:

> The important point, however, for our purposes, is that we cannot gain a "true" and complete knowledge of Native history unless we accept the episodes of "non-ordinary reality" as valid in determining the outcome of an event, or, as impinging in a vital way on the historical event itself...The whole account, minus this episode, is quite plausible according to any historical standards, and, is probably a more realistic accounting of the relationship of

> the Natives and Whites in the War [of 1812]. But, it is this "impossible" transformation of Odawa braves into bats, penetrating an enemy camp and bringing back details of the camp's layout which would be embarrassing to historical scholars. However, the event did take place in Native History, and any attempt to work around it by making out of it a simile or metaphor (where Odawa were as inconspicuous to the enemy security as bats in the evening) or such like, is an outrageous and unacceptable tampering of "facts". The significance of this whole episode out of Odawa history hinges on this particular "impossible" event. If we are to accept Native history, we must accept the Native's way of "seeing" the unfolding of events in that history. (Dumont 1989 citing Hallowell)

In understanding the dynamics of "ordinary" and "non-ordinary" realities within the Native experience we gain a deeper appreciation for Native consciousness. In other words, we must go beyond ideology, grounding events in co-existing ordinary and non-ordinary realities to truly represent Native history. For example, the Lubicon are constantly drawing from ordinary and non-ordinary realities which directly and indirectly influence social events.

Visions, dreams, and spirit messages may result in an actual event taking place. I will recall a specific example to demonstrate this further. In December of 1992 a shaking tent ceremony was "put up" by Lubicons in Fish Lake, Alberta. A member of the community specifically requested the ceremony, to which I was invited. The questions asked by Lubicons of the spirits regarded community direction. The spirits told them what to do spiritually, socially, politically, and individually. The spirits also stated that nothing should be "repeated" outside of the ceremony (which is why I cannot give any more details of what occurred in ceremony). The "advice" given in the shaking tent resulted in "physical" action. It also went against some peoples' "feelings." In other

words, they could not do what they "felt" like doing. They had to put personal feelings aside in order to achieve their collective goal or common good for all Lubicon.

In summary, if we are to fully understand the Lubicon, or any Indigenous society, we must take into full consideration the interconnection of coexisting realities which fuel the social dynamics and ideological underpinnings of that society. The level of assumptions differ from that of "western" assumptions. Indigenous peoples assume it is a real event to engage in a dialogue with the spirit world as much as with the physical world. Indigenous peoples assume it is normal to believe all of creation has a spirit and only the Creator can provide the laws we abide by. If we take into consideration Indigenous understanding of knowledge we can begin to fully comprehend Indigenous reality and issues arising from that reality, such as Native history, culture, resistance, spirituality, and so forth. Therefore, we must place our "facts" within a Native context to represent events truthfully.

CHAPTER 4: THE "OFFICIAL" LUBICON HISTORY

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Lubicon Cree are a hunting society from northern Alberta. They have traditionally lived around Lubicon Lake, hunting and trapping within a seventy-mile radius. As far back as the elders recall, they have lived around Lubicon Lake, using the resources for their hunting lifestyle. According to James Smith's "The Western Woods Cree: anthropological myth and historical reality" (1987), the Lubicon as well as other Cree lived in the western territories long before the fur trade. In his analysis of empirical, historical, ethnological, and linguistic data Smith has concluded:

> The elders of the Lubicon Lake Band of bush Cree (saka*wiyiniwak), now at Little Buffalo, Alberta, insist that they and their ancestors have always been in the region east of the Peace and west of the Wabasca rivers... According to the elders, the Peace River has always been the boundary with the Dene-Tha branch of the Beaver Indians... Stevenson (1981:2), an archaeologist who worked at Peace Point, wrote that 'older informants of the community contend that Peace Point has been occupied for several hundred and, perhaps, thousands of years.' The Beaver of the Dene-Tha Band confirm the Cree tradition. The chief of the band... asserted that all Beaver traditions hold that all raids by the Cree occurred west of the Peace River, in Beaver lands. According to him, the lands east of the Peace River were always Cree, while those lands west were Beaver...(Smith 1987: 443-4)

Their contact with outsiders was minimal given their isolated interior territory. It was not until 1954 when a mission school was built in Little Buffalo that they learned the English language. (Smith 1987; Asch 1985; Goddard 1991) The Lubicon social organization was,

> . . . bilateral cross-cousin marriage; a kinship system with Iroquois-type cousin terminology; classification of kin into consanguines and potential affines or in-laws and including temporary matrilocal (uxorilocal) post-marital residence with bride service; levirate and sororate formation of society into hunting groups; local and regional bands; a "marriage universe" including the adjacent Loon Lake and Codotte Lake regional bands and a social identity reflecting the territory they exploited...In addition, there was the recognition of demonstrated wisdom and ability to those who were recognized as Elders. Government was by consensus, especially as heads of families guided by Elders. (Smith 1988: 61)

The Lubicon assert that it was during one of their Tea Dances that they were informed about the government signing a treaty in 1899 with the other Cree. The Lubicon elders felt it was important to secure their lands from white settlers. (Smith 1987; Richardson 1989; Goddard 1991; Hill 1992) With the help of visiting missionaries, they wrote a letter to Indian agents and sent delegates to Whitefish to speak with representatives concerning their taking treaty. (Goddard 1991) Major flu epidemics swept the area in 1916-18, depleting their population to a third (from 2,500 to about 400). (Smith 1987; Goddard 1991) In 1939 they were successful in gaining legal recognition as a band. (Smith 1987; Lennarson 1989; Goddard 1991; Mandelbaum 1940)

They were pursuing the protection of their lands through contacting Indian agents in the area. The Lubicon were visited by C.P. Schmidt, one of Alberta's Indian Agents. After visiting the Lubicon in August of 1939, he reported:

> I was very much interested in this band. I found them clean, well- dressed, healthy, bright and intelligent - in other words, people who want to live and do well. They have log shanties for winter use. At the time of my visit, they were living in tents and tepees. I saw a number of small gardens and potato patches all fenced with rails. I noticed that they have very good horses. (Quoted from Goddard 1991)

Schmidt concluded that the Lubicon constituted a separate band between Lubicon and Buffalo Lakes. He calculated that 128 acres times 127 people would entitle the band to 25 square miles. The aerial survey took place and by 1940 the reserve boundaries had been drawn up. (Goddard 1991) At the time of legal recognition, the Lubicon had approximately 350 members with three Metis families residing in their area. The reserve size was agreed upon. However, due to World War II, there was a shortage of ground surveyors thus actual survey never took place. (Ibid.)

In 1942, an official of the Department of Indian Affairs, Malcolm Mcrimmon, removed Indians from registered lists and refused to acknowledge the Lubicon as a band. He stated, "If my recommendation is approved by the Minister, the number of Indians remaining on the membership list at Lubicon Lake would hardly warrant a reserve." (Goddard 1991) The Lubicon had been legally working towards a reserve settlement since 1939, historically since the early 1900's. (F.N., Edward Laboucon, 1989)

The mission boarding school was built in 1954 in Little Buffalo. The school was not built by Lubicon Lake because of provincial interference. The Lubicons wanted the school around Lubicon Lake. (Goddard 1991) This led to most families moving to Little Buffalo to reside with their children. (Fulton 1986; Smith 1987; Hill 1989) The mission school influenced the social structure since most families started to live year round in Little Buffalo. Most, however, still relied on hunting and trapping income well into the 1980's. According to Bernard Ominayak:

> I was born in my parents cabin at Lubicon Lake...Life was like a cycle. In the fall, the men would hunt, trying to store as much food as possible for the winter. Then my dad would go up to his cabin at Bison Lake [70 miles north], trap for three or four weeks and come back with fur. My mother took

> the fur for drying, and my dad went out again. My mother, my brother and I were home alone most of the time. Then, as I got a little older, I got to go with my dad when he went hunting. If somebody shot a moose, he'd call the others over, and they would split it up between them. (Quoted in Equinox, Goddard, June 1985)

The elders decided the youth should learn English in order to pursue the land claim. Men such as Walter Whitehead, and Bernard and Larry Ominayak were persuaded by the elders to attend high school in Grouard.

There Walter met up with Harold Cardinal who would later help the Isolated Communities Board, which consisted of northern community representatives, to deal with land claims. Walter was elected chief in the early seventies. He began to lay the legal ground work for the land claim. His first task was to conduct a census to establish Lubicon membership. He regularly attended the meetings held by the Isolated Communities Board presided over by William Beaver. (F.N. Walter Whitehead, 1989) Oil exploration began in the area about the same time, the early 1980's. The provincial government began to build an all-weather road into the area to facilitate oil exploitation. (Asch 1985; Goddard 1991)

Walter Whitehead, working with the Alberta Indian Association, attempted to file a caveat with the Alberta Lands Registration Office in 1975. The caveat was the first legal notice the Lubicon registered with the government. The provincial response was to refuse to file the caveat. The Alberta Indian Association assisted Lubicon in filing suit against the province for refusing to file their caveat. The Lubicon then sought federal assistance in pursuing their case with the province. The Lubicon, informed that the federal government was the "trustee" of Indians, later learned that the federal government

would be involved themselves in the case only on behalf of the provincial government. (Lennarson 1989; Goddard 1991) According to the Lubicon Lake Nations submission to the "United Nations International Covenant Civil and Political Rights" Communication No. 167/1984 the sequence of court proceedings were as follows.

"3.3 On 27 October 1975, the band's representatives filed with the registrar of the Alberta (Provincial) Land Registration District a request for a caveat, which would give notice to all parties dealing with the caveated land of their assertion of Aboriginal title, a procedure foreseen in the Provincial Land Title Act. The Supreme Court of Alberta received arguments on behalf of the Lubicon Lake band. On 7 September 1976, the provincial Attorney General filed an application for a postponement, pending resolution of a similar case. The application was granted. On 25 March 1977, however, the Attorney General introduced in the provincial legislature an amendment to the Land Title Act precluding the filing of the caveats. The amendment was passed and made retroactive to 13 January 1975, thus predating the filing of the caveat involving the Lubicon Lake Band. Consequently, the Supreme Court hearing was dismissed as moot.

"3.4 On 25 April 1980, the members of the band filed an action in the Federal Court of Canada, requesting a declaratory judgment concerning their rights to their land, its use, and the benefits of its natural resources. The claim was dismissed on jurisdictional grounds against the provincial government and all energy corporations except one (Petro-Canada). The claim, with the federal government and Petro-Canada as defendants, was allowed to stand.

"3.5 On 16 February 1982, an action was filed in the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta requesting an interim injunction to halt development in the area until issues raised by the band's land and natural resource claims were settled. The main purpose of the interim injunction, the author states, was to prevent destruction of the traditional hunting and trapping territory of the Lubicon Lake People. This would have permitted the band members to continue to hunt and trap for their livelihood and subsistence as part of their Aboriginal way of life. The provincial court did not render its decision for almost two years, during which time oil and gas development continued, along with rapid destruction of the band's economic base. On 17 November 1983, the request for an interim injunction was denied and the band, although financially destitute, was subsequently held liable for all court costs and attorneys' fees associated with the action." (Quoted from United Nations Human Rights Committee, Thirty-eighth session, 1990: 3)

During the time the Lubicon were pressing their claims through courts several significant events took place. Walter Whitehead resigned as chief and Bernard Ominayak was elected to the office. The Lubicon started to organize their band office and receive funding for band administration. They hired a consultant, Fred Lennerson, who served as their advisor. Harold Cardinal recommended a lawyer, James O'Reilly, to represent the Lubicon land claim.

From 1974 through 1985, the Lubicon became a welfare dependant community. According to band records there were only ten percent of the members receiving social assistance in 1981. By 1985 ninety percent of the eligible membership were receiving assistance. (Fulton 1986; Goddard 1991)

Another significant event was the completion of the "road" into Little Buffalo and further north in 1978. By 1980 there were at least ten major oil companies with over 400 wells within the territory of the Lubicon. (Asch 1985; Goddard 1991) Michael Asch states:

> However, among the most striking of effects is the cumulative negative impact of local oil and gas development on the regions wildlife and its habitats. As a result, there has been a significant decline in the economic productivity of this sector. This can be exemplified from statistics complied by the Band. These show, for instance, that the income from trapping has declined from per capita average of over $5000 in 1979 to under $400 in 1984-85 and that the moose production has declined from 200 for the band in 1979 to just 19 in 1984-85. At the same time, the percentage of people receiving welfare has risen from just under 10% of the population in 1979 to over 955 in 1984-85. (Asch 1985: 8)

The band reported a marked increase in social breakdown at this point. Chief Ominayak describes a community in stress. He states:

> The change in diet, influx of outsiders brought our health down. The T. B. outbreak in the eighties was just the first sign that development was having an impact on our health. There are no sure studies to show exactly the kind of impact. However, we have witnessed a marked increase in alcohol consumption, violence and even suicide. We never had these social problems before. All the development, welfare, nothing to do, nothing to hunt, changed our traditional structure of men having pride in providing for their families. I'll never forget the day my father gave in and signed for welfare, I'll never forget that moment. He held out, but in the end had to ask for assistance. Babies are sick, many don't make it, just look at our graveyards. You'll never measure the impact, not in economic, social, environmental, emotional, psychological, cultural or spiritual areas. Science can't measure that, only we can. And I can tell you, it's devastated us. (F.N. Ominayak, 1991)

While the community experienced rapid development, the political leadership engaged in a public media campaign to bring attention to their plight. In 1983 the Lubicon appealed to the World Council of Churches in Vancouver. As a result of their

investigation, the World Council of Churches sent a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau. Dr. Anwar Barket wrote, "In the last couple of years, the Alberta Provincial Government and dozens of multi-national oil companies have taken actions which could have genocidal consequences." (Barket in Goddard 1991: 86)

The province ensued with its own campaign by trying to establish Little Buffalo as a provincial hamlet. In 1981 the official status of Little Buffalo was changed from "Indian Settlement" to "Provincial Hamlet." All the laws applicable to hamlets were applied to Little Buffalo. Lubicon members became subject to municipal and school taxes. There were tax notices sent out to members, and residents were required to apply for land tenure or land lease. Residents that did not comply with the hamlet requirements were threatened with fines or demolition orders. (Ryan and Ominayak 1987; Fulton 1986; Goddard 1985 and 1991)

In 1984 the Department of Indian Affairs accepted that the Lubicon Lake Band should have mineral rights, funds to create a variety of programmes, and the means to protect their traditional lifestyle of hunting and trapping. The Department of Justice determined the Lubicon were legally entitled to a reserve. (Ryan and Ominayak 1987; Asch 1985; Goddard 1985) By November of 1984 Federal Minister of Indian Affairs, David Crombie, announced the appointment of former Justice Minister Davie Fulton to mediate the case between the federal government, the province, and the Lubicon. The former Conservative justice minister undertook a year-long study and turned his recommendations in to all parties in February 1986, only to be "excused" two days later. (Goddard 1991) Fulton's recommendation were favourable to the Lubicon. Fulton's

recommendations were ignored. (Fulton 1986 in The Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review, Final Report, 1993)

With the help of their advisor, Fred Lennarson, the Lubicon initiated a public boycott against the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary. The boycott brought considerable national and international attention to their land claim. They were successful in raising awareness of their situation but still unsuccessful in negotiating an agreement with the government.

The federal government responded to the Lubicon boycott by deferring the matter to the courts. Minister of Indian Affairs Bill McKnight proposed the establishment of a forum for addressing the band's grievances. (Goddard 1991; Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review, 1993) In the ensuing months, discussion failed over who would mediate the "grievances." The Lubicon withdrew from the Canadian court proceedings in 1988 and declared that the only reason they had been involved in the Canadian courts was to force the Canadian government to obey Canadian laws. When they withdrew from the courts, the Lubicon stated they had jurisdiction over their traditional territory, effective October 15, 1988. The federal government responded by withdrawing its mediation process arguing the "assertion of jurisdiction precludes any opportunity for negotiations or discussion." (Goddard 1991) The Lubicon erected a blockade on October 15, 1988 after failed discussions with the province and the federal government. On October 20, 1988, armed Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers (RCMP) arrested twenty-seven Lubicons and their supporters, including two Quakers and two West German supporters.

On October 22, 1988, the Lubicon met with the Alberta Premier Donald Getty

and arrived at an agreement, now known as the Grimshaw Accord. Getty allowed for seventy-nine square miles to be transferred to the federal government for the purpose of establishing a Lubicon reserve and another sixteen that would be under the jurisdiction of Lubicon. The seventy-nine square miles included sub-surface and surface rights, as at other reserves in Alberta, while the sixteen only included surface rights. (Grimshaw Agreement (1988) in Goddard 1991: 195) The federal government agreed to accept the seventy-nine square mile reserve, plus sixteen miles, but was only prepared to provide services to members it designated as "Indians." McKnight was prepared to recognize 235 of the approximately 500 Lubicon members. (Lennarson 1989; Goddard 1991) Band membership proved to be a key issue in the following year or more of discussions with the federal government. The Lubicon were not prepared to allow Ottawa to split their members (status/non-status).

Negotiations between the federal government and the Lubicon carried on into the new year. There were many problems regarding the membership, as well as many other unresolved items on the agenda. By January 1989, the federal government offered a take-it-or-leave-it deal. This offered no more than $45 million. The Lubicon reviewed the offer and found that it contained few of the self-sustaining provisions for which they had been negotiating. There was also problematic clauses in the fine print which contained a final release of all legal rights:

> 48.7 In consideration of the rights and benefits provided by this offer, the Band and such persons who are entitled to adhere to Treaty No. 8, through the Chief and Council of the Band:
>
> (a) will cede, release and surrender to Her Majesty in Right of Canada

> (i) all their aboriginal claims, rights, titles and interest, if any, in and to lands and waters anywhere within Canada, and;
> (ii) all their claims, rights or causes of (legal) action whether collective or individual which they ever had, now have, or may hereafter have, or arising out of or by reason of Treaty 8, save hereafter specifically provided;
> (iii) all their claims, rights or causes of (legal) action whether collective or individual which they ever had or now have as alleged in (legal actions filed by the Lubicon people);
> (iv) all their claims, rights or causes of legal action they ever had, now have or may hereafter have under, or arising out of or by reason of any Imperial or Canadian legislation or Order-in-Council or other action of the Government-in-Council or Canada in relation to Metis or half-breed scrip or money for scrip (Department of Indian Affairs, Lubicon Settlement Offer, 1989).

The wording of the take-it-or-leave-it-offer undermined the possibility of the Lubicon suing for any further compensation as suggested by the Fulton Discussion Paper of 1986. The Lubicon rejected the offer and argued it was clearly not without prejudice to Lubicon rights to sue for compensation (Goddard 1991)

Critical to the Lubicon situation was the provincial announcement in February 1988 of the establishment of the Diashowa pulp mill near Peace River, along with the granting of a timber lease of 11,000 square miles, including 4,000 square miles of Lubicon land. (Goddard 1991; The Lubicon Settlement Commission Review, Final Report, 1993) At the time Bill McKnight, the Minister of Indian Affairs, also held the Western Diversification Fund Portfolio, through which he pumped millions of dollars into the infrastructure for the pulp mill. McKnight was clearly in a conflict of interest position as he was supposed to be settling the land dispute. McKnight was aware the province had negotiated the lease of Lubicon lands to forestry companies. (Ibid.)

In February of 1989 a series of meetings were held between Lubicon members and the government representatives in Edmonton. These individuals were interested in exercising a clause in Treaty 8 which provided land in severalty. According to the treaty, this was for families who wished to live apart from the band. Lubicon leaders were informed through reporters that a dissident band was organizing. Chief Ominayak opted to call an early election to demonstrate he was representing the mandate the Lubicon people had given him. Ominayak also wanted to demonstrate Lubicon people did exist as a nation despite the government charges that large numbers of Lubicon had signed to join the newly formed Woodland Cree Band. The chief and council were re-elected. (Goddard 1991) The dissident group was formally referred to as the Woodland Cree. Shortly there after they secured a land base around Cadotte Lake.

As far as the Lubicon were concerned, the intention behind the initiative was to undermine their land claim through establishing a band that would harvest their members, and thereby nullify their land claims. The federal government had utilized this strategy as far back as the days of Malcolm Mcrimmon in the 1930's. (F.N., Ominayak, 1990)

They recruited members by promising them $1,000 for each family member if they would sign with the Woodland Cree. I personally spoke with members who had received this offer and they were unaware that the money received for signing would subsequently be deducted from their welfare cheques. (F.N., 1991) Author and journalist John Goddard was in the community to report on the voting of the Woodland Cree land

deal. He investigated the story and found not only were the people given a monetary incentive to sign but each member was paid $50 for voting.

The Woodland Cree struck a land claims deal before 1992. There are about sixty people who were former Lubicon members who have signed over to the Woodland Cree (Band Records of the Lubicon Chief and Council). The Lubicon felt the government had failed to recruit enough of their members to substantially alter the land claims negotiations. They are quick to point out the high birth rate will compensate for lost members. (Ominayak, 1992) According to Lubicon members residing in Loon Lake, the federal government has been lobbying them to sign up with another government created band, called the "Loon Lake Band." (Ibid.) It appears the government is aware of the "marriage universe" James Smith outlined and has directed its energies into reestablishing Lubicon members into either of the two related communities and eventually absorbing the Lubicon membership. The government actively recruited people known to be dissatisfied with the Lubicon leadership due to family differences. The lawyers who served as engineers of the Woodland Cree and Loon Lake Bands may have found their blueprint in the work of the joint federal-band genealogy study in the early 1980's. Both the federal and provincial levels of government worked to recruit and settle the land claims deal.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee rendered its decision on March 26, 1990. The Lubicon learned of its release April 27 and reviewed it May 1, 1990. The Human Rights Committee under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights found Canada in violation of article 27. The decisions states:

> 5.) finds Canada in violation of article 27 so long as historical inequities...and certain more recent developments (continue) to threaten the way of life and culture of Lubicon people (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Human Rights Committee, Thirty-eighth session, 1990, 29).

An independent non-partisan commission was formalized in 1991 to seek a resolution of the Lubicon land claims. The twelve member commission included a lawyer, an anthropologist (Michael Asch), and the president of the Alberta Federation of Labour. They released their findings to the public in March of 1993. The Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review's Final Report, published in 1993, after a year long investigation, stated:

> Our principle finding is that the governments have not acted in good faith. They have:
>
> a) passed retroactive legislation to undermine legal claims,
>
> b) appropriated royalties that, had a reserve been established at an appropriate time, would have been in Lubicon hands, and
>
> c) been in conflict of interest because they act as interested party, beneficiary of royalties, and presumed judge of the validity of Lubicon claims....
>
> We feel that there is in-built conflict of interest within the mandate of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs. On the one hand he is to protect the interest of the Indian people; on the other hand he is put in a situation where he is to make decisions regarding the development on contested lands, decisions with negative consequences for Indian peoples. A case in point: Minister Bill McKnight, responsible for Western Diversification Funding, allowed funds for development by Diashowa on disputed Lubicon lands.
>
> We found the Lubicon have acted in good faith in negotiations. Having heard Chief Ominayak's report regarding deliberate avoidance of oil wells in the selection of their land, Commission members acknowledge the Lubicon's sincere efforts to facilitate resolutions. The Lubicon want open and public negotiations, and have responded to invitations from the governments to negotiate. They have presented a well thought-out plan for a settlement, to which they still await an adequate government response. They have also agreed to the process of mediation....We agree with E. Davie Fulton who said: "I cannot see this being a precedent because this is an entirely unique set of circumstances.

> Never before in our history - and let's hope never again - has a situation existed where a Band was promised, over 50 years ago, a settlement and a reserve that would have given them a livelihood, set them up in that way so that they wouldn't have suffered so dreadfully from the loss of their forms of livelihood and they would receive other benefits from it - promises which have not been fulfilled, which have been stymied, which have been met with obfuscation and difficulties by the very people responsible for implementing the promise...So a generous settlement recognizing the equity of the situation could not possibly serve as a precedent for other settlements, because there's no other such situation." (The Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review, Final Report, 1993, 4)

While numerous commissions continue to condemn Canada for its stonewalling of the Lubicon land claim, the community itself has been under enormous pressure. The social impact, as Ominayak previously stated, is not measurable. The next section outlines field research in Little Buffalo from October of 1989 until June of 1993. The following section is important because it is an account of the cultural survival, human cost, and resistance the Lubicon have experienced. Lost in all of the "official Lubicon history" is the Lubicon people themselves, their beliefs, values, culture, and spirituality. Thus the research is placed in the only legitimate context, that of the Lubicon. The Lubicon live in a world of breathtaking cultural beauty, integrity, and distinctiveness, a world far from the offices of Ottawa.

CHAPTER 5: VOICES FROM THE LUBICON

THE LUBICON : KNOWING WHO WE ARE

The young men stood in a small circle holding their hand drums and began to sing. The elder men rose, reaching out to hold hands with one another, and began to dance clockwise, lifting their feet rhythmically to the sound of the drum. The women and children joined the circle as an unbroken chain moved into the morning. I left the Round Dance to see if the "ancestors" were still dancing in the sky. Sure enough, they too moved around in a circle above the sweat lodge, tipi, and Longhouse where ceremonies continued till dawn. The Northern Lights moved lower and in one astonishing moment entered the tipi, where the sacred fire was burning. People stood in silence watching, listening, taking in the drumming, and the rattling hiss of the Northern Lights. It was powerful. At that moment we knew the prayers were being acknowledged. There was hope. The elders we had assembled for this gathering were from many nations, Cree, Iroquois, and Tlinkit. They had all travelled long distances to Little Buffalo, an isolated community in northern Alberta, to pray for the Lubicon people. It had been decided early in the summer by medicine man Charlie Wapoose, that the "good people" should come together because the "bad people" had already joined forces. In broken English, he told me of his dream about the good people needing to unite. Charlie, in his middle forties, was tall with long braids and penetrating eyes. He seldom spoke but when he did, you listened. Shortly after our conversation, the chief had asked me to organize this

gathering. There was a shortage of "material resources," but always an abundance of faith.

Organizing in Little Buffalo was a collective experience. The spiritual matters were taken care of by Charlie, the chief, John C. Leternder, and Chief Hubert Buck from Six Nations. Minor details like funding to get elders there, whom to invite, how to accommodate everyone, were left to me. The women had just begun to organize as a group. They were excited about the gathering. Each family would take a turn cooking the meals for the three-day gathering. What they were going to cook I did not know. Rosanne Gladue sent Dwight out hunting to look for moose. Louisa Ominayak had her sons hunting for duck and her daughters went picking berries for the bannock and dessert. Maggie Auger sorted out the labour matters, who would clean, finding women to help out and billeting.

The next task was to figure out where to find the money for travel and food items. I turned to the "informal men's group." These men had been strong supporters and friends of the Lubicon for many years. They attended the political meetings and spiritual gatherings in Little Buffalo. They were a small group but a strong one. Denys Auger, then vice president of the Alberta Indian Association, offered to find some funding. Chief Ernest Sundown of the Joseph Bighead Reserve in Saskatchewan also said he would help. Chief Victor Buffalo from Hobbema flew in to Little Buffalo to discuss the gathering and pledge his support. A traditional Seneca chief of the Iroquois Confederacy promised he would be there and bring a few others. The "core group" was now in action; we just needed a date and to send out invitations.

The research team that supports my work had wanted to hold a meeting in Little Buffalo. I thought perhaps they could bring elders and leaders with them. A few phone calls were made and it worked out. Colin Scott, head of the research team, arranged to bring four anthropologists and the Innu research partners, Peter Peneshue and Daniel Ashini, and Johnny Grant from James Bay. We sent the word out on the decided date of August 21. The elders from the blockade in Meadow Lake Saskatchewan, would attend as well as a traditional chief from the Tlingit people from Alaska.

As August approached several agendas emerged. The original spiritual meaning of the gathering was the central focus but never discussed openly. The women focused on the social possibilities, organizing softball games with Joseph Bighead, the feast, the Round Dance, and the official opening of the newly built Longhouse. My research team's involvement demanded a more formal "meeting of minds" should take place. The chief decided to invite the Lubicon lawyers to meet with the academics and decide what might be done to assist the Lubicon in a technocratic way. The chief also decided to have a formal discussion with elders to ask for their advice.

Charlie, Hubert, and the chief had their agenda. Charlie had not been the only one to have a message given to him through dreams. Before leaving for Little Buffalo in June, Hubert had also been contacted through dreams. Hubert came over to discuss his dreams. He wanted to tell Bernard a sacred fire burned in Lubicon land and that a ceremony was to be conducted by our people in Little Buffalo. Hubert had two agendas; one, to help the Lubicon in their struggle and, two, to kill the self-government referendum of 1992, which he believed would be the "demise of all Indians." The sacred fire would

"burn that paper, see that it go up in smoke." (F.N., Buck 1992) He believed they were involved in a spiritual war and we needed to enlist the help of the ancestors because only their ancestors could help get rid of the "dark cloud over them." (F.N., Buck, 1992)

I had a chance meeting with Mike Meyers days before leaving for the trip to Little Buffalo. Mike was a well-known Mohawk activist and was leaving from Six Nations to attend a Native healing conference in Edmonton. We decided to drive out west together and make a detour to South Dakota. He had to pick up a ceremonial gift from someone on the Pine Ridge Reservation and I had wanted to visit the Badlands. He had his children and several Native counsellors with him. I had rented a small U-haul for our trip. It contained my daughters' bikes, my computer, books, recorders, and a camera.

We detoured en route to Little Buffalo, Alberta and visited the Badlands in South Dakota. Perhaps there was a reason we were here at this moment on the way to Lubicon. I thought of Wounded Knee and how many wars our people had fought to remain free. I feared the Lubicon would follow the same fate as our ancestors. Most of all, I feared going back to Little Buffalo where the people are heavy with grief, their eyes telling a thousand stories of loss, loss of life, land they love, meaning, and culture; and of a faith so strong it allows the human endurance of this pain and fuels their resistance to genocide. In my fear, I hesitated to return to a place where the darkest heart of mankind consumed the lives of a people to feed itself. Western cannibalism is an evil that has plagued our people since the arrival of the invaders. I had witnessed this ongoing assault on our people over the many years I had visited the Lubicon. I asked for

strength for myself so that I might go back to Little Buffalo and not become immobilized by powerlessness and pain. I asked for strength to stop the government from this senseless destruction of a people and land. Finally I asked for a good mind and good heart.

The next day we drove into the heart of the Badlands. We stopped and had breakfast and drove to the place where it is believed the spiderwoman sits. I offered tobacco to her and the land. The children played a few yards from us, climbing on the rocks. We stood silently looking out over the land. Just as we were about to leave we saw a group of eagles fly directly over us. Amazed at this spectacular sight Mike offered tobacco to them. We counted twelve eagles. One swooped down and just barely touched our children's head with its wings. The eagles circled above us for over an hour and left. I thought, if ever there was a sign, that was it. We drove another two hours and stopped. Again the eagles came and circled above us. This was something nobody would believe back home.

We phoned Little Buffalo and told Bernard about our experience with the eagles. He decided to meet us in Edmonton and gather Denys, Ernest, and Paul to hear Hubert's message. Mike also wanted to meet with the chief. Mike had invited the Ojibway chief, Eli, from Shoal Lake, Ontario, and his spiritual advisor, John, to attend our meeting in Edmonton. Wendy Thomas a friend from Six Nations flew out to join us. We met at the West Harvest Hotel in Edmonton the night of June 16, 1992. Cramped in our room, the Lubicon offered tobacco to the Ojibway man, John, asking him to share his vision with them. After lengthy discussions about the various dreams and visions a

decision was made by the "group" to have a sacred fire at Little Buffalo. The discussions were so serious and intense we lost track of the time and our children. Bernard's son, Lou, and my girl, Ashley, and Mike's daughter, were wreaking havoc in the hallways. This ended abruptly when a woman screamed, "Where are your parents? Do you know what time it is?!" We all sat very still--as if caught doing something bad, quietly waiting to see if the kids would tell on us. I laughed as I observed the nervous looks on this room full of so-called "radicals" as they waited to be scolded by the angry woman. Finally she slammed the door and the children quietly returned to our room. We all breathed a sigh of relief that they did not lead her to our room. The meeting ended. The agenda for the summer's meeting had been set.

The gathering became central to that summer's visit to Lubicon. As we set up the tipi in Bernard's yard between the Longhouse and the sweat lodge there was a sense that events were coming together. The lawyers and academics had arrived with Peter Peneshue, Daniel Ashini, and Chief Abel Bosum from James Bay Cree. Lubicon lawyers James O'Reilly, Owen Young, Bob Sachs, and Ken Stroszik as well as anthropologists Colin Scott, Adrian Tanner, Joan Ryan, and others had arrived. The agenda for the day's meeting at the Longhouse was to strategize for the upcoming trial of the Lubicon in the fall. The Lubicon had been criminally charged with burning a logging camp. Those at the gathering viewed this act as political not criminal since it was associated with the land claim. After many hours of discussion, it was decided that the academics would gather "cultural" information from Lubicon elders in order to substantiate their history and dependence on the land. Joan Ryan was to bring in testimony from the

women in the community regarding their experiences, and Ken Stroszik told me I "could work with the kids to see if they might contribute to testifying." (F.N., August 1992) The Innu leaders offered their support to the Lubicon and Chief Bosum cemented his support to their struggle. The lawyers left and the elders began to arrive.

I was scurrying around trying to find the people who said they would billet and help prepare the Longhouse for the meal. We held a Round Dance and feast that evening. The fire would be lit the next day when all the elders arrived. The van from Six Nations arrived with Chief Buck and elder Calvin Miller. Mohawk Chief Allan McNaughton was flying in later that day. All of these people had been to Little Buffalo for ceremonies earlier in the spring. Chief Victor Buffalo sent five strong elderly women to participate in the events. The key people had arrived; the fire was to be lit by afternoon.

Men busied themselves getting wood and rocks for the four sweat lodge ceremonies which would take place in the next two days. People sat around the yard waiting for Bernard to begin the ceremonies. Elders entered the tipi where Hubert burned tobacco for the fire. The pipe ceremony also began. Charlie prayed in Cree and Hubert prayed in Cayuga. Charlie had advised Bernard to stay in the sweat lodge throughout the four consecutive sweats. We jokingly asked Charlie if Bernard was to be sacrificed for the ceremonies.

The first sweat began. Many people sat around the fire, built outside the lodge, talking and joking. I busied myself with finding keys to empty houses for guests, tracking down the drummers from Joseph Bighead and playing softball with the Lubicon

youth. The women arrived at the Longhouse with the prepared food and we cleaned as guests began to arrive. The Round Dance was about to begin when I was asked to accompany Hubert into the sweat. Although Hubert had been to Little Buffalo on numerous occasions he had never entered the sweat lodge. We were all happy that he finally had agreed to go in. I was supposed to orchestrate the Round Dance and help the shy women greet the "outsiders." I also had to find beds for the numerous elders from the Meadowlake blockade. The elders from Meadowlake had set up a blockade to stop their tribal council from logging traditional lands. They were looking forward to the gathering. I turned to Ernest and asked him if he would take over my duties.

The sweat began and people prayed out loud in their own language. Everyone was praying for Bernard to have the strength and wisdom to help his people as well as praying for the people and the land. Charlie sang four songs, as did as Denys and Hubert. It was a strong sweat. We also prayed for Hubert to get well. In between rounds, the flap would open and Erwin, Bernard's eldest son, would pop his head in. "The elders from Saskatchewan don't want to camp. They want a mattress." The next round Erwin said, "Do you know what happened to the truck with the mattress for the elders?" On the third round he said, "Do you know where the key to the house where we want to put the mattress is?" On the fourth, he popped his head in to ask, "Do you know what happened to the elders that wanted the mattress?" We burst into laughter and continued with the ceremonies.

When we left the lodge the Northern Lights had arrived and surrounded us. I went into the Longhouse and was told to "get Ernest away from the microphone. He's

been telling bad jokes all night." The Longhouse was full to capacity and everyone was dancing and enjoying themselves. Exhausted from the sweat lodge, I left to take in the company of the visiting ancestors. Trying to remember all that I had seen and heard, I wondered how I was going to write about my involvement in these ceremonies and closed political meetings. My role as researcher had been redefined by the Lubicon. They had shared so much with me; they had included me in their lives. How was I to remove myself from these events in order to construct a presentation that revealed intimate thoughts of the spiritual beliefs of these people? They had revealed so much to me that was sacred and profound. How could this relationship be translated into the white man's world? As I listened to the drums I pondered these questions, feeling so very lost between many worlds. How did a Mohawk woman end up with the Lubicon Cree in northern Alberta working on a doctorate in anthropology for McMaster University? It was all part of the Creator's mystery in life. I reflected on a conversation I had in 1990 with my supervisor, Harvey Feit. He quite seriously cautioned me about the possibility of the Lubicon "not existing by the time I finished my research." I remember walking away from his office when this reality hit me. Could I deal with it?

I realized I was here for a reason. I had been allowed to be a part of their ceremonies, a focal point of Lubicon life. I decided people needed to know about the power of the grandfathers, grandmothers, the fire, the drum and songs, the pipe, elders, the ceremonies, and sweat lodge. They needed to know about the spirit of original human beings--the Lubicon people.

Chief Hubert Buck sat with me for awhile. I told him of my dilemma and he responded, "Write the truth, that's all." So simple was his answer I had to laugh at myself. I told him they would not accept that there is a truth or even that I would know it. He responded, "Write from your mind and heart, what you heard from these people, what you saw, even what you felt. Isn't that your responsibility, to tell their story?" (F.N., Buck, 1992)

Hubert had been my companion on this journey from the beginning. Back in 1989 he visited the community with me and my husband, Rodney. By August 1992 we had visited the community numerous times together. In fact the Longhouse they built was inspired by Hubert. The building was finished in the summer of 1992 and the opening ceremony was conducted during the gathering. He had tried to help the people spiritually and morally over the last four years and this had earned their respect. I felt privileged to have had the opportunity to be a part of it all. In memory of Hubert, I will attempt to follow his advice.

Voices from Lubicon

The person my family spent the majority of our time with was chief of the Lubicon Lake Nation Bernard Ominayak. During most of our visits to Little Buffalo we stayed in his home and soon felt like an extended family. I say "extended" because so many of our relatives accompanied us on my research trips--aunts, mothers, and nephews, who refer to Bernard as "uncle." Even though we seemed to spend a lot of time together, it was difficult to find times when Bernard could discuss his life.

During the summer of 1991, I logged one ten-day period in Bernard's life. In ten days he drove to Edmonton and back three times, attended four meetings, held over seven sweat lodge ceremonies, and never went to bed before 4:00 A.M. To say the least, we couldn't physically or emotionally keep up with his gruelling schedule. His days and nights included everything from meeting with Lubicon lawyers, attending a conference hosted by the Lutheran Church, fixing a furnace in a lady's home at 2:00 A.M., gathering rocks near Fish Lake for the sweat, and picking and making medicine for a very sick little girl. One of the medicines he showed me consisted of 84 different herbs. This was one example of his many dozens of prepared medicines. He often stayed awake while others went to bed, usually to prepare medicines for a very sick community. It was not unusual for him to spend the greater part of the night in the sweat lodge, eat at 3:00 A.M., visit a while, sleep, then wake at 9:00 A.M. to head to Edmonton for a 1:00 P.M. meeting, and then return to Little Buffalo for another sweat by 9:00 P.M. In the midst of all this, he was still a hunter at heart and who had an obligation for many, including his family. Aside from the "official" business, he was always on the scene when homes were set on fire, when there were accidents, when there was a break and enter at the band store, when there were incidents of domestic violence, and so forth.

Living at his house was similar to living at a twenty-four hour crisis centre. In essence he was the hunter, doctor, policeman, fireman, social worker, spiritual advisor; he was the Lubicon chief. On top of the day-to-day official and unofficial business, there were always local reporters wandering around, as well as journalists from Japan, Germany, and Sweden. At times it was outright comical watching Bernard operate at five

different levels simultaneously. The following tells of events that took place at Fish Lake. All our actions were under police surveillance since the logging camp that had been burnt was located not far from Fish Lake. The police sat outside Bernard's home, parked across the road by the graveyard.

The Sacred Run, led by the former leader of the American Indian Movement, Dennis Banks, arrived that day. There were over fifty runners, some Natives, the rest from all four directions: Africa, Europe, India, Sweden, and so on. We had a hot dog roast at Edward Laboucon's to welcome the weary runners. We were planning a feast for that evening. The food was trucked to Fish Lake, as well as the runners who were short on vehicles.

Bernard had been extremely busy the previous days and was quite exhausted. The runners were anxious to talk with him about the land claim and he tried to hide in his cabin. Under normal circumstances people do not bother him when he is in his cabin. They often wait outside, weather permitting. Since these people were not accustomed to Lubicon social mores, they walked into his cabin and surrounded him. There were at least twenty people crammed into his cabin, sitting everywhere. A woman from France was trying to show him an article she had about the Lubicon. There was a Lakota Sioux man talking medicine to him while an East Indian man started to massage his back. Bernard looked over his shoulder and said, "That's okay. I don't need that." This man replied, "Oh, yes, you are so tense. Let me rub you down." He went down Bernard's back and started to message his legs. If I had a picture of his face during that moment it might describe much of Bernard's character. He was trying to pull away as this woman

insisted he read this article, thrusting it so close to his face that his cap fell off. He didn't really lose his cool but was as close as I had ever witnessed. He pulled away from the East Indian man that had hold of his legs, backed away from the woman, almost tripped over the people sitting on the floor, and headed straight out the door, only to be greeted by an RCMP officer. Those of us watching this episode were laughing quietly as the chief maneuvered through this comical situation, which he wasn't appreciating one bit. The scene stuck with me. It captured much of his life, people demanding his attention and his calm amidst total chaos.

I understood how the sweat lodge seemed to be the centre of his life. Through the years I observed a person under great pressure increasingly draw his strength from the sweat lodge. There was no chaos there, no white people. Everything in there was Cree. In there the grandfathers were in control.

The following interview was given during one of my visits during the summer of 1991 and again in 1992.

CHIEF BERNARD OMINAYAK: THIS IS A BLOODY WAR YOU KNOW

"I was really close to my grandmothers. I remember when we were in the bush this one time. I must of been eight or nine. I knew someone was there, I knew she had passed away. My parents didn't know what to think. I wanted to keep going to see her. I guess it was then that I realized something about myself. I paid attention to those things after that. In the bush, you're closest to all those ways of knowing, close to God. I was sent to Grouard, the mission school. I didn't much like it but did like learning. I

read the Bible. I know what's in there, too. In fact, they used to have contests for kids who could memorize different testaments, I won. I really memorized the whole Bible that year. I won a scrap book. Some of the stories were interesting, but I liked the stories we were told better. Closer to those. I ran away after grade ten. I couldn't stand to be away for so long. I had a family soon after that I needed to look after. We lived in the bush and I would work when I could. No roads back then.

"I got involved in these land claims. The elders told us about them and Walter was trying his best to figure out why we hadn't gotten a reserve and how we could deal with this issue. I would go with him to some meetings. I met people like Harold Cardinal who also went to Grouard.

"The Isolated Communities Board was an initiative by [non-treaty signers] supported by Harold to deal with people like us, in our situation. I guess things just progressed from there. I read everything I could get my hands on and found myself as chief. It all seemed like a natural progression of events. Anyhow, Fred Lennarson was brought in by Harold and I liked the way he seemed to have all the facts with him. He was always prepared. The Isolated Communities Board started to fall apart, people not attending meetings, internal politics. But, from our stand point it was the only solid structure thus far to deal with our situation; I didn't want to see it fall apart. It did anyway. We didn't have a band council or anything at that point. Walter had managed to start at least getting housing. I bugged Fred, calling and calling him to come out here and help the Lubicon. I would call him from this pay phone at the only gas station in the area. I knew that if I kept it up he would give in. He did. Trapping skills can be used

in many ways (laughs). I knew Fred knew the government and I knew we did not. We needed Fred to show us the ropes, how these people operate, how they think. Fred wanted me to do all the talking and tell me later about it, but I wanted to just watch, watch white people, learn from observing them. So in most cases, I would sit back and listen, see where their priorities were. It was quite a lesson from what I was used to in the way I grew up. But Fred was fire and I figured out you have to fight fire with fire, someone who knows their language. We would work together in that way.

"From there Fred worked with the Alberta Indian Association and we eventually lobbied for official recognition as a band council. Even that was a big struggle. I knew we needed a lawyer, given what was happening with the oil coming in, the roads; we needed legal advice. I asked Fred to get us the best. Fred [through Billy Diamond] managed to convince James O'Reilly to come out and hear our case. It wasn't easy, mind you, convincing people like this to work for you when you have nothing but a story to tell them. That was it, we were just up-front with these guys. We knew what we wanted for a long time; it was just finding the white people to work with us in fighting the government. Actually, when you think about it we must have been crazy to think we could do what we did, convincing these strangers to come here, with no money to offer. But the elders were pushing us younger guys to settle this once and for all. I set my mind to it back then. I had babies to care for, mouths to feed, but I focused all my energies on getting this done, this land claim. When I look back, I see all that has been lost. The government can never compensate for what we have been through. I mean all the families, not just mine. My kids have suffered. I was never around. I

missed a lot over the last twelve years. But I figured if I could secure a land base, a future for my children and grandchildren, then that was more important than anything. I hate the way they have had to suffer, though. I have to credit Louise with a lot. She kept things going while I was on the road, at meetings, and so on. Really she raised them." (F.N., Ominayak, 1991)

"I think [about] the main reason we are still in this fight. Basically because we understand in looking at the different Native societies across Canada, meeting our brothers and sisters, we saw that a lot of them had lost their ways. And, especially in the last five years, we started realizing how lucky we are to a large degree in keeping with what we had for many, many generations. The important thing in all of this is land.

"We survived off this land for many years and everything that we do surrounds land. For example, through our prayers and the ceremonies that we have, everything is tied back to the land. Its like a newborn baby and the attachment it has to its mother. It can't go on its own, nowadays I suppose it could. I mean, years ago, a baby that wasn't nursed by its mother wouldn't survive. If the baby was left on its own. I mean, take a couple days old baby left on its own, how long would it last? In this situation, everything that we do, for example, when a person is sick, the first thing we do is go back to the land, to see what kind of sickness this person has. Then we go back to our different areas of our traditional areas, where certain herbs are, which may help the ill person. Or if we need to go to a certain animal to heal that person. Then we have to go to the different area of that animal. So our whole territory was kind of like a drug store in one sense, a grocery store, and a meat market, to try and put it in modern terms.

Keeping in mind that the Creator has put us here to raise our children and grandchildren and we got to try and do what we can and hope and pray for his guidance and assistance in trying to keep this land so our children and grandchildren will have something.

"But what we saw and what we have experienced is the white priority, or oil development or governments. All they're concerned with is money. Money to them is like land to us. Those two things we cannot compare. From our ways, money never meant anything to us. That is why we are poor in one sense, in the materialistic ways. In a lot of ways we are still well off as a Native person. The two have to have a balance as we are finding out. As long as you don't have the money, then you can't really be fighting off the powerful people all around you who are interested in more money. And yet you are trying to protect what is, in a true sense, an inherent right to a large degree. The Creator must have put us here for a purpose. There must be a reason why we are here, to keep what we got as much as possible. Throughout this process we have been taught, for myself, my parents taught me, I got to share, share everything, not to kill anything for no reason at all. Through all these things, we got to always respect the animals and the land, no matter what we do, the trees, they all have a purpose. As we start out in our prayers, these are the areas that you'll notice a lot of times. People are smoking their pipe; they'll start dealing with our mother, the earth. I kind of hate to use that terminology, (aware of the new age popular usage, we nodded) because we see a lot of this stuff, the medicines that we get off the land from the earth itself.

"When we bring our pipe around it's all pointing to those things because that was the Creator's ways, and means one another, and yet to try to keep that alive

throughout this process. These herbs go through a certain process, like you just don't go out and pick it any time you feel like it. I'm sure that has a lot in common with your people like Hubert and that. Then there are trees that all have different roles, different purposes, different medicines. It could be the root, or the pines off a spruce tree. These things all have meanings and purposes, in our connection to the earth. Same thing with the animals, like the bear is one of the powerful animals. We use that for both medicine and also, many other ways. Same thing with the moose and other animals. We always had the good and bad. There is always bad on any of these given animals. The bad stuff always hits hard right away, but the good always prevails, even though at times it is a slow process. But we have found the good will always overcome that. It may be more than one thing on the good side to overcome that bad. There has been a lot of times, for example, some animals, maybe two or three animals in any given year that we didn't have. Maybe we didn't have for one or two years the moose. We had to rely heavily on the best hunters of our community to provide the meat, moose meat, for the rest of the community. It wasn't strictly that these guys were good hunters; they were backed up by medicine men who knew how to use other animals in assisting these other guys in getting animals. And we still have a lot of that stuff go on today. For example, there are times when there are a lot of white hunters around, and they are not getting anything. One of our guys can go in there and get an animal. A lot of them knew that there is more to it than just the hunter, in these situations. But that's something that we never dealt with. We only use, or do that kind of stuff when there is a real problem. We don't do it every time someone goes out. If there is moose around, then the guys just do the hunting. A

lot of these younger guys are just depending on their own luck. There is more to it than just the hunting aspect.

"Same thing with trappers. The trappers relied on medicine men a lot to do their trapping and, of course, they always done better than everyone else. Under those circumstances, we had to go back and deal with the medicine men who then we had to help in a lot of times, when they were putting up a Tea Dance and things like that. So if I had some moose meat or duck, I would take that along and give it to the cooks that were cooking there as part of my contribution. And put in as much time as possible in putting up the ceremony; we are still trying to do that.

"For these ceremonies, that's where we bring in the herbs, to get blessed. And we ask or invite or ask the people that have gone on, our relations, for them to come and eat with us as we do these ceremonies, we ask for their help. A lot of people never bring it up. But there is a major difference between an Aboriginal person and a non-Aboriginal person, where they don't seem to have that connection, the white man. The Bible, a lot of our people start believing that, that our ways are evil and they should be looking at the white man's way, which is the only way, the right way. They seem to be picking on people who aren't the brightest people and pull people in to follow in. The so-called church. I think some people have started to give up hope, then these groups come in and pull them in. I think it's psychology at work. The people believe them. That is an added burden to the overall problem that exists, when you have a people that are faced with resource development. Really no way, or limited knowledge, as to how to defend

themselves in the so-called political system that is in place. Or the legal system that's not in place by the governments of Canada.

"So, when you have a group of people that when you are doing business, that feel that everyone is honest, at both sides of the table; where we were raised to respect all people and all forms of life, whether it be animal or any of the trees, all these things. So, it's a hard lesson that we have had to learn through this process, whereby we found out the white man doesn't care. All they're after is money and how to make more money, with no regard to the land or animals or any life. Anything that gets in their way they want to push aside to make way for the modern, or so-called modern, technology that benefits them. It's a head-on collision with the white society. It's something that I think we realize that we are not going to hold off forever. Yet our ways are disappearing fast. It is something that we can not let go on, we have to try and keep as much as we can for as long as we can. Because once we lose that connection with the earth and the animals, this land around us, whatever we have survived off of for these many years, it's weakening us.

"We are in a situation where we have to keep hanging on. I think there are more and more Native people who are beginning to understand they are never going to be white. So the best thing is to try to grab back whatever they can, which is their identity as Aboriginal people. Some are even so far as not speaking their own language or knowing anything about the land or their ways altogether. It's a lot harder for them to come back. In our situation we have been fortunate enough that we have been isolated for a long time. So we are seeing our ways disappear at a rapid pace. We are also a lot

further ahead in one sense than the other Native groups in Canada. But the Lubicon are fighting and, most times, fighting alone. A lot of the other Native people have a tendency to believe the government where they say we are troublemakers. But the fact of the matter is land. We are fighting for the land. There are policies and treaties, provincial legislation, whatever else other Native people have made agreements with. We are confined in many ways in what we can do, because of these other agreements already in place. So for our traditional territory, our preference would be to hang onto our land. While we are fighting with governments to try and get a settlement that would enable the people to make a living. Like, for myself, in the back of my mind, I am always looking and looking for a way around this where we don't have to deal with the government. My preference would be to tell the federal government to go to hell and keep what we got. If there is any possibility of going in that direction that would be my first choice, but looking realistically at what other Native groups got and have.

"Getting back to where I started, the spirituality of all this is that if we allow ourselves to be landless, we are nobody. Now there are differences between us and the Woodland Cree, it's more of a problem of a group of people that have given up all hope, and are on their hands and knees to the government and are more or less prepared to do what the government tells them to. Whether that be selling the rest of the people down the river that doesn't matter to them. They want to grab onto anything that comes their way. You have to think, these people wouldn't exist or even have anything if it were not for Lubicon. With our own small group here, there are some that have given up all hope. What an elder said about those that give up all hope is they are not any good to anyone

or even themselves. So it's a situation that is happening. I don't blame anyone for being at that stage. The only thing we have to keep in mind as long as the majority of the people still want to go in this direction then I have to do everything I can that has been put before me.

"I am sure a lot of the other people, like the James Bay Cree, face a lot of these same problems. As we look at the social structure of any community, that's the more important thing. Once that is broke, then we have the many different problems that both Native and non-Native people face.

"In our group we have always had these family groupings, one family in one area and another in another area and so on. While we had these ceremonies we always were able to identify where people were at fall or where they where going to be at winter. It was always kind of a government in one sense. We kept tabs on our people and what part of the territory they where going to be on in a year. For example, if there was a death in one of the families we were able to notify people throughout the territory and track down people in areas at any given time even though we didn't have phones or anything. So we did this by dog team or horse or walking.

"The social fibre of these things are older people have a whole lot of knowledge in how to survive off the land which now is not being utilized to a large degree given the destruction of the area. Our community faces a lot of hardship because of the destruction to the wildlife. Before, one family would have a good hunter or a good trapper, some were good at drying meat, everyone had resource people in these groups. Some women where good at various things, all these resource people. But once we were

pushed into this box, this community a lot of this was pushed aside. So welfare left people at home. The older people were pushed aside, doing nothing. Then the young have nothing to do, start drinking, lots of deaths related to alcohol. The structure that held us together is falling apart. A lot of our people started losing at a rapid pace our ways. Especially the younger people, they don't show a lot of respect to the older people or to themselves even. It's a sad situation, for any community.

"Bringing it back to our ceremonies, like the Tea Dance, for example, where everything that we are about is what is brought in there, into the ceremony. The people were glad to help one another. If there was a family, for example, where a woman had died and they had children, everyone would try to take a child and raise it as theirs, if the burden was too much on the mother or father. It wasn't any kind of adoption. In one sense, but no legalities. But if a father had six children and he was not capable of looking after all of them, his relations would try to help. If he had no relations than the people would look at taking one or all of them in until they got older then maybe he would want this one or another to come home. That was the understanding among our people.

"In these ceremonies, the herbs for medicine were brought in, a purification system and also a place where they are blessed. The structures are made of poplar and different kind of trees, each representing something different. And a certain amount of poplar is used, certain amount of birch, willow, whatever is used. There are markings [we make] on each which are used from dyes that come from the ground. The different markings on these trees all mean different things. The lodge itself will vary from one

medicine man to another. A lot will depend on the forefathers because a lot of this stuff is handed down from the years. For example, some people will have four fires and each means a certain thing. Some can go up to eight or twelve depending on what time of the year. Or two medicine men can get together and put their's together, depending on how they agreed and if there is a lot of commonality with the two structures. There is so much that could be said about that. A lot of this stuff has meaning, like four, the four seasons, and so on.

"We pray to just about everything the Creator has provided to us. We pray to the thunder, animals. You know the animals love their young ones. For example, the bear, mother bear will die to protect her young ones. We ask for their love and their power that they have been given by the Creator. We look at them as something that has provided for the Indian person to utilize. Once you obtain the knowledge as to how you do these things for the different animals in the surrounding area, then we try to utilize those. I think that is how we have been able to survive is having that knowledge in these different areas. As I pointed out how we use the trees, the medicines, the sun, moon, the stars, the rain, many times you will find when people pray, they pray to the four ways, and they all come from the four directions, the cycles of spring, summer, winter, and fall. These are the kind of connections that have to do with the fire, the rock, all things, things we use in ceremonies. We pray to it for its strength. For example, the rock, we pray to it for it to heal people that go into the sweat lodge. All these things. There has been talk about sweat lodges. There are many different sweat lodges, depending again on the

person running the sweat lodge and who is handing it down to him. There is bear, the turtle, and so on.

"And these drums, they are passed on through generations. Like a lot of these drums that we have today are from way back. There are times when you change the hide or the skin on the drum, but the marking inside, things inside the drum, those things have to be put back and not tampered with. That's what is most important about our medicine drum, what's inside. For example, if the medicine man was helped by any of the animals or the sun or people will have a tendency to be dependent on any one of God's creations, that is what their marking represent on the drum. Like I have a drum and I'm not sure how far back it comes from, that drum has been handed down through the generations and that is how John got it. John's relations were also mine, our grandfathers, and he handed it down to me. And I got another from Charlie. These things you don't just pick up. Like, the ones that aren't closed aren't the same.

"Most drums will have a song that is also passed down. Or maybe the owner of the drum will dream a song and that song will be passed down. There are different pipes that have a song that go with it, like a medicine pipe will usually have a song that goes with it. They all have a way of working together for different purposes, different things. The pipe and the drum may go together for certain reasons, like a Tea Dance. You can't just sing anybody's song. The four young guys that work in the Tea Dance they can sing some of the medicine songs because they have earned them. Also, if they need to know what does this mean, they can go to the medicine person putting up the Tea Dance like Charlie or John, and they can ask because they helped in the Tea Dance and

have earned that. Many times many of these guys may go to the Tea Dance and work and not realize that they are earning the rights. Like, you notice in the Tea Dance, the four guys all have different markings. One has a belt, another has a feather, all those different things mean something, most of which has to do with protection. For example, if you get into different areas where there is a lot of other people involved, like young guys, and they may offend someone and that can come back on them. But it won't work on them because they are protected by these things because they are helping. The same with the pipe, you can earn the right and be handed that. Like, the pipes that I have were given to me by elders. These elders saw the struggle that I was in, the pressure that I was always under, so they gave me these and told me that I needed this one for protection or this one for another reason and I was to rely heavily on these pipes.

"When I light my pipe, I trust the pipe will correct my prayer, if I say something wrong, it will correct it or clear it for a prayer of strength. Any pipe here that you get from anyone, the person passing it on has to bless it before passing it on. Speak to the pipe, purify it, and as they hand it on to you, they tell you that is what it is for and how to use and to keep it. And how the different pipes have different prayers. When you're praying to a different thing, you got to use it a certain way. You don't just take the pipe and smoke it. Most will deal with the four directions and different things, mother earth, animals, spirits, grandfathers, angels, or protectors. For example, with my pipes, these animals spirits, the people gone on before us, you ask them to thank and pray to the Creator to share his love. The bottom line to using the pipe is how you use and what comes from here [heart]. The bear is one of the most powerful of the four-legged

animals, the buffalo, the moose. The spruce tree is our main tree, you can ask the tree for things. We use it for different medicines, the bark, the root can be used for medicine. There is a difference between the white man and the Indian. I think the major difference is they have been given a ways and means to pray to the Creator entirely different way from the Indian people. Indian people's ways all pertain to land, while a white man has a Bible and a church and that is where they do their praying. And I think there is some that can do a lot of different things in their church, that's their way. They seem to fall short, even when they try like hell to utilize the Indian ways. And they really take it to heart and really want to utilize it to a certain point. But with the white man, there is the a dollar to be made, he'll grab that first. Maybe that is not true of all white men but I've yet to find one, especially within government, where how to get another dollar isn't a goal in life.

"One of the main reasons, or the way I see it in what I know, that as a Native person if I want to survive and share as a Native person, the true meaning of a Native person, the way that the Creator was to provide for myself is I have got to be as close to the land as possible. This area, what I know, the more we lose by way of land and animals the more we lose ourselves. That is the important reason, where we know what you do within your land base, what you're dependent on the land. I don't see myself living a white man's way of life. I have seen some of it, have lived some, but you're really missing something. But when I get back, I need to go out in the bush to get my strength back.

"After all the troubled years we have had, and trying to hang on, land means life to us, a way of life. We enjoyed something we are losing. For our people that is the only way. We do not desire to live in a town or city, but this is home, the only home we know. It is very important that we try to hang on to as much of our home as we can, the animals that we survived off of. If we lose all that, we have lost more than we can ever recover. Start losing your ways, then your identity, and then your pride, everything else where you get to a point that comes with all that. In this community, there is great knowledge of how to survive off the land, but as long as the kind of mega-projects are taking place that way of life isn't there. We are supposedly living in a free country where people live as they chose. It is truly an inherent right to live like this.

"I guess that is what the government saw early on, that the Native people were strong in their beliefs and spirituality, and since these were strong there wasn't much the white society could do but try and weaken the Indian through his spirituality and beliefs. When you know who you are, your culture, your traditions, no one white or Indian can take that from you. Because you are strong, your mind and heart are strong, your values, your beliefs, is what gives us a purpose. That is why the government worked so hard to break that, to break us in that way. They get the missionaries to do their work. Now, look around at our societies, the damage that is being done to our spirits, our land. I firmly believe, as long as we can hang onto our traditions or spirituality if I may use that terminology, that's the direction to go, our land and our spirituality. As long as we have one we'll be strong enough to survive this process, or attack, on our people. If they succeed in breaking us, it will be because they succeed in

destroying our spirituality. It's part of my job to ensure they don't do that, they don't destroy us spiritually. If there is one thing we can rely on, as we have seen through this mess, it's our ceremonies, the grandfathers, our Creator. We have to remember that is where the power is. The government realizes that when you know who you are, or are strong in your own identity, they [Natives] can be a powerful adversary, as history has shown us." (F.N., Ominayak, June 1992)

JOHN "C" LETENDRE

John C. Letendre is in his late forties and resides at Loon Lake, which is about twenty-five kilometres from Little Buffalo. He is a "non-status" Lubicon member and a cousin of Bernard's. He would often come to Little Buffalo to visit Bernard and help conduct the sweat lodge ceremonies. John is a quiet person with limited skills in the English language. I immediately noticed the respectful way people approached him. It took some coaxing on Bernard's side to convince John C. to allow me to interview him. He was nervous and I could tell he was doing this as a favour and not because he wanted to so. The first interview in 1991 was more formal. I sensed his uneasiness. The subsequent visits to Little Buffalo resulted in getting to know John C. better. When I felt he was at ease, I asked him for a second interview and he agreed. The first section of this interview is from the summer of 1991 the second interview from the summer of 1992.

"I had two fathers, one raised me, not the real one. My father, the one that raised me, I miss him. He died now not long ago. He taught me everything, my mother

and father. We were out in the bush a lot. I really like it out there. That's where I'd be all the time if I could. Bernard, he help me too. I got into trouble and I was never in trouble before, well, once before, but that's not really my fault. But Bernard, he helped me that time. I shot a moose and another. I didn't do that on purpose. I shoot for the one moose but it got away But another moose behind. I got that one. When I went there, to get the moose, I see the other hurt, so I did shoot it. So I had to take it, because it will die somewhere. That's not good, to hurt it. I went and took the other moose, so it wouldn't be for nothing. I took them back in my truck and somebody see that I got two moose and tell on me. I guess that is what happened, because I cut them up and give some away. My sister, she got some of it. The police come or the gaming person. He say to me, "Did you have two?" I don't lie, I said, "Yes." And he wanted me to show him. So, I showed him and took him over to my sisters and show him. He tell me that I broke the law, can't have two moose, only one. They took my sister's meat and some of mine. They tell me it's a thousand dollar fine and if I don't pay I go to jail. I was real worried. I don't have any money so I thought I was going to jail. I called Bernard that time and he said not to worry. He said he would get a lawyer and they wouldn't let that happen to me, to go to jail. He got a big lawyer from back east, O'Reilly I think his name is. He is a good man. I don't really know what happened except I didn't get into trouble. They gave me my moose back but it was no good meat. That was a shame, to see that meat not any good to anyone, all that trouble and money, no need for it. But, that's how Bernard help me, I told him then I would help him. There are people that try to change my mind, about Bernard, about being Lubicon. They say I should sign with

the Loon Lake band. They start one there too now, like the Woodland Cree. They try to talk me into signing. They tell me I'll get a status card. Well, all these years now, I never have one of those. That is not really the thing, to have this card. It's in your heart what you are. I know my children want one. Things come with that card, certain things I can't get and they can't. But, I wait with the Lubicon and stay where I am, not change. These men have come to my door to talk to me about the band, white men. They want me to sign, they say I'll get better home and so on. I don't like it when they come knocking to bother me about this. I want no part of what they are doing. They are doing this to hurt Lubicon. I don't think something good can come out of it when they have a bad purpose. I think they're not for the Indian, being tricked, a lot of people let themselves be tricked by these white men. I wonder to myself when they talk, how come you never around before? No one cared what kind of house we had, school or offices, but now, they all over saying how they going to give us all these things if we sign.

"I never saw a white man until I was sixteen. I was in the bush a lot. I was scared the first time I seen one, he was there for not a good reason. That's when they tell us, you have to get a card to and pay to trap and hunt. All these years my grandfathers hunted and trap, it's our grandfather's hunting places, now we have to register and pay? Why? Now, they try to take me to jail for hunting. Trouble, always trouble when you see white people, they coming for reasons that aren't for the good of the Indian. They run right through trap lines with the oil and roads. No one came and asked them to pay. "Bernard, they don't like him because you can't trick him. He knows what they up to, no good, not for the Indian, land or anything. These men here going to court now, that

worry me. I don't think they are bad men, good men, I think more trouble. I told Bernard I will go to court with them. I don't understand a lot of what is the problem, what they say. I go just to be there for the men. That's why I don't spend as much time in the bush, where I like it the most. The bush--you're close to God, real close, not like when you're in a house, not the same. In the bush, your dreams are strong and you feel all the spirit of life around you. You don't feel that here, not really. You think that's why everyone is sick, lots of trouble, maybe? I pray a lot, I pray every day. My father, he taught me to pray, always for the good. Maybe that's what I can do to help, keep praying, all the time, asking for help. That's all I can do." (F.N., John "C.", July 1991)

SECOND INTERVIEW WITH JOHN "C."

"The Tea Dance, according to my father and mother, the Tea Dance is like everything we need. Something or someone sick or our loved ones are sick our children or our grandfathers, grandmothers we don't like to see them die before they're very old. Every time we see pain on our hearts or our minds where they make like crying, because our loved ones are sick. At that time, what we see the only one we ask to stop that, is our God, that's the only one. We call him, people think we are nuts, on our hearts we call our father whenever we see pain on our hearts. The Tea Dance we set up early spring and late in fall. That's why we are doing that to keep our children growing up. We don't want to see them go ahead of us to die. That's what it means, the Tea Dance, to ask that our children stay with us. Sometimes, well, my father told me we can just set

it up once a year, summer. But he usually set it up early spring and fall, that's what it means.

"We set it up. When we start inside there, we thank the trees that we have cut them. We broke them, because God planted them for us. The animals we thank, because we use them too. We not just go ahead and kill them, we thank them. Because he put the world here for us. All the people, they pick those things, the medicine. Those people, like they can help everyone, not just relatives. Lots of people we know just do that. But not just our children, all children, help everyone. I tell my children the bad and the good. My father always tell me, this is good, take it, this is bad, don't take it. I tell my children that. Lots of people know bad medicine and they use it. I tell everyone, like you guys, because I know you are good, you try to help. We thank you every time for coming around to our Tea Dance and sweat lodge. I am happy you enjoy the sweat. I try to do good. Whenever I get on the pipe I try to do the best I can, pray for all the people. To bad I can't speak English very good, so people could understand my words. I have a hard time. Those people that used to know medicine, they dream, somebody tell them what to use, what it looks like and then they know. I was dreaming. When you sleep that's when you find out about this. Our father, he picked people, he knows me, I wouldn't fool somebody, I won't joke on people. I tell good people, anybody. Our father, he pick people that will do it right, he do the good work, the right things. To look after these things. Same thing with medicine.

"White people don't believe. Like animals don't have spirits, every animal has spirit like us. Trees, too, just the same, medicine in the ground, they all got spirits.

everything, every one of the animals has it, birds too. But white people just don't believe it. All the trees, all the poplar, spruce, every one of them have a spirit. Fire too. The fire is one of the important things, the fire, every one of those Tea Dance's and sweat--all those things, fire go ahead of it all the time. Like the Tea Dance, we have to cook so we need fire, with a sweat we have to make fire.

"We quit about ten years ago. Those Christian people don't like that. One time they tell us we have to quit [our ceremonies]. They don't want it, they don't like, they don't want to help us. My father told me to quit on it. I talk to myself and the grandfathers. I talk to myself, just quit for awhile. I ask our father, we going to quit for awhile. I ask him to forgive me and forgive my children. I said to myself, I am going to take it back in while, I said to myself. Finally it came back now. Ten years ago this was, but I pick it up again about three, four years ago. My father was kind, he didn't want to make mad anyone.

"The drum is what they dream to make that drum and draw those things. You are not just supposed to make anything there, you dream. If you dream, someone come and give you a drum and you see the markings on it. If someone give you something like that, you never forget. And you might dream someone sings, that's when the spirits give songs. Those songs you never forget. Some songs are passed, those songs I sung the other night are all my father's songs. Indians grow with it. All was dreamed. Even the Tea Dance was dreamed. They dream these things, how to put it up. I learn from my parents, that's the way I know." (F.N., John "C.", June 1992)

JOHN SIMON AUGER

John Simon Auger, also known as Simon, is in his early forties and speaks English well. I met him through the sweat lodge ceremonies which he attended regularly. Because of his quiet nature he was not easy to get to know. He and his wife, Maggie, were always at the Tea Dance and ceremonies but were both very quiet. Maggie was more outgoing and we later became very good friends. It wasn't until 1992 when Chief Buck and his friend, Beatrice, and daughter, Sadie, stayed with John and Maggie that he opened up to us "Mohawks." John "Simon" is cousins with John "C." Both are non-status. I interviewed him shortly after a Tea Dance in the spring of 1992.

"Ever since I was young, I went to Tea Dance. We would go ride from Lubicon Lake and to Loon Lake and Marten River, we went all over on horseback. There would be about twenty of us on horseback. We went all over, the spring and the fall. We would go to three or four every spring and every fall. I can't describe how I feel about it, how I feel that today right now. That song John "C." sang nearly made me cry. That one the other night at the Tea Dance, that song used to belong to my uncle. He raised John "C." that's why John "C." got it. First it used to be my grandfather's. I don't remember that, then my uncle got it. He used to take off from here to Loon Lake early in the morning on horseback. I guess he noticed I was always working. Ever since I was about eleven or twelve. When I started working, at the last fire, that's always the one you start at, work your way up. The leader, the one that wears the sash, the first fire, he tells the rest what to do. I think when where we lost ours, when I was about eighteen. They didn't do them as often, they quit. Like John "C." I never heard him sing until about two

years. He's worked so long ever since he was a kid till he was in his thirties. His father quit. The songs have to be passed on. Even if you heard your father sing those songs every day and every night and you know them clear through, there is no way you can sing them unless they were passed on to you. So you can memorize it, but there would be no power to it because it wasn't passed on to you.

"So many years we did lose it, few guys can sing around here. What happened was the white man's religion came. And there was pressure on him all the time by these people. He was kind like John "C." he didn't like to offend anyone. So he laid off, that's what really did it. The last few years it's coming back. I can't say I really lost anything, it was really with me all this time. But nothing was passed onto me so there was nothing I could do. When I saw my uncle getting sick, there I was really worried. But then I heard John "C." had it, so it really brought me up again. Like the other day, he thanked me for helping him. I told him I will always be here to help. I believe in it so much that I was so happy he started it up again. It was hard on him because of his real father. My uncle just raised him, he has another father. I used to work at all of the Tea Dances. Like Maggie's uncle over at Lubicon Lake and another one on this side of Loon Lake, Marten Lake, I worked in every one of them. John "C." didn't finish that song, he was thinking of his Dad too much. It brought tears to my eyes too. We didn't have any doctors back then. When I was about six or seven, I got very sick, my mom figured I was going to die. My uncle got back from trapping. He said he was going to make me medicine. If this little guy makes it, he's going to be my partner, dreams, for the rest of my life. He was my partner. Like the drum I was carrying belong to John

"C."'s real grandfather. The lead drum has been around a long, long time. He'll bring it out every now and then in the sweat but not very often.

"Like what Diashowa and what they want to do here, they say it is a changing world, I don't know if Jr., here, he wants to go in the bush with me, he doesn't want to go to school. He has a twenty-two [rifle] and he is only five. I put the container on the fence, in four shots he hit it once. If he wants to learn this way I ain't going to stop him. When hunting beaver, take everything and put it back in the water. You let things lay for awhile, let it cool off, you don't just go in and cut it. And moose bones, you take them back into the bush, where it's clean. Today, you see some they just throw it out the door, they aren't being taught. I teach Jr. the way it was taught to me. Like the herbs we gather during the summer, the Tea Dance, we take it there, that's where they get their power. It was so nice a long time ago, going to Tea Dance. We didn't have all these deaths, all this sickness. Many times, I'll just sit here and think, think about all this stuff. It bothers me a lot, I don't want to let go of the past. Others seem to adapt to it easier than me. I can't seem to. I have a hard time, maybe because of what my uncle taught me. I think that's the most important thing, the Tea Dance. If we can hang unto that, that's the backbone of our people. Round dance not as much. I hope my children will be able to sing. I remember my uncle used to sing in the morning, maybe four or five songs at sunrise. It was so nice, to hear that when you wake up.

"This thing we're in now, I hope I see the day it comes. When our land claim is finally settled. I worry about my kids. What they going to have? People just don't know what we have been put through these last years here. For the first time, I have

thought we might not handle it too much longer, something got to give. Our guys here, they just drink. Wasn't like that a while back, nothing like what you see now. A lot of us wonder now, what is going to happen to the land, to our ways, hunting and things, what's there going to be left? Before, Bernard had a lot of us going all over with him. One by one, they dropped. I have went the last few times, to Edmonton with him. He's at meetings that really the councilors should be looking after, but they are worn out. We worry, can he keep going too? I just don't know. If anything happened to him, there is no one to take over. We know that here, who could do it? All the history with lawyers, support groups, band business, we'd be lost. We see the toll it's had on his life and no one here is in a hurry to step into that." (F.N., Simon, Aug. 1991)

DWIGHT GLADUE

Dwight Gladue is in his late thirties and speaks English well. He is a band councillor and is one of the men charged with arson at the logging camp near Fish Lake. We were introduced during our short stay in the winter of 1990. The Lubicon had decided to close down the oil wells on their land and there was friction in the community because of the presence of RCMP officers. Dwight was especially upset when we talked with him because he had just lost a brother and had been interrogated by the RCMP. We grew close to his family over the years and have shared moments of laughter and tears with them. His story is closest to my heart. The following life history consists of several interviews and notes taken over December 1991 until June 1993. I have assembled them in chronological order.

"I've been a counsellor for a year now or more. These police are crawling all over the place. They're taking people in all the time, knocking on doors, dragging this one or that one off. They took Hector Whitehead in and took him to the bush, threatened him, "to smoke him" if he told on them. They took away this guy's sneakers and let him go at 2:00 A.M. in this freezing weather [shaking his head]. What next? You know what really makes me mad? My brother, he died not too long ago. I knew something was wrong. I told him not to go drinking with these loggers and oil men, these whites. But he went anyway. When he didn't come home, I knew. I went looking for him. The fourth day, I called the police. They didn't care. I found him, he was half in the water. I knew he didn't just die like that. I called the police. Nothing. They took a long time to get out here just to get the body. It was awful. I had to leave him there in case something, they found something. But they didn't even try. Do you think they went around looking for the guys he drank with or questioned anyone? They didn't care. It was only an Indian. But a life, my brother's life, meant nothing to them. A life, a human life, did not concern them. But a logging skid is damaged and we have sixteen cruisers crawling all over the place, going door to door. I could not get one out here to help me with my brother. Even when he was found, they took their time, "busy" they told me. Does that tell you anything? Does this, a skid, mean much more to the white man than a life? I have no respect for these people. I can't prove it but I know these white guys killed him, I know it. But they will never get caught, never. Because the police figure they did them a favour. We have no rights up here, nothing. They can come up here take our land, destroy us, our lives, and get rich doing it. They can do as they please and

it is justified. Us, we just have to take it. Now they want to jail us, lock us up, let the rest go to the Woodland Cree or wherever and that is all legal. Their laws, I have no faith here in this system. It has shown itself to me very clearly these past years. Me, I never hurt no one. I never kill or steal or cheat and they will try to lock me up, threaten me.

"Sometimes, I just want to take my kids and go away from here. They are watching all this happen to their parents. Drinking, fighting, and people falling apart. I wonder what effect it is going to have on them. What will my children have left? There seems to be no way out. I have to try for them. I have to show them we are right and we will fight for what is right. But it has had a toll on all of us. There is so little here to offer the children. Rosanne and I try to do things, like hockey or volley-ball games. We had some in cross-country running, but it got expensive. You need gas money and so on. We had to quit. The kids, they get into trouble. I don't want this to happen. But I know if there is nothing for them to do, they will drink and get into trouble. It's so frustrating. I think that is all the government wants, to watch us fall apart. Keep stalling our claim, keep logging and opening wells and watch us be destroyed by welfare and nothing to do. They want that." (F.N., Dwight, Jan. 1991)

SECOND INTERVIEW WITH DWIGHT GLADUE

"I want the kids to know their traditions. I want them to speak the language. I have never been to one but have heard of them. Something like our Tea Dance, but it's the Sun dance for them. The kids need to be proud of who they are. I was raised in

foster homes. My foster parents were nice. But I missed a lot, too. I take the boys hunting and try to teach them. I also want them to stay in school, because if we get this claim we are going to need people who can handle the business. Right now, they are doing good in school. But there is nothing cultural in there. They don't learn about themselves. Mr. Dewar was good. He even had the kids go down to the blockade in '88 and write about it. The kids did well. They got rid of him and this one that is in there, I don't know. She set up a field trip to Diashowa! She isn't well liked here. The kids don't like school the way they used to.

"It's good that these young guys from Joseph Bighead have been coming up. They get our guys singing. Gordie is good, I think he picked it up fast. The boys all have drums and practice. I think that is good. I hope they stay with it. I want them involved in the Tea Dance, too. You really need those things, the sweat, the ceremonies, to know who you are. They are excited about the Sun Dance. You're driving up with us, aye?" (F.N., Dwight, July 1991)

THIRD INTERVIEW WITH DWIGHT GLADUE

Not long after our summer visit Dwight's oldest boy died of unknown causes. His death devastated the community as well as his family. There were several of us from Six Nations that mourned Timothy's death.

When I organized the third Drum Beat conference, a bus-load of Lubicons and people from Joseph Bighead attended. They stayed at Six Nations for four days. Dwight, Rosanne, and their children--Gordie, Crystal, Timothy, and Wendy--stayed with us. They

were still grieving and I knew they needed help. I just didn't know what to do for them. Hubert Buck wanted to perform a ceremony for them and it was decided that during his next trip to Little Buffalo he would put this through for them. With the money raised at the spring conference we were able to pay for several chiefs and people from Six Nations to travel to Little Buffalo that May. Days before we left, it was found that a feast for the dead needed to be put through for the whole community. Elder Calvin Miller and Chief Arnie General stayed with Dwight and his family. Rosanne had a newborn boy they named after his deceased brother, Douglas.

The elders tried to do what they could to help the Gladue family. Everyone felt for them, but as Hubert said, "time is really what deep wounds need to heal. We just make sure things don't get worse." (F.N., Buck, 1992)

The upcoming trial of the men was also worrying the Gladue family. Rainy Jobin was the first to be tried in Edmonton. Dwight didn't know when he would be called to trial. He never spoke much about it. The last long discussion we had was shortly after Hubert's death. I happened to be in Little Buffalo in March of 1993 working for the Lubicon Lake Nations Women's Circle. Hubert had a stroke. It upset Little Buffalo as much as it did the people back home. I knew they had been praying for Hubert and I knew how Dwight felt about the "old man." Word of his death silenced Little Buffalo. I had been staying at Jennifer Ominayak's trailer and felt immobilized. The chief and drummers from Joseph Bighead had stopped in Little Buffalo the previous night. It was good that we were all together when the news was delivered. Dwight wanted to come to Six Nations to attend the funeral but lacked the $1,200 it would cost

in air fare. He sent Hubert's family a card which contained his week's wages. My next trip out was in April and we had the following discussion in his home late one night.

"I'm not sure where all this is going. My kids, Timothy, he has a hard time of it yet. We all do, sometimes Rosanne, sometimes me. As you can see we don't sleep well. If you want to visit someone at 3:00 A.M., you can come here, we'll be up. It's hard, too. I really miss Hubert. I wanted so much to go there to his funeral. It is so frustrating sometimes. It's hard to believe he is gone, that he will never be walking through my door ready for a good meal. He did a lot for our community. Even people that didn't get to know him feel it. It's hard. He gave us hope I guess. Something about that old man. Gave us all hope.

"I just don't know if things can get much worse. I suppose I shouldn't say that, maybe I will be locked up in some jail serving time! Just in the time you have been here, you have seen how awful things are. Sometimes it's hard. Can't sleep thinking about all these things gone wrong. Everyone is hurting, every house has hurt. When is it all going to end? I think of our trip to Six Nations. Man, you guys got it made up there. Things for kids to do, nice houses, good schools you run. Lots of elders and your Longhouse. I often think if I had all this I wouldn't leave it. People are happy out there, you see the difference eh? I'm sure you really don't need this, but you have been here. See, we are just nowhere, can't plan a thing, limbo. That's so frustrating. We are tired of this mess, tired of having been put on hold, jail held over our heads. That's it, they are getting what they want, to just let us fall off one by one until they did us in. You are lucky, to have what you have. I wouldn't blame you one bit if you never came back here,

why should you? Your kids have a lot going for them over there. Someday I pray for the day we see that here. This isn't living, it's hell. It's surviving one day at a time. Just get through another day. Hope no more bad things happen to anyone. No bad news comes knocking at our door. It seems like the bad are winning. You know, I have always been taught that the good win, but right now from where I see things, the bad are winning. The bad ones do as they please and don't even hide it. The ones who don't hurt anyone are the ones getting it from all sides. I can't ignore what I have seen the last years here, the bad are winning. Us, we just keep taking it while we are walked on. I know you can't get down to their level. But it's sure hard sometimes to just keep taking it." (F.N., Dwight Gladue, April 1993)

WALTER WHITEHEAD

When I first visited Little Buffalo back in October of 1989 one of the first people the chief introduced me to was Walter Whitehead. Walter had been the chief before Bernard and was now a band councillor. Bernard was insistent that I interview Walter who he said, "knows a lot about this whole thing." (Ominayak, 1989) Walter sat behind a desk in one of the four rooms in the band council office. I asked him if he would speak to me and he sighed without answering. He did not want to be interviewed. I went back to Bernard office and said "Walter does not want to talk." Bernard pressed and said, "Get him to talk, he will. It's just that he hasn't gotten over the deaths of his two children and he needs to open up and talk." (Ibid.) I reluctantly knocked on his door and went in. He sighed again and sat back in his chair. I joked that I was under strict

orders to make him talk. He made it very difficult for me, not answering many of my questions. He did say he was chief for five years but resigned in 1975. At that time no band council existed and only nine percent of the people received social assistance, mainly the older ones. Walter laid the groundwork for the land claim. He undertook a census and had joined the Isolated Communities Board. He recruited Bernard as band councillor and later as chief.

Walter, staring at the floor and speaking very quietly began,

"You know, we lost six Lubicon teenagers on their way home from Peace River. A logging truck pulled out in front of them. The car went up in flames. All six were killed, everyone in this community lost a cousin...sister...nephew. We're all related. I lost my two kids." (F.N., Walter Whitehead, Oct. 1989)

Over the years Walter opened up to me. When he attended the first Drum Beat conference held at McMaster and Six Nations, he camped at our house. He seemed to laugh and tease more. During the last evening, it was decided by the leaders and spiritual advisors that all the guests should return in the morning to hold a sacred ceremony. During this ceremony, Walter stood in the circle of elders and spiritual leaders. When it was over, he told me, "You know for the first time in years I saw my children's faces. For a long time I could not see them, maybe to stop the pain, but I saw them clear as day when we stood there." (F.N., Whitehead, April 1990)

Walter was always in attendance at the ceremonies held in Little Buffalo and Fish Lake. He once turned to me during a sweat lodge at Fish Lake and said, "This here, these ceremonies, this is where the real power is. The government don't like it, they can't

control us. When you follow your traditions, you'll die for your beliefs. They are afraid of that kind of strength, you know; they don't want us to be strong." (F.N., Whitehead, 1990)

I remember the following summer I saw him carrying his father, Albert, out of his cabin in Fish Lake. As if he were holding a child, he carried him to the lake. I walked to the hill and saw them sitting there quietly. I thought it best not to disturb them. I knew Albert's illness saddened Walter. He cared for him, which was a difficult task since Walter also had the responsibility of thirty-three grandchildren. I recalled Walter carrying Albert into the Tea Dance and placing him down beside the drummers. Albert's condition worsened and Walter was forced to place him in an old age home in Peace River. This action greatly saddened him, but, as he said, "I can't give him the around-the-clock attention he needs and be running around dealing with court." He would often visit his father in Peace River. It was prior to this time I interviewed him about the trial and court case. We were in Edmonton and he agreed to talk about it. Walter and his two sons, Hector and George, were charged with arson.

"It don't bother me. They can drag me off to jail and lock me up and throw away the key. I have many children and grandchildren, they keep going even if I am locked up. They can lock up my boys and still I have grandchildren that will carry on the fight. They're not aware of that, I guess. I am not afraid to go to jail, I'll eat and sleep, even maybe get some rest [he laughs]. I have lost too much in this to give up now. My grandchildren are always sick, everyone sick. Not the way it used to be around here. We have to stay together. That's what they want, for us to fight one another, point

fingers. This Woodland Cree, what they got? Their children will not be bragging about how their parents fought for them, the land. They will have to live with what they did. Their children will have to hang their heads when someone says, "Who are you, Woodland Cree?" What is that? A government white term, not identity. Those children will pay for what their parents done. They will have nothing, no land, no money, no future. The way that deal is, no rights, they can't take it back to court, it's a one time, sell out of rights. No title to land. That's real bad. Everyone got their status cards through Bill C-31, no Aboriginal title. They sold out their children's future. I will never do that. I will never sell out. I would rather have my children and grandchildren see me go to jail for standing for their rights. They will not hang their heads over what I have done.

"I will always be Lubicon, like my father and grandfathers will never sell out. They can offer me anything, I will not sell out who I am. And I am not about to watch them destroy the land we love. Call it what you will, if you get lost, take up white man's ways, religion, then you are pickings for these government officials, you'll sell out because your beliefs are not Lubicon. That is why it is so important to keep the ceremonies going, keep the traditional ways, the songs. All these things keep us knowing who we are, pride. Government can't shake it, but now we have our own people turning Pentecostal or whatever. That will weaken them and it will weaken us. But as long as I stay with the traditions, Lubicon, they will never wipe us out. They can't. Because we'll never say we're something else, even till maybe there's only a handful of us, never say it, never say, 'I'm something else.'

"The police were so mad. They pulled me off the road, put me in their cruiser. I smiled at them and said, 'How you doing today?' They were saying everything. They were trying to get me to say something. I told them, 'I got nothing to say to you people. Go ahead, lock me up, throw away the key, my kids, too, then you deal with my grandchildren.' [smiling] They didn't like that! Hector, they took him to the bush. They slapped him and really tried to shake him up. They even told him they would shoot him if he told on how they slapped him around. He told on them right away. They wouldn't let him see the lawyer. But maybe they're shaking us up, but they will pay for it later. I ask you, who is the criminal here? What have we done that is wrong? They came and took our land, our trees, our oil, we have no way of hunting, our living is gone. We are all on welfare while the white's pockets are lined in gold. They treat us like we're not human, no respect for land, animals, trees, no respect for life. They have no respect even for each other. But we are the bad guys, we're on trial, we're going to jail. For what?

"The courts, they're as bad as the rest. I had dealings with them during the land claim. They are just as crooked. This Judge Moore was an ex-lawyer for Petro-Canada. He threw our case out, even put in retroactive legislation to undermine the caveat we filed to stop the oil development. They changed laws right in the middle of our case! What kind of laws are in place here? Laws for the white man, not for the Indian. The only law I know is the Creator's laws. Only he can judge me, not these people. They will try their best to do me in. What you think the courts going to do now? They will try to hang us. They're the government's right arm. I've seen it a long time now. I couldn't be chief because I saw too much of it. Bernard was more suited

for it. I watched them lie, cheat, steal--smiling the whole time. In the mean time, we have mouths to feed, families to look after. They keep us spinning. Coming in from all directions, hitting us this way, that way [sighs].

"I just wish my father could live to see the day we get our claim. The elders who trained us are all sick or dying out. It hurts me that these old ones go to their grave without seeing their children and grandchildren getting a fair deal, a future. They go to the grave saddened. I pray to see that I live to see that day. I bet they don't like you Mohawks here [chuckles]. You people give them a hard time too. It's good for us to stick together. We all have the same beliefs really, don't we? White man don't want that, for us to really get together, in a real way, like how we are now with you people and Ernest and them. They are watching. It's good that the old man came too. Hubert is a good man. We need people to watch this, so they can't get away with it all the time without people reporting what they are doing. Some day maybe, we all celebrate; that would be a good day, celebration instead of thinking it's a good day to die. [laughs]." (F.N., Whitehead, Jan. 1991)

ELDER ALBERT LABOUCON

I met Albert Laboucon during my second trip to Little Buffalo in December of 1989. Bernard had taken us up to Fish Lake, where Summer Joe and his brother Albert had a cabin not too far from Bernard's. Both were in their seventies and only spoke Cree. Bernard translated for me. I asked Albert to tell me about himself, and his thoughts on the land claim. His answers were short and often direct.

"I was raised in the bush, trapping, hunting, a hard life but a good one. There has been much change. No more animals, no wildlife, everything is disappearing, our ways are. They came in with the road and destroyed everything in their path. They cut right through trap lines, right through everything. Everything is dirty, water and animals are not so clean. I want the children, grandchildren, to have something, that's why I stay with it. I think they are trying to wipe us out now. I never thought that really before, to wipe us out. They are, no deal, just get us out of the way. They are greedy, greed like we don't know. There is nothing for me, just doing this for my grandchildren now.

"The Woodland Cree, I knew them since they were this high [by his hip]. We feed them, help one another, it's hard to believe that these people can forget who they are. If I ever get that stupid I will pay some young boy ten dollars to shoot me. This has been going on long time, since I was young. I thought it would be all okay; we get our reserve, no big deal. They seem to want to wipe us out instead, don't know why. I think they have money, no word for the money they have. We don't want much. So, I don't understand why they need to go and try to build a new band with our members. Don't make sense. A lot they do doesn't make sense, destroying the land, water, air, no matter, they think they above all this, they're not. They are needing air, water, food, and they can't see what will happen to us will happen to them to. They don't think about their children either. What will these young ones have to drink if all the water is no good? Maybe if we keep hollering they will hear us, maybe if we keep making enough noise. It's good that other Indians like you come here and help. We need to help one another

the way the Creator intended. I feel better when there are other Indians helping." (F.N., Laboucon, Dec. 1989)

I asked Albert what he wanted me to take back to my people, what to tell them from him. He sat quiet for a long time and said in Cree, "We should put our voices together, our drum, it will be heard across the country." He said something to Bernard and proceeded to take out a root they burn before drumming. His drum was in a white cloth hanging above the bed. A blanket was placed on the floor and he kneeled down and held the drum close to his face. He sang for a while and then put it away. He said, "They will hear that, take that to them." To say the least, the Drum Beat conferences were inspired by Albert. The first Drum Beat was held the following spring.

ELDER EDWARD LABOUCON

Edward Laboucon was one of the first elders I spoke with in Little Buffalo during my first trip there in October 1989. I wanted to speak with him because prior to my meeting the chief at McMaster, I had dreamed of an elder who looked a whole lot like Edward. In the dream the old man invited me to visit. When I saw the video "Our Land Our Life" which Edward was in, I knew that I would visit this elder. When I arrived in Little Buffalo, they informed me Edward was in the bush. I informed the chief I had driven a very long way to meet this elder. The next day, Steve Nosky, picked us up and we looked for Edward, who is also Albert's brother, in the bush. We didn't find him but I was told he knew we were looking for him. Three days later we found him. I will never forget the moment. We had been driving down muddy paths for over an

hour. There were pieces of red cloth tied to bushes which were markers put there for us to follow. Finally we came to a clearing and sat and waited. After half an hour, off in the distance a tall white-haired man driving a horse and wagon was nearing. He greeted us and we made a fire and sat on bales. Steve translated for us. I had a gift which was a carved stone false face. I told him it would bring him luck. He said, "Twelve moose?"

"I heard this pretty Mohawk woman was looking for me. What took you so long? [laughing]. I thought I better go see for myself. I have spoken to many people. I have gone over the big water [Europe]. Told our story everywhere people would listen. But this is good, in our bush, to tell the story. We have been here a long, long time. We have been here in this place, according to my grandfather, (as far back as he can recall at least) five generations. Indians were at war, so we moved to this place around Lubicon Lake. There was French here, too, for awhile. They brought diseases with them. When I was a little boy there was many of us. We camped this lake here, the French around, too. They brought many illnesses. Half our people died that summer. I do not want to talk about that though. It is too painful to remember...my mother...my sisters...they died then. They brought war with them, too, the French. Whites always want things, they want all that is under this earth, all that is on top. That includes the Indian. They will not rest until everything is destroyed, especially the Indian.

"Today, things are bad too, only alcohol is killing our people now. Young ones, they don't listen, I tell them and they walk away in disrespect. I stayed with my father all my life, he told me what to do and what not to do. What my father told me was like an instruction book; because I listened, now I am wiser. This thing with our

land, we have been trying to get the government to settle this. We have been waiting since I was a young man. They came, they said,"Okay, now you will have a reserve. You will get twine, flour, sugar, ammunition, and nails for a house." I have been waiting a long time for these nails. But I think the whites, they don't know how to speak truthfully, the government [laughing]. Why should I wait for this people to tell us we have land, we are Indians? Lubicons. They put some of our people who went to find out about the supplies on another band list. Of course they don't know what list, they don't speak English. So today, the younger speak English and know now what is going on. And they say we are not Lubicon, we are this or that. Bernard must deal with that. Here, we know who we are and that this is ours.

"Well, we have made some strides. The blockade was good, it got us a deal with the [provincial] people. But now I don't know, it doesn't look so good. I am becoming worried now, everything seems to be falling apart. The people here, not very good, sick, alcohol, babies, and we need to settle this thing. I am worried about all of it. The blockade did some good. But it harmed us, too. We got our hopes up, we celebrated, and now nothing but things worse. The oil, they cropping up everywhere. They chase all the animals away. Hunting is bad too. I haven't caught a moose in a very long time. We are healthy for awhile, lots of moose to eat; now only the food in the store and I don't like it." (F.N., Laboucon, Oct. 1989)

CHAPTER 6: THE LUBICON LAKE NATION WOMEN, A BUNDLE OF VOICES

INTRODUCTION

> Through all the centuries of war and death and cultural and psychic destruction we have endured, the women who raise the children and tend the fires, who pass along tales and traditions, who weep and bury the dead, and who never forget...We survive war and conquest; we survive colonization, acculturation, assimilation; we survive beatings, rape, starvation, mutilation, sterilization, abandonment, neglect, death of our children, our loved ones, destruction of our land, our homes, our past and our future. We survive, and we do more than survive. We bond, we care, we fight, we teach, we nurse, we bear, we feed, we earn, we laugh, we love, we hang in there, no matter what. (Gunn Allen 1986: 50)

All too often in anthropological research, Aboriginal women are excluded on the basis of gender. While they often have a lot to say, they are often not asked. Many times I have come across research that the male authors simply state: "Because I am a male, and interacting with the women is not appropriate in their context, I have little representation of women in this work." A few observations are made about the women's work role and it usually ends there. It is my belief that if you can include only half of the whole, your research is not comprehensive. Aboriginal women have a whole series of experiences and processes the men don't. Their point of view and voice has been silenced for too long by a Euro-dominated society that has continually degraded them for 500 years.

The absence of the Native woman's voice is indicative of Euro-centric sexist traditions of degrading their women, thus carried over to a double standard of ethnocentric

and sexist representation of Aboriginal women. Cree women, as Van Kirk states, were portrayed as slaves, sluts, and beasts of burden. It is only in the recent history that Cree women have had a voice in literature produced about them. It is my goal not only to include the voice of the Lubicon women but to allow their voice to shape and direct our understanding of their history and contemporary situation. The women of Lubicon Lake Nation express the human cost of colonization, resource exploitation, and land claim struggle. It is through their experiences that the social impact of the dominant society's oppression can be odescribed. It is meaningless even to attempt to measure the impact of development on their social reality through a Western methodology of measuring "impact"; we see the impact of development and colonial domination best through the Lubicon's own life stories. There is a gap in the literature on the history of the Lubicon and especially of Lubicon women. I will provide some background in interviews with several Lubicon women, describing the history of their roles, their economic base and cultural practices. I will then document their contemporary situation and collective experiences as a Women's Circle.

LIFE HISTORY

One of the most profound experiences I had in Little Buffalo was when a young, beautiful, thirteen-year-old girl asked if she could speak with me alone. I told her we could go to the van and talk. We left the house and walked into the night and climbed into the freezing van. I lit a cigarette and she asked for a smoke. We sat

silently waiting for the van to warm. Head down she quietly said, "I don't want to live any more, I really don't want to be here...I want to be with God." I waited a long time, searching for the words. I finally said, "You are already with the Creator who put you here in this place for a reason. Don't throw away his gift." She answered, "What, all this? Drunks, accidents, fighting, watching everything being torn apart? I'd rather skip all the pain, like what my parents have been through. I can't take it. They are wiping us out, aren't they? I'd rather be in heaven than to let them do that."

I thought long and hard for a response. What could I promise her? That everything will be alright. When I wondered myself if they would survive what was being done to them. I thought of the young children who were inside the T.C. camp at Oka during the confrontation there, and how I listened to their screams on TV, their eyes filled with terror as bayonets were only inches from their faces. I looked at my little Lubicon child friend, silently screaming for help, silently held hostage by a different weapon. I studied her eyes, indeed, they held the same terror. I told her, "Your grandparents, parents are putting their lives on the line for you, so you might have a future. They are in a war, a silent war. Don't help the white man by doing yourself in; that would be the final blow to those that fight for you. The Creator put us here for a reason. Put you here for a reason, you must be strong and help your people. That is what I am trying to do too, but we need your help."

She answered, "Will you promise not to leave us alone in this?" I said, "promise if you do the same." She smiled and we walked back into the cold night and never spoke again of our conversation.

I have tried to keep that promise. During one of the women's meetings, Lillian Whitehead told me, "We want you to tell our story, what we have been through, what we are fighting for. The women have been silent too long." (F.N., Whitehead, August 1992) I also promised the women that I would tell their story.

Forgotten Voices

One of the first women I met in Little Buffalo was Louise Ominayak. At this time (December 1989) she was grieving the loss of her mother. Sensing her pain I opted to stay with her instead of visiting with the chief and my husband. It was during this visit she agreed to give me an interview. I was a bit surprised because she had stated she seldom talked to any of the "outsiders." I explained to her women needed to speak about their experiences as well as the men. She agreed with me and decided to tell her story.

"I have been raising kids ever since I can remember. My mother was sick and I had to look after eight of them. We lived in the bush. It was a hard life but a good one. I miss that, even though it was hard. I went to school for awhile. Not very good at it. Bernard and I were always scrapping with other kids at school. We used to like to fight, even then (laughs). I had to stop to look after the kids. He went on, he was smart. Me, I just know the bush. I was up at Bison Lake and my father had left, my mother was sick. His family would pass through there. He would take pity on me and stop to help. One time he just stayed. We had one tent, a horse, and all these mouths to feed. He was crazy even then to take that on! I was so glad, now I was not alone with all these children. I was only about fourteen or fifteen. But we had fun. Somehow we

had fun. Can't explain it. We laughed, went places on horseback, it was my best memories. We raised all of them.

"Now, everything is upside down, nothing has been right. This land claim. He never goes to the bush anymore. I miss the bush. Out there it is so peaceful and quiet, good. It was not bad when we first lived here (Little Buffalo). Then, one day he asked me about becoming the chief. I said, Okay, I stay home and raise the kids while you do what you have to. I did not realize I was agreeing to give him up. I've been on my own ever since. The children miss their father so much. It was hard, especially when they were sick. Our boy, Lou, we almost lost him as a baby. His lungs, he was so sick and Bernard had to go to [New York] that time. That was real hard on all of us. People just don't realize how this has torn us up inside. And him, he has changed. Worried all the time, quiet. I don't know what goes on out there, where all he has been, or seen, but he thinks a lot. Me, I don't like to go on the outside. I went to Edmonton once and wanted to go home right away, too many white people. Then my home, we always have reporters, strangers in and out all the time. I just feed them and don't say much, but I listen to what they are saying. They take pictures of how the land is being torn up and all the trucks and then they leave. I often wonder what happens to all these pictures, if anyone out there is listening or seeing what is going on up here. But things just keep getting worse.

"The hardest part is my family being torn up. I don't understand how that happened. One by one, my brothers and then sisters left to go to the new band, Woodland Cree. I just can't figure that out. Why? After we raised them and helped

them, now they are against us. My father has a lot to do with that. After leaving us he got jealous that Bernard raised them. But all those years...now no one talking to one another (shaking her head slowly). I miss my mother so much. If she were here I would ask her what to do.

"Sometimes I ask God, what is He taking everything away for? I wonder if I was bad or something, losing everything that I know and really love. Bernard says don't worry so much, just look after the kids. So I do, just keep them out of trouble. Kids wander around in the dark around here, drinking and getting into no good. Sometimes their parents are drinking and their kids are hungry; they come to the door for food. I don't let mine out after dark. It's hard, people changing, drinking, and fighting. Sometimes the young people come here, a girl is hit or something. I try to help them, tell them to stay with it. That's what I am trying to do. Sometimes the drunks come here when he is gone away. One time this man, I beat him with my broom, I got him out of here. But this is not good, I miss being in the bush. My kids, they are not learning the way I wanted them to. I wish my mother was here. She could tell me what to do." (F.N., L. Ominayak, Dec. 1989)

The next time I was able to visit Louise was over a year later, in the summer of 1991. She had moved to Codotte and was living in a Woodland Band-owned trailer. I stopped in to visit with her and she appeared even less happy than the last visit. She said she had left Little Buffalo because it was "getting to her," but she was not joining with the Woodland Cree. Her brother was now the chief of the Woodland Cree and was pressuring to sign with them. She refused. Edmonton reporters were seeking her out to

find out if the Lubicon chief's wife had left to sign up with the Woodland Cree. The Woodland Cree were about to vote on a plebiscite for a land claim deal. Louise informed me that the Woodland band was paying up to $1,000 for people to sign with their band. She also told me that, "They are fools. Their welfare money will be taken away." (F.N., Louise Ominayak, June 1991)

In July of 1992 she stopped by Bernard's and gave me a beaded belt, barrettes, and necklaces she had been working on. We attended the Round Dance at the "steel building" that evening and she was looking well. We had more of a chance to visit. She told me,

"I am staying in Trout now. I get to the bush a lot. I don't like it in Codotte, too much drinking. They are always after me to drink or give them money. I miss Little Buffalo. My kids want to stay here, too. I needed time to sort things out in my head. Everyone is trying to get me to turn against Bernard, but I won't. People must not realize how we shared everything all these years, grew up together. They forget, I don't. They can't buy me. The white man is trying, but they can't give me anything I want. They took all that away and they are still taking everything. Maybe I will move back here. Not right away but I still visit him. I can stay there if I want. He let me take whatever I wanted. I stayed for awhile last winter. We are just too different now, but I can stay there if I want to help with the kids and the house.

"But I need to get my life going, my own life. My brothers are nice to me now, too. I missed them and my father is not well. I tried to help him out. Boy, things are crazy. They were after me to sign up with the Woodland, but you never do that, you

stay with him on that one. They just want to have me sign up so that will make headlines. After all this, why would I do what the [white man] wants? They must think I am stupid. When I wouldn't sign they wanted me out of the trailer. If I signed, I would have been promised new things and money. But I am Lubicon and I am going to stay Lubicon, so I had to get out of there, too! That's why Trout was good. I was left alone up there, just stayed in the bush, tanned hides and beaded. You and I, we will stay friends no matter what, right? People around here are making all kinds of rumours, but we know, don't we?" (F.N., Louise Ominayak, July 1992)

I told her that I understood and didn't listen to the rumours. If anything, I admired her for the way she held up under the circumstances. If anything, I felt anger over what this woman was being put through. It was through Louise's experiences that I was beginning to comprehend the human cost of this ordeal. The government capitalized on the human pain of individual Lubicon members, sparing no one in its attempts to undermine the Lubicon land claim.

The following spring of 1993, we spoke again. This time Louise had moved back to Little Buffalo and was living at home again. She was upset because a very young baby had died in the village and she was the first to arrive. She did not want to talk about it and said she was trying to forget what she saw. I spoke with her again that summer. She was feeling better and was about to begin a new job. The following are excerpts of those two telephone conversations.

"It is good, this Women's Circle, having people doing things together again. I hope that it goes on. Maybe I will go to a few meetings and see what is going on

They have asked me to help the younger girls to bead and tan hides. Maybe, if I have time, I will. I should teach you, you don't know anything of the bush but then I can't write books either, so don't feel bad [laughs]." (F.N., L. Ominayak, May 1993)

"I have been so busy beading for Bernard, the belt he wanted for the ceremonies [Tea Dance] and other things. He just tells me a few days before and I have to work all night on these things. Then the Horse Dance. I made the horses' blankets. I worked really hard on that. It turned out so nice. I hope he doesn't need anything for awhile. Then I can work on your girl's belt and your mukluks. You should learn, but you don't have time, eh? Some people are starting to buy my work. I will send some things back with you so you can sell them for me. I am going to begin a job, my first job in my life. I will work with Virginia in the homemakers program. I am looking forward to it." (F.N., L. Ominayak, July 1993)

Over the years I also grew close to Bernard and Louise's daughter, Jennifer Ominayak. When I first met her in 1989 she was 18-years-old and had completed high school. She was also very pretty and carrying a child. She did not seem to be thrilled about her condition so I left her alone most of the time. While we stayed at the house during the summer of 1991, she had a beautiful little girl, Lennett, and was carrying a second child.

It was obvious she was unhappy and Bernard had asked me to speak with her because "She is like me, she doesn't open up to anyone. I am worried." (F.N., Bernard Ominayak, June 1991) I tried, but she did not want to talk.

It wasn't until the summer of 1992 that she opened up and discussed her feelings. I felt that for someone young and intelligent in a community that had very little opportunity to offer a young person, the lack of prospects would be depressing. Jennifer more or less expressed that she felt "bored." She later agreed to be interviewed and to tell her story.

"I was always sick, real sick, oh man. I don't know, I couldn't breathe. They would take me into Peace River and I wouldn't see them for a real long time, because there was no roads. It seems like I grew up in the damn places, always missing my mother and father. I remember, too, or, my mom told me about my fingers. See them? The nails don't grow on this hand. I always hide this hand. But, I guess they were in the bush and it was real cold, like a blizzard. My father had left the camp and got stuck somewhere, we were running out of food and everything. So my mom carried me in the blizzard for maybe 10 miles! I guess my hand got frostbite. So this old couple that my mom had went to see for food, the old man fixed my hand with our medicine. But, can you imagine carrying a baby that far in the cold? Holy, my mom is tough. Not like us, we are spoiled.

"But I wish I could do things like her. She can bead and everything. I remember being in the bush when we were young. Man, we had a good time riding our horses and our cousins were with us. That's when things were fun. We were like a family more then. I remember this one time we had to cross a river and the men were ahead of us a little bit. My cousin, she had her own horse, too, and the two of us were behind everyone. We were just small and I was ahead of her. She screamed and I saw

the horse run ahead of me. When we looked back she was still on the saddle but no horse! Did we ever laugh. That looked so funny, her sitting in the water on the saddle. We teased her about that. That's one thing I am good at, riding horses, but I don't ride as much with the kids being so small.

"Melissa [younger sister] is lucky, she doesn't have to go to school the way I did. Dad is teaching them how to do things. She can ride good! And she goes to the cabin more with him. Erwin, too, he is a good hunter. Lou doesn't have to go to school either. I wish that would have happened with me, but they wanted me to finish school. It was hard catching up all the time because I was sick. Finally, Dad and Fred took me somewhere far away to this special doctor and ever since then I haven't been so sick. But I missed a lot of learning, being sick and away from them.

"Now, I am educated but don't have a damn thing to do, no work, nothing. What good was it? Maybe that is what my father figures, what good did it do me? So he is teaching the others everything. I like to write but don't know what to write about. I want to help in the land claim but don't know how to. I see my father, so tired, running all over the place and he doesn't eat right. I worry that he will get in a car accident because he is on the road all the time. What would we all do if anything ever happens to him? I can't help worrying and I am worried until I see him pull in. Then I can sleep okay. But everyone around here is calling, worried too. It's crazy, eh, checking to see he is alright.

"I know he was mad because I was going out and partying a little bit, but it is so boring around here. I am sick of it. I get up and clean, get the babies dressed and

then what? Maybe go for a visit, but that gets tiresome after awhile. No one has any money to go to the show or anything. All of us are bored and we don't know how to go in the bush. So that's why we drink. Nothing else to do here and we all know it's wrong but it's hard to have nothing to do day after day. Everyone is just waiting for the land claim because nothing will really happen around here until we get that. So, it's really the waiting and the sadness of all this. We were involved more when we were younger. Even the principal of the school was involved and let us go to blockade and write about it. But the province got rid of him and now we have this woman that is not very good at all. Lots of kids don't want to go to her school and she is driving everyone away. They don't teach anything about our people there or nothing! It was better when I went there and the principal was more involved. It was fun to learn, so I don't blame all these ones for dropping out. But then look at what they are doing instead, drinking. I wonder if anything will get better around here?

"I am really glad that you people keep coming here. That is the only action around, the Round Dances and those people from the Sacred Run. I miss that old man Hubert, he teased everyone. When he was here it seemed as if everything was going to be alright, but, when he would go it would seem as if everything was bad again. People over the years have dropped off. It seems like when I open up to someone and get to really like them they have to leave and go to their own lives, and we are left here, just lonesome. That's why I don't bother trying to get to know anyone anymore. I am afraid to lose them again and be lonely. Like you, I am getting real used to you being here and talking with you, but you will go home and I will miss you and be bored again. I miss

your girls running around here already. But you already have a reserve with lots to do there. You are lucky. I don't blame you for leaving this place. I will try not to drink anymore, stay out of trouble. Maybe I will ask my father what I can do to help with the land claim again, maybe help the Women's Circle, eh, like last summer?

"That was really good when we told that guy, what's his name? Siddon, Tom Siddon, yeah, when we told him last August. He thought he was going to treat us women like dummies, like we don't know what he is up to. Oh man, I will never forget that guy's face, it was all red! He looked like he wanted to hit you, if he would of, well, we would hit him. That's when I got upset. He had no right to treat you in that way, like scolded you because you had a tape recorder. I told him, didn't I? He was trying to make it look like Daddy was a liar, too. We should all be mad at Daddy. What did he think, we never read the paper he sent? It must be hard on Daddy to meet with guys like that all the time. I know they lie, but he sat there and lied to us and that's why I think we all got so upset. I got him on the membership question, didn't I? I remember asking you and the lawyers over and over again. I knew I had it straight. Then he said membership wasn't an issue, when he stated right in that paper it was! That felt so good, to tell him what we know. I wonder if they will ever meet with us women again? Maybe not, but I still wonder why they are putting us through all of this when it is ours, our land, everyone so poor, nothing to do. Why are they doing it, do you think?" (F.N., Jennifer Ominayak, November 1992)

I explained to Jennifer that I wasn't all that sure either. I also explained to her that I believed the government did not want to settle fairly with a land claim that

would set a precedent in the north. She failed to understand why being fair is a precedent. I left unable to promise her they ever would be fair or that things would improve in her community. I also wondered how frustrating it must be to be young and bright with no resources to build a better place and no resources left to teach the younger people their culture. The court case was on everyone's minds and she promised to help make trips with the Women's Circle to support Rainy Jobin, one of the men charged with arson.

Jennifer and I frequently talk on the phone. Staying with her during my visits and spending time with her children has brought us even closer. She had been hired by the Women's Circle as the youth cultural program coordinator. She had the younger people involved in the Horse Dance, Round Dance, as well as travelling to the Joseph Bighead Reserve Sun Dance during the summer months of 1993. Just this month she was hired as an assistant to the nurse at the Medical Services Branch.

Rosanne Sowen is another friend I made back in 1990. She is in her thirties and worked as the janitor at the Little Buffalo school. Since the new principal has been hired, she has quit this position. Rosanne has a quick wit and is known to deliver great one-liners. I visited with her often and came to know her family well. We travelled to Sweat Lodges, Tea Dances and Sun Dance ceremonies together. Rosanne is also known as "the cook," and cook she can. Often the men putting up the ceremonies give her tobacco to cook for them. I remember being in Fish Lake and watching her cook outside on three open-fire pits. She had to feed about one hundred people and looked quite at ease in her duties. She allowed me to boil the water for the tea, jokingly.

Over time I have relied on her friendship to get me through the lonely moments. She seemed sensitive to people feeling bad. She would tease and joke to try and pull one out of a sad mood. I never formally interviewed her, but through the years made notes on our conversations. Here is her story:

"I was born over at Lubicon Lake. We lived in the bush, went to school a little bit [chuckles]. My father and mother were okay until we lost my sister. He never recovered from that. He never forgave our medicine for failing to cure her. Things got bad after that. They started to drink. At first it was just my dad, but then my mom gave up and joined him. Sometimes me, too. I married Dwight and we had kids. Things have always been tough, no money, no moose, no... [she laughs]. I try now. The kids, they need something to do. For a couple of years, we would take kids to play hockey or things like that, but it got to be too much on us, to travel with all those kids. I feel bad there is nothing for them to do. One year we went to Jasper. We had some runners [stay with us when they visited Little Buffalo].

"Things are tough, you can see that, eh? But, we survive, we help one another. Dwight is busy with council, running here and there, doing a lot of nothing [laughing]. Those men, they can't even find a moose, no wonder we don't have a land claim. [chuckles] I feel bad sometimes. I know my dad would be better if we had a land claim. These old people, they have been waiting so long, it would be nice to see them happy instead of sad all the time. The loggers, they get on my nerves the way they want all our trees. The oil companies, that stuff is making us sick.

The water, air, everything is dirty now. What will be left for our kids? The kids, they are hurting, too. A few years back when that road came here, six were killed in a car accident. My brother was one of them. Then Dwight's brother, he is really hurt over that one dying. He found him, you know. The police wouldn't even help him look for him. He found him and still the police took their time. We figure the loggers got drinking with him, did something. Now we will never know because the police are white and they won't even try to find out. But when that camp was set on fire there were about fifteen police vehicles here knocking on our doors, pulling people out of their homes, driving away. You would think there was a murder, but, when Dwight's brother was murdered, not one cop was here asking anything. These white people, I wonder how it is they work in their heads. If they try to send Dwight to jail,...I'll punch them (laughing). Dwight never hurt anything or anyone. He is a good father, a kind and good husband. They better not try to lock him up.

"This life here, I don't know anymore. As long as nothing happens to my children, I am glad my kids are alright. But I could go and punch some of these people doing this to us." (F.N., Rosanne Sowan, August 1991)

The following months dealt yet another horrible blow to Rosanne and her family. Her eldest son, Kevin, died in October 1991. I had come to know Kevin and his brother, Timothy. The autopsy and toxicology report showed no cause of death. I did not have to be there to know how much pain Rosanne's family was in, but all I could do was send cards and pray for them not to give up. Rosanne was with child and gave birth to baby Douglas. When I arrived in the summer of 1992, I tried to talk to her as much

as possible. She said very little about the death of her son. She was quiet and still in mourning. Douglas was what held her together. They still have trouble sleeping. They miss him at night. She has become active in the Women's Circle and is second-in-command to her sister, Maggie.

Louisa Ominayak is an outspoken elder, almost sixty. She is not really sure. She was born around Marten Lake, and died only a short two months after this interview. I had been lucky enough to meet her in the summer of 1992. She was active in the Women's Circle and we travelled to Edmonton for the meeting with the Minister of Indian Affairs. I miss her robust laughter and outspokenness.

Louisa spoke fairly good English. She went to school with the priest and nuns at Marten Lake. She figures there were around seventeen families at the time she lived there. She married Jim Ominayak and together they raised their children. They built a cabin at Marten because of the school and availability of game. This is her story

"Ya, we were poor, had nothing. But, we had wild meat, ducks, grouse, rabbit, moose, and berries. We ate, the children were poor, clothes, not much. We built that cabin, it cost us eleven dollars for the logs and we had to get a permit to build there. Then they served us papers, but we were not there, like most other families. We came back from the bush just in time. We had only been given four day's notice to get out of our house, they were gonna run everything out of there. We had to borrow a team from Whitefish to get our stove and everything out. Then, some didn't even know.

"Boy, they came in and bulldozed the whole place. We had no home. They never did pay us for our home we lost. We felt so bad. That was our home! It was nice

there, quiet, no drinking, had a little school there. In Codotte there was drinking, but not there. The government never talk about that day we all lost our homes. I never see that on the news. They never know how we felt there, watching our nice place being bulldozed. I'm still mad about that.

"I went to a convent from the time I was seven until I was fourteen. It was good there, lots to eat. They treated us nice there. That is how I can talk and write. They would send a team to Lubicon Lake. My dad, he would wait for us to return. There was about six houses there. Josie L'Hirondelle had a store there and we traded with him and got stuff there. His wife was Cree. I got out of school and got married, moved to Marten River. All my kids were born in the bush except two, Mike and Martha. I lost three, one as a baby, one in that accident.

"Joseph Laboucon used to be the chief in the '50's. He died now. I have been waiting a long time for our reserve. I wait and wait, but never nothing. They think we don't know all the oil that was at Marten where they bulldozed our homes. We know it has oil all over there. They kicked us out. They don't want to give us a damn cent for what we know is ours. They don't know how tough we are. We'll fight right to the very end. And we will tell everyone what they did to us up here. Someday they will have to own up to what they have done.

"They cry about the money, but who has all the money? Not us. I want my children to have a nice home, nice jobs and a nice place to grow up. Not welfare and drinking and no animals. We won't settle for that. What will there be for our grandchildren if we accept that deal they want us to? Welfare, poor houses, beg them for

everything, that's what they want. We lived on our own and we know what is ours and what is not. They have gotten rich off our lands. What we got? Bulldozed homes, T.B. and welfare. Nope, I am gonna fight along with the chief. He's smart and he won't let them rip us off, that's why we made him that, chief. So, next time I see that Siddon, I ain't gonna be so nice as I was in Edmonton. I don't have long, so I'm gonna give him a good one. They still owe me that eleven dollars. I'm gonna get it, too!" (F.N., Louisa Ominayak, Dec. 1992)

When I returned to visit Louisa with Lubicon lawyer Ken Strozak, she had been taken to the hospital. At the time, we heard it was an abscessed tooth. The following month, Maggie Auger received a call that she was very ill; I was at the house at the time. She wanted Maggie and me to know that she had cancer and not long to live, but not to tell anyone. My visit was cut short because my elder, Hubert Buck, had passed away. I tried to visit her on the way to the airport but we ran into a blizzard and barely made my flight on time. She died only a few weeks later. She was another elder that never lived to see what she wanted most, a settlement.

There are many, many more stories that the grandmothers before them and the ones living today have to tell. The themes are similar: the loss of a way of life they loved, loss of loved ones, and finding strength to continue the battle. Few would have visited a community that has been torn on every level such as the Lubicon. As one elder who visited the community stated, "As long as the women hold together, the nation will survive no matter what. When the women fall, so do all the people, the nation." (F.N., Chief Hubert Buck, 1991)

I had visited the community previously and got along well with many of the women in various age groups. I was often scolded for not getting to visit one or the other. I tried to see at least one member of each of the different family groups. I put the idea out to the women on individual visits that we should get together and see what would happen. Our first meeting was held at the health trailer. There were expectations; I had to have a focal point, an agenda. The Alberta Commission of Review was going to visit the community late that month. When the women gathered I asked them what they would like to say to the public. The ideas started rolling like thunder. Two and a half hours later, we had more than enough to edit into a statement. I was shocked by their anger, frustration, and outspokenness. These women had a lot to say, and, as one put it, "We have been silent too long. Now we will be heard and we will make them hear us!" (F.N., Lillian Whitehead, June 1992)

The written statement is overwhelming, a condensed version of all their pain. They read the statement and quietly signed their names. Over twenty Lubicon women composed the statement which was to be read in public. They chose a young woman by the name of Rose Ominayak to read the statement. Several days later we gathered at the Longhouse for the hearing. The women joked that their meeting made the men nervous.

There were reporters from as far away as Germany. Ed Bianchi video-taped the presentations for his new documentary. The presence of so many white people made the women nervous; this was entirely new to the community as a whole. Bernard asked the women to speak first. Rose quietly moved towards the front table. Head down, she was shaking as she read the statement. She was only able to read half before she finally

broke down in tears. Everyone sat in silence while she composed herself to finish the statement.

> We, the Lubicon Lake Nation, are tired. We are frustrated and angry. We feel we cannot wait another minute to have our land claim settled. Fifty years is too long. In those 50 years we have watched our land and lives be destroyed by Canadian governments and corporations. Our children are sick from drinking water that oil has spilled in. They are sick from breathing the poisoned and polluted air the pulp mill has made. We are sick from eating animals, animals that are sick from disease from poisoned plants and water. Our children have nothing - they can't breath - even that has been taken. Their culture, the bush life, has been destroyed by development. When we were young we lived in the bush - it was a good life. Now, we have no trap lines, nothing to hunt. There are no jobs, no money to live a decent life. We see ourselves, our men and our children falling into despair, hopelessness, low self-esteem and drinking. Families are broken like never before. Drinking and violence rise as our spirits fall.
>
> We live our lives in constant danger. Since the blockade we have been afraid to go certain places in town. Our sons have been beaten by white men when they say they are Lubicon. We are even afraid to say that we are what we are! The roads are dusty and dangerous to travel. The logging and oil trucks run us off sometimes. We have lost many young ones because of the horrible roads. We are not even safe in the bush. We are afraid to go into the bush because the white sports-hunters shoot at anything that moves.
>
> We ask why? Why us? What have we done to deserve such treatment? Why can't the government settle with the Lubicon? Why have they spent so much time and energy trying to destroy us rather than deal fairly with us? What have we done, our children, our people? What wrong have we done to the outside?
>
> We are not dogs, but we are treated like dogs. We are people just like you. We are equal. We have every right to be here. The Creator put us here in this place. We are important - our future. We have lost more than you can imagine: our way of life that we loved, our culture, our beautiful land, our health and our happiness. What else can we lose?
>
> The Lubicon women demand an end to the physical, emotional, economic, cultural and spiritual destruction. We demand an end to the invasion and devastation to our lives. We demand an end to the government and corporation warfare with our lands and lives. We demand an end to the mockery of our nation! We demand an end to the genocide. Hear our voice

> and our message -we don't know if we'll be here tomorrow. (Lubicon Lake Nation Women's Circle, Rose Ominayak, August 1992)

There were men and women alike with their heads down and eyes watering. The Lubicon women had broken the silence, and powerful it was. The response to their statement by the media was interesting. The theme was that the Lubicon women wanted a settlement out of desperation; they would accept anything. The federal government responded with a letter to the editor from the Minister of Indian Affairs, Tom Siddon, saying that they wanted to help them. (F.N., Hill, August 1992) The federal government had turned the intent of the women's message around. The theme they were trying to establish was that they sympathized with the women and hoped they would tell their chief to stop stonewalling the federal government's offer.

The women held several meetings after the Alberta Commission of Review hearings. The women were outraged that the federal government was trying to blame the chief for the impasse. They requested copies of the latest Lubicon offer Siddon had given to the chief and band council. They read through and saw that issues of membership, compensation and community development were unsatisfactory, and they requested a meeting with Siddon. The Honourable Tom Siddon did not respond.

The chief, along with the research committee, had organized a gathering and opening of the Longhouse for August 21, 1992 through to the August 24, 1992. There were elders, leaders, and women invited from as far away as Six Nations and Alaska, as well as lawyers and academics invited for discussion on the upcoming court case of the Lubicon men who were trial for arson of the logging camp fire. The women said they

would cook and help organize this gathering. We had a series of meetings over three weeks to pull together the Sacred Fire gathering. Various family groupings had agreed to cook, one day each.

At the gathering a sacred fire was lit inside the Tipi and Sweat Lodge ceremonies began. Elders were present in the Longhouse as the "technical" people discussed how each could assist the Lubicon in their court case and land claim. Later that evening a feast and Round Dance were held. The second day, an Onondaga from Six Nations, Wendy Thomas, held the first Women's Circle in Little Buffalo. There were five elderly ladies representing Hobbema and three from Six Nations. The rest were Lubicon, about twenty altogether.

The men were sent out of the Longhouse while the Women's Circle was conducted. The men were obviously not used to exclusion; they kept popping their heads in the door. The drummers from Joseph Bighead were anxiously waiting to begin the evening Round Dance.

The Lubicon women did not say much. I wondered what they thought, but didn't ask. Some younger girls cried and left the circle. The women appeared emotionally drained. I wondered how we were going to pick them up before the Round Dance. Just as that thought passed, Rosanne's youngest son, Jordie age 11, came in. He whispered to me, "Do you ladies want me to sing you a song?" I thought he was an answer to our prayers. He stood in front of the women, held his drum and sang (translation) "Never, Never Leave Me." The women all hugged him and sent for the men to begin the Round Dance. The Longhouse was filled. People held hands and danced

in a clockwise circle. Some of the visiting elders made short speeches to the people. A young Lubicon woman, Sweetie (Eva) Calliou, brought me her new baby and honoured me by naming her Dawn Starlight. It was a good day.

It was during the gathering that the women decided they wanted to attend the next meeting with the chief and Tom Siddon. Siddon had been requesting meetings with the chief "alone." By the end of August, the women received word that the chief was asked to a meeting with Siddon in Edmonton, September 4, 1992. The women held a meeting on September 1 and decided who should attend. Two elders, Louisa Ominayak and Josephine Laboucon, three delegates, Maggie Auger, Rose Ominayak, and Jennifer Ominayak, and I would attend. They also requested the five women elders from Hobbema to attend for support and direction.

I drove Louisa, her daughter, Rose, and Josephine to Edmonton. On the way there, Louisa said, "This is really good, we have not been helping as much as we could. I think this should go on and the women should not quit once you are gone." (F.N., Louisa Ominayak, September 1992) The two elders occupied themselves watching for a moose. It was not a good sign if you did not see at least one animal on the way to Edmonton; it was best if you saw a moose. Josephine spotted several foxes, which she believed to be a sign of Siddon. She said that he was going to "be sneaky, like a fox." We agreed. Louisa decided, upon the second sighting of a fox, that we were going to have to "outfox the fox." Josephine wanted to see a bear, but we never did.

We arrived at the West Harvest Hotel and had dinner with the elders from Hobbema. The chief had the lawyers--Bob Sachs, Terry Munro and James O'Reilly--

assembled for the upcoming trial. We had a late meeting with them to discuss the women attempting to meet with Siddon in the morning. At this late-night meeting, one of the elders from Hobbema stated:

> Bernard, we were happy to have visited your land this summer. We feel your land is sacred and special and understand why you want to protect that beautiful land you have. And it is good that your people they all speak their language; they know their traditions well. You must work hard to keep everything alive. We are pleased that you are respectful of the women and include them. We have some understanding of what is going on. We want to tell you and the women. We know the federal government has a plan against you and your people. We know they believe you are at the point of collapse; you're so tired, everyone knows this. The government is trying to wear you out, and they are succeeding. They believe you will fall anytime now. Many pray for you to have strength and health. They think you will not last over this court case planned for the fall. They will have you running back and forth, attending the hearings and tiring out. Then, they will send in the logging. Who will be there to stop it when all your men are on trial? Who will run your council when you are away at court all the time? They will come in and try to sign the remaining Lubicons to the Loon River Band. They expect people to sign because everything will look so bad, the men going to jail, and all will fall apart. You must know this is their plan. You women must be there to stop this plan. Bernard will not collapse as the government hopes. The women will help. This is good. (F.N., Alice, October 1992)

The lawyers, Bernard and the women all agreed that was indeed the plan and they should try to stop it. The women asked the lawyers about some details of the agreement they did not understand and after several hours left the meeting to draft a press release in case Siddon refused to allow the women to attend.

The following morning the women left to meet with Siddon. When they arrived Bernard informed them Siddon would give them "five minutes and no more."

We entered a room that would seat about 30 people. There were about eleven women assembled, five Lubicons, and five elders from Hobbema, and myself. Siddon

greeted the women and the meeting began. I attempted to record the meeting but before I could request this, I was scolded by Siddon. He told me curtly to "put it away or leave." (F.N., Siddon, September 1992) The tone he used angered the women and they asked if he was afraid to have his words on tape. He responded, "No. She didn't even ask. I don't like sneaky people." (Ibid.) Siddon's response upset the women and tensions rose. I put it away and began to write everything that was said.

Maggie Auger asked Siddon why he never responded directly to the women's letter to him but rather chose to send his response to the media. He responded that he thought he had sent a letter to them. Maggie stated:

> In the letter to the media you say you feel bad for us and that you will do everything in your power to help. You try to blame our chief for us not having a land claim deal. We don't like you trying to say it is our chief that is the problem. We have read the offer you gave us in August. It is not good. Was there not an agreement between the band and your government to hire independent cost estimators to evaluate how much a new community would cost? (F.N., Auger, September 1992)

Siddon responded,"Yes, we had agreed to have independent cost estimators determine the amount of building a new village at Lubicon Lake." (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Maggie stated:

> Then, Mr. Siddon, if there was an agreement to wait for the independent cost estimators to determine the amount, how did you come up with $73 million in this deal you offered a few weeks ago when the cost estimators have yet to complete their estimation. Isn't that in itself breaking the initial agreement with the chief? (F.N., Auger, September 1992)

Siddon replied:

I think $73 million is a large sum. In fact, it is one of the most generous offers the Lubicon ever received. You have to realize how much money that is that we are offering you. You women have said yourselves how poor you are and your living conditions. Just think, you would have running water, new schools... (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Louisa Ominayak responded:

You have made billions off our land. Don't tell us that you are being generous with our own money! We are sick of playing games. You never answered Maggie! Why did you offer a deal when those men that were supposed to come up with the amount, you didn't wait, you went ahead and put this in the media just to make it look like we are bad people. You are the ones not being fair! (F.N., L. Ominayak, September 1992)

Jennifer Ominayak then stated:

That is our land, you need to get that one straight first. Our land! You are trying to make it look like we keep turning offers down, but you had an agreement with my Dad to go with the independent cost estimators and, instead, before they even finish, you are on TV saying you have a new deal for us. Now, you know who is wrong here. You're just trying to make us look bad, and we know better. Besides, you also agreed to drop the membership issue, that we would determine who is a member. Now I read this new offer and you bring up membership again, there again. You a breaking your promises. What do you have to say, tell the truth. (F.N., Jennifer Ominayak, September 1992)

Siddon responded:

Now wait just one damn minute here. You are making me angry. There is no need to tell me to tell the truth! I came here of good will and agreed to meet with you for five minutes, and they're up!" (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Louisa Ominayak jumped to her feet and pointed at Siddon, saying:

You sit down! You're not going anywhere until you give us a deal! Now you said you want to settle with us. Here is your chance. Tell us you are going to give us five minutes like we are some kids or something. I have been

> waiting 50 years for a settlement. Your people came and bulldozed my home. You have never paid us for that. Nope, you just took all the oil in the ground and trees off the ground, now you say you are being generous when we are all losing our way of life and homes and everything. And now we finally meet you and you swear at me and this other elder here. Don't you swear at us! (F.N., L. Ominayak, September 1992)

Siddon's face turned red as he slowly sat back down. He tried to compose himself, saying:

> I didn't mean to swear, but you ladies need to show respect too. (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Maggie responded:

> You need to show respect to us if in turn you want to receive it, and you are not showing us respect. You are lying to us. Now, I will ask you again and I want an answer, not to change the subject, but an answer to my question, did you agree with the chief to have an independent cost estimator determine the amount of the land claim settlement for building a new village, yes or no? (F.N., Auger, September 1992)

Siddon responded:

> I realize the cost of a new village is more than even what the Lubicon's proposal suggested because of the inflation rates and so on. We took this into account. Now you must realize the $73 million is a whole lot more than the $45 million you were offered. It is quite fair and you should talk to your chief and tell him how fair it is. We cannot give you more, especially since your band has lost many members. Even taking this into account we are giving you a lot of money. (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Maggie responded:

> Siddon, you are not answering the question and I get the feeling we could sit here all day and you won't answer, so I'll tell you what you offered. You offered us a bad deal. You offered to have our people with no economic development, you charge us $10 million to pay the province for land that is already ours, so we are talking about $63 million already. You offered to

build houses for so many Lubicons, but then bring this membership up again, who is allowed and not allowed to get a new house. Under this agreement I would not get one. I am not treaty, so I am not going to talk the chief into accepting a deal that would only provide for treaty holders. I am Lubicon and you cannot determine our membership for us. Secondly, this offer includes the amount for a new school and other public services that the Canadian government provides for all it's citizens. So, why are you charging us to build the public buildings and their operations when no other Canadian has been charged? That makes it look like you are offering a lot of money, but, really you are adding in those expenses that shouldn't be in there. When it comes down to it, the Lubicon will receive less than the $45 million offer. See we have read this carefully. I ask you, doesn't the government provide educational facilities, health facilities and so on to the larger public. When you add this up and make it a $73 million dollar offer? (F.N., Auger September 1992)

Siddon replied:

Now understand, we are prepared to build you a beautiful community and you have nothing as it is now. This is the best deal the Lubicon ever have been offered. What do want? A $100, $200 million? We are not a bank with money to give away. You have to be realistic. We don't have $200 million and the buck has to stop somewhere! (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

Jennifer Ominayak looked angrily at Siddon and said:

We never asked for $200 million. Besides, you have taken our land. Our land not yours. You aren't giving us anything! You have taken something and made billions of dollars from it. Now you have to pay the owners, so quit saying you are giving us. Giving us! You are not giving us what was never yours to take in the first place. So, what we ask for is by law, what we are entitled to, schools, health and housing. (F.N., J. Ominayak, September 1992)

Maggie Auger then stated:

Siddon, you are speaking in circles, not answering anything. Now we'll ask again, why don't you wait for the cost estimators to determine the amount and work from there? (F.N., M. Auger, September 1992)

Siddon only evaded her questions and the discussion led nowhere. Towards the end of the meeting, I informed Siddon:

> I hope that you do not try to jail all the Lubicon men and hope the logging begins at the same time. Then sign them up to other bands. Your strategy to destroy the Lubicon overlooked one important facet, the women. And I can assure if you try to carry out your plan, Mohawk women, Native women, all women will protest across this country. I just thought I would let you know. (F.N., Hill, September 1992)

Siddon responded:

> Look here, whoever you are, Mohawk or whatever, I don't take kindly to threats. (F.N., Siddon, September 1992)

I said:

> Who is threatening you? I am stating a fact. It's no threat. (F.N., Hill, September 1992)

The meeting lasted for over three hours. Over the course of this time, tensions rose and he practically shouted at the women. Louisa Ominayak warned him once again. He evaded all of their questions and left visibly shaken. The media immediately questioned the women. Maggie wearily responded:

> He swore at us, he shouted and he lied. He is not a man of honour and we are disappointed with his answers. He talked in circles. Maybe the chief will have more luck. (F.N., Auger, September 1992)

Siddon met with the chief and we gathered at the West Harvest for dinner. Bernard told us, "He was shaking when he came in to meet with me. He asked, Who the hell is that Mohawk woman and what is she doing with your women?" Bernard told him, "She is researcher and it's not her you have to worry about. You met the Lubicon women

and now you know what I have to face each time I come home and report, "No deal!" (F.N., B. Ominayak, September 1992)

James O'Reilly, Bob Sachs, Terry Munro, and Ken Stroszik joined us for dinner. O'Reilly and the others were beaming with victory. He told the women:

"You can't even begin to realize what you just did in there and the impact that will have on the federal plan. Yep, you women are the Lubicon's secret weapon and they never saw it coming. Now, we'll just have to wait and see what their response is. As for isolating Bernard and trying to portray him as out of sync with his people, alone and losing his people, well, you women just stomped all over that. The real problem, Siddon and the federal government, have been exposed. You did a great job and we hope you women stay together through this next while. The court case is critical to the Lubicon. If they jail the men, you women will have to take over and keep everything going. Can you do that?" (F.N., O'Reilly, September 1992)

The women discussed how they felt about everything and later agreed to formally organize to help raise money for their group to travel, arrange speaking tours, accompany the chief on meetings and support the men going on trial on October.

Terry Munro said:

> The time is right for the women to ask the federal people for some money. After that ambush they are going to want to appear congenial to the women. This is perfect timing to ask for a start-up grant. I will write a proposal and set up a meeting with the regional Indian Affairs man, Ken Kirby. (F.N., Monro, September 1992)

The women agreed to write the proposal with my help and set up a meeting to request funding. The amount agreed upon to start up the women's group was $45,000.

A series of meetings took place throughout the fall of 1992. This developed into a "women's group" that became active in political and social affairs in the community. The women decided through a series of meetings they would continue to support the land claims struggle and their leadership, but would also focus on improving the community social well-being. The women expressed concern about the "human condition." They felt the community had been torn apart through years of struggle which created social breakdown and collective community stress.

The federal government gave a "one time" grant to the Women's Circle. The $20,000 was to be used to help the women begin the planning stages of their organization's goals and objectives. The band council has signed over funds to the women through band council resolutions. They also donated $3,300 from the Brighter Futures funds.

The band's philosophy has been "hands off" the business of the circle. The chief and council stated:

> In pursuing a land claim for the Lubicon people, the chief and council has had little time to pay close attention to the social breakdown in the community. We support the women's initiative to work towards improving the community and cultural survival. (F.N., B. Ominayak, October 1992)

The women met weekly. Maggie Auger provided the leadership of the Women's Circle. The women decided gathering for "crafts" was the most comfortable environment in which to exchange ideas. The ideas were collectively gathered and distributed in the community via one page newsletter. Their goals and objectives were set out in the September 1992 newsletter:

1) To help the community become stronger and work together.
2) To relearn to work collectively and help each other.
3) To help organize community meetings and gatherings.
4) To help gather ideas for recreation and other activities for the young people.
5) To educate each other about rights and the land claims.
6) To brings in resource people to do workshops, training, cultural activities such as Round Dances.
7) To raise money for the women's meetings, attend women's conferences, travel and learn about outside etc.
8) To start a crafts centre for crafts.
9) To put up baby sitting services for women that attend meetings and workshops.
10) Work to support the political struggles that effects all community members. (F.N., Hill, September 1992)

The women made contacts with Elaine Bishop, a Quaker who worked in the community. She was also a member of Friends of the Lubicon. Elaine worked with lawyers and church groups and was able to secure a house in Edmonton for the wives, mothers, and sisters of the Lubicon men on trial. The women made plans to work with the men on trial and alternate women to support them while in Edmonton. The trial appeared to "bring the people together again" more than it created stress on an already shaken community.

Their work in establishing a "community spirit" is critical to the healing of the community. Continuing in this direction is of the utmost importance to them. Since the women have accomplished the groundwork in the last year of bringing the community together again, the "deeper" level of healing is beginning to be addressed. This involves collective healing as well as individual.

The women have identified three approaches to healing. The Women's Circle is an avenue to release anger, frustrations, despair, and fears, which allows hope, confidence, happiness, and empowerment to emerge. The circles should continue in their

present format, informal and formal. (Meeting, June 1993) Women working together on crafts is the traditional way not only to express themselves but to offer support to one another through listening to others and being listened to. This has helped reestablish friendships and bonds and to provide individual and collective support and strength. The "formal" approach to healing is to bring "outsiders" into the community to have "talking circles," workshops, and structured meetings which continue to assist the women in expressing themselves and their feelings. They believe that healing begins with the individual then moves to the family and then community, it builds a strong nation. (Meeting notes, June 1993)

Traditional healing, through sweat lodges and spiritual ceremonies, are seen as avenues to bring the community back together. Because many of the women have adopted Christian religions, there has been a strain between the traditional and non-traditional. Through discussions about the issue of ceremonies at the circles, traditional ways are being redefined as cultural ways. This has made it easier for Christian members to accept and participate in the "cultural events." Lorraine has explained many of the traditions from a broad context so all members feel free to at least understand what they may have not understood before, such as sweat lodge ceremonies. It is the hope of the Women's Circle that the traditions available in the community would be used by all members in the healing process. If that is accomplished, conflict between the two religions will weaken and healing can begin collectively.

The Lubicon women stated how they have always been involved in the political, social, spiritual, and economic spheres of their society. The development of the

circle is a result of two forces, their political struggle and their desire to improve their conditions. They are women who share common experiences but found themselves in a vicious cycle of social breakdown and powerlessness. It is the women who have suffered greatly because of the development in their territory and government colonial policies. They have much to offer the story of the Lubicon. It is only recently that they have shared these stories of human tragedy with "outsiders." Many stories will never reach the public eye. (Meeting, June 1993)

There was some speculation that the men would become threatened by the women's group. This may be true to an unmeasurable extent. The chief and council have supported their work and welcome their assistance in public spheres. There has been key support from the husbands of the women leaders. They feared creating tensions between the men and women but this has yet to happen. There have been a few community members who feel threatened by the circle. These women held positions of power in the community and were afraid the Women's Circle was going to "take over everything." The women quieted their fears to an extent by continually phoning them and inviting them to meetings as well as sending them all the minutes of the meetings. This seemed to lessen their anxieties.

Not all of the families in Little Buffalo are participants, for various personal reasons. However, the women, by and large, represent most kinship families and are determined to repair the damage the "outside" has done to their personal lives, families, community and nation.

As head of the Women's Circle, Maggie Auger stated in November 1992:

Why I do this work here, stay with it, the women, is because I am afraid so much has been lost. Our elders are passing away. They have all the knowledge. Me, I know something about tanning hides, the bush. I am willing to get the younger ones interested in doing these traditional things. We have great respect for the land, the animals, the life, the ceremonies. I don't want us to lose that, too. The younger ones must know the meaning of the drum, the songs, the pipe, honouring our ancestors, what the elders tell us. This is how we know who we are. I don't want my kids growing up not knowing who they are, like you see so many. Then drugs, alcohol and the rest follow. Too many of our young are going that way because they aren't taught the traditions. They are losing their identity. We know the land, we know where we were born, where we gave birth to our children, where our people are buried. We remember travelling to different camps, Tea Dances. John used to travel all over with Bernard when they were young to go to ceremonies, Tea Dances. They would ride four days by horseback to attend these ceremonies. Our children will never know that life. They don't know their home so well. It is like our home, our house here and it's being taken over by outsiders, destroyed, I should say. So, I am only doing my duty as a mother and protecting what we have here, for our children, protecting our children. I see it as a traditional responsibility, even though I am doing things not so traditional like leaving my kids to go speak somewhere. It is hard at times. But it has been really hard on the men, too, so maybe we can help here and there a little bit.

As a woman I am aware of all the problems here, the miscarriages, the babies that die. We know better than anyone how this development has hurt us, that the outside never sees or hears about. But, we don't normally talk of our personnel tragedies, that's not our way. But truthfully, the government has done quite the job on us. Letting us hang in the air like this. Creating new bands. Tearing families apart. This has taken a toll on us and we never let anyone know how much suffering really goes on here. The Women's Circle maybe can ease our pain. Keep us together, support for one another. We must stay together and keep our ways strong. That is what I believe will get us through this. (F.N., Maggie Auger, November 1992)

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION: KNOWING THE TRUTH

Can you see what I see?
Can you feel what I feel?
Can we make that so its part of the deal?
I've got to hold you in these arms of steel,
They can't hold us behind these iron walls
we've got mountains to climb

(Robbie Robertson, "Broken Arrow")

TESTIMONY

It's an almost impossible task to make sense out of senselessness. It was and is a critical challenge to remain true to Hubert's advice. The truth, theirs or ours? More importantly, is it possible even worthwhile to present the Indian truth to the white man? I have tried to bring a truth of ours to you. Indeed, what is at issue is this: the Lubicon need solid academic work to provide evidence to the dominant society that Canada has broken their own laws and that this is to be corrected. It appears insanely paradoxical to have to prove to the oppressor that he is oppressing you! Lubicon is filled with contradictions, extreme polarizations of existing First Nation realities, opposing truths in constant tension. The examples are numerous and varied. For example, the Minister of Indian Affairs, Bill McKnight, appointed to settle the Lubicon land claim, was simultaneously pumping millions into the exploitation of the disputed lands. Another

federal Minister of Indian Affairs, Tom Siddon, stated to the Lubicon women, "I honestly am here to help you, I have your best interest at heart." (F.N., Siddon, 1992) At the same time Siddon "promotes" self-government, he is creating dissident bands in order to destroy the Lubicon. To look into the eyes of men like Tom Siddon, a symbol of the colonial regime of domination, and calmly manage the rage as they patronize, deny, degrade, and destroy you is difficult at best.

As the Lubicon have shown, the game of smoke and mirrors continues. The Indian Problem has and continues to be the white man's headache, always standing in the way of progress, development, and civilization. For the Native, the Lubicon, survival hinges upon resisting that progress, development, and civilization. We have a very different understanding of the problem.

History between the Native and the Euro-North American is an ongoing interplay of coexisting realities; one dominant, the other subordinate. The dialogue is transfixed in "English" and the impersonal/objective. In the Lubicon case, to disengage from the "conversation" could be suicidal. In my case it was critical for me to make room for their voice--our voice--in order to tell this story.

The stakes are high, to retreat or "accept an unacceptable deal" would entrench the splitting of their kinship families (status-non/status), sentence their society to welfare dependency which would perpetrate the social ills, and allow destruction of their land base and, ultimately, society. To accept the colonialism would be asking the Lubicon to legally deny their world-views, culture, identity, and belief systems.

The extreme alternative is to continue their resistance which is proving to have those very consequences they are attempting to avoid. The Lubicon have been in a war which has taken a high toll in casualties. Canada's weapons are highly sophisticated, the agents of their power, the law, the courts, the corporations, media, and the rich resources they have access to have served to manipulate the truth and crush a people. The Lubicon endure the abuse, injustice on a day in, day out basis, as the government waits for them to be worn out and thus can finish them off.

The Lubicon survivors know Canada is continuing its their campaign to "wipe us out." The attempt to destroy a people is genocide. Yet the truth is masked in a veil of propaganda, legal/economic terminology that obfuscates the reality of what is taking place in Little Buffalo, Alberta. Agents of the powerful continue to condemn the Lubicon for being Lubicon. It goes far beyond blaming the victim; it is the manufacturing of consent. The ideological justification for the historical and continued dispossession, exploitation, and oppression of Native people by the dominant society continually perpetuates their right to dominate. (Chomsky 1989) Why then, would the Lubicon continue to engage in a discussion when they "know" the other side is consciously attempting to destroy them? The alternative to genocide is auto-genocide. Ward Churchill and Winona LaDuke developed the idea for the North American experience. According to them, auto-genocide refers to dominant powers positioning the oppressed in a situation where they accept "deals" that appear empowering at first, but in reality, simply allow the oppressed to be the authors of their own demise. The fast-cash, quick-fix deal has long term consequences which put the Indigenous leaders in a position to

either say yes to a "bad long-term deal" and pay the consequences later, or say no and appear to his/her people as the "bad guy." (Jaimes 1992)

In essence, the Lubicon can continue to resist the internal colonization process instead of accepting the "deal" offered which would condemn them to auto-genocide. The reality either way does demonstrate how internal colonialism and genocide continue to operate in Canada, and, more importantly, how the government powers that be are getting away with it in a country that espouses human rights and democracy!

The Lubicon ideology demands an adherence to traditional values and beliefs, which is presented in the public arena in the English language by Lubicon representatives. Fred Lennerson and James O'Reilly are the "Lubicon public officials." They are public figures who present the Lubicon agenda in a dialogue for the dominant public arena. The public dialogue, while related and informed by the private, is an entirely different conversation. Neither Fred or James attempt to immerse themselves in the Lubicon world. Rather they engage the "official" dominant ideological arena on behalf of the Lubicon.

In the private arena, the Lubicon conversation includes their traditions and beliefs which not only inform and form their consciousness but fuel their spirit of resistance. The conversation is in Cree, and includes both ordinary and non-ordinary realities. The conversation is often with the spirit world and direction is given in which the Lubicon and friends then become responsible for following the direction and placing their faith in the Creator's power. The "grandfathers" spirits of the Creator, have handed down "laws" which are to be respected and obeyed. The Lubicon people believe there

is no power as great as the Creator's, no laws above the Creator's laws. There is no negotiating with natural laws--you cannot compromise natural law. Traditional Natives that I brought to Little Buffalo, along with the Lubicon "core group," reaffirmed these beliefs. Traditional Lubicon beliefs demand the people to be "strong." If they obey the Creator's laws they will be protected, rewarded. The traditional knowledge of the Lubicon is similar to what I have been taught as a Mohawk. The relationship and discussion the Lubicon engaged in with Hubert and myself was premised on the same values, world-view and ideology. Audrey Shenandoah, Onondaga clanmother elaborates this point, states:

> Being born as humans to this earth is a very sacred trust. We have a sacred responsibility because of the special gift that we have, which is beyond the fine gifts of plant life, the fish, the woodlands, the birds, and all the other living things on earth. We are able to take care of them. We are able to see, if we live right and follow our instructions, that they have a good earth, have good water, a good life, just as we would have if we would follow the instruction of our Creator....The spiritual side of these responsibilities that I have mentioned tonight is the most important part. It's the very foundation of everything that would allow this system to work peacefully. (Shenandoah in Wall, 1992: 40)

The system Audrey refers to is an indigenous one given to the people by the Creator, and each and every nation has such a system. This may differ in cultural expressions but natural laws are observed and celebrated through ceremony. What I want to stress here is that ceremonies are not solely an expression of or a reaction to domination or repression. Ceremonies are the expression of ancient spiritual and cultural philosophies which reinforce the consciousness and practice of their collective system of beliefs. The Lubicon have a sophisticated way of thinking. Their thinking accounts for

all life, creation, and faces yet unborn. The Lubicon have a collective understanding of their humanity and spirituality, and of its denial by their oppressors has not been recognized by governments and outsiders.

The Lubicon Lake Nation's Women stated they are treated like dogs, they express what that denial feels like. To be regarded as non-thinking peoples whose rights need not be respected can be traced back to early contact and the debates of Valladolid in 1542. As I stated earlier, we do not need to study or debate oppression, we know what it is through experience. They do not know the Geneva Convention definition of genocide, but they can define genocide through their experience both individually and collectively. The fact that the Lubicon women ended their statement with a sincerely fearful, "Hear our voice we don't know if we will be here tomorrow..." was not politically motivated rhetoric. They whispered it, heads down and eyes watering. Who better to explain oppression and genocide than the very people who endure and survive systematic destruction to their land and lives? The human experience of culture, spirituality, and survival brings the ideal, theory into the arena of practice.

Official versions of Lubicon history have failed to include the thinking of the Lubicon. The authors wrote the Lubicon experience out, therefore missing the depth of Lubicon beliefs. In the need to address issues the dominant society respects and therefore expects, even I feared telling this story to an audience who might once again disrespect the people. After all, we seem to interfere in the white man's right to talk to us when we try to talk for ourselves, it's the washroom feeling again. The urge to apologize for entering the wrong room stays with us as we try to tell our story to "others."

Lubicon people and leadership firmly abide by their knowledge. The Lubicon are not fighting for just a "land claim" but for life itself--all Creation, animal, plant, water, air, and human. Their past, present, and future are totally connected to one another, as they are to their place within Creation. As Bernard pointed out, "all of Creation can survive without us, yet we are dependant upon all Creation for our life, not just us either. Someday all these people, they will realize what we stood for." (F.N., Ominayak, Sept. 1993)

The Lubicon demonstrate within their own context, one cannot try to stop genocide by accepting auto-genocide. The short-term benefits of accepting a deal such as that of Woodland Cree, by signing away their "aboriginal title," and disempowering their right to protect the land for superficial benefits such as fast cash and houses goes against their logic and beliefs. The "public" officials have successfully manipulated the people suffering from the weakening of Lubicon culture and society by providing a "western colonial rationalization" to people that have been traumatized by the whole demoralization process of genocide.

The strength of the Lubicon determination to reach a "fair deal" rests on their firm belief that "good always overcomes the bad." As bad as things may look, the Lubicon may consult with the grandfathers for advice and "strength, guidance, and wisdom." Within the internal arena, their struggle for cultural survival includes restructuring their damaged traditional system by recreating an anti-colonial modern village community. Their agenda is to re-establish traditional social/cultural arrangements which include reinforcing traditional political, spiritual and philosophical ways by

adopting some Indigenous structures which accommodate their ideology. The relationship the Lubicon leadership created with our elders rested largely on finding Indigenous models of independent governance which would perpetuate Cree traditional values and principles in a modern setting. Thus the creation of this relationship was a consciously motivated strategy of resistance to the colonial model imposed by governments. The band office represented no more than a tool of domination and this was reinforced by the fact that business there revolved mostly around handing out welfare checks. The powerlessness the Lubicon felt in the band office inspired them to resort to overt forms of resistance, such as building a Longhouse in which to conduct community business, meetings with officials and ceremonies. The Lubicon withdrawal from the colonial model provided "agents of colonial domination" with examples for their argument that the Lubicon are" falling apart." The conquistador thinking as John Mohawk refers to it, fails to acknowledge the existence of Native consciousness which has long informed political, social, and economic activities. As the Lubicon demonstrate, their spiritual knowledge guides their direction as well as being a "means to an end" in all spheres of their existence.

Beyond denial of Lubicon thinking is racism which fuels the larger society's consent of genocide. As the history of the settlement of the Americas so vividly shows, "blaming the victims" is a Western tradition of justification for acts of genocide. As Noam Chomsky's work demonstrates the dominant ideology is a way of "manufacturing consent" for heinous acts by official parties. The dominant thinking which supports concepts of survival of the fittest, manifest destiny, progress, and development all serve

to allow the officials to carry out their agenda without much protest from the public. Unfortunately, the public buys into the official ideology and perpetrates the justification. Blaming the victim as justification for oppression of people is a Western tradition, especially with regard to Natives. The Lubicon leadership work tirelessly to save their culture, reconstruct their community, and resist genocidal colonial domination. One cannot label this "blowing it." It can be said Ominayak's energy is spent keeping the body and soul of the Lubicon Nation together. Richardson, having little knowledge of the Lubicon people perpetuated, perhaps unknowingly, the dominant ideological propaganda and thus contributed to manufacturing consent.

What Then Must We Do?

I sit
on a
man's back
and making
him carry
me and yet assure myself and
others that I am sorry for him
and wish to lighten his load by
all possible means - except by
getting off his back

(Leo Tolstoy, 1886)

In the last instance, it is the "genteel nature" of the Euro-Canadian agents of oppression that is perhaps Canada's most powerful, historical tool. The appearance of democratic gentility masks the reality of genocide in the Lubicon case. There are no more massacres as witnessed by our ancestors. Just as Western technology has become sophisticated so has their destruction of innocent Indigenous populations which stand in

their way. The dominant society historically honours the Euro-north American men who successfully complete their agenda. We can think of many Euro-American heros who had a hand in destroying an Indigenous population and were commended for their efforts. Jaimes raises the question, what would the Nazi's version of history look like if they had won? (Jaimes 1992) Today, as we have witnessed with the Lubicon, massacres are technological and "white collar" in nature, reflecting the colonial sophistication Canada has attained. The Lubicon have been assaulted on economic, legal, political, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and, at times, physical levels. They have withstood the attempts to destroy them by utilizing all the available "democratic means possible" as well as their traditional sources of strength. The lack of physical violence and bloodshed does not excuse Canada's ongoing attempts to virtually destroy the Lubicon people. The issue of Lubicon reaches far beyond "stonewalling a land claim."

The significance of this research reaches far beyond Euro-centred issues of cultural survival, resistance, ethnographic authority, or voice. From what I have witnessed, and what I know, what the Lubicon know and want to say is that this is an example of Canada's ongoing modern practice of genocide. The Lubicon are contending with an organized relentless campaign by Canada to destroy a gentle and kind people. Canada has and continues to be guilty of genocide.

Given the odds they are facing as a people, it is no wonder people are giving up and opting for human survival. They fall prey to slick government agents that offer lots of goodies if they sign the paper and sign away their grandchildren's future. Fast-talking government lawyers work overtime to slowly pull apart a people who are under

siege, vulnerable to losing everything. Many have lost hope and alcohol is utilized to numb the stark reality of destruction. So the traditions of the white man carry on, doing as their ancestors have done before them. Yet their children come to us asking for wisdom and spiritual guidance as we carry on our tradition of sharing. At times it has felt as if this big monster feeds off us, consuming our land, cultures, and, at times, our very souls. Its appetite can never be satisfied.

Here, I have tried to tell our story to you in the best way I know how, in a way that you would understand. I tried to bring to you the beauty and strength of our ways, Lubicon ways and how its worth as a people, a culture is beyond measure. I don't think it is possible in our way to fail as long as we follow the original laws and bring forth what we know with a good mind and heart. The hope in our hearts comes from the Creator, giving us signs that he has not forgotten his children. The white buffalo is a sign to all of us.

It shows us the time we are in and what we are to do. People must change their ways and as Chief Hubert Buck warned, "what happens to the Lubicon we will all follow, if they win we all win." That is the truth this work brings, I know what Hubert said is the truth.

The conclusion is best summarized by the spiritual/political leader who bears the burden of holding a tiny nation together.

> As long as I am standing, which may not be too much longer (chuckles) I will move in the direction given to me by the elders. I cannot, with good conscience, accept a deal that sentences us to a lifeless life, one cannot know the agony of trying to keep going for reasons that others don't comprehend. If the people want to go in another direction, then they must find someone else, because I cannot accept a bad deal my grandchildren will pay for to

appease a few. I'd like to go to my grave knowing I followed our ways and did the right thing. You know, its easy to take the fast way out when you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. When all you see is death and sickness, despair and growing social problems. But, as long as we follow our ceremonies, follow those instructions that have helped us survive for thousands of years, then I know there is hope. Someday, maybe people will see that this is what it is, a white government trying to wipe out a people who are sitting on billions of dollars. From what I have heard this is what they have done since they came to this land, yet people don't want to believe it, they are afraid to say it, afraid to know that it is true. But, I never talk about it, because just getting people to understand Canada breaks its own laws, uses courts to legalize their greed and so on is more than enough. I know, the truth of the matter as do the old people. They are intentionally destroying us in the hopes the Lubicon will be destroyed for good. Yet, I must sit across from these bastards and deal empty deals, public affirmations for them to say, "we tried, see here is the records of proof". So they can cover their asses when someone calls it for what it is, genocide. They can get jokers to feed the public their bullshit while all the time they know, we know. Hopefully the world will know what in fact Canada is doing here and has done to my people. And for that, there is no amount of compensation, no deal that can compensate the land, the animals, the water, the air, the human lives lost, marred and destroyed. No, the white will never tell his truth because if he had one he wouldn't do all the destruction to the world he has done. (F.N., Ominayak, June 1992)

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