

MURDERED

DEAD

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# A PRESENTATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



information

MISSING

HELP

LOST

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DEAD

**FOR ALL THE MISSING AND MURDERED  
ABORIGINAL WOMEN OF CANADA**

PRESENTED BY:

ABORIGINAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS & JUSTICE

AND THE

INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ABORIGINAL WOMEN

killing

ABORIGINAL

Missing

SEARCH

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## *Presentation to the United Nations Rapporteur Professor James Anaya*

*As Chair of the Aboriginal Commission on Human Rights & Justice and President and Founder of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, I wish to make the following points:*

- 1. The Federal Government, all of the Provincial Governments and all of the Human Rights Commissions in Canada have known of the deaths of the indigenous women for at least forty years and have failed to take action on this national tragedy.*
- 2. This awareness began with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's "Conspiracy of Silence" depicting the murder of Helen Betty Osborne, a student, by four white men in The Pas Manitoba.*
- 3. Despite the pleadings of many individual Indigenous women including myself and our organizations no action was taken by any government to address these murders, neither were the police or the courts held accountable.*
- 4. Indeed many indigenous women continue to be blamed for their own demise by the non-indigenous population as evidenced by 49 murders by serial killer Robert Picton in Vancouver B.C.*
- 5. That the governments and Human Rights organizations have deliberately restricted funding to Indigenous women's organizations including our own, to enable us to protect our young girls and women resulting in the documenting of 652 murdered or missing with the possibility of thousands more indigenous women due to inadequate police work.*
- 6. To counter the racism, prejudice and the hatred towards indigenous women the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women has created the beautiful "Esquao Awards" to honour the strength and beauty of almost 400 hundred Aboriginal women from 76 communities in Alberta. Our Social Justice Awards held every two years has honoured non indigenous individuals such as Irene Khan Secretary General of Amnesty International and police officers who have done exemplary work like RCMP Officer Robert Urbanoski who solved the Helen Betty Osborne murder and Edmonton Police Officer, Freeman Taylor who solved the Joyce Cardinal murder.*

7. *These documents illustrate the extent to which Aboriginal/ Indigenous women are targeted not only by their murderers but by the Police forces who are hired and sworn to protect them. This lack of protection has obviously been given some semblance of credibility by statements by Chiefs of Police but fully ignored and worse, fully implemented by governments in power as illustrated in the withholding of food and nutrition to the indigenous children being held in the captivity of Residential Schools.*
  
8. *I did not know that when we were asking, and begging for stable funding Mr. Lord then a Liberal federal government bureaucrat originally from Lac St. Anne, stated in our meeting with him "They like to keep you hungry." This heartless attitude and refusal to adequately fund our organization or any other Aboriginal women's regional organization has lasted to this day October 22, 2013. The Liberal Policy of not providing regional funding was fully and gloriously adopted by the Conservative government. No amount of presentations to Parliamentary Committees or Ministers or anyone else resulted in any stable funding of any sort. Scarce resources, we were told were not to be used to help the indigenous women. We had no Champion in the House of Commons, not even Honourable Anne McLellan Minister of Justice was interested in changing anyone's mind let alone the Parliamentarians. At that time I wrote to the Prime Minister Jean Chretien and pointed out to him that he had powerful women in his cabinet including Sheila Copps, Ethel Blondin-Andrews and a couple more. To quote from the letter "apparently they are silent". I met with Ethel, all to no avail. I might as well be talking to the wall. There was absolutely no political will from either the federal or provincial politicians to do anything but let our women die and wait for the next body to be found.*
  
9. *When I received the Order of Canada in 2005. I informed my family that every minute of my time, three minutes, was too valuable not to spend it on the deaths of the women. Ironically the Nigerian woman read out in French, nine (9) pages just after I spoke, taking at least 20 minutes or more. To this day I regret the short time I had been given to tell the world that our women were being brutalized, beaten and murdered in a country which I perceived viewed them as "fodder."*
  
10. *As recent as this May (2013) Mr. Blair Mason Chief Commissioner of the Alberta Human Rights Commission stated to me "when I was a judge in the north I saw that the Aboriginal Women are the most vulnerable." I replied "Yes, Mr. Mason, that's why we find their bodies thrown in a ditch or their remains are found in the bush."*

*Interviews and commentary - Muriel Stanley Venne C.M.,B.A.(Hon.)*

*Tel: 780-479-3634 Cell: 780-887-3115*

*Notes: The inquiry in to the death of Helen Betty Osborne is on the internet*

# Hundreds of Helen Betty Osbornes

CONNIE DIETER-BUFFALO

Hobbema

The two-part CBC television drama about the death of Helen Betty Osborne shocked most Canadians. I felt the program only touched the surface of racism in this country.

A scene in the movie, *Conspiracy of Silence*, shows Betty Osborne walking beside a carload of white boys while they jeer at her. I have had the same scene played out many times in my life. As I watched, I could feel Betty's heart pounding with fear.

As a young girl growing up in Regina, during the late 1950s, I was one of the few native people in the city. This was the national experience at the time. Our numbers were generally made up of close family members.

A danger we were constantly made aware of, particularly by the older female members of the clan, was to be cautious of the white man. We were told never to walk the streets alone, to stay indoors and to protect our younger siblings.

The warnings of the older women were confirmed when a cousin was dragged off her front step by a group of white men, taken to the city limits and raped. The men later dropped her off at her house, confident that their crime would go unpunished. She was 13 years old.

The family did not report the assault for a number of reasons. One was the anticipated lack of response by the authorities. The family believed that the police and the courts would do little about the assault because the girl was native.

It may be difficult for middle class white Canadians to accept that these attitudes towards native Indians existed in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Indian females were seen as nothing more than bodies for a white man's sexual aggression. We were sexual prey. The predator's motivation was the power he felt over the total powerlessness of the aboriginal female.

Most Canadians react with shock and indignation when stories like these are related. The white men discussed in these stories are not the men they know. Yet

most will have stories about the native family down the street or at school. If Betty Osborne's story suggests anything, it says that racism is insidious in any degree or form.

These attitudes may still prevail. In the past three years, the bodies of three aboriginal women have been found outside Edmonton's city limits. Investigations are continuing and no arrests are likely to be made.

Statistics show that Indian women are much more likely to die from violent means than non-native women. Poverty and poor socio-economic status are contributing factors. It is my view that the underlying reasons for this tragedy is still racism.

There are hundreds of Helen Betty Osbornes lying in graves across Canada. No candlelight vigils for them. Just another aboriginal woman's body thrown out on the side of the road, lying beside a house, shot in a motel room, found in a gravel pit, hanging in a jail cell or lying in a shallow grave a few miles from town.

Connie Dieter-Buffalo is an Hobbema writer

## NATIONAL NEWS

A5

# Police disturbed by missing women

• From Page A1

And while Ms. Sylvestre died in early October, an anthropologist has determined that the others, including Ms. Taysup and Ms. Napope, were deposited at different times, probably in the spring and summer of 1992. Police say this seems to preclude the possibility that they died together of something like alcohol or drug poisoning.

Most worrisome to the RCMP team investigating the slayings is that none of the names of the dead women were on a computerized police list of 470 young native women reported missing in Western Canada in the past three years.

Most women on that list, police say, have actually disappeared in the past 12 months.

"That is a lot of young people. I was surprised there was that many," said RCMP Sergeant Colin Crocker, who heads the homicide investigation. He said investigators drew a blank when they went through the 470 names to see whether any matched the descriptions of the dead women.

"We were able to identify Janet Sylvestre pretty quickly," he said, because a farmer stumbled on the body not more than eight hours after she died.

"And Eva Taysup's name came up through a tip after we'd gone through the list of 470."

The tip came from RCMP in Rose Valley, Sask., who rechecked their own missing-persons files and came

up with Ms. Taysup's name. But like Ms. Napope, she had never been entered in any broader missing-persons registry. Police say someone recognized Ms. Napope from police drawings in a newspaper.

The cause of death of the three remains unknown. The remains were badly decomposed after so long on the ground, and the bones may have been scattered by animals.

That there should be nearly 500 missing native women at all is grave cause for concern for both native leaders and police, Sgt. Crocker said.

Bernard Schissel, a sociologist at the University of Saskatchewan, said: "It's quite remarkable that 500 people could be free-floating and disappear and no one knows anything about it. I think to a large extent it's a reflection of our indifference toward the marginalized. We tend to blame the victim."

At least one women's organization has expressed profound shock at the number of missing women.

"Nobody's aware of this," said Lucille Thomas of the Saskatchewan Native Women's Council. "I'm just shocked—I can't believe this."

Mr. Schissel offered the theory that once a young native woman leaves the reserve for the city, her options are limited.

"There are no jobs, they take to the streets," he said. "My sense is that it is an issue of classism rather than racism. In California, there are 1.5 million street people who are free-floating out there. Here in Can-

ada, when people move away, particularly off-reserve, there's a feeling among those left behind that they've been abandoned."

Despite the traditional importance natives place on the extended family, he said, it is nearly impossible to keep track of someone who has left the reserve.

"It's not indifference," he said. "It's hard for people to keep in contact." He said that few homes on reserves in the North have telephones.

Ms. Thomas said it is a sad fact that no one keeps track of young women who leave the reserve for the city.

"No one checks up on them," she said. "They leave for the city, and if they disappear after that, no one notices."

Kim Rossmo, a criminologist and expert on serial killers at Simon Fraser University, said the high number of missing native women is disturbing.

While police say they are keeping all their options open, Mr. Rossmo said the cluster of three bodies in one location points to the likelihood of a serial killer.

"It definitely fits the classic serial-killer pattern," he said, noting that a lone assailant, having got away with it once, will return to a remote site to commit other murders or dispose of bodies.

He said 75 per cent of the time a multiple murderer is a local resident rather than a drifter. And the location of the bodies points to the likelihood that whoever is responsible knows the area well.

"Serial killers almost invariably strike the disenfranchised," Mr. Rossmo said, "and if these women were prostitutes, that makes them 100 times more vulnerable."

There has been speculation that the victims worked as prostitutes and that the killings may be related to the death 10 years ago of Laura Ann Ahenakew, a Saskatoon prostitute whose body was found near the same site.

Police remain tight-lipped, however, about either the serial-killer theory or the suggestion that any of the latest victims worked the streets.

"We don't know if it was one person or 10 people who did this," Sgt. Crocker said, "but we can't rule anything out. Three bodies in one area is very unusual and kind of questionable. Until we know more about the victims, we can't rule anything in and we can't rule anything out."

The RCMP have been working through a list of 50 or 60 suspects, including convicted killers and sex offenders who were on parole in 1992. But until they identify the fourth victim, the investigation is far from complete.

The Mounties refuse to say the cases may never be solved and are looking for any links between the four women.

"For the first while, we were getting 20-30 tips a day," Sgt. Crocker said before the identification of Ms. Napope. "Now we're getting six tips a day. So we're not stalled. We're just marking time."

# Review of RCMP policies urged

## Aboriginals angered over killing of native by Mountie officer

The Canadian Press  
WHITEHORSE

Canada's largest aboriginal group has called on the federal government to review RCMP procedure following an inquest into the death of a native man killed by a police officer.

"Police force always seems to be lethal force when it comes to First Nations," national Chief Phil Fontaine said in a news release Friday.

"The federal government must not allow another life to be lost in such tragic circumstances. We have already lost too many lives."

Harley Timmers was killed by RCMP Cpl. Wayne Foster last.

The shooting occurred in September 1998.

Foster was patrolling alone when he fatally shot Timmers, 23.

It happened following a short foot chase and struggle.

The coroner's jury heard Timmers started to choke Foster and the officer shot Timmers five times.

After 10 hours of deliberation Thursday, the inquest jury recommended RCMP work in pairs at night and review their use of head locks, among other things.

Fontaine said the jury recognized the situation was not properly handled.

"I have been pushing for such a review (of RCMP procedure) for almost two years now," he said, noting the shooting deaths of Connie and Ty Jacobs by police in Alberta.

"The government of Canada, in con-



THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sarah Snowdon holds photo of son Harley Timmers at a press conference Friday.

junction with the AFN, must establish an independent contextual review to examine the relationship between the First Nations and the RCMP."

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, a Saskatchewan judge who is also aboriginal, said she hoped the inquest helped the Timmers family deal with their grief.

She added she was sure that the recommendations by the jury will lead to change.

Timmers' mother, Sarah Snowdon, said Friday her son was a cheerful, caring person, full of fun, a good listener, polite and considerate.

"It has been a long, painful and difficult year for our family losing our beloved Harley at the hands of the RCMP," she said.

She said the promotion of Foster from constable to corporal and his transfer to a teaching position in Saskatchewan's police academy has added to the family's grief.

"We are cognizant of the fact that the RCMP plays an important part in society, but they must also be accountable for their actions," said Snowdon.

# Woman on poster at police range an aboriginal: critic

NATIONAL POST, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2000

RICHARD MARJAN / THE STARPHOENIX



This Saskatoon Police Service range poster was part of a series that showed people with firearms in their hands. About 1,000 were sent out. It is "frightening and horrible," says the executive director of the Elizabeth Fry Society in Saskatoon. The director of the Saskatchewan Police College in Regina says: "The woman depicted in the target is not an aboriginal woman. She's a caucasian lady."

# RCMP's native-death probe hears complaints about fellow Mounties

SASKATOON (CP) — An RCMP task force investigating the deaths of five aboriginal men has received 25 complaints involving the force's own members.

Three of the complaints involved "abandonment," task force spokesman Sgt. Rick Wychreschuk said yesterday. He said the term has been coined to mean "dropping people off somewhere where they had no intentions to be" — sometimes in sub-zero temperatures without shelter.

The probe originally only targeted Saskatoon city police, so it was made the Mounties' responsibility — but now it seems they'll also have to investigate themselves. Darcy McKenzie, a spokesman for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, said that's why the federation wants a public inquiry.

"The RCMP shouldn't be investigating the RCMP," said McKenzie.

The man in charge of the RCMP doesn't see a conflict. Solicitor General Lawrence MacAulay told CBC's *The National* the Mounties investigate themselves all the time.

The task force was established in February after Darrell Night complained he had been abandoned by Saskatoon police on the outskirts of the city in sub-zero temperatures without a coat and told to walk home.

Two Saskatoon officers, Const. Ken Munson and Const. Dan Hachen, were suspended without pay. The task force's report on them was given to the Justice Department earlier this week and a decision is expected soon on whether charges will be laid.

Night's complaint came at the same time two other aboriginal men disappeared. Rodney Steven Naistus and Lawrence Wegner were found frozen to death in the same area.

The RCMP were called in to find out more about the freezing deaths. Their mandate was later expanded to include three other deaths.

Wychreschuk said the new complaints go back between 10 and 20 years and include such things as excessive force or assault.

# Indian women the most vulnerable

CONSTANCE DEITER-BUFFALO

Hobbema

On any given day of the week, and at any time in the most recent past, all of the aboriginal women listed below succumbed violently to either racism, sexism, or indifference.

Indian women still face discrimination in employment, housing and economic opportunities. The sexism of mainstream society is compounded by past government policies that place Indian women politically without a voice. Indifference was evidenced by newspaper reports of the high murder rate for aboriginal women. No one moved until the number of dead was over 200.

Indian women, as suggested by police reports, suicide statistics and mortality rates, are the most vulnerable women in Canada. Urban Indian women are more at risk. Most of the women on this list were women who were living in urban areas, away from their home communities.

Their deaths happened in every city or community in Western Canada and others will follow. Left to mourn with cherished memories are the daughters, the sons, the mothers, the fathers, Kokums, Mosoms, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles and friends.

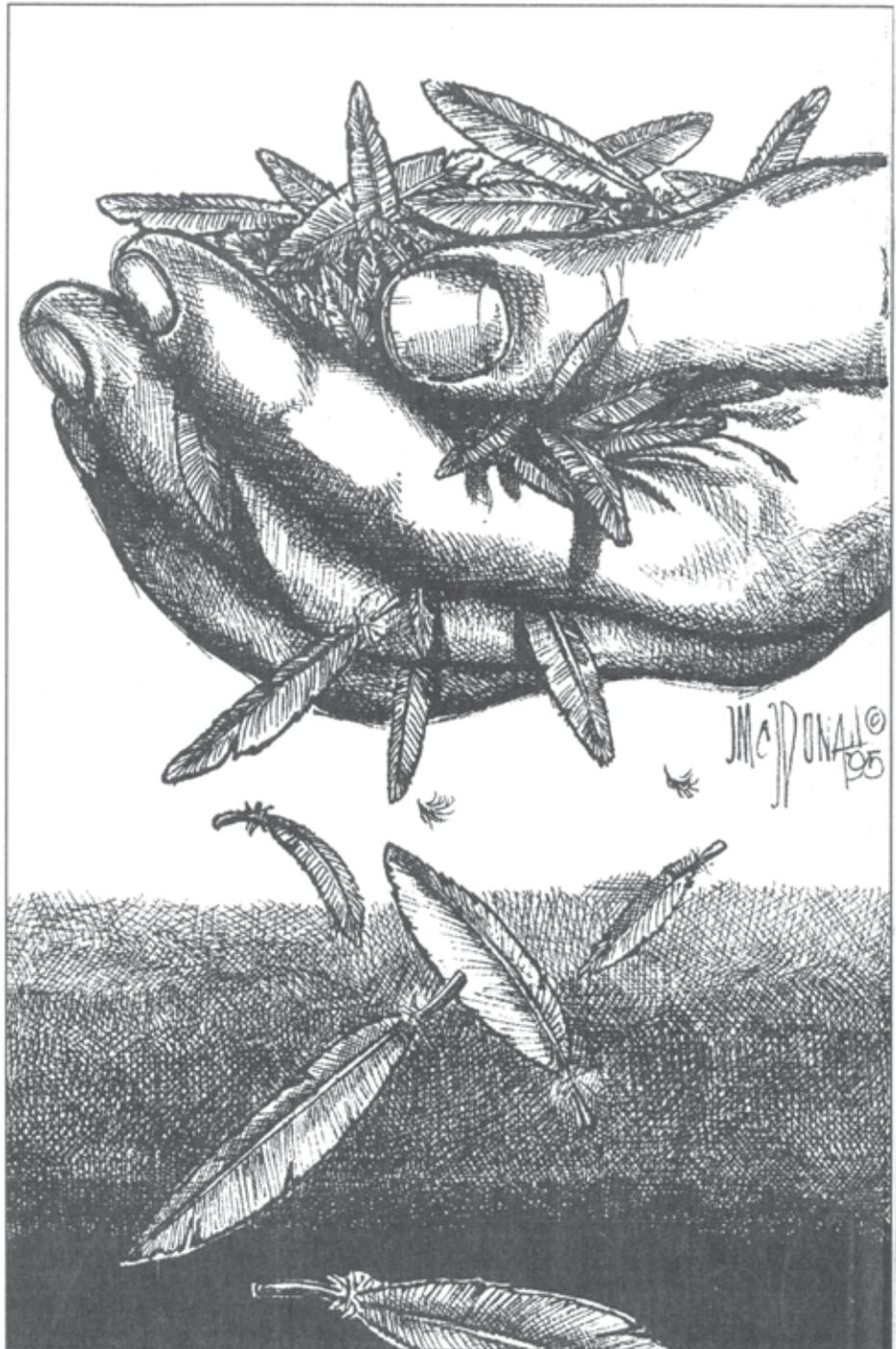
## GUEST COLUMN

In lieu of tributes, donations will be gratefully accepted at any women's shelter, inner-city service organization, aboriginal addictions agencies, food banks, or treatment centres for violent offenders. They are all sadly missed.

Helen Betty Osbourne (17 years); Carol Ann Deiter (32); Marlene Buffalo-Hudson (23); Laura Ann Ahenakew (22); Janet Sylvestre (37); Eva Daysup (30); Shelly Napape (16); Elaine Keewatin Flowers (21); Dawn Keewatin (17); Anna Marie Aquash (24); Rose Desjarlais; Mrs. Wayne Stonechild (24); Madeleine Lavalee (30); Jane Doe (body of unidentified aboriginal woman found outside Saskatoon Oct. 24, 1994); Joyce Cardinal (30's); Annette Bruce; Julie Gambler.

Roberta Saddleback (20's); Tracy Lyn Hope; Cherlene Kerr; Debbie Kennedy; Gloria Duneult; Cheryl Ann Joe; Brenda George; Dawn Ritchie; Laverna Avigan; Debbie Neeclouse; Loran Carpenter; Jennifer Pete; Verna Lyons; Sandra Flamond; Bobbie Lincoln; Donna Chartrand; Shirley Nix; Lisa Leo; Martha Garvin; Gertrude Anderson; Wendy Poole; Christine Billy; Sheila Hunt; Rose Peters; Jerry Ferguson; Ruby Williams.

Barbara Larocque; Holly Cochrane; Cindy Williams; Lorna George; Veronica Harry; Monika Lillmeier; Elsie Tomma; Patricia Andrew; Nya



Robailard; Mary Johns; Barbara Paul; Diane Lancaster; Carrie Anne Starr; Mary Johnson.

Rose Merasty; Lorna Jones; Lois Mackie; Carol Davie; Lorraine Arrance; Nancy Bob; Peggy Snow; Janice Saul; Margaret Vedan; Janet Basil; Leanne Scholtz; Donna Stony; Laurie Scholtz; Karen Baker; Jenny Waters; Belinda Ritchie; Sharon Arrance; Julie Smith. Pauline Johnson; Maxine Paul;

Chantel Ferguson; Annie Cedar; Patricia Wadhams; Amanda Flett; Maureen Riding-at-the-Door; Bernadine Standigready; Luanne Stolarchuk; Marjorie Pironen; Dora Patrick; Sally Jackson; Tanya Wallace; and 117 names not released by the RCMP and others.

Constance Deiter-Buffalo is a Cree Indian and a master's student at the University of Alberta.

# 110 slayings ... and not one person charged

## Aboriginal women want improvements to justice system

DON RETSON  
Journal Staff Writer  
EDMONTON

Silence descended on the city hall foyer Saturday as a prominent Alberta aboriginal leader read the names of 110 slain native women. No one has ever been charged in their deaths.

The list was compiled in 1995, but the situation doesn't appear to be getting better. Muriel Stanley Venne of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women said she will soon present an updated list she expects will exceed 200 names.

The deaths happened in Western Canada over the past few decades.

"We are presently gathering statistics on our women who have been murdered and no one is ever charged," she told a human rights conference focusing on women's issues.

Venne is president and founder of the institute as well as chair of the Aboriginal Human Rights Commission. Her address touched on issues ranging from legislated discrimination against aboriginal women in the past to ongoing systemic discrimination.

"In our organization we counsel our women never to go alone to an appeal board or hearing of any kind," she told the conference, entitled Celebrating Women.

"We have found that if a person goes alone they lose and if they go with someone they win. It's as simple as that."

Venne said she will unveil the updated list of native women killed at the marathon fatality inquiry into the shooting deaths of Connie and Ty Jacobs.

The two were killed by an RCMP officer at the Tsuu T'ina Nation near Calgary March 22, 1998, after Jacobs pulled a rifle on two social workers and a tribal police officer. The inquiry has heard that Jacobs feared having her children taken away.

The institute has received standing at the fatality inquiry and will present its case in December.

Venne said the institute will seek funding for preventive and advocacy programs it hopes will improve the existing justice system for native women.

"We are embarking on our Guardian Angel program which will train our own women in advocacy and mediation, which is culturally based. This program is designed to deal with crisis and pre-crisis situations."

Venne said suspicion about the justice system discourages many aboriginal women from blowing the whistle on a criminal, who could be an important member of the community.

"Victims are loath to put a perpetrator in a system that is viewed as racist," she said, adding that in cases of spousal violence, many victims fear police will take away their children.

Other speakers at the conference, which continues today at city hall, are Senator Thelma Chalifoux, Liberal MLA Laurie Blakeman, city lawyer Shirish Chotalia and Margaret Ruth Osbaldeston. The conference is dedicated to the promotion of equality between men and women.



*On Friday morning, October 11, 2013 we arrived at Ermineskin Band Junior High School Auditorium located in Hobbema 36 km from Edmonton.*

*The sun was shining when we left and promised to be an "Indian Summer" day with falling yellow leaves covering the ground. The previous afternoon we were given a briefing on protocol, time allocation and pointers on the Rapporteur's mandate.*

*The gym was packed with leaders, both women and men from as far away as Saskatchewan and as close as the four Reserves located in Hobbema, now "Maskwacis" (Bear Hills). We were called fairly early and given a full five minutes.*

*Three large display boards depicting the poster used by Police officers and distributed by the Saskatchewan Police College National Post February 19th, 2000; two guest columns written by Connie Deiter-Buffalo published in the Edmonton Journal; Article calling for a full investigation into the actions of the RCMP towards Aboriginal people. 110 slayings... and not one person charged.*



# Canada's First Nations in 'crisis': UN envoy

## Government needs to address 'profound mistrust,' Anaya says

MARK KENNEDY  
Postmedia News

OTTAWA — Canada is facing a "crisis" over its treatment of aboriginals and the Harper government needs to take urgent steps to build trust with its Indigenous peoples, says a United Nations human rights envoy.

The message came Tuesday from James Anaya, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, who wrapped up an eight-day fact-finding trip to Canada with an impassioned news conference near Parliament Hill.

In a sharply worded statement, he called on the Conservative government to grant an extension to a commission studying the residential schools saga, move more slowly on plans for a bill to reform aboriginal education and establish a public inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

He said Canada has been a world leader on human rights and was one of the first countries to extend constitutional protection to aboriginals.

"But despite positive steps, daunting challenges remain," he said.

"From all I have learned, I can only conclude that Canada faces a crisis when it comes to the situation of

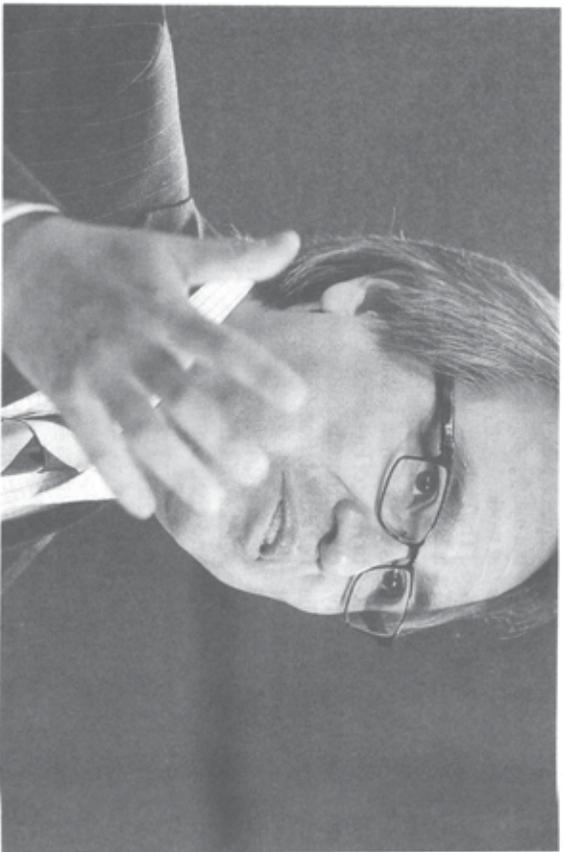
Indigenous peoples of the country."

He said the "well-being gap" between aboriginals and non-aboriginals has not narrowed in recent years, treaty claims remain "persistently unresolved" and there is a high level of "distrust" among aboriginals toward the federal and provincial governments.

"Canada consistently ranks near the top among countries with respect to human development standards, and yet amid this wealth and prosperity, aboriginal people live in conditions akin to those in countries that rank much lower and in which poverty abounds."

He said at least one in five aboriginal Canadians lives in homes in need of serious repair, which are often also overcrowded and contaminated with mould. The suicide rate among Inuit and First Nations youth on reserve — more than five times greater than other Canadians — is "alarming," he said.

"One community I visited has suffered a suicide every six weeks since the start of this year. Aboriginal women are eight times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women and Indigenous peoples face disproportionately high incarceration rates."



United Nations human rights envoy James Anaya talks to the media Tuesday in Ottawa.

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Amid all this, he said governments are taking steps to address the problems, but they have fallen far short of what is needed.

Anaya said Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government must spend more time truly consulting aboriginals. "If that doesn't happen, the path forward is going to be a rocky one."

The Harper government has had a history of treating UN emissaries with disdain and it was critical of Anaya last year when he spoke out against living conditions at a Northern Ontario reserve.

Anaya met last week with Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, who issued a written statement Tuesday, which did not address his

specific recommendations.

Instead, Valcourt pointed to Anaya's compliments of Canada and insisted that the Conservative government is preoccupied with the "well-being" of aboriginals and is taking "effective incremental steps" to make progress for them.

In the wake of his tour of Canada — he met federal politicians in Ottawa and travelled to several provinces where he met aboriginals — Anaya will prepare a report that will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in September of 2014.

On Tuesday, he said it's important for the government to seriously consider his preliminary recommendations, which include:

■ Grant the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, tasked with getting the facts on the residential school scandal, an extension for "as long as may be necessary." Over many decades, 150,000 aboriginal children were sent to church-run schools, where many faced physical and sexual abuse.

A lawsuit against the federal government and churches resulted in payments to those affected and the creation of the commission. Its mandate runs out July 1, 2014, but its work has been slowed down because the federal government would not pass over millions of historical documents in its files about residential schools.

■ Do not "rush forward" with

planned legislation this fall to reform the aboriginal education system, because there is "profound distrust" among aboriginal leaders about the plan, which they say has lacked proper consultation. The upcoming First Nations Education Act will outline standards.

Aboriginal leaders worry the act will impose standards that don't reflect their Indigenous language and culture, and that funding for aboriginal education won't be increased. Valcourt said he has consulted aboriginals, but Anaya said more of that needs to be done.

■ Establish a public inquiry into the "disturbing phenomenon" of missing and murdered aboriginal women — something the government has flatly rejected, insisting it is taking action.

■ Treat the deplorable housing situation on First Nations reserves and Inuit communities "with the urgency it deserves."

Anaya said it is "abundantly clear" that funding for aboriginal housing is "woefully inadequate."

■ Adopt a much less "adversarial" approach to dealing with aboriginal land claims and treaty disputes.

■ Recognize that "resource extraction" — such as oil and mining — should not occur on lands subject to aboriginal claims without "adequate consultations" and the "free, prior and informed consent" of the aboriginals affected.



# *Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women*



*Muriel Stanley Venne, C.M., B.A.(Hon)  
Edmonton, Alberta*

As President and Founder of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women she works tirelessly on the issues confronting Aboriginal Women. Muriel along with Vice President Marggo Pariseau created the Esquao Awards, a province wide recognition for Aboriginal Women. This annual event has grown over the past several years to attract 800 people, bringing government, corporations and community together to honour the significant accomplishments of over 357 Aboriginal Women in 76 Alberta communities.

Premier Peter Lougheed appointed her as one of the first seven Alberta Human Rights Commissioners in 1973 serving for four years. Currently she chairs the Aboriginal Commission on Human Rights & Justice and was instrumental in producing "The Rights Path – Alberta" a holistic booklet produced to inform Aboriginal people of their human rights now in its third edition.

Muriel received The Alberta Human Rights Award on December 10th, 1998 on the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the Alberta Human Rights Commission and the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations International Declaration of Human Rights.

She received the Queen's Medal in 2002 and the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 2004 for her work in bringing Justice to the Aboriginal community. In 2005 she received the Order of Canada, the Governor General's Commemorative Medal in honour of the Person's Case and the Alberta Government Centennial Medal. Alberta Venture Magazine named her as one of the 2006 "50 most influential people in Alberta".

In November 2007 Canadian Ambassador McNee recognized her work at the United Nations citing her as a "Human Rights Defender pertaining to Aboriginal women, children and families". On September 2008, she was elected Vice President of the Métis Nation of Alberta and in June 2010, Muriel received a Distinguished Citizen Honorary Bachelor of Arts Degree from Grant MacEwan University in Edmonton. Recently, Muriel received the Queens Jubilee medal for her work to achieve social justice for Aboriginal women.

ABORIGINAL COMMISSION  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS & JUSTICE



INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT  
OF ABORIGINAL WOMEN

