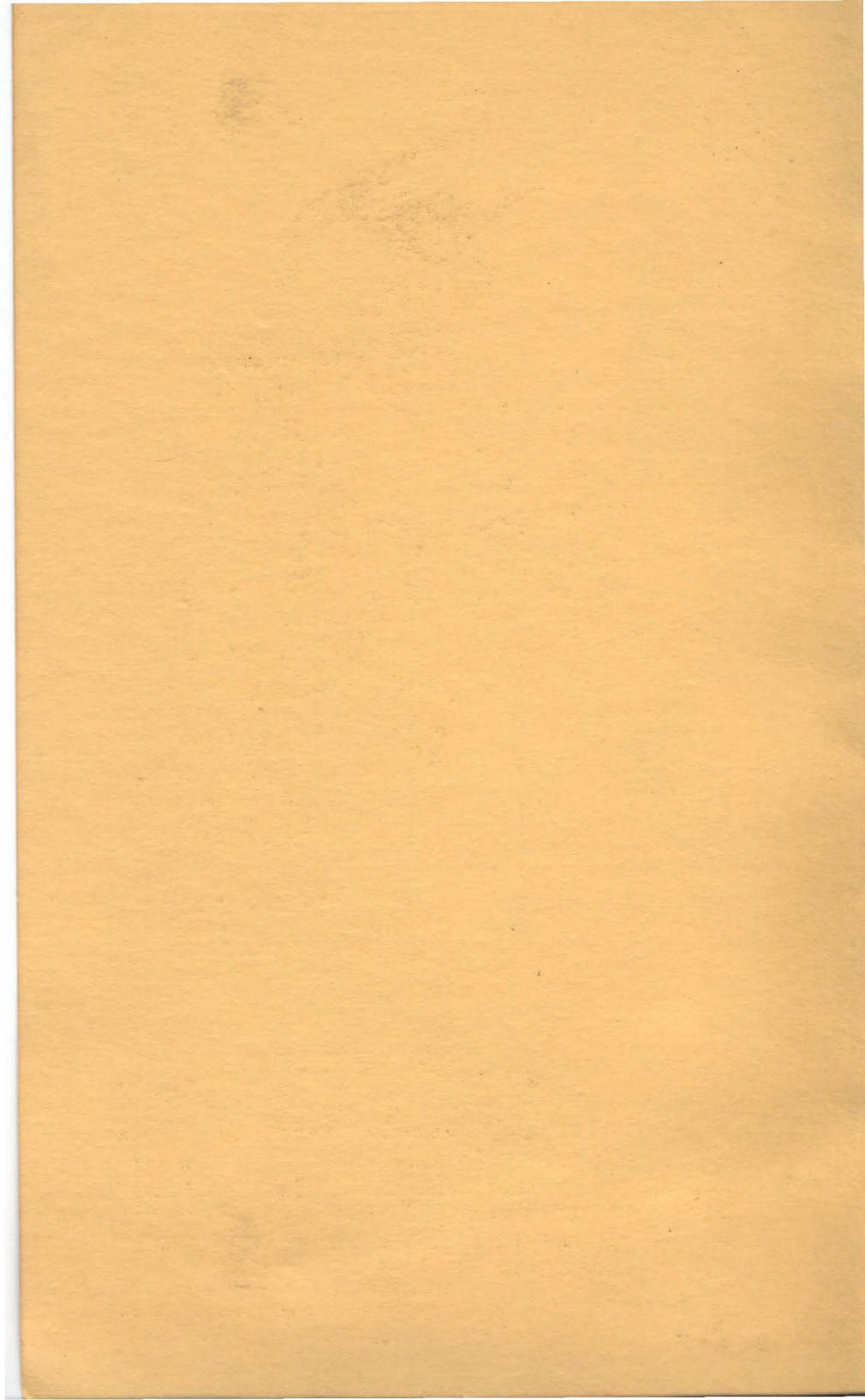


# ALMIGHTY VOICE



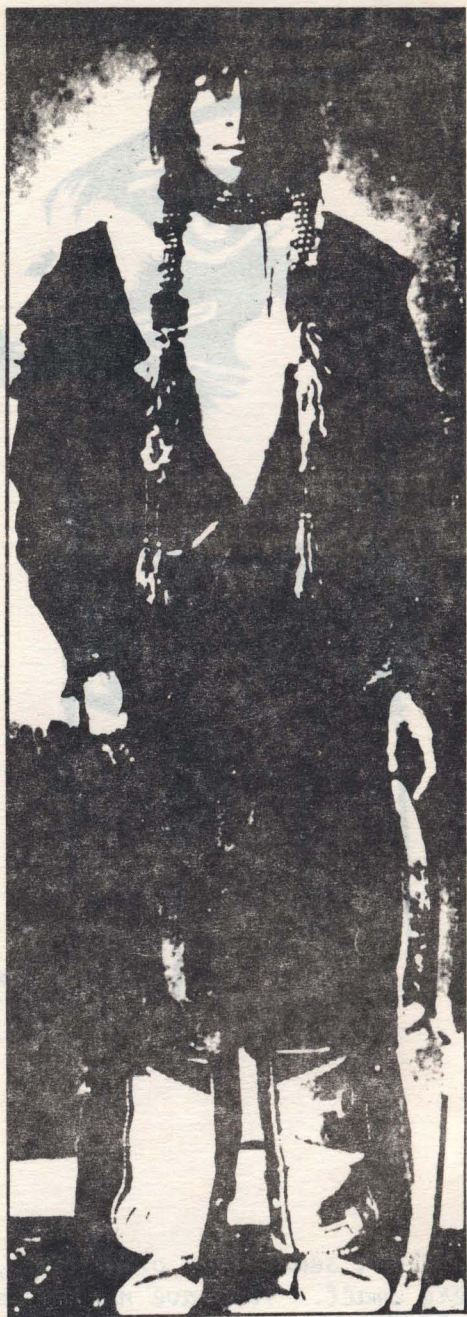
HEAR OUR WORDS OF TRUTH





*S. W. Hoose*  
'81

Brother! Our seats were once large, and yours were very small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but you are not satisfied. **YOU WANT TO FORCE YOUR RELIGION UPON US. \*\*\*\***



"GITCHEE-MANITOU-WAYO"  
"VOICE OF THE GREAT SPIRIT"  
"ALMIGHTY VOICE"

Cree Nation, Saskatchewan

Photo: "Outlaws of the Canadian Frontier"

WE, the Brothers of Kent Institution, would like to dedicate our voice to one of our ancestors who lived in this world as a human being and as a warrior. His name is "ALMIGHTY VOICE". As we seek to rebuild ourselves from within, we look to our ancestors--as well as our Elders today--for their strength and knowledge to better understand and cope with our responsibilities in this life cycle.

Almighty Voice is a Spirit Being now, but the way that he lived when he was a human being, we know that he never left the People and the Land. Too many times in the present, because there is so much confusion around us, we become confused ourselves and lose our ability to communicate with the Sacred Spirit Beings who are all around us. So today we are seeking to bring that source of knowledge back to our way of life that we have been removed from by a foreign society that condones grave-robbing.

In Honor to the dignity of Almighty Voice, we dedicate this publication with a prayer for our People.

# GREETINGS RELATIVES.....

Kent is a Canadian maximum security penitentiary at Agassiz, B.C. 30% of its prisoner population are of Indian descent. There is no opportunity for them to practice their religious Native beliefs. The Native Brotherhood Culture Club inside the Kent institution has felt it important enough to seek a change in the institutions' policies that overlooks their basic human right.

For the past 5 months there have been numerous discussions with prison authorities concerning this matter. Out of these discussions a proposed agreement--that was thought to be agreeable to both sides--was reached and submitted for the wardens final approval. On Tuesday, July 13, 1982, three members of the Native Brotherhood, with their liaison representative met with the prisons program director. They were informed of the following guidelines by which the Brotherhood was to conduct their ceremonies:

- 1) To inform administration HOW the Pipe was being taken;
- 2) Which ROUTE it was to be taken on;
- 3) WHERE it was being taken;
- 4) How the Pipe was to be transported back to the cell and which route it would be taken;
- 5) That the Sage, Cedar, Sweetgrass and Eagle feathers were to be kept with the Pipe Bundle at all times: meaning that no other brother could have any of these articles in their cell for their personal use;
- 6) That the Sacred Pipe was never to be prayed with in any of the living units;

7) The reason that the Pipe Bundle could not be released that day was because it was ILLEGAL for the Pipe Carrier to have Eagle feathers and that administration expected a permit from the "Fish and Wildlife" bureau to arrive at the institution any day, making it legal for the Pipe Carrier to have his Eagle feathers.

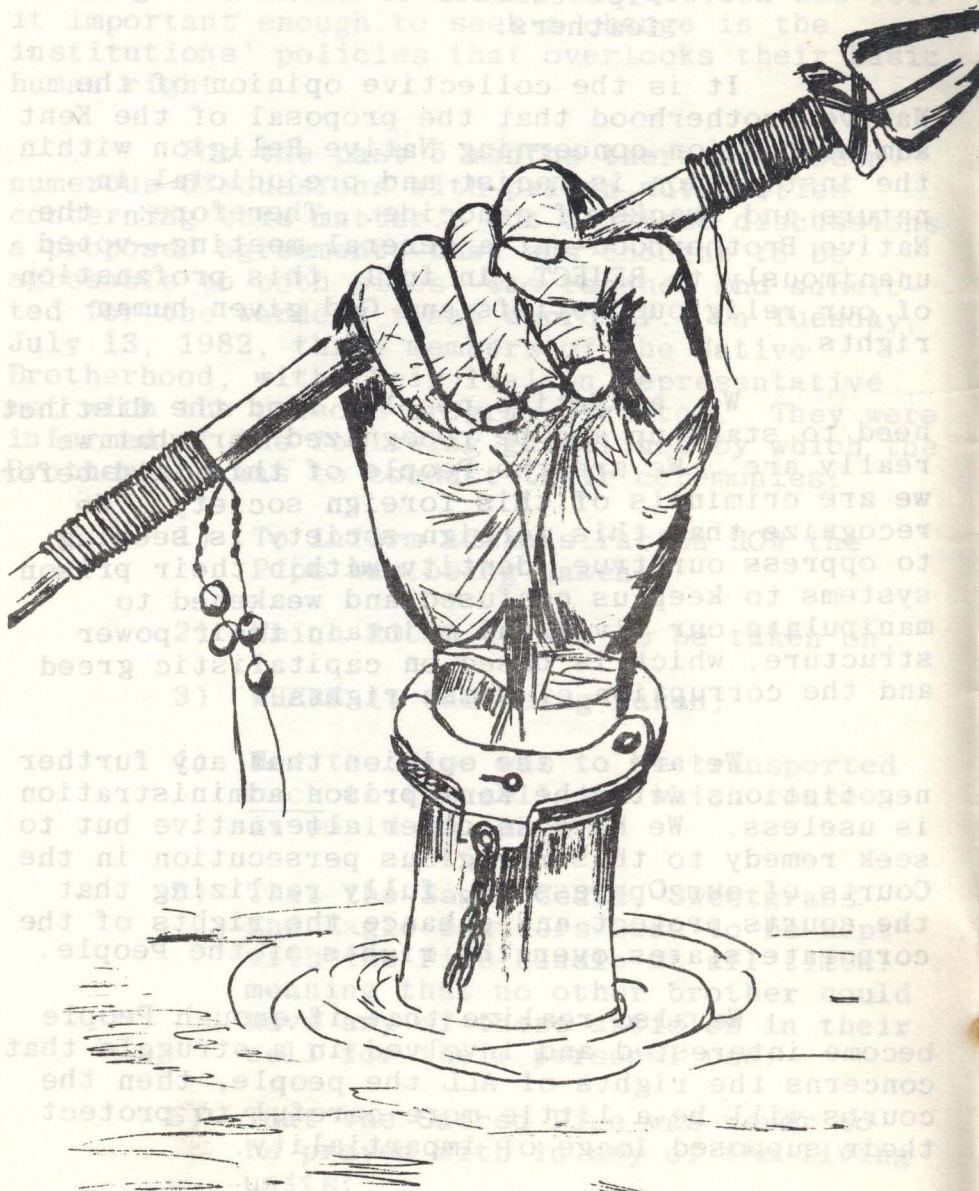
It is the collective opinion of the Native Brotherhood that the proposal of the Kent administration concerning Native Religion within the institution is racist and prejudicial in nature and smacks of genocide. Therefore: the Native Brotherhood--at a general meeting--voted unanimously to REJECT, in full, this profanation of our religious beliefs and God given human rights.

We, as Native people, find the distinct need to stand up and be recognized for what we really are. We are the People of this land before we are criminals of this foreign society. We recognize that this foreign society is seeking to oppress our true identity within their prison systems to keep us confused and weakened to manipulate our lives and maintain their power structure, which is based on capitalistic greed and the corruption of human rights.

We are of the opinion that any further negotiations with the Kent prison administration is useless. We have no other alternative but to seek remedy to this religious persecution in the Courts of our Oppressors, fully realizing that the courts protect and enhance the rights of the corporate states over the rights of the People.

3. Freedom We also realize that if enough People become interested and involved in a struggle that concerns the rights of ALL the people, then the courts will be a little more careful to protect their supposed image of impartiality.

Therefore, even though we seek to go into the Courts, we are not appealing to the courts for respect and recognition. We are appealing to our People of the Red Nation and to all families of the Human Beings to come to our Aid in this continuous struggle against Genocide.





# PROPOSAL —

## from Native Brotherhood

## to Administration

1982-06-01

TO: A/AW OP, Kent Institution

FROM: Rene Poitras, AIMS Representative,  
Darelle Butler, Native Brotherhood Group

SUBJECT: NATIVE PIPE CEREMONY SUBMISSION

The native traditional pipe ceremony had been brought down to "Lakota" tribal Indians by the appearance of a vision. This vision was in the form of a woman carrying a bundle on her back. She was then taken to the Indian village where the "Lakota" tribe had been camping. She then asked all the native people to gather around and come together. She then explained her purpose of being with them. She explained to them that she was sent to them to deliver the "Sacred Buffalo Calf Pipe" with instructions of how to respect the sacred Pipe. She then walked out into the plains and changed into the form of a buffalo calf. The buffalo calf then disappeared into the skies. This is why the native people respect the pipe as a way of life.

Issues to be discussed and agreed upon:

1. Location of Pipe at all times.
2. Time and place of use.
3. Freedom of other native inmates to also be included.
4. Initially the pipe will not be brought to Native Brotherhood Meetings until all N.B. know the background, proper respect, and knowledge of the sacred pipe.

5. When special occasions arise, such as death, illness, and times of thanks (sundance), the pipe follows fasts for four full days, without food nor water. It is most essential that this right be granted to assist those who are in need of prayers, guidance, support and all other native traditional values. Upon completion of the fast, native food is essential to complete that fast.
6. One day of each week must be granted to the native pipe followers so that they too can practice their religious beliefs and traditional native values, similar to those Christian groups that presently have their right recognized.
7. Spiritual advisors from the native rural and urban communities must be granted the opportunity to attend these religious ceremonies, similar to the other Christian groups.
8. The pipe bundle and all its contents have been listed and is in the hands of the administration of Kent Institution.
9. The pipe followers must have religious articles such as eagle feathers, sage, sweetgrass, cedar, cedar bark, kin-nik-inik (red willow bark).
10. Foresight indicates that expansion will be necessary once the native inmates become more knowledgeable about the pipe ceremony and traditional native religion. At this time, it would be appropriate to consider a sweatlodge, to be built in the Kent institutional grounds at a date agreed upon. Further to this, the Native Brotherhood Club and the pipe followers will keep in total communication with the administration of Kent institution as further needs occur.

we ask for respect and understanding of our way of life. we, as a People will ask no more; a worthy nation will grant no less.

A collective agreement was made in October of 1981 regarding traditional Native ceremonies in the Kamloops regions. The men are allowed to leave the camp to attend ceremonies on the Kamloops Reserve, and then be returned to the Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre (KRCC). In a letter to Local Directors to two other camps within the region, Mr. G.J. Hall, Local Director of KRCC wrote:

*"These ceremonies will be carried out in private with a great deal of dignity and reverence. Images of a large group of people sitting around smoking who knows what, must be put to rest. This is part of the native "cultural-religious" tradition, and even though it may appear strange to those who are not familiar with this ceremony, it must be recognized as part of the native peoples' spiritual right and heritage."*



## Indian prisoner wins fight for religious rites

A Protestant prison chaplain and an imprisoned native Indian spiritual leader have teamed up in a successful bid for permission to have traditional native religious services conducted on a regular basis behind bars at Oakalla Regional Correctional Centre.

Darrell (Dino) Butler, a prisoner in Oakalla's top-security South Wing, will conduct services in the wing, says Oakalla chaplain Rev. Ross Manthorpe.

And regular services in other units of the provincial institution in Burnaby will be scheduled in the new year for other native prisoners with the help of "pipe carriers, or visiting ministers," from the outside, he adds.

Mr. Manthorpe said in an interview the agreement with prison authorities was worked out after a long campaign by Butler for the right to keep his sacred pipe, grasses and other religious items in his cell.

Butler and his cousin Gary, both held in Oakalla without bail since last February to await trial for attempted murder of two police officers, mounted a 10-day fast just before Christmas to reinforce their demand.

"It was a legitimate demand," said Mr. Manthorpe, noting that prisoners in federal institutions have regular access to religious ceremonies.

"Protestants and Catholics can keep a Bible in their cells. I don't see any difference.

"That's why I went to bat for them, but it took a lot of talking (to authorities). To be a good chaplain you have to be a bit of a con man."

Mr. Manthorpe said he had been

holding the pipe—a 38-centimetre-long wooden shaft with a stone bowl—for safekeeping, and handing it over to Butler once a week for his use.

"I smoke it with them - it's a fellowship kind of thing," he said.

"You know, I'm pretty hardnosed after 12 years in here, but I've found it a very spiritual experience - one of the best things that happens to me all week."

Mr. Manthorpe described Butler as "a deeply spiritual person" with the ability to inspire other native Indians with respect for their traditional culture and values.

"The interest in native religion has certainly grown since he has been here; the word has passed around," he said.

Butler said in an interview he conducted three services at Oakalla when he was held in other wings of the institution, with up to 12 native prisoners taking part.

"Many of the brothers had never been in a ceremony or witnessed one before," he said.

"That is because we were never allowed to learn our religion before. There was nothing of our culture left."

The two Butlers face trial Jan. 18 on nine charges stemming from an incident Feb. 23 during which shots were fired at a police car during a chase in East Vancouver.

Last August, they were successful in an action in B.C. Supreme Court to force the RCMP to release two medicine bundles, a blanket and other religious items.

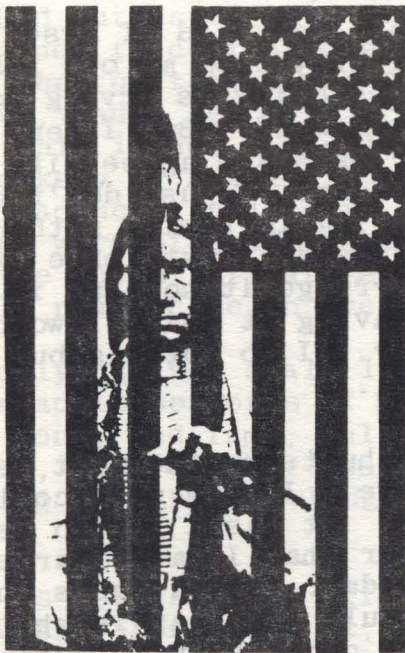
By Robert Sarti, The Vancouver Sun, December 30, 1981

*Brother! We do not wish to destroy your religion, or to take it from you. WE ONLY WANT TO ENJOY OUR OWN." \*\*\*\**

DARKNESS SONG

We wait in the darkenss!  
Come, all ye who listen,  
Help in our night journey;  
Now no sun is shining;  
Now no star is glowing;  
Come, show us the pathway;  
The night is friendly;  
She closes her eyelids;  
The moon has forgotton us  
We wait in the darkness.

--from the Iroquois



OUR WORDS OF TRUTH

My moccasins have not walked among  
the giant forest trees,  
My leggings have not brushed against  
the fern and berry bush,  
My medicine pouch has not been filled  
with roots and herbs and sweetgrass,  
My hands have not fondled the spotted  
fawn,  
My eyes have not beheld the golden  
rainbow of the north,  
My hair has not been adorned with the  
eagle feather,  
Yet,  
My dreams are dreams of these.  
My heart is one with them.  
The scent of them caresses my soul.

Today I noticed of myself that I seem  
to be drifting away from my own reality of Life.  
All I seem to be doing is trying to please other  
people and not myself. But I tend to listen to  
what everybody says and agree with it, whether  
its right or wrong. I just don't care, but I  
really do. So I'm left with nothing but puzzlem-  
ent on my mind and I just leave it like that.  
Never try to arrange it so that it is right or  
wrong, just leaving it while I wonder if it will  
ever get better. I do nothing but wonder, never  
about anything....

What hurts me the most is the lack of  
education I have. I have no recollection of what  
I have learned. It was a joy to learn but I never  
seem to remember what I have learned, even if it  
was only yesterday. But I guess that my bad  
memory is my fault and that is why I don't have  
any friends. I don't know what caused my bad  
memory, nor does any of my family.

The truth is I never bothered to ask  
anybody why I have such a bad memory for things.  
All I want to do is remember. But no matter how

hard I try, I just can't. It just don't make any sense to me. Maybe I had an accident when I was little but I think that someone would have told me if that would have happened, but I don't know.

I don't know what other people want out of life, but I know what I've always wanted in life, that's peace of mind, understanding, friendship and a kind heart with understanding and love towards those who come as a friend. To my knowledge, that has never been too much to ask for. But its always better to ask for fame, fortune, and the right to sell other people's minds and to humiliate other people when they feel like it; for their own pleasure and not logically for others to understand why....

For God put us on this Earth to help one another and not to destroy one another. From what I've seen on this earth its all take, rather than give, and I see more grief than love thy neighbor. This is not a world that I live in. It is a mockery of Reality. Human beings protesting one anothers beliefs in life. No one will give a kind word of God's words, for only His words are the purest of nature and by His hands alone will peace come to everybody's minds.

For only one way shall I say my words to whom shall read these words of my mind. I don't look for money and fame, only for peace of mind, friendship, knowledge of God, His kindness and understanding and the knowledge of education itself.

This is the shell of life I live today.  
ALFRED RODNEY GRAY. Born June 11, 1959 in the town of Agassiz, B.C. and raised there for some sixteen years.

Brother! The Great Spirit has made us all. But he has made a great difference between his white and red children. He has given us a different complexion and different customs. Since he has made so great a difference between us in other things, why may we not conclude that he has given us a different religion, according to our understanding? The Great Spirit does right. He knows what is best for his children. We are satisfied. \*\*\*\*

My name is Miles Henderson. I lived in Saskatchewan most of my life. I'm Cree Indian. I'm in the Native Brotherhood group, and since then I've learned more about our way of life since I've known before. I've just recently learned about the Pipe and Sweatlodge, and I feel that we, as anyone else deserve as much religious rights, and that we shouldn't be neglected any of this, it has been one of our oldest traditions. I'd like to see this right given back to us.



Brother! Your forefathers crossed the Great waters and landed on this island. Their numbers were small. They found friends and not enemies. They told us they had fled from their own country for fear of wicked men, and HAD COME HERE TO ENJOY THEIR RELIGION. \*\*\*\*



*Struggling in time  
awkward to us,*

*visiting dreams  
and fantasies,*

*stumbling blindly  
into walls of illusions,*

*greeted by reality.*

*Remember purification of rain  
and tears,*

*flooding me with memories of eternity,  
memories of yesterday.*

*Honesty being the way out,  
remember lessons of experience,*

*Today being another day ....*

*K.J. 5/82*

My name is Stuart Stonechild. I am a 25 year old Cree from the File Hills reservation in southern Saskatchewan. I am doing a life sentence and have been in for five years so far.

I started my time at the old Saskatchewan penitentiary located just outside of Prince Albert in northern Saskatchewan.

The city of Prince Albert is a very "Redneck" racist community. As a result of that a lot of the officers working inside the penitentiary were given a free rein to apply as much force as they wanted in dealing with us Indians inside. Indian inmates were always systematically beaten and tortured whenever they were put in the hole for any amount of time. The time spent in the hole or segregation was never consistent in any case dealing with Indians. It was left to the total discretion of the Segregation review board which at that time consisted of the biggest klansman in the jail- Peter Labuick, director of security.

Racial conflict inside the jail was promoted in many ways by the guards.

Their philosophy was that if we were working against each other, White against Red; we could never get anything working against them. A typical divide and conquer tactic exercised by governments throughout history.

There was a lot of solidarity within the Native Brotherhood there though.

The Brotherhoods' main objective was to educate as many members as was possible. We had three Spiritual Elders: George Ermine from the Sturgeon Lake Reserve; George Albert from the Sandy Lake Reserve; and John Tootoosis from the Poundmaker Reserve, that would come into the jail to talk with us and answer our questions.

A lot of brothers found a direction to follow for the first time in their lives during those sessions. Others recommitted themselves to the Indian struggle and cast off a lot of the things they had picked up in the white society. Others silently energized themselves for their individual journeys through the penitentiary system.

The penitentiary officials recognized that a movement was starting right under their noses. They didn't understand what it was and at no time did they ask what we were learning. All they saw was a group of Indians working closely together. All they saw was the potential threat of organized violence within the jail.

A systematic shutdown of the Brotherhood began. The Elders were no longer allowed into the jail. Sweetgrass, and other sacred articles that the elders had left with individuals, was confiscated and destroyed. Meetings or gatherings of more than ten Indians in one place were broken up. The more outspoken Indian inmates were transferred or locked up in segregation "for the good of the institution". And

maybe the final attempt at disrupting our solidarity--Baseball bats were issued by the guards to key individual white inmates so that they could beat on the Indian inmates while they, the guards, looked the other way.

What I learned from that experience was that at no time can an administrative body governing an institution or penitentiary be trusted to act in good faith when dealing with another culture's traditional beliefs.

The Canadian penitentiary system has been attempting to assimilate different cultures of people into one classification for years.

The Indian has resisted all attempts at being assimilated into a system that we want no part of and has been met with forces comparable to any Nazi-SS battalion.

Obviously we hold our beliefs foremost in our minds no matter what situation we may be in right now.

We were asking in the past, and we are asking right now that our traditional beliefs be recognized in the same category that all other religions are recognized within the jail.

We are demanding that our Sacred articles be allowed into this penitentiary system UNCONDITIONALLY for our own individual and collective use.

**THE PIPE IS THE CENTER OF OUR  
EXISTANCE**

**AND THE REASON FOR OUR  
RESISTANCE!**

**In the Spirit of Almighty Voice**

**Stuart Stonechild**



My eyes tell the story that has looked upon the  
Spirit of Nature

I have seen the mutilation put on Mother Earth

I have shared her sorrows, I have shared her pain

I am her flesh, we are as one.

For me to be without her, I'm lost.

She is the spirit of my soul being.

When she struggles from all those wounds  
that have been cut deep into her flesh,

I suffer ....

In all the years that I have walked upon Mother Earth, I've seen the white society deliberately mutilate her flesh. I've seen endless persecution against my way of life. I'm experiencing right now that very same persecution. In the Kent prison, in Agassiz, B.C., where I've been for the last five years to escape the endless suffering put upon my shoulders by the U.S. authorities of the Walla Walla state prison.

I had the honor to help the Brothers in Walla Walla state prison to get the sacred ways of our life. We received the Sweatlodge and Sacred Pipe to pray according to our traditional beliefs as human beings. We won the victory of getting Sage, Sweetgrass, Cedar, Kinnickinnick. We had the Buffalo head, the Sacred Rock People, the willow branches to build our sweatlodge. The spiritual leaders of this sacred way was sent to teach us our traditional ways. I became the Redman that my heart spoke out to be. I felt a spiritual strength and my medicine was good. But here at the Kent prison, the warden and the administration are denying us all of us the right to share the Sacred Pipe.

This Pipe has been locked up and held in purpose of neglecting the native people their rights to spiritual beliefs.

This is what the Sacred Pipe means to me:

The Universe is my Church, and the Earth is its altar, upon this altar I lay my soul. Kinnickinnick burns when touched by fire. The smoke rises up up. Blue and gray smoke that holds medicine. The spirit is strong, the story is old of the smoke that curls. I feel a sound, the sound of drums on distant hills, buffalo hoofs on frozen ground. A medicine chant wailing by breezes that have not blown for many seasons nor suns that shine no longer on brown children. My eyes seek a vision, for old people told of vision that were not seen by eyes, but burned in the mind and mouth of our braves who fought battles but did not win. My body cries for strong medicine.

--Dewey Sigo



\*\*\*\*\*

Greetings:

I send my words to all who walk our Sacred Mother Earth with open minds, with open hearts, with respect and honor as we are meant to be by our Creator.

Once again we, the Original people of this Sacred turtle island are faced with Spiritual persecution by foreigners who call themselves kkanadian. Apparently ignorance has no limits to these invaders to our societies. They seem so hypocritical when it comes to recognizing our way of life upon this Earth. For 18 months I have stood strong for the people while I sat in these prisons, I have been attacked, I was welded into a cell and isolated from all for months, was threatened to be shot, but I continued the resistance, not just for my pitiful self, but for my brothers and my sisters who are forced to live within the so called civilized societies human zoos, that their inherent human rights be recognized by these lost Spirited people, that our people who sit within these zoos can learn a natural way of life, can learn about the Sacred Pipe, about the Sweatlodge.

I ask the people to take notice of this direct act of Genocide our people face today inside these kkanadian zoos and for your support. The struggle continues, I will continue the work that needs to be done. I will pray for the enemies, the pitiful ones who know not what they do because if they knew their identity to the land, to all life, we the Original peoples of this Sacred Mother Earth would be recognized as Human beings.

I Pray for the People,

Gary Butler  
Prisoner of War 1696

\*\*\*\*\*

Your religion was written on tables of stone by the iron finger of your God so that you could not forget. The Red Man could never comprehend nor remember it. Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors--the dreams of our old men, given them in the solemn hours of night by the Great Spirit; and the visions of our sachems, and is written in the hearts of our People.

----Chief Seattle

My name is John Joseph Ogden, and I am a Cree Indian from Thunder Bay, Ontario serving time at kent federal prison.

I was born and raised in the cities of suburbia, so being a suburbanite for most of my life, I have never been introduced or practiced the ways and customs of my people. But since I have joined the Kent Native Brotherhood, I've begun to pick up and learn the way of the people. I have learned the smoking of the Pipe is a significant aspect in the culture of the Native peoples, in as the Bible is symbolic to all catholics. I feel my practices should not have any restrictions, anywhere, especially inside the institution where its use would be most beneficial.

But restrictions have been placed on mine and my brothers faith. This I cannot accept as orders from responsible individuals who should be considerate of ones faith.

I feel that My faith cannot be respected inside this institution, our only accord as the Native Brotherhood is to take legal action against the decision to restrict our use of the Pipe within the institution.



My name is Leonard Nahonee and I am a young but not so young Stalo Indian. I've been going to the native meetings here at kent, and I've learned more about the culture every time I tend to our meetings. I've lived in the lower mainland most of my life. And I do go to the Long House and watch the dancers and I go to the Shakers now and then.

But the Pipe is a new thing to me, and I would like to learn about it, its important to learn about new things about your culture. I was told the Pipe has been with us Indians for hundreds of years, so thats important to learn about it.

But this institution is giving us a run around. I know they get off playing with our heads (alot of head games). So we need a little support and help, so give us a break and give your head a shake. Owell.



*Brother! Continue to listen. You say that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to his mind; and if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost. How do you know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was intended for us as well as for you, why has not the Great Spirit given it to us; and not only to us, but why did he not give to our forefathers the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe; being so often deceived? \*\*\*\**



Dear Brothers,

My name is Lorne Flamand, and I'm writing to you from the Kent Maximum Security Prison located several miles outside the township of Agassiz, B.C. The purpose of this letter is to hopefully acquaint you with the problems of our fellow Brothers in this prison. Problems precipitated because of our efforts to re-acquaint and perhaps teach other Brothers of this prisons population, the often forgotten rituals, practices and customs of our People that in large part comprise the backbone of our respective cultures.

Originally I'm from Winnipeg, Manitoba Though I've spent most of my life in the city of Vancouver, B.C. Consequently, this has left me with very little opportunity to pursue the culture that today is nearly foreign to me because of this. Now that I'm in prison and finally have this opportunity, it seems that obstacles appear in direct proportion to the effort being made and the importance of whatever Cultural Project is being endeavored.

I've often been told by prison officials that I can educate myself while serving my sentence and as a result not only benefit myself and my family but others as well. Now that I am trying to educate myself, it appears that their concept of what it means to "educate" oneself, is in direct conflict with what personally interests me and other Brothers in this prison.

As I remarked earlier on, opportunities are limited and once available should be taken advantage of. For someone such as myself, I have to start somewhere in my search for this knowledge and the actual process of learning from others of our own People is, in my opinion, an education that is both unique and inherent. Had I been given these teachings as part of my formative education, I have little doubt that the outcome of today would be much different to what it is now.

Somehow, because of this I think that this prisons administration is determined to deny us this basic right in an effort to further assimilate us to their way of thinking and most importantly to further attempt to instill in us a sense of what they consider to be proper values Educational, Cultural and Spiritual assimilation. What else can one conclude????

An example of this would be our attempt to have the Ceremonial Pipe approved for availability and use by the Brothers in this prison. The Ceremonial Pipe to most of us, does not represent a religion per se, but rather it symbolizes a way of life for our people. For who would deny the importance and significance of the Pipe in the collective history of our Peoples????

To date, the administration of this prison has approved the availability and use of the Pipe, but only to one person. What they've said in effect is that ONE person can keep the Pipe in his cell, but at no time is he allowed to let any other Brother use that Pipe. Should this Brother do so, the Pipe would be immediately confiscated and taken from anyones possession.

Further restrictions stipulate that should the Brother need to take the Pipe from his cell to the main exercise yard, security must be notified several hours in advance of this intention. Security would also have this Brother put in writing the exact route he would be taking to the yard while in possession of the Pipe. There is only ONE route from our cells to the main exercise yard, and WHY they would require him to put this in writing everytime he intended to take the Pipe to the yard escapes all logic and sense. The only logic one can make of this directive is that it appears to have been designed primarily to frustrate any further interest in the Pipe.

Should any Christian desire to take his bible to the main exercise yard, he is not required to notify security several hours in advance and neither is he required to put in writing the route he would be taking with his bible. And neither would this Christian be under the threat of losing his bible should he allow another Christian to use it. The bible as such is not a religion in its self but it does represent Christianity and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Our appeal to logic is that the Pipe in its self is not a religion either, but a symbol and reflection of our Peoples way of life.

This attempt to limit and restrict the Pipes movement and availability to other Brothers cannot be viewed with anything but suspicion and a determination to know WHY such a policy was ever allowed to be formulated in the first place. The Pipe certainly does NOT pose a "Security Threat" and neither does it pose a threat to the "good order" of the institution, so WHY the effort to frustrate it's availability and use by other Brothers in this prison???? For years the white man and his society have been trying to deny us the right to pursue and practice the rituals and customs of our respective cultures and one cannot help but wonder where the obligation and responsibility for this effort starts and ends.

In our struggle to regain what is slowly being taken from us, namely our identity, we are determined to persevere and explore whatever options are open to us. At this time we are considering the legal approach to resolving this conflict, and with the encouragement and support of others this will probably be the only alternative left to us.

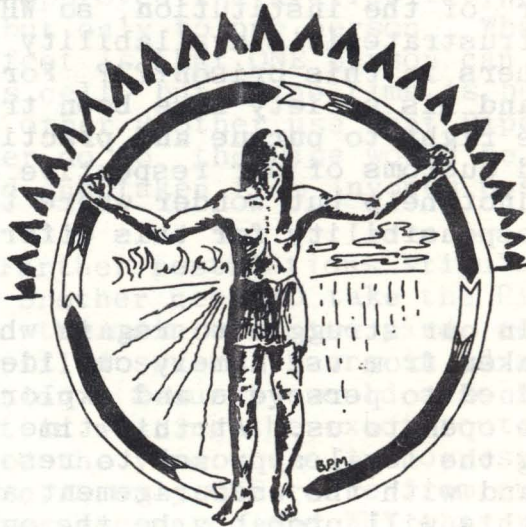
As well as the Ceremonial Pipe, we will seek to have a Sacred Sweatlodge established in this institution. The Sweatlodge is recognized throughout the North American continent as the traditional church of the aboriginal peoples and we have the need in here for this source of strength wisdom and communication.

In closing, I would like to add the observation that adversity can quite often be the "key" to success and in this instance I'm certain this will be the case.

Wish us the best and though we be miles apart, the Spirit will be with us all in thought and deed.

A Brother, L. Flamand

Brother! You say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it. Why not agree, as you can all read the book? \*\*\*\*



Brother! The Great Spirit has made us all. But he has made a great difference between his white and red children. He has given us a different complexion and different customs.

My name is Robert John Mohr. I was born in Alberta on October 24, 1957. I am Cree.

I have been in federal prisons since the spring of 75 and have yet to encounter as much ignorance as I have here at the Kent institution. It is not that they don't understand, it's just that they don't want to understand the needs of others that are not in agreement with their own ways. They seem to want to think that their way is the way for all people. It is this attitude that has left the true people of this land no other alternative but to engage in a struggle just to survive. The survival of the sole decendants of the land has turned into a struggle for their way of life that no people should ever be subjected to. It has and will continue to be a hard struggle which we are more than willing to carry on in the honourable way of our ancestors for the future of our unborn generations.

For the Brothers of Kent prison, it is important that the mental and spiritual aspects of our ways be maintained. It is important that we keep our culture, within, alive with our People. We feel that the important aspects to maintain this identity is the Pipe ceremonies and the Sweat Lodge, these which represents our very existence. This has become an issue for all concerned here in the Kent prison because of the racist restrictions placed upon our spiritual beliefs and our right to practice those ways.

Because of the ignorance and the outright prejudicial policies of prison officials, we are being denied our human rights. This is in direct violation of the Human Rights Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of which the Canadian government is signatory to. We may be incarcerated but that does not justify the denial of human rights. It is a spiritual persecution and genocide which we, as aboriginal people, will resist and will defeat....

In the footsteps of our ancestors  
with beauty before me i walk.

with beauty behind me i walk.

with beauty all around me i walk.

i will be happy forever,

nothing will hinder me....

My name is Darelle Butler. I am of the Tuney and Rogue River tribes of Oregon. I am presently incarcerated at the kent institution of British Columbia. I am a Pipe Carrier. Today my sacred Pipe Bundle is denied me by the warden of this institution. He says that I can have my pipe bundle but only according to his belief, not mine.

I have never, nor has any of my People, ever attempted to tell this man or any of his people how they should pray to their God. We always thought that that is between their God and themselves, and not for us to interfere with. But today I am not so sure of that.

But I know that it would be wrong to do that: just as wrong as it is for him to be telling me and my brothers in this iron house how to pray to our God, the Supreme Being and Creator of all life. Ever since I have been in jail here in british columbia, I have been persecuted because of my spiritual beliefs. I wonder why it is that the spiritual beliefs of the native people is so feared by the christians here in british columbia. I am one man. I seek to pray for guidance away from my confusion. Yet I am denied that right. Why is that? I know why. I think that it is important for others to know why. If they do know why and know that it is wrong then maybe someday this racist persecution will no longer be tolerated in this society and christians will be compassionate and respectful with love for all life as their natural spiritual identity to the Supreme Being instead of apathy

as their identity to a pseudo-god.

After four months of negotiating with these people, the Native Brotherhood made the decision that it is useless to negotiate any further with the kent administration who has more than demonstrated their inability to understand our spiritual needs. We have decided to seek legal advice about starting some kind of legal action against the denial of our religious freedom by this institution. But we know that any legal action that is undertaken on our behalf will only be as successful as the belief in that human right.

Therefore, we are appealing to all People for your help in our needful right. We are labeled as criminals of this society. We are seeking your help as human beings. What is being done to us is a crime against all humanity and against the Creator. As citizens of this government, it is being done in your name.

P.O.W. 1697 Butler



## DECLARATION OF RECOGNITION

WHEREAS: Genocide is a crime under International Law which the civilized world condemns, and;

WHEREAS: The Canadian Government is waging a War of Genocide against the Indigenous Peoples of North America by:

- (1) Killing members of Native communities; and
- (2) Causing serious bodily and/or mental harm to members of Native communities; and
- (3) Deliberately inflicting on the Native communities, conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and
- (4) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the Native communities; and
- (5) Forcibly relocating infants born in Native communities; and
- (6) Stealing and destroying spiritual artifacts from the Native communities; and
- (7) Violating and desecrating the Native communities' ancestral burial grounds.

WHEREAS: That Canada's War of Genocide against the Indigenous Peoples of North America has been legally documented during the United Nations Non-Governmental Organization's hearings on Human Rights held in Geneva, Switzerland in 1980 and 1981; and;



WHEREAS: That Canada's War of Genocide has also been legally documented during the Fourth Russell Tribunal held at Rotterdam, Holland in 1981; and;

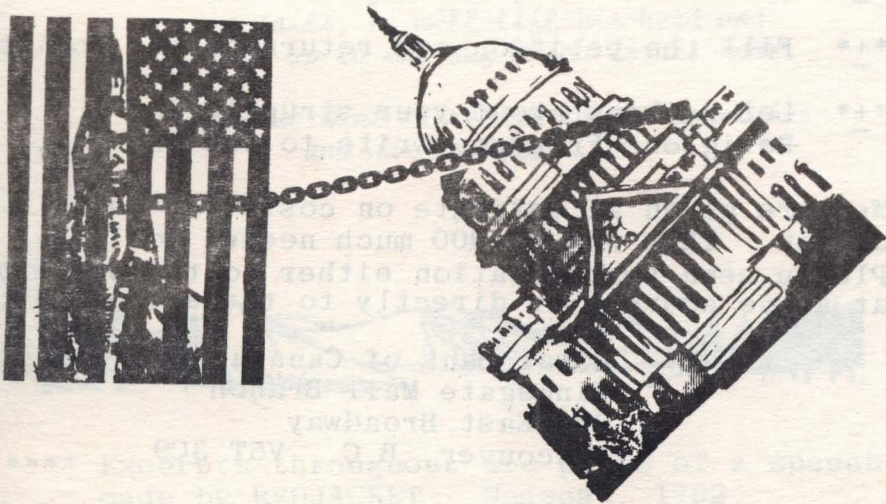
WHEREAS: Canada has never signed the International Covenant against Genocide; and;

WHEREAS: We are of Native descent, and prisoners within Canada's Prison system;

WHEREBY: (1) We recognize Canada's war against our people, and;

(2) That we are victims of that war.

WE THEREFORE, declare ourselves to be PRISONERS-OF-WAR



WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Letters of support for Religious Freedom for all people can be addressed to:

SOCIETY OF THE PEOPLE  
STRUGGLING TO BE FREE  
P.O. Box 69092 Stn. K  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Correspond with the Brothers who have shared their words:

- |                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Rodney Gray       | P.O.W. 1658 |
| Leonard Nahonee   | P.O.W. 1343 |
| John Ogden        | P.O.W. 1393 |
| Lorne Flamand     | P.O.W. 1665 |
| Dewey Sigo        | P.O.W. 1200 |
| Stuart Stonechild | P.O.W. 1621 |
| Miles Henderson   | P.O.W. 1901 |
| Gary Butler       | P.O.W. 1696 |
| Darelle Butler    | P.O.W. 1697 |

their address is: P.O. Box 2000  
Agassiz, B.C.

- \*+\* Show your friends this booklet
- \*+\* Fill the petition and return to the Society
- \*+\* Let us know about your struggle for Religious Freedom, write to the Society.

We were given an estimate on costs for Legal action. This was \$5,000 much needed dollars. Please send your donation either to the Society at above address or directly to the account at:

Royal Bank of Canada  
Kingsgate Mall Branch  
370 East Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 3C9

(Checks should be made out to S.O.T.P.S.T.B.F. for deposit only to account # 80054)



*There is something within us which does not speak but thinks, and though we remain silent our faces speak to one another.*

*Cage the badger and he will try to break from his prison and regain his native hole.*

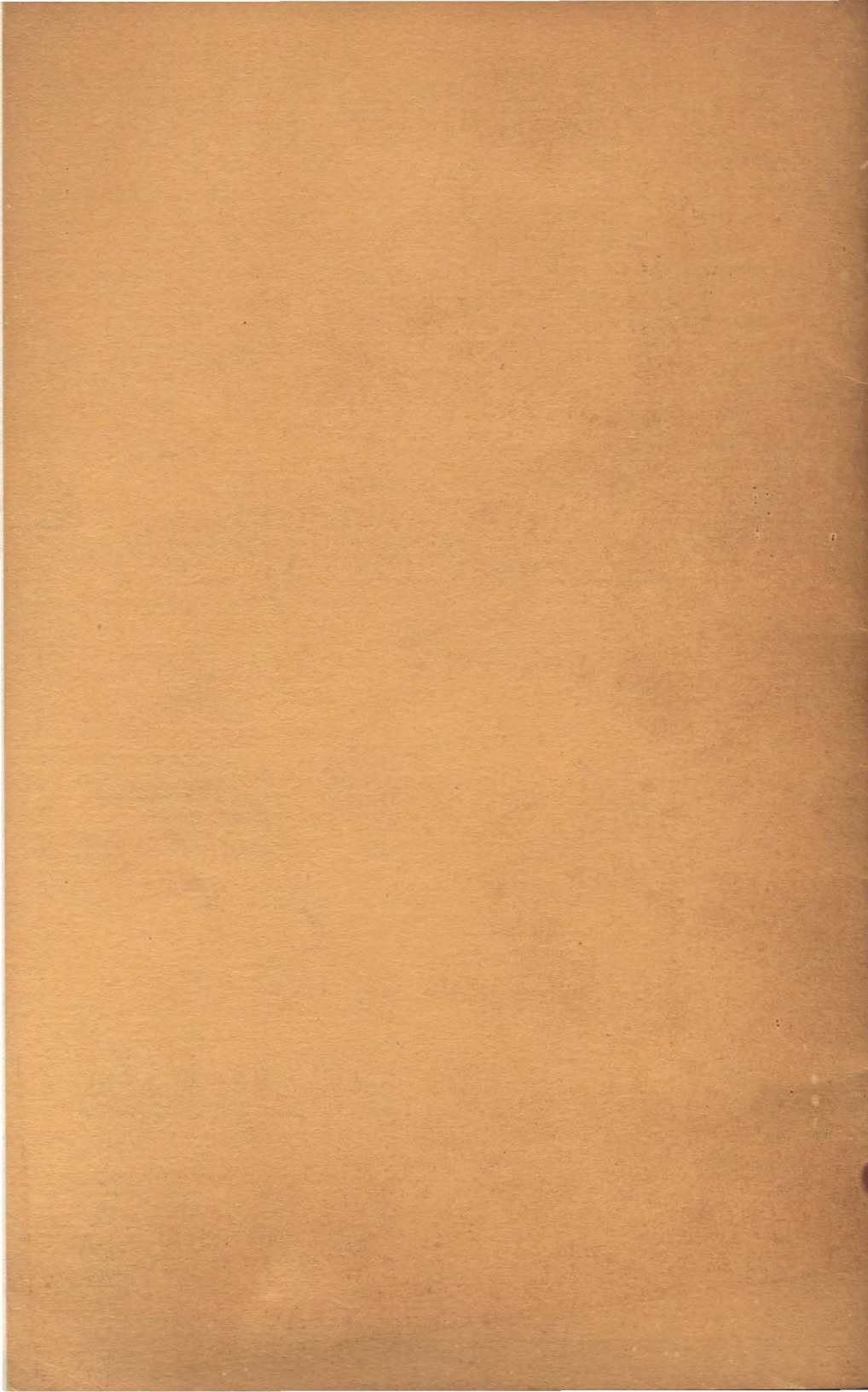
*Chain the Eagle to the ground--he will strive to gain his freedom, and though he fails, he will lift his head and look up to the sky which is his home.*

*And we want to return to our mountains and our meadows ....*



\*\*\*\* Excerpts throughout are parts of a speech made by REDJACKET , Seneca , 1792

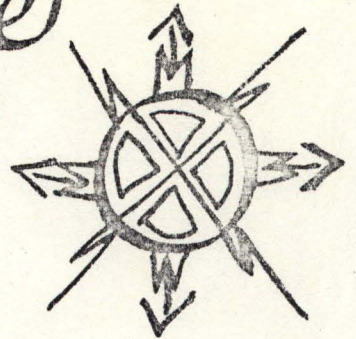
Printed by: Undercurrent Printing Collective  
Vancouver B.C.





# Society of the People Struggling to be Free

P.O. box 69092 \* Station K  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada



## GREETINGS RELATIVES:

We, the Society of the People Struggling to be Free, on behalf of the Native Brotherhood Culture Club at Kent prison, Agassiz, B.C., are pleased to be able to send you this booklet, ALMIGHTY VOICE.

It is a collective effort of the Brotherhood in hopes to inform and open eyes to the Religious struggle imprisoned Native peoples must face each day. They are asking for their birth rite to continue prayers and ceremonies as has been done since time immemorable. The Native Brothers at Kent are not an isolated group. This struggle is happening to all Native peoples imprisoned throughout both Canada and U.S.

We believe each of the four colors of man were given their own way to live and pray. To the Native peoples--all Creation is sacred and is to be Respected. To live and to pray is to be one with the Natural world, every minute of every day. Prayer was never intended to be reserved for one day a week and meals, this is why Prayer and Respect is a Way-of-Life. This Way of Life is not a forceful one and we do not wish--nor will we try--to force it upon any other group of People. WE ASK FOR THIS SAME RESPECT.

There is no valid reason for the prison administration to be putting such stringent rules on this group who wish to better themselves--to become human beings that are responsible to the Creation and all our Relatives.

Infringements on traditional culture began when the first boat of immigrants came to these shores. They continue nearly 500 years later. Everyone who lives on this land of imposed "freedoms for all people" can either open their eyes and do something to contribute to stopping prejudicial treatment of Native tradition, values and culture OR admit to themselves as being a contributor to the GENOCIDAL WAR which is the most vicious, tragic and longest war waged on any Peoples.

We encourage all of the following: 1) Letters of support to the Brothers in the Native Brotherhood; 2) Letters of support for Religious Freedom to the Society; 3) the signing of Petitions--if you don't have one or have run out please write; 4) Contributions of stamps (Canadian and U.S.), manila envelopes (6" x 9"); 5) Much needed financial support; 6) A Resolution made by your group or organization (write for sample); 7) Reprinting any/all statements in your newsletters; 8) any questions or for more information please write; 9) Most important: Your Prayers.

We are living on this land together. We can Honor and Respect the Earth, Sky, all Creation including those that have gone before us--or we can all perish together. Where is the wrong in loving, caring and respecting each other?

HONOR EARTH AND SKY

WE PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE