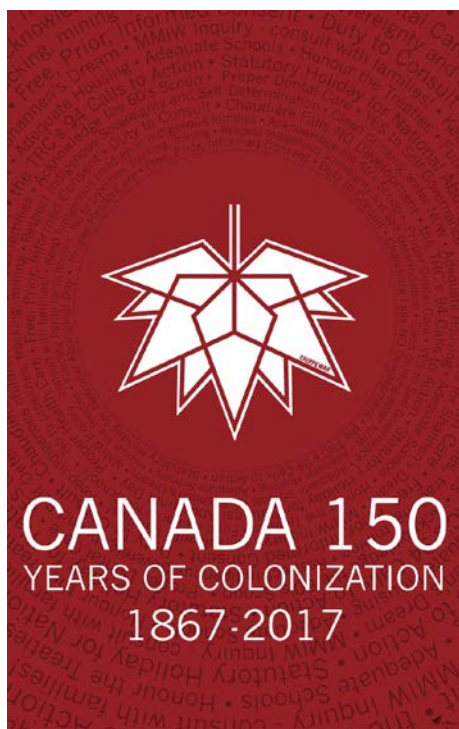


June 22, 2017

National Aboriginal Day, Seven Generations under Confederation



Can we have a better future? Can our children and future generations have a secure and holistic future? All is possible. In Canada's celebration of 150 years of colonialism there are some important questions missing.

Settler culture teaches that Canada was “discovered” by Europeans. How can a place have been discovered when there were already people living here? What can the settlers learn from the original inhabitants of these lands? What things are currently missing in the dominant society and cultures that all of us deserve to know about?

This year we ask you to consider the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy and the guiding principle of the “seventh generation”: When we make decisions, individual self-interest is short-sighted and should be considered irrelevant. Instead we should consider whether the results are good or bad for people seven generations into the future when we assess the rightness or wrongness of our actions. All things are interconnected. Decisions based on greed ignore the holistic welfare of all things.

We have lived seven generations since confederation, and we know that the settlers of Turtle Island (aka North America) have to make decisions differently. We cannot continue with the oppression of indigenous peoples of this land and the destruction of Mother Earth. Canada was created as a colony, and colonialism was part of the foundation of the state that confederation created. Colonialism has brought too much suffering for too long, and we need to make a great effort for reconciliation and a new kind of relationship between settlers and indigenous peoples, nation-to-nation, and person-to-person.

Support Indigenous Creators and Cultures on June 21

National Aboriginal Day is June 21, the summer Solstice. Indigenous peoples and allies gather on June 21 to celebrate and venerate traditional teachings, to reflect on issues, and to celebrate the cycle of life and the seasons. Please take part in National Aboriginal Day activities in your community, and when you do, please choose to support the celebrations that are indigenous-run to empower indigenous creativity and self-determination.

We invite everyone to take part in these events. You can find out about some of the events near you at www.aboriginaldaylive.ca and using #NAD2017 on twitter.

We also urge members to read the report and the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Committee at www.trc.ca, and support the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation as it continues its urgent work. Through reconciliation we can be more united and stronger as workers, more cohesive as communities, and we can work better together to protect ourselves and the land we live on from the effects of climate change.



Canada has been very slow to implement the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Rights. Our political representatives need to hear from us: that we expect Indigenous worldviews to be incorporated into our society, and that Canada must live up to its international obligations.

Reflection and Celebration

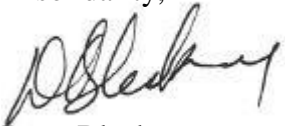
When we look back on history we need to ask ourselves whose history is not represented and why? It is up to us to honour the peace and friendship treaties that the politicians and corporations dishonour. We recognize that our lives and the lives of those in the future are affected by this lack of respect and understanding of an ancient history that could teach us so much about living in a better and more harmonious way. It is a tragedy for everyone that First Nations people have not been consulted about the land and territory they know so much about.

This history reveals that we are not meant to be overstressed, overworked, overtired and treated with a lack of respect. We are meant to be kind to one another. Instead we have a society where some people work too much, others not at all, and we compete and live deeply stressful lives.

Our national office is on unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg people. On June 21 we will pay respect to the unresolved land calms throughout the land by welcoming an elder and community leaders to unveil the Anishinabeg nation flag on our building in Ottawa. It reveals our intent to recognize and live up to the peace and friendship treaties that were signed in our name. It's one of many, many steps we will take on the road to reconciliation.

When we stand with Indigenous peoples, peace, and friendship, we stand for a better future for everyone and open ourselves to a different way of being; one of creation over destruction. It celebrates the interconnectedness of all of us and all things. It teaches us that humanity stands a chance. That is worth signing on to.

In solidarity,



Dave Bleakney
2nd National Vice-President

2015-2019 / Bulletin # 258
/bk cope225

