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The Constitution Story

Clive Linklater, Victor O'Connell, Beth Cuthand and Pauline Douglas

SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN APRIL 1982 CONSTITUTION SPECIAL EDITION p04

The oft-expressed intention to bring the Canadian Constitution home becomes a serious ambition for Pierre Elliot Trudeau in 1978. The founding Nations, the Indian and Inuit Nations, are shocked to learn they will be excluded from the entire process.

CHAPTER 1

The Constitutional Journey

AUGUST 1978

New Brunswick

At the Elders Meeting in Fredericton, New Brunswick, the Council of Elders endorse and adopt the idea of Chiefs and Elders going to England to press for inclusion of the Indians in Constitutional discussions. The General Assembly of the NIB passes the motion and Clive Linklater is appointed Co-ordinator of the Constitutional Journey.

He starts with a series of meetings with PTO's/

The Minister of Indian Affairs, Hugh Faulkner, calls the Constitutional Journey a "live circus" - little did he know how lively it would be!

FEBRUARY 1979

Ottawa

Dates for the Constitutional Journey are set for July 1-7th, to coincide with the "Secret Document" prepared by DIA surfaces. It virtually outlines a strategy to "neutralize and undermine" the Indian Constitutional position by emphasizing the Indian Act rather than the Constitutional Guarantees that we demand.

MARCH 1979

Ottawa

Noel Starblanket, President of the NIB, meets Governor-General Edward Shreyer about the possibility of meeting with the Queen.

APRIL 1979

London

Clive Linklater makes first visit to London to meet M.P.'s, Lords and support groups. He reports strong indications of potential support.

MAY 1979

London

His second visit is to schedule meetings, events and media interviews for the Chiefs and Elders. Forty five Canadian organizations endorse and support the Chiefs and Elders Constitutional Journey to England and sixteen of them also make financial contributions. They include many Labour Federations, Civil Liberties Associations, the Canadian Bar Association and provincial Bar Associations, Church Groups, Social and Educational Associations.

JULY 2, 1979

London

Historic First Meeting of All Canada Chiefs Assembly. The Chiefs and Elders represent all the provinces and territories with the exception only of Alberta. Chiefs and Elders meet daily.

Newspaper, radio and TV interviews with delegates and representatives also continue throughout the week. There is sustained and massive media coverage. Over 120 interviews from Journalists from all parts of the world, particularly Germany, France and Scandinavia. It is estimated that over two hundred million people view, listen to or read of the visit.

JULY 3, 1979

Reception and meeting at the House of Lords, hosted by Earl Grey. Lord Byers, leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords and six eminent peers are informed that the Imperial Parliament has the final say over the Canadian Constitution. Then we go to the House of Commons. Over 200 Indian Chiefs are present in the Grand Committee Room. Twenty Four M.P.'s register for the lobby. The Rt. Hon. David Ennals, former Secretary of State for Health and Social Security and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, in the Labour Government, receives a standing ovation for his strong statement of support for the Indian position.

JULY 4, 1979

Chiefs and Elders take a Petition to Buckingham Palace to Her Majesty. The Petition outlines the historical, legal and political relationship between the Indian people and the British Crown, and reminds Her Majesty of the promises and obligations to the Indian people of Canada as contained in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the sacred and binding Treaties signed between the Indian people and the British Crown. The Petition expresses the fear of Indian people that patriation of the BNA Act from Britain to Canada could terminate the special rights and status of Indian people as the Aboriginal and indigenous people of Canada.

There is a special presentation to the All-Party Committee: 18 M.P.'s are there. We meet with support groups and Human Rights groups. These groups pledge continuing support to publicize our position.

We make a presentation to the Commons Committee on Human Rights, a lively discussion follows. What was to have been a half-hour presentation turns into a full two hour discussion, and several private discussions with individual M.P.'s continue.

JULY 5, 1979

A meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury results in his promise to thoroughly examine our position and make proper representations. Indian Veterans conduct Laying of Wreath Ceremony at the Statue of the Unknown Soldier and also meet with the members of the British Legion.

We meet with the Rt. Hon. James Callaghan, former Prime Minister and leader of the Opposition. He expresses great interest in our position and while he does not commit the Labor Party to support us officially, he says he will not stop M.P's who wish to do so. He encouraged us to take our case to international forums.

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Delegations visit the Embassies and High Commission offices of Denmark, Cyprus, Barbados and India.

JULY 6, 1979

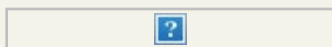
At the final London All Chiefs Meeting, several motions are passed:

- To hold another All Canada Chiefs' meeting within one year;
- To establish a London office;
- To pursue an international lobby;
- To arrange to meet the Pope.

We meet with the Embassies and High Commissions of the Bahamas, Australia, Kenya and Tanzania.

We present letters and a petition at 10 Downing Street, the residence of the Prime Minister of England.

Finally there is a reception with senior officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. They inform us that the question of Britain's residual responsibilities warrant an official response from the Imperial Government and such a reply will be made in due time upon careful study.



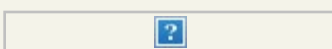
The Constitutional journey is historic:

*** It is the first time in Canadian history that Chiefs and Elders from all parts of Canada meet in a common front;**

*** It leads to the ultimate formation of the Assembly of First Nations;**

*** British Parliamentarians received a shock and education in their continuing responsibilities for Indian people. Many commit themselves to continuing support, and subsequent debates in Westminster will bear out the powerful and successful impact of the Chiefs and Elders' Constitutional Journey. We have met over 100 M.P.'s and Lords;**

*** Indian Nations have gained their first successful experience in world-wide attention and media coverage; as Chief Noel Starblanket states on Canada A.M., upon his return, "We had the world as a stage. The world learned of our existence and of our plight. The Constitutional Journey to England was a fantastic success".**



APRIL 1980

Ottawa

Historic Assembly of First Nations: the Constitutional issue dominates. A joint Council of Chiefs is elected.

JUNE 1980

Saskatchewan

JULY 1980

FSI sets up Constitution Commission. FSI application for court action on our constitutional position is rejected by Saskatchewan Attorney General, Roy Romanow.

AUGUST 1980

Calgary

National Indian Brotherhood Assembly and election reports on all fronts to confirm that Indian participation in the process of constitutional change is being stonewalled. NIB mandate to press our lobby in London becomes urgent.

OCTOBER 1980

Ottawa

NIB sends Indian Ambassador and secretary to London.

NOVEMBER 1980

London

FSI Constitution Commission asks Clive Linklater, Doug Cuthand and Victor O'Connell to review progress of London lobby and to arrange for FSI participation. They find the lobby in the hands of a recently elected M.P., Bruce George, who has set out his rules for an Indian lobby: he will not hear of Indian Government or nationhood and he will only deal with one spokesman for the Aboriginal people of Canada. Office organization is minimal.

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As the Constitution package is expected, at this time, to reach Westminster in March 1981, the FSI team stays ten days to prepare an intensive campaign to coincide with the arrival of the Resolution. Contacts are made with many Parliamentary Committees and pressure groups. Media contacts are renewed: they arrange a very positively stated article in the most influential British newspaper, The Times.

Clive Linklater's 1979 support group contacts are renewed. They find out that the eight Provinces who oppose the Resolution are also lobbying hard in Westminster.

The text of the Constitution Resolution is released. Massive protests from interest groups and private citizens all across Canada to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms leads to the establishment of a Joint Senate Commons Committee to hear submissions. The Hearings are set for nine weeks: few Indian applications are accepted.

Rotterdam

Holland

FSI addresses Fourth Russell Tribunal on the Rights of the Indians of North and Latin America. Other groups from Canada join them to present the violation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights by the exclusion of Indian Nations from the constitution process. The Tribunal issues a damning condemnation of Canada.

DECEMBER 1980

Ottawa

Assembly of First Nations in Ottawa and again the issue of participation in Constitutional change predominates. Pressure from the two thousand strong Assembly extends the Constitutional Hearings for a further six weeks and presentations from many Indian Nations are accepted.

Inuit presentation takes place on December 2. The NIB makes a presentation. The presentation by the elders of the Nishga and Abenaki Nations makes a particularly deep impression on the Committee members.

The FSI position is presented by Senator John Tootoosis and Doug Cuthand with a legal team of Delia Opekokew, Rodney Soonias and Kirk Kickingbird.

JANUARY 1981

Chief Sol Sanderson returns to Ottawa to answer questions on the December presentation.

FEBRUARY 1981

Trudeau announces Clause 34, that recognizes and firms Aboriginal and Treaty Rights'. NIB reaction is confused until it is established that indeed under the terms of the Amending Formula, Clause 34 could be cancelled, without Indian consent, just as soon as the package returned to Canada.

MARCH 1981

FSI attempts to negotiate with the Federal Government for real and absolute entrenchment of principles contained in Clause 34. The results of court actions and enquiries into the constitutionality of the Canada Bill launched by the Manitoba, Newfoundland and Quebec Provincial Governments, and the continuing opposition to the Resolution of five additional Provinces lead to referral of the whole package to the Supreme Court of Canada.

London

The March campaign for London is allowed to lapse. NIB Ambassador to First Nations returns home.

MAY 1981

Quebec City

At the First Nations Assembly, Chiefs are assured that the London lobby is going well.

JUNE 11, 1981

Saskatchewan

Constitution Commission becomes uneasy at receiving no hard news from the Office of First Nations in London. They send over party to investigate: Senator John Tootoosis, Chief Melvin Isnanna, Vice-Presidents Doug Cuthand and Cy Standing, and Victor O'Connell, constitutional consultant.

London

They arrive as a party from IAA is winding up a similar enquiry. The NIB office is not operating, their "caretaker" has no mandate. The three groups meet to draw up recommendations to reinforce the lobby.

JULY 1981

UBCIC makes similar journey and also makes similar recommendations to NIB.

AUGUST 1981

Constitution Commission asks Victor O'Connell to establish an organization in London, primarily for the FSI, but in complete coordination with the NIB and any other Indian group in London. The First Nations office has moved and is being maintained by UBCIC personnel who are in London to make advance preparation for a large Potlatch that the UBCIC would be holding in Westminster in November. NIB staffing is minimal and still unmandated. NIB are unsure whether they will maintain an office and O'Connell decides to maintain the FSI London office at the Park Lane Hotel.

In the absence of M.P.'s in London during the Summer recess, many of whom go abroad, he tries to develop a general awareness amongst the British public that the Indians have a complaint about the mistreatment of their Treaties. This follows the mandate received from the Chiefs, as a result of the observation by John Tootoosis and the group who had visited in June that there was a singular absence of any reference to the Treaties and Treaty obligations in the work of the NIB office. The public campaign consists of letters to newspapers, contact with the media and the arranging of a cultural tour to take place in late October.

SEPTEMBER 1981

England

The FSI is invited to the Labour Party's annual conference in Britain. Victor O'Connell organized a public meeting there under the title of "Britain's Treaty Obligations to the Indians of Canada." He is joined there by Clive Linklater. They distribute 3,000 pamphlets laying out Treaty position and in the process meet with many members of the Labour Party, both M.P.'s and Constituency workers.

OCTOBER 1981

England

Supreme Court hands down decision that constitution resolution is constitutional because parliament is sovereign but convention demands provincial support. London: Provincial lobbies intensify.

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The next major event is the cultural tour which takes place in Liverpool, Blackpool, Birmingham and London, lasting ten days. We go to Blackpool on the first night of the Conservative Party Conference, at which the FSI has organized another public meeting. This is very well attended by members of the Conservative party and the press.

The cultural tour is a great success, starting in Liverpool to sell-out crowds. We are shown on northern television reaching over a million people and Ernest Tootoosis is featured on four or five radio programs. The front pages of the local newspapers cover the tour, explain its purpose as to remind the British people of the promises they made to the Indians.

In Birmingham, the group appears on a national TV program, and a shot of Clive Linklater is shown on the national news.

In London another film is made for a BBC national program, "Out of Court," and two pow-wows are held at the Park Lane Hotel.

Wherever we go we ask the British public to help the Indian cause by writing to members of Parliament, and indeed in subsequent weeks and months it is apparent that this is happening. MP's contact the FSI London office as they receive enquiries from their constituents.

At the end of October, the NIB staff are recalled. The UBCIC takes over the office of the First Nations; files are opened and records started.

NOVEMBER 1981

London

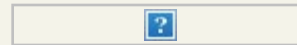
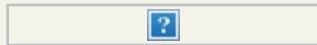
A very large group of Saskatchewan Indians arrive in London for two weeks, led by Chief Sol Sanderson; the entire Constitutional Commission and many Chiefs and elders. They are present at a series of meetings with influential groups. UBCIC Chiefs were in London lobbying the Aboriginal Rights position and are invited to these meetings.

Ottawa

Trudeau and Provincial Premiers announce, "Historic Accord" on Constitution. Their point of agreement is the elimination of aboriginal and treaty rights.



Venita Thompson, Arsene and Kim Tootoosis, Bill McNab, Brenda Britain, Billy Britain and Mary Ann Sokwaypnace. Singers Leslie Clarence, Frank Moosimin and Gerald Baptiste. They accompanied Ernest Tootoosis through Britain to remind the British of the treaties they made with the Indian Nations. The culture tour made media headlines for the Indian lobby in Britain and Europe.

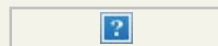


British Columbia Indians held a potlatch for 1,000 Britians, including M.P.'s in London. (A potlatch, or give-away, is the highest form of government in B.C.) The purpose was to remind Britain of the 1763 Royal Proclamation promising protection of unceded Indian land and jurisdiction. The message reached millions through the national television.

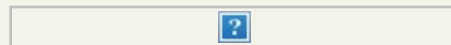
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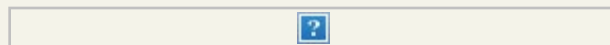
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FSI Chiefs, Elders, and Executives travelled the length of Britain to broaden the lobby. They found the Scottish liberals more ready to understand our fears for aboriginal rights than their English colleagues.



The Earl of Balfour invited Senator John Tootoosis to his Scotland estate.



Scottish conservatives too were more sympathetic to the importance of Indian Government in a Canadian Confederation.

Canada

Indian groups all over Canada react forcefully. There are huge demonstrations in major cities. Telegrams, telexes, letters, and couriers fly from Indian Nations to the Prime Minister and Minister of Justice.

Europe

Telegrams and telexes fly to Canada as the 200-strong B.C. Indian Constitution express holds press conferences in Germany, Belgium, Holland and Scandinavia and the FSI team confirms the announcements in Paris.

London

Chief Sol Sanderson holds a press conference to inform the British Government and the public that the way is not now clear to patriation, as Federal and Provincial London lobbies have claimed.

Ottawa

Joint Council of Chiefs start gruelling two weeks of negotiations toward a consensus of political principles.

London

FSI meets in the Conservative Party central headquarters with their Foreign Affairs Committee. Sir Anthony Kershaw, Chariman of Foreign Affairs Committee on the Canadian Constitution is speaking and the FSI manages to virtually take over the meeting to put the Indian case very forcefully. They also make a presentation to the Bow group and receive promises of support from this very influential group within the Conservative Party. They speak to the Conservative Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Group. They hold a public meeting, they meet with a number of individual M.P.'s and also members of the National Executive of the Labour Party. They visit Scotland and appear on radio and television and on the front pages of all the major Scottish newspapers. They hold public meetings at the University of Edinburgh and they meet with the executives of all the Scottish political parties, the Scottish Nationalist, the Scottish Conservative, the Scottish Labour and the Scottish Liberal parties; and they receive promises of support from each. The FSI press team also attends Press briefing sessions organized by the UBCIC.

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A team led by Doug Cuthand meets the French Government to discuss France's obligations from early treaties. Del Anaquod is there to organize support for the World Assembly of First Nations.

Saskatchewan Indian veterans also participate in the Remembrance Day Parade in Whitehall, London, with veterans from the Union of Ontario Indians. Two veterans are invited by the B.C. Chiefs to join them at Flanders Field in Belgium for ceremonies there on November 11th.

Senator John B. Tootosis stays on in London as a honoured guest at the Potlatch held by the B.C. Indian Constitution Express in Westminster on November 16th.

The FSI Constitution Commission asks Victor O'Connell to stay in London on a semi-permanent basis. The Canadian request is expected now at any time.

Ottawa

On November 18, a second historic accord is announced: this is the Declaration by the First Nations of Canada, the statement of treaty and aboriginal rights and principles. It is signed by virtually every Indian Nation.

Moose Jaw

FSI General Assembly ratifies the treaty and aboriginal rights principles.

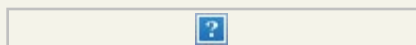
London

The Parliamentary lobby continues with individual M.P.'s. From the start Victor O'Connell has worked in co-ordination with the First Nations office and any other groups in London who came to find out what was taking place. This has meant many evening meetings explaining the situation in Westminster, the lobby process, the FSI position and so forth. It has also meant working closely with the UBCIC-sponsored First Nations Office to ensure a co-ordinated parliamentary and press lobby. The FSI and UBCIC Treaty and Aboriginal Rights lobby positions are quite compatible and cooperation is easy.

DECEMBER 1981

London

Chief Sol Sanderson, John Tootoosis, Melvin Isnanna and others return to London as the Canadian request is sent over, December 9th, 1981. They interrupt the Press Conference held by Jean Chretien in Canada House to bring attention to the fact that the Treaties are not protected in the new Constitution. Chief Sol Sanderson presents Chretien with Declaration of First Nations. The following day the Plaintiff Chiefs from B.C.,

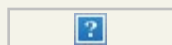


**The FSI Parliamentary Assault Team:
Chief Roy Bird, Doug Cuthand, John
Tootoosis, Cy Standing and Victor O'Connell:
kneeling Dutch Lerat, Wayne Ahenakew,
Chief Sol Sanderson and Felix Musqua**

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FSI Veterans John Tootoosis, Bob Bird, Ernest Crowe, Alan Bird and Miles Venne, march in the remembrance day parade in Whitehall to remind the British they hold the treaties so sacred they are willing to lay down their lives when their treaty partners were in need.

Manitoba and Ontario lodge their court case asking British courts to declare that Indian consent is constitutionally required for a new Constitution. Soon after, the IAA lodges a case challenging the Kershaw Committee assertion that Crown obligation to the Indians are a Canadian responsibility. The FSI announces it will be asking the British Courts to declare that any novation in political arrangement of the Treaties requires mutual consent.

The British courts choose to react to the IAA case and a week later, Chancery Court Justice Wolfe examines their case but rejects it on the grounds that it is a matter for the Canadian courts. The IAA appeals.

Saskatchewan

Constitution Commission meets.

Ottawa

Joint Council meets to consider how the lobby will be affected.

London

On December 23rd, the Canada Bill is read for the first time in the House of Commons. Second Reading is expected as soon as Parliament re-opens on January 18th, 1982.

At the end of this session, between the two active lobby groups in London, over 120 members of Parliament and peers have been seen, and some five thousand letters sent out to them.

On December 24th, the IAA learns that their Appeal is successful and the hearing is scheduled for early February.

JANUARY 1982

London

The British Government lawyers successfully apply to have the Alberta case date brought forward to January 16th. The case is heard by Lord Denning, and by two other judges. It has been prepared in great haste by the British lawyer brought in by the British Consulting group whom the IAA hired for their lobby. He was unfamiliar with Indian history, Indian tradition and Indian law.

Second reading is postponed until the decision is handed down.

Parliament opens and the lobby of M.P.'s resumes more intensely than ever.

Lord Denning's decision at the end of January is, however, a definite set back to the lobby. A number of appointments are cancelled, but our persistence wins out.

FEBRUARY 1982

London

Chief Sol Sanderson, FSI executives Doug Cuthand, Cy Standing and Felix Musqua return to London to lead the lobby; the legal team of Delia Opekokew, Rodney Soonias and Treaty researcher Anita Gordon are here to work on the Statement of Claim for the Treaty case. The lobby steps up with the arrival of Chiefs and Grand Councillors from Manitoba, Treaty 9, B.C., and Hobbema Bands. Evenings are spent with those returning to London or coming here for the first time to up-date them on the lobby.

There are also many meetings with the FSI Parliamentary Agents to draft the Indian Rights Amendment Clause.

Victor O'Connell continues to spend time with the Press. Chris Schwartz, photo journalist, is sent to Saskatchewan on the strength of commitments to run major stories from two newspapers. Chief Sol Sanderson and Delia Opekokew go to Geneva to deliver a statement to the international court of Human Rights on a case of the violation of Treaty Hunting Rights. Del Anaquod is in Paris continuing to organize European support for the World Assembly of First Nations. Second Reading is announced for February 17th. The Scottish Nationalist Party organizes a briefing session in Westminster. We present the Indian Rights Amendment Clause and a statement of the Indian legal positions.

Ottawa

The Joint Council meets in urgent session to work towards a political solution to the Canadian/Indian Constitution impasse. At this time they approve the Indian Rights Amendment clause.

CHAPTER 2

The Battle in Westminster

Second reading of the Canada bill, on February 17th is dominated by the Indian lobby: the British and Federal Governments and the press are shocked.

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Ottawa

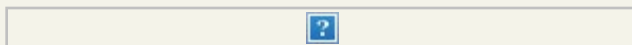
Joint Council lobbies Canadian parliamentarians. Leaders Ed Broadbent and Joe Clark agree to support moves toward a political solution with Canada before patriation.

London

On February 23rd Chiefs Sol Sanderson and Robert Daniels give a press conference on the FSI Statement of Claim on the Treaty case; and the B.C., Manitoba and Treaty 9 Chiefs win in their application to have their court case brought forward on the grounds that it raises issues of law of grave constitutional importance.

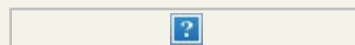
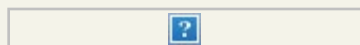
That evening the Canada Bill is discussed in Committee in the House of Commons and once again the Indian lobby predominates...

Canada House holds a late night Press Conference with Jean Chretien for the Canadian press. Chief Sol Sanderson and his staff are refused entry and are turned out of Canada House.



Keeping the press informed and interested in the Indian lobby was hard work. Above, John Tootoosis, Chief Sol Sanderson and Melvin Isnanna expose the accord between the Federal and Provincial governments

Daily appointments with M.P.'s continue and we start to make appointments with peers. Victor O'Connell continues to spend considerable time with those M.P.'s who are supporting our lobby, coordinating their efforts so that we don't have twenty speeches on one topic and nothing on the others, sending out vast quantities of information, preparing briefing notes. Chris Schwartz returns from his photo-journalism assignment in Canada: the British Press is suddenly coy and commitments fall through. He spends considerable time chasing picture and feature editors and everywhere meets half promises.



Senator John Tootoosis, Chief Ray Hance of the UBCIC, Chief Sol Sanderson, and Les Healy of the IAA, hold a joint press conference on the effect of the newly inserted clause 35. November, 1980

At this time the UBCIC announced that its resources for sponsoring the First Nations office are now exhausted. The FSI hires the personnel responsible for setting up appointments; Manitoba takes over the financing of the office and B.C. Bands look after the secretary. Cooperation on the lobby between all these groups had already become so complete that it is in effect merely a financial re-arrangement.

MARCH 1982

Ottawa

Joint Council meets and sends memorandum of intent to the Prime Minister outlining the negotiating process and

principles for negotiation before patriation.

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London

Third Reading is scheduled for March 8th. The Indian lobby again predominates but the Canada Bill passes third reading. First reading in the House of Lords is rushed through the very next day and for the next ten days Victor O'Connell has a very intensive lobby with members of the House of Lords.

Ottawa

The Canadian lobby pushes for a political solution on the Canadian front.

London

On March 11th, five law Lords refuse the Alberta Indian Appeal. They follow the opinion and decision of Lord Denning. This is another set back for the lobby - it is seen as the definitive ruling on the Indian legal position. However, on March 15th, sixteen Conservative peers attend a meeting organized by Lord Drumalbyn. Victor O'Connell presents the case for Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, the legal issues of consent still outstanding in the British courts and introduces the Indian Rights Amendment Clause. The Lords have been told they cannot amend the Bill but they are interested in a clause that will not amend the text of the Bill. There are a flurry of last minute appointments over the next two days. Victor O'Connell spends considerable time working with the peers who have agreed to support us, answering their questions and supplying them with further information. On March 18th, the peers debate Second Reading of the Bill. The Indian issues are well presented. Committee stage is heard on March 23rd: this time many peers try to stop the debate. The process is relentless now - the Bill passes through Third Reading only a few days later. Again a group of peers make a concerted effort to drown and stop the Indian debate that continues to dominate. The day after the Bill goes through, the British lawyers announce their intention to strike out both the remaining legal cases. Argument is set for a few days after Easter. Royal Assent is duly and unquestioningly given on March 29th, 1982.

Ottawa

Joint council resolution on the celebrations for April 17th:

Joint council resolution on Indian participation in the Proclamation of Celebration on the Constitution. Be it resolved that no Indian person, organization or association of the First Nations participate in the Proclamation of Celebration on the Patriation of the Constitution to be held in Ottawa or anywhere else in Canada to that day. Be it further resolved that any person, organization or association of the First Nations which are involved in the Proclamation Celebration shall be deemed to have committed a treasonous act, against the Indian Nations and their citizens and is in violation of the November 18, 1981, national position.

On March 31, the FSI London office is closed and Victor O'Connell brings home the files.

What the FSI also brings home is 30 hours of tape and seven volumes of Hansard, recording the only complete debate on aboriginal and treaty rights since the Royal Proclamation. The record of the broken promises and Treaties is therefor all the world to see. Canada can no longer freely perpetrate acts of genocide in her own backyard while posing as the protector of human rights in the Third World. Canada is unmasked and the eyes of the world will be on her as she now must negotiate a new relationship with the Indian nations.

Much energy and many resources have been spent on the FSI London lobby ... Between November and March the Indian lobby teams in London met over 300 members of Parliament and 75 peers on an individual basis or in small committee groups. Over ten thousand letters had been sent to them setting out the Treaty and Aboriginal Rights positions. Well over 3000 telephone calls have been made to try and secure appointments in Westminster and with the Press. The Press list was five pages long and mailings were frequent. The FSI team traveled from Brighton on the south coast of England to the Earl of Balfour's estate in northern Scotland, from Liverpool and Blackpool on the west coast of England to London on the east coast. Their voice was heard in Europe, Paris and Geneva at the United Nations.

It was an intensive lobby and clearly impressed Parliament. It was a very determined lobby and the effect was clear in the debate. On the question of justice and injustice, the Indians categorically won the debate. We had done so against great odds. We were up against the inexorable forces of corporate interests in Indian land and resources and the government and corporate interests in the Canada/British economic, political and historic relationship. These forces had, however, been unprepared for the inexorable force of the Indian determination to safeguard the Treaties, and to safeguard Indian land and Indian Government, to take our rightful and distinct place in the Canadian Confederation.

The Canadian Indian nations have united with a singleness of purpose. The resolutions first proposed by the Council of Elders in 1978 have withstood the passage of four most tumultuous and tense years. Indeed they have not only proved constant in our Lobby but brought the First Nations together for the first time: the protection of Indian land, Indian culture and values as well as Indian Government. The first two chapters of the Indian Constitutional journey have brought us the treaty and aboriginal principles, the basis of all action and negotiation; they have brought us renewed stature within Canada, they have brought us to the brink of a political solution in Canada.

CHAPTER 3

The Battle in Canada

The battle may have moved out of Westminster; at home it has only just begun.

From the files of Clive Linklater, Victor O'Connell, Beth Cuthand and Pauline Douglas.
