

**Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada
Media Clips**



**Résolution des questions des pensionnats indiens Canada
Manchettes**

Tuesday, January 31, 2006 ♦ mardi, 31 janvier 2006

Table of Contents/ Table des matières

IRS ARTICLES-ARTICLES D'IRS

INTERVIEW ON ELECTION AND ABORIGINAL ISSUES 3

OTHER ARTICLES-AUTRES ARTICLES

CAP SUPPORT FOR TORIES 5

TREATY RIGHTS ARE 'PORTABLE' 6

Source: Whitehorse/CBC Radio Special Report

Date: January 27, 2006

By-line: Transcript

Interview on election and Aboriginal issues

DAVE WHITE: A lot of native people will be nervously watching the new Harper government over the next few months. What will happen to that compensation for the decades of abuse done in residential schools? Will the Conservatives cancel the Kelowna Accord? That was a \$5 billion dollar aid infrastructure package that Paul Martin's Liberals negotiated with aboriginal leaders just before the election. Dennis Stark is the editor of the Toronto Aboriginal Newspaper Tansi.

WHITE: Now, how do you think the relationship between Ottawa and aboriginal people is going to change significantly under Harper?

STARK: I don't know if it's going to change significantly. There's a lot of trepidation and fear that certainly was going on before the election but with a minority government and I mean it's not just a small minority, it's a significant minority, Mr. Harper needs help in any legislation passed in this next parliament.

WHITE: What are aboriginal people in Canada most fearful of?

STARK: Obviously it's the Indian Affairs budget being slashed and that certainly is of very special interest to first nations communities but I mean there are also Métis communities or the Métis National Council, the Inuit through the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and also Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. There's also the National Aboriginal Women's Association of Canada and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy that may be affected by a proposed budget.

WHITE: Now, during the campaign or the very early days I guess of this week in the Harper government, was there anything said by the Conservatives on the campaign trail or during this week that either gave you more cause for concern or room for hope.

STARK: Well, I think there's always room for hope and campaign promises and campaign rhetoric certainly played a part in the possible fear or trepidation. Historically it was a Conservative government under Mr. John A. McDonald that hung Riel out west and that was 120 years ago but more recently 10 years ago W. George was shot under a Conservative government here in Ontario so there's certainly the sense of fear that bad things happen under a Conservative government although the reality is that most federal governments have to at least try and work with aboriginal people.

WHITE: Are there any aboriginal leaders who would welcome a Conservative minority government?

STARK: Well, Dwight Dory who represents the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples for off reserve and non status aboriginal people, has a strong power base out on the east coast apparently, actually said that the CAP executive welcomed a Conservative government whereas the Métis National Council came out fully in support of a Liberal government. Both the AFN and ITK were neutral, just urged people to get out and vote.

WHITE: One of the things of course that came up - it certainly came up in a forum that we did here in Whitehorse just the week before the vote, talking about that settlement package for survivors of residential schools. That seems to be something that's front and centre. That's something that was negotiated over the period of several years and Phil Fontaine very happy with the package he negotiated. What can aboriginal leaders and people such as yourself do to make sure that the government follows through with that?

STARK: Well, I think aboriginal people and other Canadians who've been very supportive of the whole residential school thing being resolved should actually write their MPs. People forget that MPs pay attention to mail because that's the most direct thing they know so today we have e-mail so you can actually e-mail your MP or you can write them a letter and they do pay attention to that.

WHITE: And certainly they have to pay attention now because as you mentioned at the outset, this is a minority government. Every vote counts.

STARK: That's right and like I said and most people know, in a minority government the Conservatives need some friends and whether or not they court the Bloc or they court the NDP, or work with all three parties to get legislation passed, they will need help. Canadians have given them a chance to see what they do and we'll reward them or take that into consideration whatever actions that they try to take.

WHITE: Certainly the Liberal Party and the NDP will be looking for friends as well. Do you think it's time that perhaps aboriginal leaders flexed some political muscle in Ottawa and perhaps lined themselves up with one of these parties to get their ideas through?

STARK: One of the problems or historically is aboriginal people have always maintained that they have to work with whichever government is in there and so sometimes it's that cosiness of favoring one party over the other that - and this is what sets that fear into place, that some worked with the Liberal government very closely for the last 13 years and so they want to continue working with the Liberal government and they actually be preparing to work with any government and that's probably the best thing and that keeps everyone on the straight and narrow because there's certainly some issues of accountability and transparency around the country will all aboriginal groups but also with the government as well.

WHITE: Sounds like there's going to be some interesting days ahead.

STARK: I certainly think there will be.

WHITE: Thanks.

Source: Whitehorse CHON-FM Radio News

Date: January 27, 2006

By-line: Transcript

CAP support for Tories

SCOTT ROSS: While the AFN, the Métis National Council and other groups warned voters to avoid the Conservative Party, one organization is pleased to have Stephen Harper as the next PM. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples endorsed the Tories prior to Monday's election and now they're hoping for some major changes.

SAMIR SINGH: When AFN grand chief Phil Fontaine was in the territory recently, he told aboriginal citizens to vote for anyone but the Conservatives. Now with Stephen Harper moving into 24 Sussex Drive, he and the heads of other aboriginal organizations might be a little dismayed at what's to come. However, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is looking forward to the new government. They endorsed the Tories and now they're looking for progress on a central issue. The organization represents the steadily growing populations of first nations and Métis living off reserves. Congress vice chief Patrick Braseau(sp) says now it's time to scrap or at least reform the Indian Act. He wants to change the way Status and Non-Status aboriginals are defined in parts due to their demographic trends.

PATRICK BRASEAU: An independent report done, commissioned by Indian and Northern Affairs, has stated that by the year 2129 that the number of children who would be eligible for status under the Indian Act would be zero and therefore what that means is that the federal responsibility for the non-status people would be basically almost extinct.

SINGH: He says that for urban aboriginals, the devil is in those very details.

BRASEAU: We're trying to basically lobby the federal government to say well, no, you have federal responsibility for all aboriginal peoples and not just Status Indians living on reserves which is the reality of our constituents right now is that they have indeed fallen between the cracks because on the one hand you have the federal government who says if you move off reserve for example you're a provincial jurisdiction and we hear the provincial and territorial governments saying that well, no, you're a federal jurisdiction.

SINGH: Regardless of whether the Kelowna agreements are re-drawn, rehashed or re-calibrated by the Tories, Braseau wants to see the federal government take overall responsibility for first nations despite their status or residence. Once Harper appoints the minister for Indian and Northern Affairs and fills in the position of federal interlocutor for Métis and non-Status Indians, the Congress plans to meet with them.

Source: The Leader-Post
Date: January 31, 2006
By-line: Barb Pacholik

Treaty rights are 'portable'

As an increasing number of First Nations people gravitate to cities, it's presenting new opportunities but also challenges, say **First Nations** leaders.

"Our leadership have to figure out creatively how they can help their membership live off-reserve because they don't get funding," Delbert Wapass said Monday in his keynote address to the Urban **First Nations** Conference in Regina. Wapass is a vice-chief with the Federation of Saskatchewan **Indian Nations** (FSIN) and holds the urban development portfolio.

He said people who belong to a **First Nations** community must benefit no matter where they live. "Our **treaty** right is portable," he said.

About 400 people are registered for the two-day conference titled Choices and Opportunities for Change. It's the second such conference held in the province, with Saskatoon playing host last year. It's being held jointly by the FSIN and File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (FHQTC).

In speaking to those gathered at Regina Exhibition Park's Queensbury Centre, Myke Agecutay, FHQTC tribal vice-chair and chair of the conference, said the movement to the city has been largely driven by a shortage of services, including **housing**, social programming, and employment.

He put the blame on limited financial resources. "Unfortunately, the **First Nations** under the **Indian Act** do not receive funding for programs and services for off-reserve members. However, they are still politically accountable to off-reserve members."

Wapass noted some of the key issues raised at last year's conference were: The difficulty for urban First Nations people to be heard by First Nation and non-First Nation governments; conflicts in the treatment of on- and off-reserve **First Nation** people in terms of funding and service delivery; a fear of **self-government** and its effect on urban First Nations people; and, a need for programming and services for all urban **First Nations** people.

"I think we've taken some steps forward, and every year we're going to continue making it that much better," Wapass said, adding that leadership is talking more about off-reserve issues. He noted many bands are taking the initiative to create urban offices despite a lack of funding for their establishment.

Wapass touched on some of the challenges faced by urban **First Nations** people, including poverty, gangs and loss of culture.

"The last thing that's on your mind is how you're going to teach your kid language," he said. "The last thing you think about before going to sleep is how you're going to feed your family the next day.

"How are we going to defeat that? ... It's going to happen through **education**. It's going to happen through jobs. It's going to happen through relationships, partnerships, communications, and we are beyond the point where 'White is right.' "

Agecutay expressed hope that the conference will not only provide helpful practical information, but also develop solutions.

"With the massive increase of **First Nations** people moving to urban centres, it is important that we plan and prepare for this new change -- a community that will be dominated by our people," he said.

The conference, which concludes today, includes workshops on an array of issues including **health**, justice, employment, seniors, and **housing**.