

**Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada  
Media Clips**



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

**Thursday, November 30, 2006 ♦ jeudi, 30 novembre 2006**

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November 30, 2006

## Natives Stir National Debate

*National Post*

By : Graeme Hamilton

MONTREAL - As the federal Liberal party officially buried a planned debate yesterday on recognizing Quebec as a nation, its Aboriginal Peoples' Commission adopted a resolution calling for constitutional recognition of aboriginal nationhood.

Sparked by anger that aboriginals were ignored in the discussion over the recognition of Quebec, the emergency resolution says Canada's First Peoples should be granted status as a third order of government within Canada.

It calls on the Liberal party, in partnership with Canada's aboriginals, to "initiate, develop and implement the necessary policy, legislative and constitutional change required to fully implement this recognition of Nationhood and implementation of self-government by First Peoples government."

It specifies that a future Liberal government should bring forward the recognition "at a future Constitutional Conference" and have it entrenched "in a First Amendment to the Constitution of Canada."

However, the resolution will not make it to the convention floor during today's policy plenary because it was received too late, according to the convention rules.

Hank Rowlinson, co-president of the Aboriginal Peoples' Commission, said he had hoped the issue could be debated by all delegates to the Liberal leadership and policy convention, which opened yesterday.

"Obviously we will work to try to make sure it is in the leader's platform in the next election," Mr. Rowlinson said. "It seems that in the debate about Quebec as a nation, the very first people who were here have been left out."

Michael Ignatieff, the front-running leadership candidate heading into the weekend vote, has called for a new "constitutional division of powers among aboriginal, territorial, provincial and federal orders of government."

He is also calling for the acknowledgement in the Constitution of "the national status of Quebec and the indigenous nations of Canada."

But when he addressed commission members yesterday, Mr. Ignatieff made no reference to his proposal for constitutional change. His advocacy of national status for Quebec has been blamed by many Liberals for opening up a divisive debate.

"The candidates are being a little more cautious about introducing a nation debate or opening up the Constitution," said Bob Goulais, an aboriginal delegate from Ontario who proposed yesterday's resolution recognizing First Peoples as nations.

Mr. Rowlinson did not take offence that Mr. Ignatieff ignored the constitutional angle during his brief speech to aboriginal delegates. "In Mr. Ignatieff's aboriginal policy platform, he clearly states that if he becomes leader and becomes prime minister, his platform is to recognize First Nations and Metis as nations within the federation of Canada," he said.

"He feels, and a lot of people feel, that recognizing us within the nation of Canada is only going to make [the country] stronger, just like recognizing Quebec as a nation."

The Liberals side-stepped debate over the Quebec nation issue by changing convention rules to allow the withdrawal of a resolution that had been scheduled for debate yesterday. The resolution, passed last month by the party's Quebec wing, called on Liberals to recognize Quebec as a nation and look at ways of "officializing" that status. There was no discussion and no dissent as the rule change was approved.

The Liberals behind the resolution said they were withdrawing it because the issue had been settled in a motion passed on Monday in the House of Commons recognizing that "the Quebecois" form a nation within Canada.

The Liberals pride themselves on being the only major federal party with an aboriginal commission, which was created in 1990. It alone among the three Liberal commissions meeting yesterday was addressed by the leadership candidates, and former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin gave the meeting's keynote address.

The party describes the commission as playing an important role in setting policy. "It is within this party that aboriginal peoples finally have an opportunity to have our voices heard and make a contribution," the commission says on its Web site.

The leadership candidates attacked the Conservative government for abandoning the \$5-billion Kelowna accord reached by the Martin government to improve aboriginal health, education and housing.

Bob Rae called the situation of Canada's First Peoples "one of the great civil-rights and human-rights challenges of our time."

Stephane Dion called for federal policy "to help communities, when they are ready, when they have the governance capacity, to have a way to move out of the Indian Act, which is so paternalistic."

Gerard Kennedy talked about playing hockey with aboriginal friends when he was growing up in Manitoba. "This is about an ethical and a moral problem that we've had for far too long," he said.

Mr. Ignatieff criticized the Conservatives as out of touch for describing aboriginal fisheries as race-based. "It's not a race-based quota, it's a rights-based quota," he said. "That tells you what you need to know about these guys. They really do not understand the constitutive, historical, rights-based presence of aboriginal, Inuit and Metis people in our country."

## Project Fights AIDS Epidemic in Aboriginal Communities

*Winnipeg Free Press*

By : Mia Rabson

Over six years ago, Jocelyn Paul lay alone in a hospital bed in New Brunswick and was told she had full-blown AIDS. The St. Mary's First Nation grandmother didn't have any idea what it meant or when or how she contracted it. Her only thought was that she had just days left to live.

"I could feel my spirit dying," Paul said Wednesday, speaking in Winnipeg at the launch of a new project designed to train aboriginal community groups in Manitoba to better address the growing epidemic of AIDS and HIV in the province.

"I was laying there, I didn't know what I was going to do."

Her doctor knew little about AIDS. She was afraid to touch family or friends. She had little support.

Albert McLeod, the consultant overseeing Ka Ni Kanichihk's AIDS project, said the hope is to develop **training programs so community groups in Manitoba have knowledge about AIDS.**

"Aboriginal community based organizations are the backbone of the aboriginal community," said McLeod. "They need to be part of the solution."

The pilot project is being run through Ka Ni Kanichihk, a Winnipeg-based aboriginal services organization. Funded by the federal government's AIDS strategy, it will include focus groups and the development of a training program for aboriginal community groups so the groups can then provide the services needed directly.

The epidemic of AIDS among aboriginal Canadians has been compared by some to the epidemic in Africa. Aboriginals make up about 12 per cent of the Manitoba population but account for more than one-third of new infections.

Between 1999 and 2005, 199 new infections were diagnosed in aboriginal Manitobans out of 593 new cases provincewide.

Half of the cases diagnosed in aboriginals are found in women.

McLeod said most aboriginal women are afraid to come forward and talk about having HIV or AIDS because they face discrimination.

"My community's ears are closed too," she said. "They don't want to hear about it."

#### AIDS and aboriginals

- 1982: Year HIV/AIDS related illnesses first reported in Canada
- 1987: First diagnosis of HIV/AIDS of an aboriginal in Manitoba
- 58,000: Number of Canadians estimated to be currently living with HIV
- 4,350: Number of aboriginal Canadians living with HIV in 2005
- 405: Number of aboriginals newly diagnosed with HIV in 2005
- 29: number of aboriginals newly diagnosed with HIV in Manitoba in 2005

## Politicians and Native Leaders Renew Commitment to Improving Native Health

*The Whitehorse Star*

By : Greg Joyce

Canadian aboriginal leaders and politicians were adamant Tuesday that progress will be made in closing the gap in health statistics that exists between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in Canada.

The National Summit on Aboriginal Health in Vancouver ended with a commitment by B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell and Assembly of First Nations leader Phil Fontaine that progress will and must be made to bring the health statistics of Aboriginal Peoples more in line with non-native Canadians.

The provinces and federal government have been trying for many years to find ways to improve the health lifestyles of First Nations, Inuit and Metis, who have a poorer diet along with a higher incidence of suicide, tobacco use and cancer than non-natives.

Fontaine told a news conference the meeting had been worthwhile and was more than just talk.

"It's been a good day," said Fontaine at a news conference. "The governments talked to us and described what is being done in their respective jurisdictions."

Fontaine said there is a "sense of urgency in fixing what's wrong." The summit was attended by Campbell and premiers Lorne Calvert, Gary Doer and Danny Williams of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Newfoundland respectively.

At the suggestion of Williams, the summit decided to form an "implementation committee" to monitor progress in the effort to "close the gap" in health statistics between native and non-native. While only four premiers attended the meeting, every province was represented by someone connected to aboriginal relations.

Fontaine acknowledged that governments and aboriginals have talked in the past of improving the lives of aboriginals without great success.



"I like the commitment from every government that I heard," said Fontaine. "The big difference from past gatherings is that we are at the same table and that was missing from past meetings."

Earlier, federal Health Minister Tony Clement announced pilot projects to ensure timely diabetes care for 10 First Nations communities.