

Gitksan Treaty Office

September 23, 2008

Open letter to all Gitksan

RE: ALTERNATIVE GITKSAN GOVERNANCE

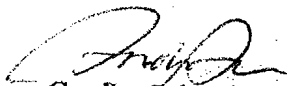
We are in a three party negotiations process: Canada, BC and Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs. The attached table shows all issues brought forward by the Gitksan Government Commission and band councils are under the jurisdiction of Canada! The Gitksan only negotiate matters that can be termed "off reserve" and are inherited through Gwalx ye'insxw.


The Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs respect the mandate of Canada to provide programs and services to members on reserves. For example, the tax exemption is a matter for Canada and is never addressed by the Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs. As well, services like Welfare, Housing and Health are left to the Government Commission to address with their superiors in Ottawa. At our negotiations we have never sought an increase in DIA program dollars - that is left to the band councils.

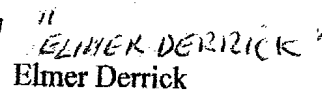
On the other hand the Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs have jurisdiction (off reserve) over 33,000 sq. km. including huwilp, lax yip and en'at (fishing sites). The rights and title of the Gitksan are protected by the hereditary chiefs and has never been protected by band councils.

All our attempts to provide information had been refused by the Gitksan Government Commission. On August 15, 2008 their delegation refused to discuss the alternative governance model with the GTS directors! They refused our request, on September 12, 2008 for a public debate on the issue to occur between Chief Councillor Marge McCrae and our Negotiator, Bev Clifton Percival. On September 22, 2008 the leaders (Chief Marge McCrae and Mamie Wesley) of the "protest" refused the opportunity for our directors to discuss the hereditary chiefs' alternative governance.

Remember the Gitksan Summit on October 22-24, 2008 at the Gathering Place at Hagwilget.


Gordon Sebastian
LUUTKUDZIIWUS
Executive Director


Bev Clifton Percival
GWAANS
Negotiator


"ELMER DERRICK"
Elmer Derrick
YOOBX
Chief Negotiator