

October 21, 2008

Honorable Chiefs, Matriarchs & Gitxsan Members:

I truly believe in what Neil said in his letter to the Gitxsan People. Our ancestors fought through trials and tribulations with respect to the continuance of our culture. Without our culture we have no identity. Thank you to the breath of our grandfathers who have left us a great legacy since time immemorial. It would be a shame to allow the teachings of our ancestors slip through our hands. Our ancestors entrusted in us the responsibility to continue the fight to keep our identity and culture alive. Gitxsan are who we are, One Nation.

Some individuals have adopted the colonizer's ideology when it is convenient. These individuals, who unfortunately follow the imposed ideology, may act as a bridge to help control and oppress the impoverished. This is called neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism involves the use of Natives to control and oppress their own people by adopting existing policies that may cause irrevocable damage in exchange for a short term gains for a few.

These individuals attempt to keep one foot in the traditional culture by participating in the traditional rituals and ceremonies and they do not care about the beliefs on which these practices are based. They will do whatever it takes to get their share of the wealth. Some examples that many of our families have experienced and have been affected by already are the taking of chief names and territories that don't belong to them, or the alteration of maps.....

There is evidence in the collapse of the economy in the United States that has affected the whole world. They continue their imperialist agenda without having to answer to anyone and only a fraction of the population are reaping in the benefits. Indigenous populations all over the world are suffering more than they already have as a result of this system of self-indulgence and greed.

We are very wealthy Gitxsan people. Do we want to sever our ties to our past, our strengths, and our rights? You are the successors of your land. Your inheritance is worth more than what money can offer. My mother's words always come back to me: Money is nothing. It will not replace your loss. If you are wise, you won't have to endure suffering. Her teachings are always taught in our Simalgyax (Gitxsan language).

We can all work **together** as a nation of families to create and negotiate better alternatives for Gitxsan. Treaty is not the alternative. We are Gitxsan and if we want to keep it that way, we must not allow the Gitxsan elite to make decisions without consulting with us first. They have to meet your interests and not railroad us into accepting their assimilative agenda. If they cannot consult with you, than it is time to let them go. There are enough resources out there to sustain us if we all work together like our families did not too long ago. Let's work together **so we can find the similarities in our differences.**

Say "No" to the Gitxsan Alternative model. There is a declaration that you can sign if you do not agree with the model. The declaration can be picked up at Gitxsan Government Commission.

Sa bax

Karen Morrison

