

Spirit dancing rests on high tenets

Mar 6
74

Sir — I have just read your front page article in The Vancouver Sun of Feb. 28 entitled "Indian Describes Barbaric Ritual."

I am a white woman, wife of a prominent member of a Fraser Valley community. I prefer to remain anonymous to protect many Indian friends from embarrassment or harassment.

Due to the courtesy and kindness of many native people, my husband and I have had the great privilege of attending many gatherings of Coast Salish Indians at longhouses on the Lower Mainland and in Washington State. We have also been permitted to witness initiations into the Spirit Dance Society of Coast Salish people and we have had many long conversations with Indian leaders and ritualists from many tribes.

Your reporter Rose's secret informant talks about liquor and the ceremonials. Alcohol is absolutely banned from all

the longhouses we have attended and is not taken by Spirit Dancers themselves. I have seen only two impaired spectators out of thousands at different gatherings. These two men were kindly but firmly escorted out.

Whatever goes on at Comox, it is unfair and untrue to represent all Spirit Dancers as sex maniacs practising their diabolical, orgiastic rites in secret.

Mr. Rose is again wrong in saying that so-called enlightened Indian leaders are trying to lead their people away from this "Dark Age Ritual," and is mistaken in the belief that they sit in fear and trembling of the "Dreaded Dancers." Many prominent Indian leaders are in favor of the high moral and transcendental tenets.

The members of the Spirit Dance Society (Silyoan) here are exceptionally fine men and women. Their leader is a man of high moral rectitude and can take his place with men of integrity anywhere.

White people must realize that a few Indian people have been made so sick by their contact with white society that they turn on their own people.

I can tell Mr. Rose the real reason why his informant was "taken" (to be a dancer). Some member of his family, feeling he needed help, turned to their own people for a traditional remedy. I wish Mr. Rose had investigated the "dropped charges" further. He may have found a well-meaning relative doing their best for someone they thought needed help.

Distress on Indian reserves, like distress everywhere else, is caused by alcohol, drugs, despair and hopelessness. Many eminent and informed members of white society including world-renowned doctors and anthropologists, believe that Silyoan helps Indian people to cope with these social ills.

NAME WITHHELD

Chilliwack

Indians & Province

1. ¹⁹⁴⁹ Calder article 1st MLA in law
(This is background to the news)

2. Dispassionate observer?
or Participant
Bias, frustration

Duff - IAC
Webster - First Cit.

Review old attitudes - 1871 - 1945

Changing attitudes after WWII

vote 1949

partial transfer of some services

Indian Advisory Committee 1950 -
Municipal Incorporation

Indian Advisory Committee

First Citizens Fund 1969 -

Provincial Museum
Collections

- activities - Archaeological
- Ethnographic
- Exhibits
- Legacy Show

Tuesday at beg. of Feb 74

'I'm staying in NDP ranks,' Calder tells legislature

By NEALE ADAMS
Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — Former cabinet minister Frank Calder plans to stick with the New Democratic Party, he said Tuesday.

At the end of his first speech in the legislature since being sacked as minister without portfolio last summer, Calder said the party had given him his start and he was sticking with it.

"I'm not a W. A. C. Bennett," he said, referring to the former Social Credit premier who switched parties before he came into power. "He knew when to cross the floor. I'm just a little guy."

Rumors had been floating before Calder spoke that he was going to switch parties or resign because of differences with the government.

"I have no intention of going anywhere and doing anything but be faithful in my duties," said the Atlin MLA, to applause from the government side.

Earlier in the speech, opposition members had yelled "Come over, come over" when Calder was critical of mining policy.

Calder, the first Indian MLA in Canada, was given responsibility for Indian Affairs when the government took office in September 1972.

Premier Dave Barrett asked him for his resignation on July 31 for an unexplained reason.

Later reports indicated Calder had been fired for personal indiscretions and Victoria police confirmed he had spent several hours in jail on April 27 while intoxicated.

Calder said he was not happy with his involvement in "a certain instance that caused my dismissal."

"If I owe an apology, I owe it to the whole house."

Even though he had been dismissed, the government had no reason to dismiss two of his aides hired to work on a report, he said. The government had decided to let them go at the end of the month.

They are his former executive assistant, Reginald Kelly, and his research assistant Mrs. Eleanore Beyer.



FRANK CALDER

... urges Indian policy

Calder said they could have finished the report after he left his post.

The former minister said that he had decided what he was going to recommend when he was fired, and had decided to pass on the recommendations as a private member.

The province should, in his opinion, do the following:

- Recognize Indian communities as municipalities if requested to do so by their band councils;

- Extend all provincial services to Indian municipalities granted to other communities unconditionally — if the Indians want them;

- Restore mineral rights to Indian reserves;

- Enter into negotiations about land settlements along with the federal government;

- Give back to Indian reserves about 37,000 acres of lands cut off from reserves by the province unilaterally in the early part of the century, or compensation for the land if it is in public use.

Calder said he opposed a separated department for Indian Affairs.

He praised the government's takeover of the Columbia Cellulose Forest Company.

"Those people," he said "were ready to put their ties and shorts into suitcases and leave the country and leave us high and dry."

He asked for an extension of public services in the north — more housing, highways, air ambulances, educational grants for northern children, and forest development.

He was critical of mining policy, stating that the government must encourage more exploration, but not undertake exploration itself unless it wants to "run the coffers broke."

He suggested that the government set up a commission to investigate poverty, and pay particular attention to northern rural poverty, including that on Indian reserves.

All these requests he said, had been made to ministers privately.

"I have been discouraged by some of the letters I have received from some of the ministers," he said. "Go up north and see for yourself."

After finishing the first part of his speech, Calder said it had been prepared for the throne speech debate but added: "I never got a chance to speak."

Don Phillips (SC-South Peace River) called out that by allowing the throne speech debate to end two weeks ago, the premier had muzzled his own members.

Speaker Gordon Dowding asked Phillips to withdraw his interjection saying: "I called upon members of this house to speak and nobody stood up."

Phillips then withdrew his remark.

1. Old Attitudes - historically hostile

- 1871 almost war over colonial policies of land and reserves

- Indian Act made them Federal Wardes
services normally provincial became federal

- education
 - health
 - local gov't
- } separate services

- continued outright hostility over land

eg 1912 McK MeBo } Province refused to talk
1927 Joint Comm } about title question

- Growth of Provincial Services without reference to Indian needs

- education
 - h & w.
 - highways
 - municipal affairs
- } not suited for Indian needs

So just in the way their relations with govt were structured - a great gulf between Indians & others
(not citizens)

Changes after WW II:

resulting from same social conditions that → Indian Act

- New awareness of minorities UN
- returning Indian veterans
- realization of inadequacy of situation

1. 1949 Provincial Vote (Even own member - Frank Calder)

2. 1951 Alcohol - Indians could enter bar parlors
start on equal rights

3. 1953 Land Act amended (Indians since Treaty had
not been permitted to buy or pre-empt land
w/o approval of Lt. Gov.) Given equal rights.

4. 1950 Indian Advisory Committee

to advise Minister on all matters involving the
status and rights of Indians

Min of Labor - Lyle Wells

6 members - 3 Indian

later enlarged to 9 members (p 5 1971 report)

Black - Prov Sec. (Minister)

Jemima Sewid - Chairman
Members.

1 or 2 meetings a year to formulate confidential
recommendations

Annual Reports - good way to keep in touch
with general situation.

Municipal Status for Indian Communities

seems like a good idea - integrate reserves with adj. comm -
- provide some prov grants
but tough legal problems are involved.

an earlier attempt - Metlakatla 1950's
"band enfranchisement" in Indian Act
ceased to be Indians, become a municipality
didn't happen: reason: reversionary right to land
- band would have become 'extinct'
- land would revert and belong to Province

this time - Cape Mudge - a system which would
not involve loss of Indian status
" " " " " " land

(fn - anyway, to remove any anxiety, P.B. O-m-C 1969
gave up its reversionary right to reserve lands.

Concepts:

- become a village municipality under Munc. Act (changed)
- not lose Indian status, or land, or IAB services
- gain Prov. grants & services
 - per capita munc. aid grants \$30/yr
 - home owner grant \$160 off taxes
 - home acquisition grant \$1,000
 - winter works, provincial share
- complications: Band Council + Municipal Council
registry of voters
taxes - to support services ^{for} water - roads

C Mudge

- May '71 Govts signed an agreement
- Fall 71 Band voted - needed 75% majority
just failed

Now - Dan Campbell changing Mun. Act. to
make it 60%.

Indian Advisory Committee

How it was set up

What it does

What its reports reflect

The current text:

- presented land case - in general
- Kitwanoocool
- asked Minister to do something about Committee
come to some decision

First Citizens Fund

1. How it was set up
2. How it was run by previous govt
 - a) Ministers
 - b) Jansen Advisory
3. How it is run by this government
Plovica
4. How many grants, and probable effects.