

AS LONG AS THE RIVERS RUN: THE IMPACTS OF CORPORATE WATER DEVELOPMENT ON NATIVE COMMUNITIES IN CANADA

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Abstract/Resume

The difference between theory and practice in Canadian water management is enough to warrant developing an alternate list of "principles" which have operated to the advantage of hydroelectric, forestry and energy corporations and at the same time to the serious disadvantage of Native people. The latter have only recently learned to organize resistance to a dominant culture which continues to treat their homelands as resource hinterlands. A selection of prominent cases underlines the exploitive relationship.

L'écart entre la théorie et la pratique de la gestion des eaux au Canada est suffisant pour justifier l'établissement d'une autre liste de "principes" qui ont joué en faveur des entreprises hydroélectriques, forestières et énergétiques et profondément désavantagé les autochtones. Ces derniers n'ont appris que récemment à s'organiser pour résister à une culture dominante qui continue de traiter leurs régions comme un arrière-pays où puiser les ressources naturelles. L'auteur présente un choix d'exemples marquants qui font ressortir le rapport d'exploitation.

Introduction

...as long as the sun shines...the grass grows...the river runs...

These were the images of nature to which Dominion officials resorted in the 19th century to impress upon the Indian bands with whom they were negotiating how long their treaties would last. Little else about this confusing process was as vividly remembered by most Natives. Adding to all the other failures of treaty administration over the years, however, it appears that now even this imagery has broken down.

Nature has been transformed in Canada, first by the westward expansion of agricultural settlement, later by the relentless incursions of the modern industrial machine into the northern hinterlands (Table 1). This paper focusses on the second, or corporate, wave of this transformation and, more particularly, its impacts on Native communities through the medium of water resources utilization. More and more rivers in Canada no longer run, freely or cleanly. And no identifiable group in our society has been more disadvantaged by this transformation than Native people, whose traditional dependence upon the natural water regime is increasingly jeopardized by publicly-supported corporate resources exploitation.

The paper begins by underlining the close relationship which Native people have enjoyed with their surrounding environments. It then selects those imperatives of Canadian water management which have evolved to satisfy the expansionist postwar economy, but which have also victimized communities scattered throughout the country, especially Native communities. All of the cases of resource use conflict documented herein fall within provincial boundaries and thus affect mainly Indian and Métis populations; the potential for water-related impacts of resources exploitation in the northern territories has, for the most part, not yet materialized. A concluding section offers some hope that the small victories recently won by Native resistance are helping to attract public attention to what has too long been a lonely, as well as a losing, cause.

Water and Native Peoples

Native people in Canada exhibit some striking differences from mainstream society. For one thing, they are more fully distributed across the length and breadth of this country than the rest of the population which crowds our southern border regions (Figure 1). Although an increasing proportion of Natives now live in cities, about half still live in small communities averaging several hundred people. Invariably, these communities are

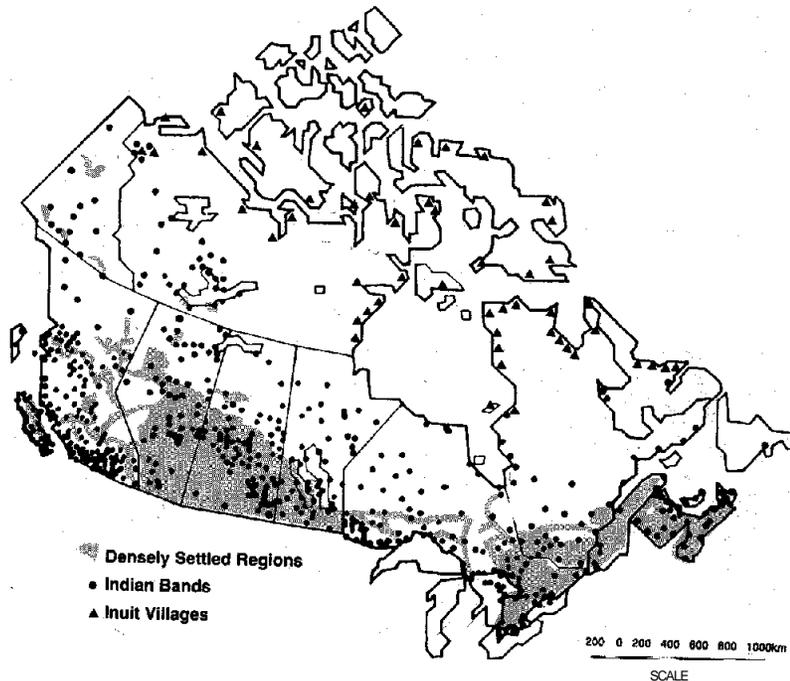
Table 1: Post-Confederation Incursions Into Native Territory

Characteristics	First Wave	Second Wave
1. Period	1870 - 1930	1950- Present
2. Leadership of Invasion	Dominion government, army.	corporations, provincial governments.
3. Nature of Occupancy	permanent settlements.	resources exploitation, transitory.
4. New Land Uses/Ownership	agriculture; some mining, transportation/ mostly private ownership.	mining, energy, forestry, transportation/ mostly public (crown) lands.
5. Regions Most Affected	southern settlement regions.	northern hinterlands.
6. Negotiations	brief, preauthorized terms.	none to lengthy (after the fact).
7. Instruments of Conflict Resolution	treaties; scrip; orders-in-council.	displacement of Natives, some agreements.
8. Native peoples' Losses	huge territories; traditional food sources; Aboriginal rights; health and independence.	some Reserve and other lands; wildlife habitat; natural water regime; health and independence.
9. Native peoples' Gains	Reserves (not for all); trivial presents.	some exchange lands; remedial works; belated financial compensation.
10. Native Organization/ Resistance	isolated bands/ passive resistance with sporadic exceptions.	tribal, regional and national associations/ lobbying, litigation, barricades.

Note: Since Native people have always depended more upon fishing, gathering, hunting and trapping than on agriculture, the second wave of Euro-Canadian invasion into the boreal forest and northern lake and river systems may prove the more destructive. For Aboriginal people, unlike modern corporations, the forest is more than wood, the river is more than water. The difference is between homelands and hinterlands.

strung out along lakes, rivers or estuaries. They can be found in every major drainage system of the country. Non-urban Native people continue to live closer to nature than most Canadians, sustaining themselves to a greater or lesser degree from plants and animals which, in turn, are adapted to the seasonal rhythms of land and water.

Such differences are not mere curiosities of the modern era, relics of a way of life which is fast being left behind by the dominant society's march of progress. Nor are they anomalies peculiar to a dying race. Now over one



Source: Adapted from Canada (1989) and McCann (1987)

Figure 1: Canada's Aboriginal and National Population Distributions

million in number, the Aboriginal population is growing much faster than the Canadian average (Canada, 1991).

Those still inhabiting their traditional territories, however, have been largely overlooked by an expanding national economy which sees the hinterlands essentially as empty, waiting to be developed (Jull, 1986). This is particularly evident in the provincial norths, where the Native population is larger but more poorly represented than in the territorial norths and where the brunt of postwar water-related development has been concentrated.

One way of determining the significance of water resources for Native people is from their own words, recorded at various public hearings associated with resources development and policy. Notwithstanding important

differences in their cultures and circumstances, as a group theirs were among the most eloquent of submissions to the Inquiry on Federal Water Policy (Pearse, Bertrand and MacLaren, 1985) in their simplicity, their directness and their passion. A number of the examples and quotations which follow are drawn from this 1984-85 inquiry which was instrumental in framing the new Federal Water Policy (Canada, 1987).

The tendency of governments to separate resource endowments into discrete categories to be pursued independently is at odds with the integration of natural processes which Native people experience. Likewise alien to their thinking are jurisdictional divisions and property rights given to distant interests:

The province claims ownership of the water while the federal government claims jurisdiction over the fisheries. It has been our experience that in practice, while both governments will jealously guard these rights against Indian...residents, they are quite prepared to give them away to large corporations to the great risk to other users and for uncertain and ill-defined economic benefits (Gitskan-Wet'Suwet'En Tribal Council, 1984).

Waterways serve natural cycles which have been observed by Native people since time immemorial, providing for all the necessities of life:

A major activity for all families, after a winter in solitary groups in the bush, hunting and trapping, was to come together in social groups in fishing camps for the summer and harvesting of wild rice in the early fall. The strategic locations of these summer settlements...were important for fishing...transportation, climate modification close to large bodies of water in the hot summer, recreation and an abundant supply of clean, cool water.

Most families have relied on hunting and fishing to provide major amounts of quality food and at least supplemental income from the waterway on or near their communities up to recent decades. The culture and religious practices are bound to the seasonal changes, the physical and biological environment...

The maintenance of the environment, especially clean bodies of water, is so essential to the integrity of the community- a fact we cannot overemphasize and a fact that is disregarded so often by the rest of Canadian society (Union of Ontario Indians, 1984).

Because they live so close to nature and adapt to the cycles of high and low water levels and to the biological resources which sustain their liveli-

hood, Native people still living in their traditional territories are particularly vulnerable to artificial changes in water distribution and quality imposed by external development. They cannot retreat "indoors" to homes, factories and offices as easily as the Euro-Canadian culture which has, in the short term at least, isolated itself from the vagaries of nature. Dams which alter flow patterns, diversions from the waterway, contamination of its quality, all take their toll. Various adverse consequences are cited in the following section.

Imperatives of Canadian Water Management

The modern era of large-scale natural resources exploitation, of opening up the hinterlands and stimulating regional development, began in earnest in Canada in the 1950s, with such projects as Alcan's Kitimat development, the St. Lawrence Seaway and Roads to Resources. It has continued through a long series of dams and diversions, mines and smelters, pipelines and transmission lines, pulp and paper mills, chemical and nuclear plants, with no end in sight. The James Bay hydroelectric complex is only the latest and largest example of the kind of resource project which Canadian governments and their corporate partners are wont to build, and even to export around the world (Ryder, 1990).

Certain rules of the game have evolved for water management in Canada during this period, but they are not necessarily the highminded principles which are endorsed in the professional literature. Examples of the latter would include "multiple-purpose projects", "basin-wide coordination" and "public participation". Genuine applications of each of these principles can be found in this country (Mitchell and Gardner, 1983), but they are few and far between. Multiple-purpose use remains the exception rather than the rule in water management, just as it is in forest management. More typically, a single-purpose project like a hydroelectric plant or a paper mill is proposed to monopolize the resource, and other interests are left to react in self-defense and salvage what they can. Similarly, the coordination of water-related developments to maximize their benefits throughout the river basin as a geographical unit has never seriously challenged the fixation of Canadian politics on big, expensive, employment-promising projects. And real participation by affected interests in decision-making remains illusory; too often the public is left in the dark until after governments and corporations have announced their plans. With little or no debate, governments from British Columbia to Quebec have opened huge blocks of public lands, and frequently the public purse, to multinational paper companies (McLaren, 1990).

Table 2: Imperatives of Canadian Water Management

Corporate Rules	Examples	
	Beneficiaries	Native Displacements
1. Regulation of flows improves the social utility of watercourses.	Saskatchewan Power Corporation	Cumberland House, Saskatchewan River Delta
2. Economic (withdrawal) uses take precedence over traditional (instream) water uses.	Hydro Quebec	James Bay Cree and Inuit villages, Quebec
3. Minorities in the way must be displaced for projects which serve the common good.	Aluminum Company of Canada	Cheslatta Band, Nechako Basin, British Columbia
4. Mitigation/compensation arrangements are afterthoughts, not part of development planning.	Manitoba Hydro	South Indian Lake, Northern Flood Communities, Manitoba
5. Deterioration in water quality is the unavoidable price of industrial progress.	Alberta pulp and paper mills, tar sands plants	Peace, Athabasca and Slave River Bands, Alberta, Northwest Territories

Note: There is considerable overlap among the above "rules" and most of them are subject to challenge as public values change. Nevertheless, governments and industries continue to announce new resource megaprojects without public debate or consideration of long-term social impacts or alternatives.

In the case of water and probably most other natural resource sectors, the difference between theory and practice is enough to warrant presenting an alternate list of "rules of the game" (Table 2). The following is not an exhaustive list, but addresses the basic development thrusts which have operated to the advantage of public and private corporate interests and at the same time to the serious disadvantage of Native interests.

Corporate Rule #1: Regulation of the natural water regime improves its utility to society.

Under natural conditions, the typical Canadian hydrograph shows streamflows peaking in the spring from snowmelt and lapsing thereafter to lower levels, from the effects first of evaporation and transpiration and later of freeze-up. That regime does not satisfy the purveyors of electricity whose demands peak in the depths of winter, the irrigation districts which require dependable flows throughout the summer and early fall, or municipal and industrial users which draw from the water supply all year round. Hence, conventional wisdom applauds the achievements of engineering in regulating streamflows and lake levels by dam and diversion projects which store flood waters and discharge them when and where demands are greatest.

As Canada has recorded more and larger projects of this nature, their success seems almost too good to be true. Indeed, there is growing evidence that artificial regulation of drainage is not necessarily beneficial. Perhaps the best evidence to the contrary is available in two large western deltas, those at the bottom ends of the Saskatchewan River on either side of the Saskatchewan/Manitoba border (Cumberland House Band, 1984) and of the Peace and Athabasca rivers near Fort Chipewyan, Alberta (Canada, Alberta and Saskatchewan, 1972). Natural flooding from the rivers each spring used to renew abandoned channels and parched lakes in these deltas while their sediment load maintained the fertility of the habitat for migratory waterfowl, beaver muskrat and fish, upon which Indian and Métis communities totalling several thousand people depended for generations.

The construction of the Squaw Rapids and Gardiner dams in Saskatchewan in 1963 and 1967 and of the Bennett Dam on the Peace River in British Columbia in 1968 cut off the spring flooding effect in both cases and started a process of vegetative succession in which shrubs and trees began to invade the margins of former lakes and wetlands. Not only have fishing and trapping opportunities declined, but it is now more difficult and sometimes more dangerous for Natives to travel along or to cross the waterways at certain times of the year. In neither case did the provincial hydroelectric corporation responsible for the damming forewarn downstream residents

of regime changes or offer to moderate their operations to soften the adverse effects on Aboriginal life.

Corporate Rule #2: Economic (withdrawal) water uses take precedence over traditional (instream) uses.

Governments have usually accorded priority to uses which contribute to regional economic development by "putting water to work". That means withdrawing it from the river, lake or aquifer and delivering it through some kind of distribution system to fields, factories, power plants, offices or residences where a greater or lesser proportion is consumed and/or polluted. Explicit protection for some uses over others can be found in water law in provinces where the resource may at times be in limited supply. Thus, the water acts of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba include statutory tables of preferential uses, generally in the order of domestic, municipal, irrigation, industrial, energy and "other". Even the more recently-enacted federal Northern Inland Waters Act was designed to licence withdrawal uses rather than to ensure a continued flow for the protection of fisheries, wildlife, recreation or transportation (Percy, 1988).

For Native people, of course, a reverse order of preference would be more appropriate. Failing statutory protection, their security lasts only until another resource user moves into their drainage systems. For the Cree and Inuit villages in northern Quebec, the rude awakening came in 1971 when word of the James Bay hydroelectric plan reached them. Their way of life practiced since time immemorial, hardly compared with a political opportunity to build the "project of the century":

...Quebec is a vast hydroelectric plant in-the-bud, and every day millions of potential kilowatt hours flow downhill and out to sea. What a waste! (Bourassa, 1985).

Even though the Cree and Inuit eventually negotiated an agreement giving them a measure of protection for their traditional activities, they still face obstacles in crossing rivers and estuaries, waterways which no longer afford stable ice cover, to reach their traplines, while high mercury concentrations in the new reservoirs make it hazardous to continue eating fish (Berkes, 1988).

Corporate Rule #3: Riparian minorities in the way must be displaced for projects which serve the common good.

When the Columbia River Treaty was finally put into effect in 1964, hundreds of residents of the Arrow Lakes region of British Columbia were

displaced to make way for a storage reservoir (Wilson, 1973). But times have changed. Sacrificing one region or community for the common good has become a more contentious issue in mainstream society when those affected directly are capable of protecting their own backyards and diverting public attention to other needs and alternatives.

The process of displacement continues, however, among third world populations, not only in Africa and Asia, but in Canada itself. It is not just a matter of proportions, of the few against the many. It is also a condescending view that indigenous peoples are 'anachronisms in the present age of technology', and that large-scale resources development would do nothing more than move forward in time the breakup of (their) way of life" (Van Ginkel Associates, 1967).

What made the process so straightforward for corporate developers in the 1950s and 1960s in Canada was the active support of provincial governments and the reluctance of federal authorities to oppose them. There need be little concern for Native opposition when the Government of Canada exercised its trust responsibility under the Indian Act without consulting the Indians themselves. A typical case was that of the Band which was displaced by Alcan's water diversion project in central British Columbia:

The Indians of Cheslatta were never given an opportunity to discuss the merits of the Murray Lake Dam, They were told about the dam after it had been built and after the flooding had already begun. The people of Cheslatta received meager sums of money in compensation for their losses, all of which was required to buy land to resettle. Most of the people were forced to live in tents between April and November, 1952, before the Department of Indian Affairs finally found property for them.

They were forced to build a new life in a farming community with which they had little in common. Many were forced to abandon their traditional occupations of hunting, trapping and fishing. A once proud people had for a time lost all dignity and succumbed to despair and alcohol. Whereas no Indians living at Cheslatta had been reliant on social assistance, now Band members have very few other sources of income (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, 1984).

By the early 1970s it was clear to those Native communities facing hydroelectric megaproject developments that they could not count on federal protection and that they would have to deal directly with Provincial Crown Corporations such as Manitoba Hydro and Hydro Quebec. For their part, the provincial corporations pushed ahead with their plans, ignoring Native protests as long as they could. An injunction secured by the Cree to

stop construction of the first stage of the James Bay project was overturned quickly:

It is, then, the general and public interest of the people of Quebec which is opposed to the interests of about 2,000 of its inhabitants. We believe that these two interests cannot be compared at this stage of the proceedings (Quebec Court of Appeal, 1973).

This "balance of convenience" argument was used by the province a second time against the Cree and Inuit in their legal challenge to the Great Whale phase of James Bay construction, inasmuch as the Government of Quebec sought to put \$60 million of roads, airports and other infrastructure in place before an assessment could be completed of the environmental impacts of further hydroelectric development (Picard, 1991).

Corporate Rule #4: Mitigation/compensation arrangements are afterthoughts, not part of development planning and not available to all interests.

After two decades of experience with assessing the environmental and social impacts of resource development, the goal of incorporating this task in the planning process, rather than as an additional step after development commitments have been made, is no closer to realization. Canadian governments and their corporate partners have become more proficient as project builders than as students of their effects and consequences. It has been easier to address technological challenges than the people affected by them. If those in the way couldn't be ignored entirely, they could be dealt with belatedly and half-heartedly.

The Cheslatta Band, whose ten Reserve properties were sold by federal Indian Affairs to Alcan on short notice for \$129,000 in 1952, had its claim for fair compensation accepted on merit by the Justice Department 35 years later in 1987. The matter remains to be settled, although Alcan tried to return most of the unflooded lands to the Band in 1989 (Day and Quinn, 1992).

In the Saskatchewan River delta, a claim for damages by White outfitters against the Squaw Rapids Dam was settled within months of its initial operation in 1963. But the Métis community and neighboring Indian Band at Cumberland House were to be frustrated for another 26 years before the Saskatchewan Government settled with them for \$15 million and a promise that SaskPower would henceforth take their needs into account in the operation of its upstream dams (Ross, 1989). After so many years, of course, no sum of money could possibly compensate a generation whose lives and livelihoods were so drastically reduced. Even so, something is better than

nothing, which is what most other Indian communities received for their troubles. A prominent example would be the Innu, whose traplines, hunting grounds and burial sites were flooded by huge reservoirs at Churchill Falls, Manicouagan and Outardes (Wadden, 1991).

Some frustrations are almost as old as the reserve system. Indian Reserve No. 58 on Long Lake in northwestern Ontario was scaled down from 612 to 518 acres early in the century with the opening of trans-Canada rail and highway lines. In 1939, Ontario Hydro dammed the lake outlet at the northern end near the reserve and redirected its outflows southward to Lake Superior for the purposes of electricity generation in the Great Lakes region and log driving to the pulp mill at Terrace Bay. Diversion-induced flooding and erosion of the lakeshore and reserve graveyard was eventually mitigated, but other problems endure. It is ironic that low-cost hydroelectric generation is enjoyed by metropolitan areas throughout the Great Lakes St. Lawrence system, even in Michigan, New York and Quebec which share the additional flow from the Long Lake diversion free of charge, while affected communities in the vicinity of the project must still import higher-priced oil for their diesel generators. And the clear-cutting practices and spraying of surrounding forests have effectively destroyed berry-picking, trapping and fishing opportunities once enjoyed by the 500 Ojibwa. Protesting overcrowded conditions on their postage stamp-sized reserve, residents joined the summer 1990 Indian uprising by blockading the CN main line for several days (Canadian Press, 1990).

These situations might be excused by some observers as isolated examples of past indifference, were it not for their continuation in newer and larger-scale developments.

In northern Manitoba, construction began on the Lake Winnipeg regulation and Churchill River diversion project to increase hydroelectric power generation on the Nelson River at the same time as a federal-provincial environmental impact assessment; both were completed by 1976, before getting down to serious consideration of Native issues. Those most disadvantaged by Manitoba Hydro's plans, the 600 Cree residents of South Indian Lake, were considered by the province to be nothing more than squatters on Crown land. Nor did the community receive any more comfort from the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to whom it appealed for protection in 1973, apparently because the status Indians involved were no longer on the Reserve to which they had once been assigned (Waldram, 1988). That left community residents prey to the "divide and conquer" strategy of Hydro officials, offering individuals compensation while refusing to deal with the community's collective leadership or legal counsel. Several years later, when serious mercury contamination in the expanded Southern

Indian Lake reservoir required closing down the fishery, Hydro paid local fishermen a mere \$2.5 million to help them reach more distant lakes.

Five other Indian communities affected in various ways by the project (Usher and Weinstein, 1991) were more fortunate, being on reserves which the federal government could not abandon entirely to provincial plans. Even here, however, Indian and Northern Affairs attached strings to its financial assistance: it was to be used to work out a settlement with Manitoba Hydro, not to oppose the development in court. A similar federal approach was pursued in funding the Cree and Inuit in Quebec.

The resulting James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975 and Northern Flood Agreement (Manitoba) of 1977 are both comprehensive, multiparty arrangements which recognize a large measure of Native rights to carry on traditional activities. But in neither case have the governments provided their agencies with the mandates or budgets to implement these agreements properly. Like the treaty experiences of the past century, more effort seems to have been put into drafting the terms of the agreements than into honouring them (Diamond, 1990).

Corporate Rule #5: Deterioration in water quality is the unavoidable price of industrial progress.

Indian communities in southern Canada endure the pollution of industrial activities in common with their mainstream neighbors. The difference is in the degree of impact, in that Native communities treasure their relationship with the plants, birds, fish and other animals which spend all or part of their lives in Water. They are not yet resigned to the loss of the harvests which have sustained them for generations. Two of the more adamant communities in defending their habitat from water level manipulation and industrial discharges are the Walpole Island Reserve on Lake St. Clair and the Akwesasne Reserve on the St. Lawrence River, both of which have developed some scientific credibility with their own environmental monitoring systems (Walpole Island Heritage Centre, 1990).

Canadian governments regularly pass legislation and announce programs to protect and restore the quality of our freshwater resources, but there are always complications which allow continued degradation. Failures to enforce waste discharge regulations on northern rivers were cited by the Auditor-General (Canada, 1990a), who noted a serious decline in compliance with regulations by mining companies.

The pressure for economic development of the boreal forest region, stretching across the mid-North from British Columbia to Labrador, has increased to a point where some observers see a parallel with the destruction of the Amazon rainforest, its rivers and its Aboriginal peoples (United

Nations Centre for Human Rights, 1991). In Alberta alone, seven new pulp mills have been announced since the spring of 1988, including one Japanese-owned mill expected to become the world's largest. Because of growing public controversy over these new mills, the Canadian and Alberta governments have agreed to undertake a \$12 million assessment of the cumulative impacts of all existing and new pulp and paper mills and tar sands plants on the north-flowing Peace, Athabasca and Slave rivers (Canada, 1990b). That is not to suggest that any of these developments will be denied, only that the severity of contamination of these waterways from chlorine-based chemicals might be moderated somewhat. For the provincial government, the tax revenues and employment prospects are too important to forego. And downstream communities, few in number and mostly Native in composition, are largely outside its jurisdiction anyway.

The situation is reminiscent of mercury contamination of the English-Wabigoon river system in the 1960s by the Reed Paper Company in Dryden, Ontario. The threat to human health was enough for government to close the downstream fishery immediately and to force an industrial process change, but over the succeeding years greater efforts went into renewing forestry and tourist confidence in the region than into settling accounts with the Grassy Narrows and Whitedog reserves whose people were the principal victims (Shkilnyk, 1985).

Conclusion

...as one elder remarked when hearing about the (Province of Alberta's PRIME, a multiriver diversion) plan: "They have finally thought of a way around their promise that the treaties will last as long as the rivers flow-they'll take away our rivers (Treaty 8, Indian Association of Alberta, 1984).

A review of selected experiences of Native peoples across the country leads inescapably to the conclusion that their lives have been disrupted severely by government-approved corporate resources development. It would be wrong to think that their losses happened long ago and are no more than history, however much regretted. If anything, the process has accelerated. The Mohawk Reserves along the St. Lawrence River, for example, have lost more territory since 1950 than in the previous century, to flooding for the Seaway, to hydropower dams, to bridges and the like (Wright, 1990). And the larger provinces have recently declared open season on exploitation of their northern forests and rivers, a region which may be only an economic hinterland for the dominant culture but which is home for Aboriginal people. At least in one part of this region, however,

further retreat is out of the question; having appealed, skillfully, both to courts of law and the court of world opinion, the Cree leadership is heading toward a final showdown with Hydro Quebec over James Bay I1.

If Canadian water management has begun to adjust the rules of the game to include protection of traditional values in the use of the resource, it clearly still has a long way to go to resolve corporate/Native differences. The pendulum must continue to swing. Some Native activists would like to see it swing back to the original balance of power on this continent symbolized by the Two Row Wampum, a 17th century belt which shows Indians and Europeans travelling together down the same river of life, but each steering their own vessel independently in peaceful coexistence. Much the same thought, of respect for cultural differences, occurred to the current grand chief of the Crees in Québec while visiting one of the dams on La Grande Rivière:

You know what I think is the greatest achievement of our people? It is that, unlike the Egyptians, for example, who built the pyramids to make a mark for themselves, my people did not leave a mark. They left the land the way it was. That is their greatest achievement. And that is what we're trying to do, to leave it as we found it, for my children, and your children, so they can enjoy it too (Coon Come, 1992).

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