

Venison vs Bologna

October 8, 2011

\$350 is a lot of money to some of us. It could buy an inexpensive winter coat and boots. It could feed a small family for two weeks. For another way to spend \$350, see the attached letter from attorney Robert Potts, Algonquin Negotiator and Senior Advisor.

Potts has just announced to the Algonquins of Ontario that membership enrolment dues are now \$350 per person, supposedly as a "one-time fee".

A "carrot" of \$10,000, "a land allocation" and other benefits entice people to sign up and pay. Indigenous are now being required to pay for promises. This sounds like an old lawyers' scam started in the 1920's to get money out of settlers. If you were a descendant of X, you could be eligible for an inheritance but you'd have to send \$\$ to the lawyers. The lawyers got a lot of money but the descendants got zilch.

What happened to the gifts and annuities promised by the colonial Treaty negotiators as tokens of payment for them stealing the land out from under us Indigenous? While Algonquins don't have a Treaty, Treaty Indians have to fight for what is their promised due. NonTreaty Nishnaabe Algonquins are today facing even more "English cunning" than ever along with the usual historical corruption and violence.

If as one ANR asserts, there are 300 members in her band and, if they all pay their membership dues at the rate of \$350 per person, the money will cover her salary and expenses as ANR for one year. The sham negotiations for a made up land claim are generally bogged down for lack of any new ideas to pass the time. The ANR's set a good example for lavish living in their brand new homes and gas-guzzling new SUVs. Many area Nishnaabe live as renters on their ancestral territory and drive old wrecks if they have a vehicle at all.

Hunting and Fishing

The really serious threat that goes with Potts' "carrot" is the possibility of losing one's hunting and fishing rights. This is already being accomplished by the whim of Crown sponsored ANR's who can make a member or evict a member, like kings and queens who once held the power of life or death over their subjects. The Crown is also the one who says which band is legitimate and which one is not.

Robert Potts obviously sees these fundamental Indigenous rights as privileges to be meted out for "good behaviour" at his discretion.

The settler sports hunter and fisherman pays a lot of money to indulge his chosen sport. He has to pay for licenses, guns, equipment, RV's

and maintenance of hunt camps. Many sport hunters come up from Ohio and Pennsylvania every year. They wear the nicest new jackets and waterproof boots and hipwaders. If the sports hunter or fisherman doesn't shoot or catch anything, he can still buy a steak for supper or go out for dinner.

The fact is, for many Nishnaabe Algonquins of the Ottawa Valley and tributaries, the proceeds of the hunt are an important part of our diet. If we fail to get a deer for venison then we eat bologna. Shame on the colonial entities for creating and capitalizing on this dire situation.

The Assimilation Plan has always been one of "starve em out". The provinces of Ontario and Quebec (manifestations of the Crown) figure they own the land and every creature that walks upon it, swims in the water or flies through the air. They want the wild game animals like deer, moose, bear and beaver to be available for their sports hunters who pay to hunt.

Some Nishnaabe Algonquins made the Three Figure Wampum in 1760 to mark their new arrangements with the French and English. This agreement was confirmed in King George III's Royal Proclamation of 1763 which acknowledged the Indians' right to hunt and fish for food in perpetuity in their own territory. How could anyone have foreseen the awful devastation of the land that was to follow!?

In 1774, the Quebec Act unilaterally extended the colonial territory, bringing in more settler encroachment in the hunting grounds as well as deadly disease like smallpox, TB and cholera.

The Hudson's Bay Company set up a trading post at Trout Lake, near Barriere Lake in 1821 and another at River Desert (Kitigan Zibi) in 1832. Some of the Algonquins at Lake of Two Mountains then moved to River Desert to get away from the settlers who were scaring away the animals.

By the 1840's big logging had moved in on both sides of the Ottawa River. The settlers and their government did their best to ignore the Algonquins for as long as possible.

The Roman Catholic priests wanted to see the Algonquins in one place, handy for their conquest by conversion efforts so they backed the 1845 and 1848 Algonquin petitions for reserves. In fact, most of the Algonquins wanted to stay out on the land. They were not farmers by tradition. The 1850 Act for the Better Protection of the Lands and Property of the Indians in Lower Canada and 1851 Act to Authorize the Setting Apart of Lands for the Use of Certain Indian Tribes in Lower Canada were supposed to protect the Indians. The opposite was the reality.

The first dams were built on Cabonga Lake near Barriere Lake in 1871. By the 1890's the Algonquins were starving because of the great

disruption and destruction to their land base. Moose are very shy creatures and will flee at the sound of an engine or the scent of a human. Raising and lowering water levels destroys bird nesting areas, fish habitat and kills the fish. Quebec game wardens then and now harass and arrest Algonquins for hunting, often seizing the proceeds which are food for hungry people.

In 1928, a 16,000 square km. Indian hunting reserve was set aside north of the Ottawa River. That same year, the Quebec government authorized construction of a series of dams on Cabonga Lake. This would raise the water level by 22 feet, thus flooding out the people, the animals and their habitat.

Once clear-cut logging came into practise, the ravage of the forests increased drastically. It continues to this day as if the goal were to cut down ALL the trees.

The Bush Cops

For over 150 years now on unceded Nishnaabe territory, if a Nishnaabe hunter gets "caught" with his kill and doesn't have "proper licenses", the meat for his family will be taken from him. It is sometimes the difference between starving and eating. You may get arrested on criminal charges involving fines or imprisonment. Fully authorized by the Crown, MNR officers or game wardens harass and arrest Indigenous hunters all the time.

To put this into context today, local MPP Randy Hillier advocates illegal culls of deer that invade farmers' corn fields. We have no exact figures of how many deer have been/are being shot or what is done with their carcasses.

Today, Nishnaabe Algonquins end up eating Kraft Dinner and bologna, not a very healthy diet. As a result, we have the highest rates of diabetes, obesity and heart disease. Cancer is an epidemic among our people, often with poor quality health care too.

The possibility of getting arrested for "illegal" hunting is used as a veiled threat by Potts against Indigenous practising our essential right to hunt, fish, gather and provide for our families.

Potts makes a very good salary, now totaling into the \$millions, as Algonquin Negotiator and Senior Advisor. He uses his role to TELL people what to do. He gives orders. If they go along with the SCAM, they'll get some crumbs. This letter is a stark and sinister example of the goings on, in our view.

The time for being polite is past. Some things must be said. The Truth must be told.

Potts does not act alone. He works at Toronto law firm, Blaney "Bologne" McMurtry who apparently condone his actions. The very Crown to whom Potts and all lawyers take an OATH, evidently approves,

sanctions and promotes his vile manipulation of Indigenous Anishnaabe Algonquins. The people who pay taxes to pay the wages of these colonial vultures are complicit by their silence. Working Indigenous also pay income tax.

Read the letter and see for yourself. We kid you not. This is no joke!!!

It's up to Nishnaabe Algonquins to speak up and stop the theft and corruption in our communities and in our names. Our future generations depend on us.

Notes and Contact Info

Here's the text of the letter sent out by Robert Potts. We have retained his exact spelling including errors. The original scan of his letter is also attached.

September 2011

Dear Elector:

In my role as the Principal Negotiator for the Algonquins of Ontario ("AOO") I am pleased to provide you with a further report on the status of the ongoing negotiations with the Governments of Canada and Ontario ("the Governments") hopefully leading to an Agreement in Principle and a Treaty.

The Algonquins of Ontario ("AOO"), the only recognized native organization, is currently enrolling members for a nominal one-time fee of \$350.00. You, in return, will receive all benefits available to a first nation, including free dental, housing, tax exemptions and the right to hunt and fish.

Other groups are claiming to provide recognition but they cannot deliver what the AOO has to offer. Enrolment with these groups will inevitable cost you in legal fees should you get charged by the MNR. You could lose everything.

The AOO has a signed harvesting agreement and ensures you that no AOO member will ever be charged with any harvesting infraction.

Call your local ANR for details.

Help keep the land claim alive. Your AOO representatives, along with myself, are working tirelessly on achieving the Agreement in Principle (AIP) and a Treaty. Your membership "yes" vote will guarantee you full Indian Status. You will be entitled to a \$10,000 payment, a land allocation as well as complete benefits.

Don't be left out! The more who join and vote "yes" will ensure we reap the benefits. [Just who does he mean by "we"???]

We urge you to share this notice with all Algonquins.

I wish to thank all of you for your continuing interest and support with respect to this extremely important project that we are undertaking on behalf of the Algonquins of Ontario.

Yours very truly,

Robert J. Potts Principal Negotiator and Senior Legal Counsel Algonquin Treaty Negotiations

Telephone: 1-877-593-7221 x3952

email: bpotts@blaney.com

The 16 government approved and sponsored ANR's Algonquin Negotiation Representatives are:
http://www.tanakiwin.com/treaty_team.htm
Clifford Bastien Jr. (Chief, Mattawa/North Bay Algonquin First Nation)
Lynn Clouthier (Ottawa)
Robert Craftchick H.B.Sc.F., RPF (Whitney)
Katherine Cannon (Chief, Algonquin Nation Kijicho Manito, Bancroft / Baptiste Lake)
Doreen Davis (Chief, Shabot Obaadjiwan, Sharbot Lake)
Patrick Glassford (Chief, Algonquins of Greater Golden Lake)
Davie Joannis (Interim Chief and Band Manager, Antoine First Nation)
Randy Malcolm (Chief, Snimikobi Algonquin First Nation, Ardoch)
Richard Zohr (Chief, Bonnechere Algonquin First Nation)
Kirby Whiteduck (Chief, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation, Golden Lake)
Vicky Two-Axe (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
Richard Sarazin (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
Jim Meness (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
Cliff Meness (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
H. Jerrow (Jerry) Lavalley (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
Sherry Kohoko (Councillor, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation)
Of these, three are also trustees of the Algonquin Negotiation Trust Fund, Doreen Davis, Jerry Lavalley and Davie Joannis.

<http://www.blaney.com/>
416 593 1221

Blaney and McMurtry Barristers and Solicitors LLP (Limited Liability Partnership - means there's a limit to how much you can sue them for no matter how much damage they do)

<http://www.blaney.com/contact-us>
<http://www.blaney.com/content/our-firm>
<http://www.blaney.com/our-lawyers>
A list of 129 lawyers at Blaney McMurtry

<http://www.lawsonlundell.com/Resources/Seminars-and-Conferences/10th-Annual-Aboriginal-Law-Conference>
10th Annual Aboriginal Law Conference
October 24,25, 2011, St. Andrew's Club and Conference Centre | 150 King Street west, Toronto

<http://www.blaney.com/lawyers/robert-potts>
Bob Potts to present at Aboriginal Law Conference
... Bob will talk about the Bigstone settlement, the largest land claim settlement ever reached in Alberta, and will discuss the do's and don'ts of settling a multi-party, complex claim.
In September 2007, Bob was a speaker at the Annual Commonwealth Law Conference held in South Africa, on "Aboriginal Claims in Canada".

[THIS INFO MAY BE MISLEADING. WE ARE INTERESTED IN HEARING FROM PEOPLE IN

THESE COMMUNITIES WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT ROBERT POTTS!!!

ACCORDING TO HIS WEB SITE BIO:]

"He has successfully negotiated a number of land claim settlements in Ontario and Alberta, including:

Sturgeon Lake First Nation, the Tallcree Tribal Government, and Alexander First Nation in relation to their Treaty Land Entitlement ("TLE") Claims and a number of Specific Claims in Alberta. Each of these claims was successfully concluded, and received overwhelming support in subsequent community ratification votes. The Sturgeon Lake claim was initiated by litigation but evolved into a formal negotiation as a result of our actions;

Moose Factory First Nation and the Witchehan First Nation of Saskatchewan with respect to land claim matters;

Wikwemikong and Wasauksing First Nations in Ontario;

Wahta Mohawks of Ontario in connection with a major land claim which was successfully negotiated and has been finalized;

Bigstone Cree Nation with respect to their TLE and Specific Claim, which recently concluded in the largest settlement of its kind ever negotiated in Alberta, and is one of the most complicated and richest First Nation Land Claim settlements in Canadian history.

Algonquins of Ontario with respect to Treaty Negotiations that are underway with Canada and Ontario involving the Ottawa Valley and the Nation's

capital.---[This is the one we know about, it's bogged down, hardly what you'd call successful negotiations except for those who continue to make a living out of the dragged on negotiations. once the negotiations are finished the paycheque is too.]

Bob was recently voted by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in Canada 2012 edition in the Aboriginal Law category.