

C7/40 215/81 CANADA

Union of Nova Scotia Indians

OFFICE OF THE FUTU'S

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December 9 1980

Mr. Jacob Th. Möller
Chief, Communications Unit
Division of Human Rights
United Nations Office at Geneva
CH - 1211 Genève 10

RE: R. 19/78

Me'taleyn:

Reference is made to your letter of 24 November 1980 with Decisions of the Human Rights Committee - Eleventh Session.

The following are the answers to questions you have directed to clarify my standing in submitting the communication to the Committee:

1. Whether I am a victim of any violation of the Covenant and on what grounds?

Since the beginning of the heartbeat in this land, the Mi'kmaq have had a spiritual leader from certain families. In this generation, that is my position.

In the same manner that my father before me was hindered as Jigap'ten by the Federal Government, so have I and my kinsmen and relatives. Today, however, they seek to end our traditions and render them to the museums and/or antiquarian interest. Being loath to scrap what I have not started nor have the power to end, I find myself a victim. Not personally, for surely my life will end, but as the only Jigap'ten of this generation that will ever exist. In that regard, the denial of self-determination by Canada makes me a victim; however, I rarely think about it in those terms as the terms are absent from our language.

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2. Whether I have been specifically authorized to act on behalf of individuals who claim to be victims of such violations?

The Santeoi Mawa'iommi have discussed this course of action for three summers but it was only this July that I was given specific authorization to see if the Pope's belief in human rights could help us. We do not come to this because it is an international law or norm, it is a matter of religion. We appeal to the Committee, not out of knowledge based on their written words, but rather out of knowledge that their words are morally and spiritually correct and that all our kinsmen and relations have been victims of an evil that no one should have to endure. God created the Mi'kmaq, gave us our language, and forged the Santeoi Mawa'iommi, as well as, creating the need for a Jigap'ten. Western thinkers gave us the notions of individuals rather than families. and governments rather than consensus.

Yes, I have been authorized to act on behalf of all the families and individuals who are being denied their fundamental rights to exist as a tribal society, fidelity to our fathers' fathers' promised of peaceful coexistence with the Eurochristian because that is the law of Jesus.

3. Whether there is any other basis on which you claim to have the necessary standing to submit the communication to the Committee?

By the operation of time alone, have I been forced to talk to strangers across the water to answer our prayers.

4. Whether you contend that besides Article 1 of the Covenants, Articles 23 or 27 or any other articles have been violated?

Most articles have been violated by the Federal Government of Canada, but the one that prays on my mind is the correcting of the future, not the past. All people make mistakes over a time; this is the nature of flesh and blood.

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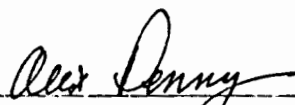
Nevertheless, the article which the communications is concerned with is the right of self-determination so we can protect the families in the future and not be classified as non persons subject to bureaucracies of supervision and cultural re-education while they take our wealth.

As to Article 23, yes, the families have been violated. But is not the Santeoi Mawa'iommi nothing but the families in their spiritual role? What we are talking about is not paper illusions and organizational charts, but something that is real: families and relatives uniting to meet common visions. This is taken care of by the right to self-determination.

As to Article 27, to the European mind, I guess we could be considered a minority. But that is not objective; we are a Catholic state, not a racial minority; we are families, not individuals; and we are united by an intense kinship and elementary spiritual consensus. We are few in number in Canada but that makes us a small state or polity, not a minority. No, Article 27 does not describe us at all; it describes the shadows of the Canadian mind.

No, Article 1 is our goal, our vision.

(signed)



Alex Denny, Sigap'ten
Santeoi Mawa'iommi