

Smoke Signals Radio Archive Episode 1991-08-10
Segment 1
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Guest speaker Maynard George from the Stony Point Band number 43 informs listeners about their struggles to reclaim their identity and solidify their status as a people who have never been recognized by the Canadian Government.

Host(s): Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke
Guest(s): John Turner, Maynard George

DAN SMOKE: Greetings! My name is **Dan Smoke**. I am one of the hosts of the Native program Smoke Signals. With the Native program, one of our goals is to fill the cultural gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, to educate, inform, and promote; to provide politically unaffiliated coverage of emerging Aboriginal issues to a broad audience; to provide news coverage, news analysis, business, economic, cultural, and other news, and features in a broadly-based magazine format to the **London** community. Programming to date has included news, news analysis, interviews with First Nations leaders from the London region and with visiting leaders from other parts of **Canada**, features on elders, education, politics, special events, a phone-in program on the **Oka Kanesatake** anniversary, community announcements, and music are regularly featured. I'm in the studio here with our other co-hosts **John Turner** and **Mary Lou Smoke**.

JOHN TURNER: Hi Dan.

DS: Hi John, hi Mary Lou.

MARY LOU SMOKE: Hi everybody.

DS: And we have a special guest in today. His name is **Maynard George** from the **Stony Point Band** number 43. They are presently involved in reclaiming their identity and solidifying their status as a people who have always been here but have failed to be recognized by the **Canadian** government. So, Maynard, how are you today?

MAYNARD GEORGE: Oh, I'm fine Dan.

DS: Okay, I see that you have brought some members from your **Stony Point Elders Council**?

MG: That's correct. I'd like to introduce you right now to our **Elder Councilor Rosalie Manning**, who is with the **Bill C-31** people. She lost her status because she married a non-Native person and she was a dislocated member from the **Stony Point Indian Reserve** in 1942. Her father was the last known **Chief of Stony Point** in 1942. And we also have with us **Marlene Cloud**, who has been with us since 1985 in our reaffirmation as a First Nation within the meaning of the **Indian Act** and within our brother First Nations. And **Janet Cloud**, who is a secretary with the **Stony Point First Nation**, the **Aazhoodena Council of Elders**. And she also helps me to reaffirm our position and, correct me if I'm wrong, in scenarios when we try to present our place in history with other people.

DS: Thank you, Maynard, for that introduction. I understand that later on we'll be getting to talk with them a little further about the message that we want them to carry out to our listening public.

MG: Yes, that's correct.

DS: I understand that it is indeed an important one because it's an emerging situation that we would like to have proper coverage for.

MG: That's correct.

DS: So, Maynard, you have been long involved yourself. I understand you have done some legal background work into this situation.

MG: Well, essentially that's correct. As a researcher for the Stony Point people, my involvement first started off with my mother, whose name is **R. Pearl George**. She was a landowner and a Stony Point First Nation member. She owned a farm at Stony Point, and she has never been compensated by the **federal government** beyond receiving a \$1000 cheque in 1981 for her loss of use of her property. From that point in time to 1985, we began our studies at that point to find out what rights we had as individuals. In that process, we found that we were a separate nation with our own council elect in 1942. And through that process we went back in history and brought it forward in time. We don't like to call it the division between Kettle and Stony because that's such a negative feeling, but rather the reaffirmation of our identity which was dropped in 1942 and we have just begun to reinstate not only with the surrounding communities but with our presentation to **Minister Siddon** on August 6th, 1991.

DS: What happened at this presentation on August 6th?

MG: Alright. There was...we had a meeting on the 3rd of August, 1991. **Robert George** was acclaimed Chief of Stony Point by the people of Stony Point. There were four other members who were also asked to be chief, myself being included. But one thing we want to present to the public and to the surrounding community is that we're not radical. I am 35 years old, around there, between 35 and 38. And, as a young individual in the community compared to my elders, I didn't want to take my position as being the one with all the answers because I do recognize the eldership of our people and I have to listen to what they have to say. For too many years, I think our people have forgotten what the older people have to say and how they retain their identity and structure and culture. I would never have knew anything about Stony Point except if my mother didn't tell me that she's not a part of **Kettle Point**. I didn't understand it because I was born at Kettle Point. And through a process of time, I come to find out, you know, through investigative reporting and looking into investigative documents that yeah, she was right. We were a separate nation.

So Robert George has been acclaimed our chief with council but at the same time we are not recognized by the Indian Act. But we are a group of elders who are outspoken members within our community structure. We have people who represent the **Bill C-31 People** and according to our customs and traditions, we have members from each household and family from the 18 families that were moved off in 1942. Now, my position is as a researcher and as a PR man. I

talk with individuals. I solicit their help. I make the presentation to ask them for help, and to identify the need within our community. That there's not a question of racism or national identity, but rather to preserve a culture than let it go down the tubes. A lot of cultures are going down the tubes. Some of the people that we have requested aid from said they got interested because of the **War Measures Act**. But at present, we cannot identify the sources of our help until we have ourselves asserted our affirmation as a separate nation. They didn't want to come in and bust up our community at Kettle Point, and we said, we're not asking you to do that. We know our identity, and all we're asking is for help to reclaim what's ours, not what's somebody else's.

In 1942, when our people were moved off of Stony Point, they had to purchase land at Kettle Point. There was no exchange of dollars. My mother's house was placed in swampland at Kettle Point. The Indian Agent who acted on behalf of the Stony Point people purchased land off of what was purchasable at Kettle Point and relocated them there. But there's a number of people who didn't get land there. So through this process of eliminating, I guess, how did the Indian Act work back then? We found that our last chief, whose name was **Wellington Elijah**, was referred to as a councillor on documentation. So, to assert whether he was a chief or not, we had to go back further and get the understanding of the Indian Act. We retrieved documents and articles of transcripts of the **Indian Agents** making reports. Now, he referred to him as "the chief" or the Chief of Stony Point. But on documents, when you retrieve it, it says councillor. So, we had to get the hidden material, the hidden agendas that the **Privy Council** had ordered the **Minister of Indian Affairs** to accomplish which was to consolidate, amalgamate, and assimilate First Nations structures and gain their land bases from them, while retaining their... How did they put it? It was their standing with the **British Arms** as an ally. So, it was a process of understanding those issues.

DS: Okay, thank you, Maynard. If people want to get in touch with you to help and volunteer some of their physical energy to helping you out, how would they do that?

MG: Alright. We have a chief now. That's one thing I really try to outline to anyone I talk to. His name is Robert George. He owns a small business at Kettle Point. It's called **George's Variety** and his number is [redacted]. Or you could contact myself at [redacted]. And that's in the area code of the [redacted] district. And there's someone always there available to either give answers or directions to our place of reference.

DS: Okay. Could you just repeat those numbers again?

MG: Alright. Robert George's number is [redacted], and my number is [redacted].

DS: Okay, thank you, Maynard. And as I was saying before, after we come back from our break, we will be talking to our guests Rose, Marlene, and Janet.

DS: Our theme song that you heard earlier at the opening of the show was "**Long Hot Summer in the Great White North**" taken from the album **Well, What Does it Take?** by **7th Fire**. And now, we will be listening to a song from **Richard Cyr**, from his album **Larceny by Trick**, and the song is called "**Oka**."