

Smoke Signals Radio Archive Episode 1999-04-17
Segment 6
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Dan and Mary Lou Smoke tell listeners about current events happening in and around the London area.

Host(s): Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke

DAN SMOKE: Koolamalsi, waajiiye, sge:no, aanii, boozhoo. That was **Indigenous**. Indigenous now have a new CD out called **Things We Do**, and we've been featuring them over the past few weeks, and we'll probably bring more of that CD to you in the near future. We're now going to feature Mary Lou sharing some of the announcements of things happening in and around the London area.

MARY LOU SMOKE: Miigwetch, Dan.

[**MARY LOU SMOKE** continues with community announcements.]

DS: Miigwetch, Mary Lou. The **Leonard Peltier Defence Committee** announced a press conference will be held with Danielle Mitterrand, the widow of the ex-premier of France, Premier Francois Mitterrand. And this press conference is going to be held in Washington, DC at Amnesty International headquarters, and it will be about the human rights violations in regard to the case of **Leonard Peltier**. And then, on the following Friday, April the 30th, Danielle Mitterrand will be meeting with Leonard Peltier at the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. So that will be taking place on April 29th to 30th in Kansas.

DS: I'd like to read to you about a conference taking place in Windsor from June 14th to the 17th, the theme of which is *From Within These Walls: Advancing Aboriginal Education from the Inside Out*. In the **Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples** 1993 report on the development of research agenda for an integrated research plan, the Commission stated that there are enormous gaps that remain in our knowledge in this field, how Aboriginal people are incorporating traditional values and ways of knowing into their decision-making processes, nor has any significant amount of research been undertaken since the 1970s on Aboriginal people in urban areas, despite the fact that most Aboriginal people live in towns and cities across Canada. It is the intention of this conference, in keeping with this statement, to accept papers which address this disappointing reality. And some of the...these are some of the suggestions about papers that they would like to see: the validation of traditional knowledge within post-secondary education; how does education theory work; utilizing traditional models of learning; non-Aboriginal instructors/professors, what is their role; is there a historical/philosophical/constitutional rationale for cultural curriculum; can education be an instrument for healing; the culture of institutional power; how does a university or a college adapt/develop a curriculum, and what are those models of delivery; the task of the Aboriginal counselors within the institutions; contradictions in post-secondary institutions; and is there a need for an aboriginal university and/or college. So, if you'd like more information about this, at the University of Windsor, you can contact us at Smoke Signals, at extension [redacted].

DS: And another conference that's taking place in Toronto is the "Riding the Back of the Feathered Serpent." It's on the **Zapatista struggle**, and it's a transformation through alternative communication. It's presented by the **Food for Chiapas** group, and it's going to be at Ryerson Polytechnical University, and it's going to be at the Rogers Communication Centre. The date of

this conference is going to be on May 8th, from 9:00 in the morning to 7:00 pm, at Ryerson Polytechnic University, in the Eaton Theatre, 80 Gold Street, Toronto. And we have the contact numbers. Now, the conference format, there will be panels and there will be a live broadcast of the whole conference, and it will include a live audio and video feed of panelists, a live chatline so that those logged on can discuss issues with each other and pose questions to the panelists. And broadcasts of videos about Chiapas culture, social and political environment, by Indigenous people in Chiapas addressing these issues and by other documentary makers. So this is, why is this conference happening? This conference seeks to offer information about Indigenous issues and to get the message out of both the oppression and the aspirations of the people of Chiapas, whose concerns echo the concerns of all peoples.

This conference will also offer practical solutions for grassroots communications. The Zapatistas have used the Internet creatively to get their Indigenous message out, to educate, and to involve communities worldwide in their struggle and the struggles of all oppressed peoples. And many Mayan people of Chiapas have been conducting a campaign of Indigenous resistance since first contact with the Europeans, and more recently, since the implementation of the **North America Free Trade Agreement** in January 1994. They are demanding local autonomy, access to healthcare and education, and the return of traditional farming plots. The Mexican government has refused to implement negotiated treaties. The Mexican army now surrounds a large territory throughout the highlands and the rainforest regions inhabited by unarmed Mayans. Low-intensity warfare has included support of paramilitary squads who murder and disappear Mayan people, and many other tactics designed to intimidate the Mayans to leave their lands. The finalized agenda will be made available by this week. We have a working agenda.

DS: Now, they have a CD out as well, and the CD is entitled *Riding the Back of the Feathered Serpent: Songs for Chiapas*. Artists featured on the CD include Ulali, the Aboriginal vocal trio that recently appeared on the soundtrack to the movie *Smoke Signals*, Kanatan Aski, **Oneida** comedian Charlie Hill, Juno-nominated singer Jani Lauzon, Chilean vocalist Alejandra Nunez, and Mexican folk singer Emilio Capistran, and many more. And for a working agenda, the rough itinerary is that from 9:00 to 9:30 will be an opening ceremony, from 9:30 to 10:30 there will be the first panel on Indigenous rights, Indigenous restoration, and the situation in Chiapas. This will be followed by a break, and then from 10:45 to 11:45, a second panel: free trade and how it has affected traditional communities in Canada and Mexico, fair trade and how it can help. From 11:45 to 12:45, there will be lunch in the foyer, and this will be accompanied by live performances by Juno-nominated performer Jani Lauzon and Emilio Capistran singing revolutionary Mexican songs, and both artists are featured on the CD. And then, from 12:45 to 2:30, the workshops will be taking place again. And then, a special workshop at 2:45: the freedom of the press and accurate semination of information. And the last workshop from 4:00 to 5:00, the alternative media communications using the Internet and their uses. So, this is interesting. I believe their confirmed speakers that they have are Gord Peters, ex-regional Chief for Ontario, Johnny Mohawk, and Evan Dion Buffalo, Professors of American Studies at New York in Buffalo, New York, Anna Dashtgard, an expert on NAFTA and the multi-lateral agreement, Kerry Appell for the Human Bean Coffee Trading Company, Joseph Leon from Native American Calling, and Pedro Sanchez from the CBC, and Peter Hart from Paper Tiger TV, and Brian Wright-McLeod from the local station CKLN. If you'd like more information on this conference, contact us at Smoke Signals.

DS: We're now going to close this week with "**The Gourd Song**." "The Gourd Song" comes from the CD *Thon-gya! "This Is What They Say"* in Kiowa. That's a CD by **Dave Copenhaver** and **Phillip "Yogie" Bread**. And we will not be here next week, we will have guest hosts

coming in to further the journey along the red road here on Smoke Signals, but we will be here the following weekend, May the 1st. So, onen ki' wahi for this week. Koolamalsi, onen ki' wahi.