

Smoke Signals Radio Archive Episode 1991-08-17

Segment 1

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Dan Smoke shares background information on a land claim that was initiated by the Stony Point First Nations band to reclaim their land base which was expropriated by the War Measures Act at Camp Ipperwash. John Turner talks about his experience visiting Camp Ipperwash and talking with Indigenous leaders Maynard George, Clifford George, and Robert George.

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

DAN SMOKE: Good afternoon, my name is **Dan Smoke**, shekóli, skanako:ka, aanii, boozhoo to all my Native brothers and sisters and all our friends listening here at CHRW 94.7. You have just heard the “**Long Hot Summer in the Great White North**” from the album ***Well, What Does It Take?*** by **7th Fire**. I am here today in the studio with my colleagues **John Turner** and **Mary Lou Smoke**. Hi John, hi Mary Lou.

JOHN TURNER: Hi Dan, how are ya?

DS: Good, thank you. Yeah I'd just like to start off with a little news item that has come to our attention. It's a breaking story that I think deserves some air time. As some of our listeners who were listening to the show last week are aware, we had as our studio guest **Maynard George** who was accompanied by **Janet** and **Marlene Cloud** and **Elder Rose Manning**. These are all members of the **Stony Point First Nations Band**. They are settled on the **Kettle Point** reserve presently and they are presently involved in a land claim to reclaim their land base, which was expropriated by the **War Measures Act** at **Camp Ipperwash**. This was at one time the **Stony Point** reserve. But in 1942, the 18 families that were living there were relocated. And most of them were relocated to nearby Kettle Point. And since then, they have been viewed by Ontario as part of one overall band; the **Kettle and Stony Point Band**. Now the **Kettle and Stony Point Band Council** hasn't accepted that there were ever two official bands—the two being the **Kettle Point Band** separate from the **Stony Point Band**.

It says that the Stony Point reserve—which is where Camp Ipperwash is—that should be returned to all Kettle and Stony Point Indians. Now the...as Maynard George was talking last week, I think we heard a distinct reaffirmation of the Stony Point band wanting recognition by the **Ontario government**, by the **federal government**, by all their brother **nations**, that they are in fact a distinct, separate nation, independent unto itself. So they are wanting recognition as an independent band with a claim to Stony Point. And in the **Free Press** this week, there was an article that says that the Stony Point group says they have evidence now that supports its case and I believe that some of this evidence was that there were some original maps that date way back to the 1800's that were brought forward to Maynard George and he has claimed that the **Federal Cabinet** had a hidden agenda at the time of **confederation**. And this hidden agenda wanted to see that all bands, all Indians, would amalgamate into one nation of Indians and that they would, therefore, become loyal to the confederate government at that time. Now,

as most Native people are aware, each and every nation is a distinct nation unto itself—they all have their own language, each nation has its own ceremonies, each nation has its own government, and each nation has its own **land base**. Now, when you have a nation of people declaring with its own language, land base, and government constitution, then you have, in effect, a nation that is clearly given recognition by the **United Nations**.

So what the **Canadian government** has effectively done is over the course of time since 1942, they have effectively muzzled the voice of the Stony Point Nation. And in doing so, a lot of the Stony Point Nation members have become somewhat lost in who they are, as was evidenced by last week's show. We had a couple guests say on the air that they wanted to know who they were. They wanted to know what was it that made them...what was their relationship to the land because they didn't have a land base that was theirs. And land—to Native people—is a spiritual relationship that was given in the form of a gift from the **Creator** for the human beings to use. And the Stony Point Nation, being no different than any other nation of native peoples, they have a right to use the land that was given to them, and to respect it, and to practice their thanksgiving to the Creator for the gift of this land. And as long as that natural law is respected, then they should be accorded the same respect as a nation of people who certainly do have a voice for their future generations and also they should be able to start their own healing process. Because when you've been separated from your land base for a number of years, like the Stony Point band has been, then there is gonna be a certain amount of healing that will be necessary to take place because of you know...you lose your land, then you effectively lose your culture.

And we're seeing all across Native nations in Canada, the language is something that's very precious, and it's something that we are very defiantly holding onto. Because it's our...our language is a direct way for Native people to communicate to each other, and to acknowledge to the Creator our gratitude for what he has provided for us. So today there was a ceremony of sorts taking place down at Ipperwash. And at Camp Ipperwash today was a graduation of sorts, I guess for the cadets. And it also...this graduation was accommodated by the presence of the **Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Lincoln Alexander**. And he was there today to give a graduation address to the graduating class. And also present were the **Elder's Council** of the Stony Point Nation. And I believe Maynard George was present as well as the recognized chief of the Stony Point Nation, **Robert George**.

John, you were down there this morning?

JT: Yeah, I was. It was very interesting. I got there about 8:30 and they were just getting their placards and things all set up to go. There were a lot of people—there were 25-30 people when I first got there, and by the time I left, there must have been 50-60-70 people there. So that's very good, very reassuring. There were all different kinds of people—there were Native people, there were a few Japanese people, and there were non-Native people as well. So I think Maynard will be very happy to get that kind of support, and I think it will help him with his cause. It will get a message out to the Federal Government that people are concerned about this thing and they want a peaceful resolution to it, they want it to be resolved soon. It's been going on

now for 45...the war ended 45 years ago, 46 years ago. And they were supposed to give the land back but they...they haven't. And there is no real reason for them not to give that land back. We hear, you know, daily about, you know, they're gonna close down military bases in **Germany** and all over **Canada** and so on. They're gonna close one down here in London. And yet, they won't give back the summer camp, which is really what it amounts to, on Camp Ipperwash, to the people that really owned it.

So I went out there this morning and...though not very long because I had to get back here quickly...and I talked to a few people. So I have them on tape, it's...I have it here, and I think that we'll play it now. I have about four or five people that I talked to. It hasn't been edited so...watch out. It may be a bit...and I have difficulty with microphones—I can't talk and think at the same time—so I made a few mistakes myself. So let's play that right now.

DS: Who are we going to be listening to, John?

JT: We're gonna listen to Maynard. And then there was a **Japanese** gentleman there who was drawing a parallel between what happened to the Japanese during the war—the **internment camps** and so on—and their concern and the parallel between them and the Native concerns. And I spoke to **Clifford George**, who was raised on Camp Ipperwash, on Stony Point and the Stony Point reserve, and he joined the **Canadian Army**, he fought in the **Second World War**. He has all kinds of medals across his chest. Towards the end of the war, he was taken **prisoner of war** in **Italy**, and when he came home to Stony Point, his house was gone. And I've also talked to Robert George, who is the new chief. And he is a very interesting man too. So, shall we play it?

DS: Sure.

JT: Okay, here goes.