

## INET 2005 Report

*Arthur Manuel, Spokesperson*

### **Indigenous Network on Economies and Trade (INET)**

**January to December 2005**

The following is a listing of activities that the Indigenous Network on Economies and Trade (INET) participated in or organized.

#### **January**

INET participated in a conference hosted by the Kuna peoples in Panama City, Panama. The conference was the final meeting of a European Union sponsored research project on indigenous autonomy in Latin America. INET gave a brief explanation on how we used international trade disputes under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), that otherwise undermine indigenous autonomy, in a practical way to promote and protect indigenous proprietary interests.



#### **February**



INET participated in a demonstration organized by indigenous rights activists Vancouver against the Delta Hotels. We met at Victoria Square and marched to the Delta Hotel on Hastings Street. The purpose of the demonstration was to reinforce the boycott of Delta Hotels which is a big part of the expansion of Sun Peaks Resort near Kamloops. The expansion of Sun Peaks Resort is based on the theft of Secwepemc lands and the destruction of the traditional use of our peoples inside the historic Neskonlith Douglas Indian Reserve 1862 meant for exclusive indigenous use.

The Spokesperson for INET, Arthur Manuel, also spoke at the University of British Columbia, (UBC) First Nations Studies Program, Internet Speakers Series 2005 on Governance and Land Claims. The topic of the speech on February 22, 2005 was Consultation and Development in British Columbia, it was given before an audience at the First Nations House of Learning and web-cast through the Internet. The whole series from January 18 to March 15, 2005 can be seen at <http://fnsp.arts.ubc.ca> for on demand viewing.

INET participated in a panel at the Conference “International Law Confronts the Global Economy: Labor Rights, Human Rights, and Democracy in Distress”, hosted by the Chapman Law School in Orange, California. This talk was followed up with an Article published by Nicole Schabus and Arthur Manuel in Chapman Law Review, Volume 8, Spring 2005, Number 1, entitled ”Indigenous Peoples at the Margin of the Global Economy: A Violation of International Human Rights and International Trade Law”. This Article canvasses the whole

## INET 2005 Report

issue of Canadian indigenous proprietary interests' vis-à-vis Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in the Canadian USA Softwood Lumber Dispute.

Members of INET also participated in the Chinese New Year parade in Vancouver. The Chinese community always invites indigenous peoples to participate and lead in their Chinese New Years Parade. The relationship between the Chinese and our people go back many generations. INET addressed the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers again this year in Vancouver and also participated in a workshop organized at the University of Victoria on Imperialism in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.



### March

The grassroots people met on two occasions at Neskonlith Indian Reserce, to talk about the Harper Lake Logging case and about the Canada USA Softwood Lumber Dispute. The result is an on-going debate about what the grassroots people do when the elected Chief and Council do not take action on critical Aboriginal Rights matters. This debate affects the very credibility of the elected Chief and Councils in view of the conflict between being accountable for government money and to the grassroots for defending Aboriginal Rights.

INET also participated in an indigenous student organized speaking event at the University of the Cariboo College now Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia. This was very interesting because I do speak to a lot of different events around the world but rarely get invited to local events in Kamloops. In this case it was very good to speak about how INET views Aboriginal Rights.

INET also met with some Haida organizers to brief them about the Canada USA Softwood Lumber dispute and upcoming meetings in New York and Washington, DC. The Haida peoples have always been very interested in the international aspect of their Aboriginal Rights.

INET is an Affiliate Member of the Seventh Generation Fund ([www.7genfund.org](http://www.7genfund.org)) located at Arcata, California. The Seventh Generation Fund is a grant-making intermediary and was founded in 1977. INET participated in the "Keeping the Homefires Burning Gathering 2005" in Rumsien Ohlone Traditional Territory, in Monterey, California. The theme of this Gathering was "The Impact of Globalization on Native Culture Renewal". The Seventh Generation Fund has been very helpful to INET and we would like to thank the Seventh Generation Fund for all the work they are doing for the grassroots. Your help is greatly needed.



## INET 2005 Report

### April

Water is a major issue at the international level. INET has worked with the Council of Canadians on this issue for a number of years and did participate in a Water Workshop, Toronto, Ontario. We talked about Water issues as they impact indigenous peoples. INET has worked with the Anglican Church and co-sponsored an Indigenous Water Forum in May 2004. Ardith Walkem and Nicole Schabus prepared the background paper for Forum entitled “Our Water, Our Responsibility, Indigenous Water Rights, May 13 – 15, 2004, Briefing Paper for Forum Participants”. This document canvasses the legal aspect of indigenous water rights.



INET also met with the Winnemen Wintu on their tribal land in Shasta Area in northern California. Panta Rhea Foundation suggested it would be a good idea to meet and share our experience of exercising rights from the local to the international level. The Winnemen Wintu are an unrecognized tribe of indigenous peoples in the United States. They are affected, like we are, by large-scale development. The Winnemen Wintu are being impacted by artificial dams and water diversions that impacted and flooded their territories. Currently they are fighting to keep the water levels of the Shasta Dam the same, whereas local politicians want to see them elevated to produce more energy. It was really nice meeting these people and we enjoyed their hospitality. They made us fit right in despite the short notice we gave before our visit.

The Native Youth held a meeting on the Neskonlith Indian Reserve. It was sponsored by local people but was also attended by Mayan indigenous peoples living in Vancouver. It is always good to participate in these meetings because young people need to keep in the loop especially when it comes to talking about Aboriginal Rights and economic issues.

The Secwepemc Okanagan Confederacy met in Salmon River near Vernon. This meeting was the follow-up to the grassroots meetings held in March. The Secwepemc Okanagan Confederacy is based upon a Treaty between both nations to work together to defend our sovereign rights as indigenous peoples. The purpose of this meeting was to canvass the work INET has been doing in relations to the Canada USA Softwood Lumber Dispute.



INET also participated in an international forum on water called the People’s Conference in Defense of Water in Mexico City, Mexico. This is a grassroots initiative to talk about water especially in preparation for the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum being held in Mexico City from March 16 – 22, 2006. The big problem with the World



## INET 2005 Report

Water Forum is that some governments and corporations are pushing for the privatization of water. This is opposite to the view of indigenous peoples that clean water is a right and responsibility given to us by the Creator. Clean water is not a commodity that can be bought, sold and taxed by big industry and big government. This meeting was to initiate the kind of response indigenous peoples will bring to the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. It is clear that the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum would like to present the media spin that indigenous peoples agree that big industry and government can justifiably take our water rights away. Indeed, indigenous peoples need to struggle to keep their water clean and under indigenous control. It will be really important to ensure real broad indigenous participation from North America and INET is ready to help facilitate that.

INET attended an appreciation banquet sponsored by the Lake Secwepemc Sustainable Community Building Society in recognition of the Chinese people who donated \$4,500 from a Historic Banquet held at the Floata Seafood Restaurant in Vancouver attended by hundreds of Chinese people. Two thousand dollars were given to a Neskonlith band member to help repair forest fire damage caused by the devastating Forest Fires in 2003 and two thousand five hundred were used for the irrigation system for the Neskonlith Community Garden. The Interior Savings Credit Union gave a \$12,000 donation to help pay for drilling a water well and installing a solar water pump for the Neskonlith Community Garden. The Banquet was at the Neskonlith Band Hall.



The Neskonlith Community Garden is a real positive development on the Neskonlith Indian Reserve. It is important that in areas where the land is available and the weather is permitting that individuals and communities establish their own gardens. This is really important for families who must subsist on social welfare. Communities that heavily depend on Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) social assistance should encourage their people to grow as much food as they can in order to be more independent from the federal government social assistance program. In fact we should all become more independent in getting our food.

As indigenous peoples who hold inherent land rights and indigenous knowledge to our territories and the plants and animals within them, we carry strong legal arguments and convictions regarding food sovereignty. INET is pleased to see many of the communities we work with engage in food sovereign activities, such as seed exchanges between the Paez people and other communities in Colombia and the Secwepemc people who have engaged in the Food Safe BC Network and were co-hosts of the Food Sovereignty Gathering in Sorrento, British Columbia in 2005 along with non-indigenous NGOs.

## INET 2005 Report

### May

The Secwepemc Okanagan Confederacy met in Adams Lake Indian Reserve. Information regarding international trade was greatly appreciated. It is clear that people need a forum in which the sovereign rights of indigenous peoples can be discussed without being inhibited by so called “practical matters” as imposed by outside interests. Giving free expression to indigenous traditional knowledge, values and activities is essential to fully explore and protect the ecological biodiversity of our traditional territories. There was a real common feeling among all participants at both meetings that the Confederacy needs to stand up for the grassroots and for protecting our land.

INET also attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in New York, New York. These meetings were held consecutively over the course of two weeks at the UN Headquarters in New York. The UNPFII meets annually in New York and discussed the Millennium Development Goals as they relate to indigenous peoples in regard to the eradication of poverty and hunger. The 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNPFII will be held May 15 – 26, 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. The UNFF is an intergovernmental policy group that considers forestry policy with regard to management, conservation and sustainable development. The UNFF 6<sup>th</sup> Session will be February 13 – 24, 2006 New York, NY.



INET hosted Side Events at both meetings in order to raise issues regarding indigenous economies. Side Events are scheduled through the United Nations and are open to all participants. The Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Grand Council of Treaty Number 3 and Grassy Narrows participated in these side events organized by INET.



The federal government of Canada did try and intercede in these Side Events. Canada told the United Nations that they wanted to have all Canadian groups participate under a Side Event organized by the Canadian government. INET had to remind the United Nations Officials that we are entitled to be independent from the official state government. INET told the United Nations that Canada cannot say they represent Aboriginal peoples because Canada opposes the recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights whenever indigenous peoples go to their law courts especially regarding forestry. The UN Officials did back down on this matter but not until there was some mix up with one of our rooms. In the end, more people at our Side Event despite the fact that it was held simultaneously with the event of the government of Canada and ours took place across the street from the main venue.

## INET 2005 Report

During the course of the UNPFII and the UNFF Nicole Schabus and Arthur Manuel traveled to Washington DC to meet with people on the Canada USA Softwood Lumber Dispute. We solicited opinions from different experts about taking legal action on the 5 billion dollar countervailing duty fund held in the United States. The countervailing duties are monies that Canadian softwood lumber companies have to put in US government trust account in order to export lumber to the United States. INET was meeting to determine how to proceed with taking legal action to claim this countervailing duty fund, based on our argument that the failure of the Canadian government to recognize Aboriginal and Treaty Rights constituted a subsidy. This work is still proceeding and we are hoping for funding to proceed with the prerequisite economic research.

In addition Carol Audet from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Joe Kuhn from Grassy Narrows met with Mr. Anton Korinek, Senior Research Assistant to Joseph Stiglitz to follow up on developing economic arguments respecting indigenous economies. This meeting was a follow up to previous meetings, some with Prof. Stiglitz, and is part of an ongoing effort to conduct an economic assessment of the damage inflicted on indigenous peoples by failing to take their rights and economies into account in mainstream macro-economic planning. One indigenous nation who has worked with INET has built excellent data bases on the impact of forestry in their area over the past century. This could be the basis for an economic research project and analysis as proposed in the attached “Economic Assessment of the Damage Inflicted on Indigenous Peoples by Canada’s Logging Practices”. This proposal is in the process of being finalized and we are seeking funding to be able to start the research.

INET also met with Judith Kimerling who teaches environmental law at City University of New York, Queens College and CUNY Law School. She also has worked with indigenous peoples in Ecuador on the negative impact US oil companies have had their survival as a peoples. She spear-headed actions under the Alien Torts Act against US corporations how violated indigenous rights and environmental regulations. She has agreed to work with INET on issues involving the Canada USA Softwood Lumber Dispute.

### June



INET worked along with local grassroots organizers to have a Harper Lake Logging Meeting Workshop at the Adams Lake Indian Reserve. The Harper Lake Logging Case which commenced in 1999 when the Secwepemc went logging off reserve and were issued a Stop Work Order by the British Columbia government. This meeting is part of an ongoing effort to keep on top of the complex issue as this matter proceeds to trial. It is important for the grassroots people to keep abreast of what is happening because our economic future depends upon successfully winning this case. INET briefly brought those who attended up to date on the international aspect of Harper Lake Logging issue, which connects all the way up to our involvement in the US-Canada Softwood Lumber Dispute.



## INET 2005 Report

INET participated in a public workshop at the Harbor Center Campus of the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver about issues affecting indigenous peoples in British Columbia. INET's presentation focused on economic issues as they relate to forestry and stopping the expansion of Sun Peaks Resort.

### July



INET organized a Press Conference for Nicole Manuel who spent 45 days at the Alouette Correctional Centre for Woman in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. Nicole Manuel was sentenced for standing up for her Aboriginal Rights at Sun Peaks Resort. She blocked the road to Sun Peaks.



In addition to her, Rose Jack, Trevor Dennis, Marc Sauls and Rod Anderson had to serve 45 days for also blocking the road and serve an additional 45 more days for stopping an excavator at Sun Peaks Resort. The Press Conference was held at the Indian Friendship Center in Vancouver. The primary message delivered to the media was that the Native Youth were not deterred by becoming political prisoners and would continue their peaceful struggle to protect their Aboriginal Rights.

INET along with the support of the Seventh Generation Fund, Rainforest Action Network, Panta Rhea Foundation and Govinda a radio technician set up a low frequency FM Radio Station on Neskonlith Indian Reserve. Neskonlith Secwepemc Radio 91.1 FM has been servicing about a 30 kilometer area with an indigenous based FM radio service. It is very important for indigenous peoples to think about establishing local radio stations in order to promote our language, music and culture. It is also important to provide the in-depth information to our rapidly changing legal and governance struggles and developments as they occur, because the local public media does not give our issues the coverage we need.



The radio station is purely a voluntary initiative and does have ongoing support primarily by young people who take on assignments to put together play lists of music and other information. Their radio programs are stored on the computer and are played back according to schedules worked out by them. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done and more equipment that needs to be bought in order to better prepare programs but the radio is up and running and it is a welcome addition to the community newsletter. It is our desire to make the radio station mobile this coming year so that other communities will be interested in setting up a radio station as well. We are an oral society and radio fits in perfectly. INET is intending to use its mobile radio station to help raise awareness about indigenous rights, threats of corporate control and indigenous economies.

## **INET 2005 Report**

### **August**

INET attended the Annual Conference of the International Indian Treaty Council at Hobemma, Alberta and addressed the issue of the making of Treaties in British Columbia under the British Columbia Treaty Commission process. INET emphasized the fact that Canada and British Columbia have to make comments in their Financial Statements because unsettled Aboriginal Title matters are a financial liability to Canada and British Columbia. INET has extracted this information from the Canadian and British Columbia Financial Statements but they are difficult to find because we are merely itemized as “Contingencies and Commitments” at the back of the Statements. The governments through their existing Land Claims Policies of not recognizing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights have deemed our Aboriginal Title as liabilities that will be extinguished in the Treaty settlement.

Indigenous peoples by participating under existing Land Claims Policy validate the governments’ approach of making our Aboriginal Title merely Contingencies and Commitments and not proprietary interests that accrue to us as owners of our traditional territories. Indigenous peoples have to identify the macro economic interests of their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights or they leave it up to the federal and provincial government to do that on their behalf. Indigenous peoples have forced Canada and British Columbia to economically and financially report on their liabilities to indigenous peoples in their Financial Statements but we are letting them off the hook by letting them report about us in their Contingencies and Commitments and not in their Balance Sheet. INET is ready to help coordinate and conduct the necessary macro-economic research to ensure that indigenous rights are taken into account.

### **September**

INET is a voluntary organization that does not take money from the Canadian or United State governments. Financial support for INET comes from small private donations from churches and foundations. The reason INET has made this decision is in order to be a genuine opposition to government policies to co-opt and set the direction to groups that they fund. INET had the opportunity to make a presentation to the National Network of Grant Makers at the Semiahmoo Resort in Washington. The NNG is collective of foundations that support political projects and organizations.

In 2005 we were very grateful to receive an initial grant from the Panta Rhea Foundation, to date it has been spent primarily in communications (36%), supplies (19%), travel (16%), organization costs (12%), rent paid (11%), offices (4%) and services (1%). The Phanta Rhea Foundation grant has been used to keep INET operational and supported our core activities. We are seeking funding to continue this work and conduct some of the macro-economic research we have not been able to complete to date.

### **October**

INET along with the specific participation and support of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, House of Smayusta of the NUXalk Nation, Pilalt Nation, Sutikalh and Skwelkwek’welt Protection Center prepared a shadow report to the Human Rights Committee on the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Elder Irene Billy and Ska7cis Manuel traveled to Geneva, Switzerland to deliver the



## INET 2005 Report

presentation to the Human Rights Committee and lobby the Committee on our behalf. The trip was paid for by two churches and by supporters in Geneva who billeted our international representatives. Their support was greatly appreciated. Elder Irene Billy did get sick in Geneva and was brought to the hospital but luckily she recovered and was released the same day.

The submission entitled “Independent Indigenous Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Committee – On Canada’s Fifth Periodic Report – October 2005 is 40 pages long, copies can be obtained from INET. The main purpose of the submission was to challenge Canada for not fulfilling its obligation to recognize that indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination under Article 1 of the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Canada was asked about how they were addressing the question of self-determination but they never came up with a good answer but merely canvassed the notion of self-determination from an academic point of view. Needless to say Canada had no concrete examples to address this question, because their policies continue to violate our right to self-determination. INET criticized Canada for using our poverty as a weapon to manipulate indigenous organizations through the Canadian federal and provincial funding policies. By making them dependent on government programs and services, they marginalize and impoverish our peoples, and avoid their obligation of recognizing our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. INET told the Human Rights Committee that the “Modified Rights Model” and “Non-Assertion Model” essentially extinguish Aboriginal Rights without using the word extinguishment. This was recognized as a primary concern by the Human Rights Committee in its concluding observations. INET criticized Canada for using the loan funding to put indigenous peoples in seriously weak bargaining position. Forcing the borrower to make a very poor settlement like a loan shark extorts high interest rates.



INET organized a Press Conference to welcome Elder Irene Billy and Ska7cis Manuel back to Canada at the Vancouver International Airport. It was good to see our international representatives. Well wishers and supporters came to the Airport and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) covered the story.

### November

INET sent a delegate to the meeting of Indigenous Nations in Northern BC, in support of the Thaltan Nation, who opposed mining in their traditional territories. A number of elders were scheduled to go to court for blocking a road that gave access to a test drilling site, when they refused to leave they were arrested and the mining equipment moved in. Test wells have now been drilled in the formerly pristine Tlappen Valley, but the elders continue to fight future mining operations in their territory. INET met with them to offer support in taking their issues international and they joined our Human Rights Submission and asked INET to keep working with them from the local to the international level.



INET was invited to attend the Cumbre Continental de Pueblos y Organizaciones Indigenas in Mar del Plata, Argentina. The purpose of the meeting Mar del Plata was a counter-conference to the Canadian government funded indigenous meeting held in Buenos Aires.

## INET 2005 Report

Both meetings were held in response to the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Americas which was organized to attempt to validate the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The FTAA is a multilateral economic agreement designed to transfer all ownership and power over all valuable land and resources to the big transnational corporations. Canada fully supports the FTAA and has funded the Assembly of First Nations to make it appear that indigenous peoples support Canada and to break up indigenous movements in the South who strongly oppose trade liberalization and corporate control.

The Cumbre Continental de Pueblos y Organizaciones Indigenas in Mar del Plata was considered to be the outside group but when I attended the meeting I was greeted by elderly indigenous leaders who worked with my father George Manuel. In fact one of the key organizers was Dr. Eulogio Frites who said it was thirty years ago in October 1975 that he saw my father become the first president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in Port Alberni, British Columbia, Canada. He also spoke about my father going to Argentina when the country was under a military dictatorship. In fact my father was warmly remembered by many of his friends there because he came to help organize indigenous peoples when there was a very high security risk to him. I did not expect this kind of welcome but when I saw first hand the people that organized the Mar del Plata meeting I knew they were not the splinter group. The splinter group is the Assembly of First Nations and it is the Canadian federal government that is to blame for the attempts to break up indigenous movements to promote trade liberalization.



INET participated in the EAGLE Education Workshop held in Squamish. INET addressed the issue of the elimination of poverty and its direct connection to recognition and non-recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The focus of the talk was that the existing Canadian policies regarding Aboriginal and Treaty Rights actually generate the poverty we experience. The presentation linked many of the activities INET has been doing at the international level to local struggles. It was important for us to be part of this workshop, because INET is one of a few groups that pursue on an ongoing basis international indigenous issues from a sovereign position.

INET helped organize the Grassroots People's Coalition to demonstrate against the First Ministers Meeting in Kelowna, British Columbia. The First Ministers of Canada met with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). The government announced the purpose of the meeting to be to reduce poverty amongst indigenous peoples in Canada. This objective sounds good but we must be careful because the poverty of our peoples is a very complex issue deeply linked to our special relationship to our lands and sovereignty as peoples, that the governments refuse to recognize



## INET 2005 Report



Our poverty as a peoples is directly linked to the fact that the Canadian and provincial governments do not recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The primary objective of the Canadian and provincial governments is to assimilate indigenous peoples under mutually exclusive power of the federal and provincial governments and not recognize the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of our peoples. In fact the federal government considers that all programs and services delivered to Indian peoples like education, housing, health care and economic development are given under humanitarian and moral

grounds, and not based upon Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

In fact, the agreement entered into between the Canadian government and the Assembly of First Nations, the latter agreed with this position of the governments by agreeing to treat programs and services separately from Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Unlinking programs and services from Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, means to accept the federal position that our programs and services are provided on the same basis as those given to all other Canadians. Programs and services must be linked to our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights or they will be subject to diminishment and losses like we are presently experiencing.



In addition we need to understand that the root cause of our poverty is not a lack of capacity on our part in terms of education, housing, health care and economic development but the failure of the federal and provincial governments to recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Accepting money from the federal and provincial governments to fix our short falls in education, housing, health care and economic development basically lets the federal and provincial government off the hook. The primary reason we lack capacity in these program areas is because the governments do not recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and the power to organize them ourselves according to our indigenous values and needs.

Getting money to improve our capacity in these program areas will not give us economic security because they will be linked to shoring up federal and provincial governments' power over our Aboriginal and Treaty territories. Economic security under the existing Canada and Assembly of First Nations strategy will only support the economic powers of the Canadian and provincial governments. The existing Assembly of First Nations strategy does not take into account the macro economic proprietary interests of Aboriginal and Treaty territorial natural wealth and resources. The existing strategy merely treats the symptoms of our poverty but not the cause.





## INET 2005 Report



The Grassroots Peoples' Coalition made it very clear that the AFN does not represent the grassroots. In fact it was clear that the Assembly of First Nations does not have the mandate to sign the deal they did. In fact signing the deal they did in Kelowna basically challenges the credibility of the Chiefs and Councils. It makes the Chief and Councils a self-centered political entity that has been co-opted by Canadian and provincial government economic strategies. The Grassroots Peoples' Coalition is a dynamic force needed to stand up for our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

### December

INET participated in a Human Rights Workshop in Vancouver organized by the Public Service Alliance Canada, a union representing public employees. It is clear that the linking the existing impoverishment of our peoples to the violation of the Human Rights as a peoples is not very well understood by the general public and us. The primary purpose of the presentation was to brief PSAC about the presentation made in October 2005 in Geneva, Switzerland. It was also clear that Canada has been very skillful in detaching our poor quality of life from violations of our right as peoples to self-determination. A lot of work needs to be done in this area and this aspect along with our economic interests needs to be part of the Grassroots Peoples' Coalition strategy.



INET also attended the solstice party hosted by the Neskonlith Survival School. Janice Billy who has a Masters in Education is working with a number of Secwepemc families who have students that do not want to go to the regular public school system. These survival schools are needed because the mainstream public school system only works for some students and is still dysfunctional for many of our students. In our communities we have a real cross-section of students. The solstice party was successful and well attended by people who have revived their traditional view of this winter holiday season.

If anyone has any special questions regarding the work of INET on the matters mentioned in this report please do not hesitate to contact INET at: [inet@earthlink.net](mailto:inet@earthlink.net) and Tel: +1-604-785 5806 or Arthur Manuel at [amanuel@telus.net](mailto:amanuel@telus.net) or on his cell phone: +1-250-319-0688.