

Outaouais Lubicon Solidarity

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WELLS, PIPELINES AND BROKEN PROMISES

A New Campaign To Support The Lubicon Lake Indian Nation *Just A Few Minutes A Day Can Make A Difference*

Our campaign is endorsed by:

Lubicon Lake Indian Nation

Bruce Cockburn

OXFAM-Canada

KAIROS:
Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

OPIRG-Carleton

OPIRG-Ottawa

Hull/Aylmer Riding Association of the New Democratic Party

Graduate Students Association - Carleton University

The Raging Grannies (Ottawa)

National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)

Le Centre de ressources sur la non-violence

Amitié Lubicons-Québec

Outaouais Lubicon Solidarity (OLS) is inviting you to participate in a simple yet innovative and effective protest campaign to push the Canadian government to negotiate a just settlement of Lubicon Nation land rights and finally end this long-standing human rights tragedy.

While the Lubicon Nation tries to negotiate with the federal and Alberta governments, more and more oil and gas wells and pipelines are approved within Lubicon Traditional Territory. In 2002 there were already over 1,700 oil and gas well sites in Lubicon territory, and countless miles of pipelines.

It will only take you a few minutes a day at most to participate, but the combined effort of Lubicon supporters around the globe can make a difference.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

All you have to do is visit our web site at <http://www.lubiconsolidarity.ca/brokenpromises> and sign up to participate in the campaign. It'll run for five weeks - from February 6 until March 13, 2005.

Every time a new oil or gas well or pipeline is approved for development in Lubicon Traditional Territory, you will receive an e-mail message from OLS informing you that yet another development has been authorized to steal Lubicon resources. They add up – last January twenty-two new developments were approved, last February thirty new developments were approved, and in March eighteen new developments were approved.

The e-mail will include a draft letter you can cut and paste into a new message or letter to send to the Minister of Indian Affairs, with copies to your Member of Parliament and the Alberta Minister of Native Affairs. Addresses of the two Ministers will be provided. You can find out the address of your Member of Parliament by going to the OLS web site at <http://www.lubiconsolidarity.ca/brokenpromises/letters.html>. The draft letter will note that yet another development has been authorized on Lubicon Territory prior to Lubicon land rights being resolved and will ask that the Minister meet his Constitutional responsibility to negotiate the settlement of aboriginal land rights with the Lubicon people.

If enough people participate, the responsible officials will be receiving thousands of e-mails or letters during the campaign, which will encourage them to take action on this issue at last. The volume and frequency of e-mails coming in could be significant.

Please consider participating in this important new initiative. With your help we hope to demonstrate that a significant number of Canadians and other supporters around the world are paying close attention to how the Martin government handles this critical issue.

You can also help increase the impact by passing this message along to all of your friends and associates and encouraging them to participate in the campaign.

Backgrounder

Who are the Lubicon?

The Lubicon Lake Indian Nation, an Indigenous nation of approximately 500 people living in northern Alberta, have never surrendered their rights to their traditional lands. The Lubicon were simply overlooked when a treaty was negotiated with other Indigenous peoples in the region in 1899. A reserve promised to them forty years later was never established. Since the mid-1980s, negotiations with the federal and provincial governments have repeatedly broken down. Meanwhile, the Lubicon say that their health, their way of life and their culture itself are being steadily destroyed by resource extraction to which they've never consented.

As Amnesty International said in a recent report, "It's now been more than 100 years since the Lubicon were overlooked in the Alberta treaty process, more than 60 years they were first promised recognition of a secure landbase, more than a quarter century since the first negotiations began with the federal government, and more than a decade since the United Nations called on Canada to stop the violation of the Lubicons' human rights. To say that justice is overdue is an understatement."

Oil and gas exploitation goes on

While the Lubicon Nation tries to negotiate a settlement of Lubicon land rights with the federal and Alberta governments, the Alberta government's Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) authorizes more and more oil and gas wells and pipelines within Lubicon Traditional Territory. In 2002 there were already over 1,700 oil or gas well sites in Lubicon Traditional Territory and countless miles of pipelines connecting those to market! Last year alone another 77 oil and gas wells and 75 pipelines were approved within Lubicon Traditional Territory.

Already nine wells and seven pipelines have been approved since the beginning of this year. Some of these involve oil sands development within three miles of the proposed Lubicon reserve lands.

Further, another over 2,300 hectares of oil and gas leases have been auctioned off in Lubicon Traditional Territory since the beginning of this year, netting another \$800,000 in lease fees and bonuses for the province. Over the next month and a half another 30 square kilometres of Lubicon Territory will be auctioned off into the hands of oil and gas companies by the province.

All of these wells, pipelines and leases are designed to steal non-renewable Lubicon resources prior to any Treaty determining who has rights to the very lands and resources being forever altered by these developments.

The Lubicon Nation estimates that over \$13 billion in oil and gas resources have been taken from Lubicon Traditional Territory since oil and gas exploitation was begun in earnest 26 years ago. From that, the Alberta government receives – by conservative estimates – somewhere around 20% in royalties.

The Lubicon people, for their part, have received no royalties, no taxes, and no financial compensation for what oil and gas development has done to their traditional economy and way of life. At most the Lubicon people have received some seasonal employment building leases and rights of way for developments they neither control nor approve.

More about this campaign

The campaign will start on February 6, 2005. February 6 will be the 19th anniversary of the delivery of the Fulton report. E. Davie Fulton was the former federal Justice Minister who was appointed by the federal government to investigate the Lubicon situation and make recommendations for settlement. His report, which made reasonable recommendations to resolve the dispute, was shelved and ignored. Fulton was dismissed. Now almost 20 years have passed since he made recommendations for settlement and a settlement is still outstanding.

The campaign will continue until March 12, which is the 12th anniversary of the release of the Lubicon Settlement Commission of Review's report. The Lubicon Settlement Commission was an independent and non-partisan tribunal made up of professors, business people, religious leaders, lawyers, labour leaders and environmentalists who, like Fulton, investigated all sides of the Lubicon dispute and made a series of recommendations for settlement – including a recommendation that all royalties from oil and gas development be held in trust until settlement and “further, that there be no additional permits or leases granted on traditional Lubicon lands without Lubicon approval.”

It was in response to the Lubicon Settlement Commission's report, which was presented by the Toronto Friends of the Lubicon to a large number of MPs in Ottawa as part of a lobby campaign, that then-Liberal Leader Jean Chretien made the infamous promise to settle Lubicon land rights once he was Prime Minister – a promise he never upheld.

One of the other key recommendations of both Fulton and the Settlement Commission was that financial compensation be paid to the Lubicon people. The Settlement Commission recommended compensation in the range of \$50 million (in 1992 dollars) from each level of government – now worth even more in current dollars. This is a key outstanding issue in land rights negotiations. In light of the enormous amount of resources being taken from Lubicon Traditional Territory over the past 25 years, federal negotiators must be given a mandate to negotiate financial compensation as part of a Lubicon settlement.

For more information, please visit www.lubiconsolidarity.ca.