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Author
Long, John S.

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Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree. By John Goddard. Vancouver, British Columbia: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991. 228 pages. $26.95 cloth.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. In the early years of this century, the Canadian government set out to "disrupt or destroy" Indian political bodies that opposed it. And when the League of Nations (forerunner of the United Nations) began asking embarrassing questions about the Six Nations Indians, Canada forcibly replaced the hereditary chiefs with an elected council (Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision*, 1986, pp. 94–134). Seventy years later, when the United Nations began to focus its attention on the case of the Lubicon Cree, Canada simply created the Woodland Cree band. Journalist John Goddard tells their story.

In 1984, the Progressive Conservatives, led by Brian Mulroney, were elected to form a majority government in Canada. The Tories, who were committed to reducing government expenditures in order to lessen the national deficit, established a Task Force on Program Review (the Nielson Task Force) to examine the spiraling costs of federal government programs for aboriginal peoples. A confidential memo released to the Tory cabinet the next year referred to the then-secret Task Force report as "The Buffalo Jump of the 1980s"—a reference to the aboriginal harvesting practice of driving bison over a cliff to their death. Reminiscent of the Liberal government's 1969 White Paper, the report advocated changes in the trust relationship between Indians and government, transfer of responsibilities to other departments, increased service delivery from the provinces, and fixed multiyear funding arrangements.

As Katherine Graham notes, "Regardless whether the real emphasis of Conservative Indian policy is oriented toward cost containment or self-determination, its success will depend on the perception . . . that government actions are humane and will result in the improvement of conditions" for Canadian Indians (Michael J. Prince, ed., *How Ottawa Spends 1987–88*, 1987, pp. 237–38). The government adopted a comprehensive communications strategy to sell its unpopular message of restraint to the public. In matters concerning Indian policy, the strategy stressed three themes: We're fair, we're making progress, and we honor our commitments. In *The Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree,* John Goddard shows very clearly that the department was not fair, did not make progress, and did not honor its commitments.

The Lubicon case has a long history. Like the Teme-augama

Anishnabai in Ontario (Bruce Hodgins and Jamie Benidickson, *The Temagami Experience,* 1989), the Lubicon Cree were simply missed when treaty commissioners traveled in 1899 through what is now northern Alberta. It was common practice in the western numbered treaties to allow the Métis—those of mixed aboriginal and European ancestry, then referred to as half-breeds—to choose whether to be recognized as Indians and be placed on band lists or to receive a land certificate (scrip); in fact, the treaty commissioners advised against the latter (p. 10). By 1940, Ottawa was fully prepared to recognize the Lubicon people as a band entitled to a reserve.

Enter Indian Affairs official Malcolm McCrimmon, who singlehandedly and arbitrarily removed ninety names (58 percent) from the Lubicon band list. Two separate inquiries determined that the people should be reinstated, but these recommendations ended up on McCrimmon's desk. He readmitted only eighteen people, denying Indian status to exactly half of the Lubicon. Revisions to the Indian Act in 1951 provided a restrictive definition of Indian status and created the powerful position of Indian registrar. McCrimmon got the job.

Then an oil and gas boom began to develop in Alberta. By 1969, while Pierre Trudeau's federal government was proposing to terminate the special rights of Indians, Alberta government officials were brutally eradicating one of the Lubicon villages. In Goddard's words, the people of Marten River "attended meetings they did not understand, signed papers that they couldn't read, heard promises that were never kept, and had their homes and possessions bulldozed and burned virtually without warning on what soon afterwards became" part of the region's first productive oil field (p. 41).

The Indian Association of Alberta, led by Harold Cardinal, advised the band to notify the provincial land registration office formally of its interest in Lubicon territory. The Alberta government of Peter Lougheed, at odds with Trudeau over national energy policy, retroactively amended its legislation to disallow this legal challenge—"a measure almost unheard of in a democracy" (p. 51).

Enter Bernard Ominayak and Fred Lennarson, who became chief and adviser, respectively, to the Lubicon Cree in the late 1970s. Their story includes an unsuccessful court challenge, Davie Fulton's role as David Crombie's special envoy, the Lubicon boycott of the 1988 Calgary Olympics and The Spirit Sings mu-

seum exhibit, Alberta premier Getty's personal intervention, a blockade and assertion of Lubicon sovereignty, and a near resolution of the Lubicon claim.

Then, in 1988, the Tories were reelected and, after perfunctory negotiations (the federal team included a media consultant), offered a take-it-or-leave-it settlement to the Lubicon. Under pressure from the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the Mulroney government undermined the Lubicon leadership and escaped international censure by creating the Woodland Cree band—just weeks after negotiations broke down—which accepted its offer.

The story ends in the summer of 1991 with the Lubicon claim unresolved, the Daishowa pulp mill built and ready to exploit the Lubicon region, and Indian Affairs official Gary Wauters ordering his staff to restrict Goddard's access to information on the Lubicon. It is a sinister tale of meanness, deception, and manipulation by a government that perpetuates tutelage (Noel Dyck, *What Is the Indian "Problem?"* 1991).

The Cree of eastern James Bay had never signed a treaty with Canada, so when massive hydroelectric developments began in their region, they were able to negotiate a modern land claims agreement in 1975 (Boyce Richardson, *Strangers Devour the Land,* 1975; Roy MacGregor, *Chief: The Fearless Vision of Billy Diamond,* 1989). In 1992, they were able to use their newly acquired wealth and power to stop a second phase of the project. The government of Canada clearly does not want to create another aboriginal people as powerful as the Cree of Quebec.

Indians whose lands were "acquired" (though not necessarily "surrendered") through treaties are in a quite different situation from that of the Quebec Cree in the early 1970s. While the Canadian courts recently ruled that treaties should be interpreted liberally and in the Indians' favor, they have not really questioned the very nature or existence of these treaties. Questionable treaties and discontinuous treaties would open up questions that governments just do not want to think about. That leaves the courts, which have not ruled favorably with either the Teme-augama or the Lubicon. It will take a major paradigm shift before the legal system can deal with this one. Most nonaboriginal politicians and their officials will not understand the nature of the problem or will be too afraid of setting precedent by breaking new ground.

This book is not without its weaknesses; it is largely descriptive and has no footnotes. But it is an easy read and has a moral force

that will disturb you long after you finish it. It is essential reading for anyone interested in Indian-government relations in Canada today.

John S. Long
Mushkegowuk (Timmins, Ontario) Education

The Maidu Indian Myths and Stories of Hanc'ibyjim. Edited and translated by William Shipley. Berkeley, California: Heyday Books, 1991. 181 pages. $11.95 paper.

This is a very special book. The original storyteller, Tom Young, or Hanc'ibyjim, was "the last great Maidu storyteller." The stories were first collected by Roland B. Dixon early in the twentieth century and published in 1912, in Maidu, with Dixon's English translations. The stories were brought home to the Maidu in the 1950s, when William Shipley, as a University of California, Berkeley graduate student in linguistics, did his doctoral work on Maidu language, publishing *Maidu Texts and Dictionary* in 1963 and *Maidu Grammar* in 1964. Shipley returned to the stories many years later, and our reward is the present volume, published just as Shipley has retired from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The book is exquisitely crafted, beginning with the cover, a portrayal of Coyote by contemporary Maidu artist Harry Fonseca. The forward by Gary Snyder whets our appetite and gives us a taste of what is to come. Shipley's brief introduction tells how he met the Maidu and heard their myths and tales. He then introduces the Maidu people at some length, unobtrusively providing us many clues for what follows. By now, we are prepared and ready for the stories themselves, and Shipley does not disappoint. "In the Beginning of the World" contains four parts: "The Creation," "The Adversaries," "Love and Death," and "Coyote the Spoiler." Now that all the important subjects of life have been told, we are treated to elaboration and exploration of the themes in "Tales of Old Man Coyote" and "Tales of Other Beings." Finally, in an appendix, "How This Translation Was Made," Shipley completes the picture by providing a succinct explanation, complete with examples, of his process. Here are his words:

> My next step in the process—the one which involves the reader's willingness to trust the translator—was to look beyond the