

Ancestral Lands and Canada's First Nations: Whose Ways Must Take Precedence to Heal Mother Earth

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Theme: [Environment](#), [Oil and Energy](#)

In-depth Report: [Climate Change](#)

A dispute between the traditional hereditary chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation of Northern British Columbia and Government of Canada recently erupted over the construction of a TC Energy Coastal Gas pipeline through their unceded territories. This controversy is akin to countless unresolved disputes that have occurred in the New World since the days of first contact between First Nation peoples and "The White Man", as the European colonizers from the Old World have been called by them ever since.

At the heart of the controversy is who has ultimate sovereignty over the ancestral lands of the original peoples and whose rules of law take precedence when it comes to the infringement of the inherent rights of humans and use and development of the earth's finite natural resources. The original peoples have mostly long since been pushed off of their traditional lands and placed on Indian Act Band Council System 'reserves' or 'reservations' that some traditional native peoples liken to New World 'concentration camps' because of the severe deprivations they've suffered as a result.

Another critically-important issue embedded within this dispute regards the question of the Climate Crisis in both the New & Old World's and whose rules of laws chiefly are responsible - traditional peoples or the colonizers - for addressing the basic issues of wise land use and management or mismanagement of its finite natural resources that either will lessen or contribute to the climate crisis in the future. The problem is that when constant exponential growth and profit is the main objective of governments and corporations, and expansion their constant goal, it's not basically in their DNA, and never will be, to ever lessen the crisis.

So the question of how to solve the climate crisis, which may not ever be achievable given the perpetual growth model that mercilessly drives forward the modern world, continues to be a highly contentious one. Some government's, like the United States and Australia, have set a bad example for other nations to follow by continuing to play the denial game that climate crisis doesn't exist so they too can continue their corporate 'business as usual' way of life and continue to rape and pillage the earth's finite resources and natural world. But it's not only the on-going rape of Mother Earth that is in question here but the age-old male power game and sexism of men over women that also is at the heart of the issue. When any human culture so readily accepts the raping of their mother earth for her coveted hidden resources buried deep inside her it doesn't represent a huge leap in consciousness for that culture to also readily accept the widespread act of raping its own women for their own imagined hidden treasures.

So it's no great surprise that Men basically run most of the energy-mining-resource development corporations, joined by their counterparts in the political realm who every day

continue to give a green light to not only continue the raping of Mother Earth but, tacitly, accepts the wholesale rape of women as part and parcel of conducting business as usual. The raping of Mother Earth and Women simply a dominant male way of looking at and seeing the world that they have dominated since the beginning of time.

One salient example of this dominant male attitude in the world was manifested during the Wet'suwet'en dispute by one Doug Sparrow, the General Manager and President of X-Site Energy Services, Ltd, of Alberta who created a 'Rape Culture' logo for his company's hard hats that depicts the rape of the 17 year-old minor Greta Thunberg who has become the world-renowned symbol of the Climate Crisis protest movement. Doug Sparrow's stated defense for arrogantly creating the logo is that it's not a crime, using the rationale, "She's Not a Child! She's 17!" This type of cynicism is but one example of yet even more horrific blowback still to come against all those traditional First Nations activists and non-indigenous climate crisis protesters in world-wide movements like 'Fridays For Future International' and 'Extinction Rebellion' who dare to defy what all is happening?

The world's mining and energy corporations in Canada already are attempting to put some distance between themselves and the gross actions of Sparrow by declaring "X-Site Energy Services Does Not Represent Alberta" But the message sent and the spin conveyed is clear. The White Man's corporate world is scared. The spin of vicious corporate blowback already is in high-gear around the world against the actions taken by the Wet'suwet'en First Nations, their Mohawk Nation allies and non-indigenous climate crisis protesters like Greta Thunberg.

So the pre-eminent question that faces Canada and the rest of the world is how to define who will have ultimate sovereignty over the land and its resources, whose rules of law must take precedence in 2020 and beyond, and how the human race once and for all will finally face up to its responsibilities to address and resolve the grossly-imbalanced power relationships that exist between the consciousness of men and women in regard to the protection and preservation of both the earth and women's precious resources?

Canada now is *Ground Zero*. Every nation must take its lead in one direction or the other. Whichever way this dispute plays out it's a watershed moment for the human race and the earth. The bottom line for humanity to heal the earth and itself and make them both whole, perhaps for the first time in the modern era, the corporate world obviously must change its basic relationships with indigenous people, women, and the massive, painful changes that will have to be made and mutually accepted by every human being on earth. Yet, as things now stand, most colonizers resolutely continue to avoid discussing anything to do with 'climate change', women's 'equal rights' or the same inherent equal rights for 'Mother Earth herself'.

The White Man's Corporate World Avoids the Reality of What It Is or Isn't Doing

Constant closer attention now must be paid to the many absurd hypocritical actions constantly being created in the mainstream world by those who pay lip service to wanting to do something progressive to positively address all these issues but then do just the opposite. In the case of climate change and the inherent rights of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs righteously put forward, heated debates, both pro and con, about the need for more or less oil and gas pipelines nevertheless rage on.

Meanwhile, one can simultaneously see on every television set around the world, every minute of every day and nighttime too, during every sports cast, sports match, sit-com, major cultural event, and in every movie theatre around the globe during every pre-show entertainment, while moviegoers are held as captive audiences, the masses are constantly force-feed slick, sophisticated commercials that woo, cajole and brainwash them to buy every larger, more expensive, more resource development-driven flashy SUV's, P/U trucks and slews of unnecessary products that need still more and more oil and gas to produce and run. So it raises the big question, "How many more endless oil and gas pipelines will the world need in the future and how many more will have to trespass through the traditional lands of indigenous peoples?"

It's a somewhat sad yet cynical note to realize that the oil and gas that is making the modern world possible is the collective residue of all the life forms - prehistoric tropical plant life, dinosaur's and the like, that represent the ancient very primitive consciousness of earth's pre-human world yet is now playing a key central role in the evolution of the modern human civilization that, since its discovery, has literally killed billions of innocent lives, destroyed countless countries, nations and peoples just to gain hegemony over this slimy prehistoric residue that, at the same time, is destroying the climate that may end up killing us all...And that will be the end of that!

In the meantime, as the We'suewet'en and their allies continue to press their case before the legal courts and larger court of world opinion far too many citizens in the general populace instead only continue to moan and groan about the unacceptable inconveniences now being caused to their daily lives by what those like the Wet'suewwt'en First Nation, their Mohawk allies and those in the Climate Rebellion Movement are seeking to do. They miss the essential point why so many other traditional peoples also are protesting so vociferously all around the world, who a naysayer corporate press otherwise constantly dismisses as *zealots* and *radicals*, yet are serving as critical point men and women showing us all the way forward, if, indeed, the *Survival & Well-Being of All of Life* is what is to be the operative directive of the future.

Resistance and hostility to their efforts represents the clearest example of the inflexibility of "The White Man's" alien, rapacious way of life and its inability to see what its way of life or 'way of death' perpetually perpetrates.

The critically important dialectic that has begun in Canada between traditional and non-traditional people underscores the fact that if the bottom line and ultimate goal is a healthier more balanced planet earth and more livable way of life in the 21st century the human race is going to have to be prepared to yet suffer and endure still many more personal, cultural and economic privations and inconveniences than the few road and rail blockades, shipping backlogs, traffic snarls and upsets to tourism industry timetables then those that thus far have been caused by the dispute between the hereditary chiefs of the We'tsuewet'en Nation, Canadian Government and Corporate-Business world.

Someone who has the ear of the world's political and corporate leaders has to talk some sense into them like a *Dutch Uncle* and get them to realize what we all must begin joining together to do in the world beyond demanding that the We'tsuewet'en and their allies simply stop and desist from their rail blockades.

If Shakespeare were alive today, this whole business would simply be more 'grist for the mill' to create yet some new pithy human drama that speaks truth to power and the human

condition.

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Jerome Irwin is a Canadian-American activist-writer who, for decades, has sought to call world attention to problems of environmental degradation and unsustainability caused by excessive mega-development and the host of related environmental-ecological-spiritual issues that exist between the conflicting philosophies of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Irwin is the author of the book, "The Wild Gentle Ones; A Turtle Island Odyssey", a spiritual sojourn among the native peoples of North America, and has produced numerous articles pertaining to: Ireland's Fenian Movement; native peoples Dakota Access Pipeline Resistance Movement; AIPAC, Israel & U.S. Congress anti-BDS Movement; the historic Battle for Palestine & Siege of Gaza, as well as; innumerable accounts of the violations constantly waged by industrial-corporate-military-propaganda interests against the World's Collective Soul.

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