



Message from Southern Grand Chief
Chris Henderson



l-r: Chief Norman Bone, Keeseekowenin Ojibway First Nation, Chief Irvin McIvor, Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation and Grand Chief Henderson

Booshoo! Washte! Tansi! Greetings to our Elders, Veterans, Southern Chiefs, Council Members and First Nations citizens. I hope this greeting finds you and your families well.

On February 23, 2005, the Government of Canada brought down its budget in the House of Commons in Ottawa. Despite high expectations and bold promises made by the Prime Minister of Canada last year, financial resourcing for First Nations' issues and priorities were virtually shut-out, or non-existent, within this current budget.

Close to \$3.7 billion has been allocated to international assistance over 5 years, while during this same time period, only \$735 million will be provided for "Aboriginal" issues in Canada. If anything, these two figures should be reversed. At a minimum, \$3.7 billion should be dedicated to addressing First Nations' housing, health care, access to education, and rebuilding our governments. This would be consistent with the recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. It appears that foreign affairs are more of a top priority for this Federal Liberal Party instead of addressing the "shameful living conditions" that plague our communities and people.

In closing, I want to acknowledge, recognize and salute all our grandmothers, mothers, daughters and sisters on International Women's Day, March 8, 2005.

Miigwech



Next Issue: Chiefs-In-Summit Review

South Wind

"The official newspaper of the Manitoba Southern Chiefs' Organization, Inc."

Send comments or feedback to:
Southern Chiefs' Organization
200-286 Smith Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K4
Phone: (204) 946.1869
Fax: (204) 946.1871

BOYCOTT REMAINS IN EFFECT Aboriginal Funeral Chapel

Last fall, the Southern Chiefs of Manitoba adopted a resolution calling on our peoples to boycott the "Aboriginal Funeral Chapel" (AFC) in the City of Winnipeg. This boycott was in response to the disrespectful treatment that some of our citizens received by the owners of the AFC.

For your information, this boycott remains in effect. We are continuing to strongly urge and encourage all Aboriginal peoples in Winnipeg, and the rest of Manitoba for that matter, not to use their services of this so-called "Aboriginal" owned and operated company.

Based on our informal investigation into the AFC, we are told by former employees that the owners of the AFC are not First Nations or Métis. This revelation then forces us to ask why they would use the term "Aboriginal" within

their business. It appears that the owners are taking advantage of this term for economic gain and benefit. This is a case of misrepresentation.



Consider this: What would happen if a First Nations or Métis person started a similar business with the title "Ukrainian Funeral Chapel"? You could rest assured that this city's Ukrainian community would not be comfortable knowing that a non-Ukrainian individual was taking advantage of their culture and heritage

through the misuse and misrepresentation of their cultural name. Why then are we as First Nations and Metis peoples allowing these business owners to use the term "Aboriginal" in a loose and reckless manner?

PLEASE NOTE: The AFC Boycott is still in effect and we are asking for your support.

Addressing Alternatives to Jail for Women

On March 1, 2005, Manitoba Keewatinow Okimakanak (MKO) Grand Chief Sydney Garrioch joined Southern Grand Chief Chris Henderson and Dr. Elizabeth Comack of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) in announcing the release of a report stating joint recommendations on the type and location of a new women's correctional facility to be established in Manitoba.

The report titled; **The Challenge for Change: Realizing the Legacy of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Report** was researched and authored by representatives from MKO, SCO and CCPA. The recommendations are based on consultations with Aboriginal women who are currently incarcerated at the Portage Correctional Institute for Women and on the AJI Report.

Southern Grand Chief Henderson stated, "The Province has to honour the AJI and develop a correctional model that is culturally appropriate and culturally responsive to Aboriginal women in Manitoba currently involved in the justice system."

"MKO is committed to working closely with all parties to ensure that the new women's correctional facility reflects

the First Nations beliefs, values and principles that place a first priority on healing and on supporting families and communities" stated Grand Chief Sydney Garrioch.

The Long Plain First Nation is willing to host a new healing lodge for women, once the Portage Correctional Institute is closed.



l-r: Dr. Elizabeth Comack, Grand Chief Henderson and MKO Grand Chief Sydney Garrioch.

Among the female prison population, Aboriginal over-representation is even greater. The AJI

reported, quoting a study done by the Elizabeth Fry Society, that 71% of Manitoba female inmate population in the early 1980s was Aboriginal. By 1988, this had risen to 85%.
www.gov.mb.ca



"Maybe we shouldn't be talking prison, maybe we should be talking healing lodge."...Maybe we should recognize that the issues are much broader than that. I mean, this is a real opportunity to really step out and realize the legacy of the AJI.—Dr. Elizabeth Comack, CCPA Spokesperson.