

Race-based rights Should everybody 'count' all of the time?

After years of being forced to live under "race-based rights and needs" on these concentration camps created by Predator and reserved for Indians only, we are now being told by Predator this is the 21st century and we have to move away from meeting needs based on what race you are.

So says Stock Day and his Canadian Alliance Party. I say where were Stock Day and Preston Manning or their forefathers when John McDonald, Duncan Scott and others were forcing our people, through legislation and deadly force, to live segregated from mainstream society on those concentration camps known as Indian reservations? This is the origin of the so-called race-based rights.

There is no other group of people in Canada forced to live on French reservations, English reservations or German reservations. Yet these are all peoples who have managed to kill off hundreds of thousands of people through deliberately starting two world wars. Now if any people should be locked away on reservations...

What other peoples are forced to live under the control of eurocanadian legislation like the Indian Act? What other peoples are forced to attend eurocanadian residential schools so as to have their identity, their self-esteem, their spirituality and their traditional teachings ripped from their heart and souls and to be forced to think, act and be like good, Christian, eurocanadians - to be like their oppressors?

This race-based separation was created by the white eurocanadian Predator as a sinister and deadly means of eliminating Indian people and persists into the present due primarily to the resilience and perseverance of our people. We are still here because our people persist in living as Indians on those white-created ghettos but the white eurocanadians are now changing the game and the rules because it suits their greed. Our people are viewed as being in the way of white eurocanadian progress and development and, therefore, expendable.

After thinking up and starting this whole business of race-based rights, or as it was known in the beginning race-based segregation, the reform/apartheid/alliance Predators now wish to change things because it suits their greed. Always the root of the problem is Predators bottom line greed ideology which reduces everyone and everything to a commodity to be bought, sold and discarded. So the insatiable appetite continues to consume, devour and pollute all that comes into contact with it.

At contact Predator did what he did to the Indian people of Turtle Island; i.e. annihilate them or segregate them as a means of stealing what did not belong to them, the land. In the present day, Predator is doing what he is doing for basically similar reasons, the theft of our land, holding on to our land and the denial of the 500 year genocidal relationship between transplanted Europeans and the Indian people of Turtle Island.

One additional factor has emerged over the last 500 years; Predator knows in his heart and soul that by his white is right and might is right actions, which resulted in genocide and the theft of our land, he has deeply wronged our people and guilt and resentment is not embedded deep in his collective psyche. So, for the present Predator feels he must finish what was begun 500 years ago, that is the complete elimination of all evidence (read Indians) of what occurred here in the name of greed.

In today's terms you accomplish this by oppression and forcing segregation, poverty, education and all non-Indian values and beliefs onto the survivors of that 500 year holocaust.

Couched in clever intellectual doublespeak such as "race-based rights," Stock Day and his apartheid alliance party are still bent on a Final Solution to Canada's Indian problem.

*All My Relations,
Dan Ennis
Tobique First Nation*



**Sharing our
Wabanaki
Perspective**
By Dan Ennis

In the last 200 years, the 'modern world' has been dominated by literature from the English, libertarian democratic tradition. A major theme emerging in conjunction with this tradition is the notion that every member of the collective receives an equal vote. Every member has the right to a proportionate influence on the issues confronting a society, especially those of significant importance. It is a notion that has permeated nearly every aspect of our culture. It is no surprise, therefore, that this liberal theme is so strongly imparted in our education system, a fundamental social movement and phenomenon which takes such libertarian notions as 'Truth'.

This has not always been the case, however. As far back as The Republic Of Plato we see the argument made that, in order to be a worthwhile participant in the respective dialogue or discussion, one needs at least some previous experience, knowledge and/or invested time and thought into the issue. Those who possess the ability to look upon an issue without the presuppositions and narrowed view that accompanies the alienated life style of the everyday citizen. Such individuals should be critical in their thinking, love the good, and possess rational control over their emotions and appetites. For Plato, it was the philosopher who occupied themselves with these problems, therefore, giving them the most 'qualifications', if you will. Hence, the idea of the philosopher king is born.

Now, although few but the powerful enjoy the unnerving and profoundly undemocratic notion of a select group of individuals making decisions on our behalf, there is some merit to the argument. Besides, with the lack of dialogue between elected officials and the public, our country is not far from Plato's template anyway (although our decision-makers are far from philosopher kings). In all seriousness however, should we not value silence in ignorance? Does it not seem obvious that we should discourage people from talking when they literally do not know what they are talking about? Or more precisely, when they lack all context needed to make a 'meaningful' statement? This is not to say we should not listen to other developed opinions ('developed' being the key word). Rather, we should not rush into this 'on the spot' intellectualism. We do not have the authority to participate in important decisions simply because we have been conditioned by democratic lip service. How many times have you heard the sentence, "communism only works on paper", for example. Usually, this statement is uttered by the individual who could not even define the term in all its complexities because they have not taken the time to look at this 'paper' they speak so highly of.

Another example is the frequent and very confident use by many of the term 'human nature'. How many times have we heard this term used in support or refutation of political systems, moral actions or even sexual behavior when the individual clearly has nothing but personal, empirical evidence for their claim? Not to say that empirical

**Paideia: Analysing The Inconsistencies Between The
Theory & Practice Of Education**
by Shea Tompkins

evidence and observation is not worthy, but that it is an isolated sample hardly adequate for encompassing every member of a 35,000-year-old species.

Has, then, this feeling of comfort in expressing oneself in the raw, no matter what our real knowledge of the subject matter, risen since the onset of modern libertarian ideology? It would be difficult to argue the contrary. One could make the case, therefore, that this 'problem' might increase dramatically with the rapid augmentation of globalization and 'communication' technology (although I use the term 'communication' lightly).

There is little doubt, for example, that the last thirty years have been host to a large media shift towards the lowest common denominator. In a search for ratings, media has pulled away from critical analysis, to a more cost-effective satisfaction of superficial base interests and shock value. Although these stances are not mutually exclusive, it has been our experience that critical pursuits almost always suffer at the hands of the masses. What then, has led us to this intellectual equivalent to pre-mature ejaculation and how can we improve the situation?

I would argue that our conditioning of 'the right to count' in public school plays a substantial role. The evidence, although highly generalized, seems present. The great majority of the pre school years, for example, are lived through a highly restricted environment of predetermined diners, bedtime's etc. Further, these years are dominated by play that is centered

around individual struggles and wants. For the most part, it is only the onset of the elementary school setting that most children learn the fundamentals of democracy in a tangible fashion. It is the time we first engage in collective decision making analogous to voting.

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Regardless of the insignificance of doing Math before or after lunch, it is at this early stage that children receive their very first hands-on democratic experience. It is the first time the child must compromise between numerous parties, rather than, interpersonal conflict. These are the years in which we reinforce the subconscious bias that democracy relates to 'the way things are'. The students are provided with countless reinforcing examples of 'equality in number' with no critical interpretation. It is unified, unquestioned experiences such as this one that create intellectual biases and closed mindedness. It is in later years, then, that we actually begin to discuss the fundamentals of democracy in abstract terms. All the while, we constantly reaffirm, through actions and words, the notion that everyone counts, everyone's opinion is important.

This may be extremely problematic. Exposing children to such ideology without proper contextualization is detrimental to our social health if we do not augment the child's responsibility in a proportionate manner with his/her concept and understanding of freedom. As teachers, it is of fundamental importance to stress the

idea that, although one possess the 'Right' to participate at all times, one can and should refrain from participation when one does not have at least a minimum background and understanding of the situation and factors involved. Further, ones credibility in the matter is directly related to ones experience. Anything less is simply not democracy, plain and simple. More that one great libertarian writer would have been prepared to argue that democracy without an enlightened, responsible population is not only paradoxical, but ranks equally (although in disguise) among all other forms of tyranny and inequality. Freedom comes with an unshakable need for responsibility, it is the job of the educator to speak, teach and live this responsibility. If not, we further contribute to a society that makes ignorant, unfounded political decisions. The result is a nation with leaders who do not talk of common good and true consistent vision, but instead, do little more than preach the lowest common denominator of the masses. Not long ago, for examples, our own premier left the NDP in order to join the Tories. Considering, then, that these two parties are historically and theoretically rooted in what could be considered opposite ideologies, are we not reducing all that we esteem in the realm of democracy and politics to simple lip service.

As was written by John Stewart Mill (1859), "Reflecting persons perceive that when society is itself the tyrant...its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries...[and is] more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself."

Taking our fragile life for granted

You know what I think?

I think that we all take people and how fragile life is for granted. One second you can be talking to someone about all your plans in life, and the next second, it is all gone. You can be thinking of deep thoughts that transcend reality, life, and all that is known, and the next second all you can think about is how frivolous and shallow these thoughts are in light of the big picture. You can be [reading] this article trying to understand what this rambling man is talking about, and somewhere else in this world, a friend of yours could be courting whether or not to end it all.

We all do our little things, we trot around in life not thinking that the next time we see a good friend, is the last time you might ever see that person. You can not predict how things are going to work out in life. We all laugh with each other, we all have good times, we all enjoy the story that is our lives, but we never even imagine that it can all come crashing to an end as quickly as it takes for you to read this little article. We talk to each other under the assumption that these little gatherings will continue forever. Unfortunately, this will never be the case. The next time you talk to your best friend, tell him or her that you really appreciate what they have done for you. Whether it is a shoulder for

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you to rant on, whether it is the good company of friendship that is provided, whether it is just someone that is there to help you occupy

space while you watch TV. The people we surround our lives with do much more than I think we realize, and I think it is something that should change. If it is too hard for you to talk to your friend like that, then at least come to terms with yourself that what you have is valuable. No money in the world can give you what you have now. No person can make you value everything you have. The sort of appreciation that I am talking about is one that goes beyond what we take for granted. Something happened to me recently that made me think just how fast things can happen for the worse, and that I will never get the chance to converse with my friend ever again. What is the real kicker, is that it took this event to happen for me to get this higher appreciation. This article might mean nothing to you and that is your choice, but for those of you that realize how quickly you can lose a friend, I now understand what you feel and I can't say I am too proud of what it took for me to realize. I hope you have the peace that you could never find Randy. Say hi to Plato for me.

And that is what I think.

James Ryan

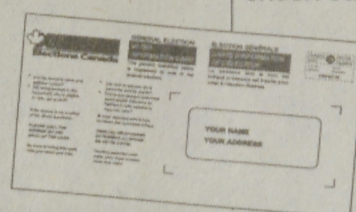
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