

ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION

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January 7, 2014

An open letter to National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief and Ontario Regional Chief, Chiefs of Ontario

At this time I would like to convey my thoughts to the Leadership the concerns on how our grassroots members have continuously attempted to convey their concerns, and to remind all levels of government, and our Chiefs that our treaty relationship derives from our inherent historic relationship with Her Majesty the Queen, who predecessors saw our ancestors as equal sovereign peoples. Modern developments by various Provincial, and Federal governments have eroded this historic relationship, with the tacit approval, or ignorance of Her Majesty the Queen, who had promised to protect her people.

Our children, elders, youth and women are speaking to you as leaders of our nations, they have communicated their concerns through with their walks, hunger strikes, petitions, acts of protest, they have sought to communicate with you their concerns.

As our people proceed with their journey they will do so with courage, determination and pride as well with heart ache because they feel and know their love ones and fellow members are suffering with pain and encountering a challenged dream of where the future will take them, due to the absence of a clear spirit or hope. Some don't even want to wake up from their sleep because they sense the agony will still exist in their communities, in their people.

During their journey their voices need to be heard as our grassroots members are shedding tears as they pray for Peace, hope, freedom and justice for the nation and for the leaders to hear the message loud and clear but somehow the leaders are confused and very fearful when they received the message from their people so when the leadership are in that state they approach their people with promises and commitments to carry on their message to the government who failed to honour the treaty and respect First Nation leaders.

Chiefs, why are you watching your people agonize when they raise their voices and struggle for their rights and protect our signed treaties... is it because you don't comprehend their voices or are you afraid to act on it? It's so anguishing to watch the walkers go through the discomfort journey as the chiefs are in comfortable zone. What does it take for the Leadership to understand and feel the distress for the people that are fighting for the rights for justice, peace, freedom and to renew the treaty relationship and to honour the spirit and intent of the treaty?

Chiefs, this not the time to cover your eyes and allow our people to stand alone in battle to protect our collective rights, I call upon you, to listen to the concerns of your

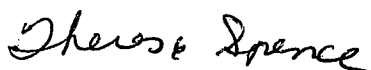
membership, to head their advice, and to call upon on your fellow chiefs and set up a special meeting to develop a united stand for the future of our Nations.

Such a course of action was suggested by young lady recently at the Special Chiefs Assembly held in Ottawa on November 7, 2013, in her presentation she encouraged all chiefs to have a Pipe ceremony and to pray to our creator for Peace and Hope and especially for leadership to stand in unity.

I encourage for you chiefs to implement an immediate action plan such as organizing a meeting with the government of Canada to advise them that they are grassroots people are in a journey for their Inherent treaty rights where the concerns of the People are brought forward and for the Chief's to declare a statement to them that as chiefs that you will stand united and support the walkers and your people and furthermore you as chiefs will protect and fight for them.

Remind the government there were statements from the Chief s in December 2012 and January 2013 on crippling aspects of the economic system that were doing harm to our peoples and others suggested that they will blockade the highways and railways and other transportation for goods during my hunger strike. My spokesperson Danny Metatawabin who assisted me in my hunger strike protest last year declared in press conference on January 24, 2013, that although the hunger strike ended, it doesn't mean the fight is over and it will continue. Danny has started his walk to Ottawa on Saturday, January 4, to tell the Leadership that there is a vast tide of concerns with our people, for which he has entitled his epic trek "Reclaiming Our Steps Past, Present and Future." Danny's quest is to remind all Chiefs, and the Government of Canada of the undertakings promised during last year's struggle, which remain outstanding.

If the chiefs fail to head the advice contained in this open letter to engage in solidarity with their members to advocate for their members and to protect the needs of our people, and treaties, I will call upon on my grassroots people, treaty partners, Canadians and our neighbours from other countries to expose all of the wrongful acts and abusive actions that was imposed to our people, and continue to impact generations of our people to this day.



Chief Theresa Spence
Attawapiskat First Nation