

Listening to Victims: a Fresh Approach to Healing and Reconciliation

by **Mark Vandermaas** (14:33 mins)

The image of the dancer in the Caledonia Victims Project logo is a tribute to a 14 year old girl named Pam Dudych who loved to dance – before the occupation of the Douglas Creek Estates. She is, for me, a symbol for all of Caledonia’s victims – aboriginal and non-aboriginal.

SLIDE: DANCER AT LIONS PARK

Pam lives on the Sixth Line in Caledonia which borders the occupation site. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) withdrew policing service from Pam’s street on April 20, 2006 after hundreds of native occupiers attacked them while they were trying to enforce a court order.

Police were injured after being attacked with clubs, crowbars, axes, a chainsaw and socks filled with rocks. [1]

Mr. McHale has approximately 1,000 hours of audio recordings of radio transmissions proving that occupiers have authorized the shooting of civilians and police straying too close, and interfered with ambulance crews. [2]

SLIDE: ‘ROAD OF HOPE’ PAMPHELET

We met Pam in March 2007. She had produced a heartbreaking pamphlet for a school project called, *Road of Hope: Help the Sixth Line!* and wanted the world to hear her words of pain [3]:

“[...] You can’t call the police because they can’t help you. You’re locked in your own home. A few days later, when it calms down, you have to go to school. But you can’t get to school by bus anymore so you have to drive a 30 min. ride to school when it only took 2 minutes unless you went through the blockade. But you could only do this if you had a pass, but even when we got one, it was whether they felt like letting you go through or not.

If they did let you go, it was like you're in prison, gates everywhere, men with masks over their faces only to see their eyes. Men holding bats some even with guns, it was a living hell. I had to live through that. You don't know what life is like until you have lived through it.

"I'm a competitive dancer, and love to dance outside on the side lawn, but I wasn't able to unless I could take the pressure of getting stares or firecrackers thrown at me. Now I take medication and go to counselling because of all of this. A 14 year old should not be doing that!

"It's these things that hurt, because its not just my family in pain its all of ours on the 6th line. There are 7 children on this road ranging from 10 months to 15 years old. It's very sad when the 14 and 15 year old are told that if ever a native came into OUR house and tried hurting us and we defended ourselves by fighting back, we would be the ones arrested! Not the native!" [...]

"I'm 14 years old and I will fight with as much power as I have to get police and justice back on my road! [...]

SLIDE: DEER CARCASSES ON POLE

The OPP threat to arrest non-native victims was common to both Haldimand County and Ipperwash. [4]

Pam's mother showed me the pass the natives forced them to carry, as well as a photo of two of the seven deer carcasses hung by occupiers on a lamp pole near their home between October and December 2006.

Her diary entry for October 30th at 3:50 pm notes this about the 5th carcass: "Between yesterday at 1:30 and now, the deer was taken down, skinned and beheaded and then hung back up. Mayor called." She wrote me saying, "See[ing] the deer each time gave you a sickening feeling in your gut."

When we released Pam's story we were immediately accused of fabricating it by occupation supporters. Journalists from outside Caledonia refused to tell her story despite her personal appearances at a news conference at the Ontario Legislature, and again at our pre-election 'Remember Us' March in 2007.

Christie Blatchford became the first non-Caledonia journalist to tell part of the Dudyh story in January 2010. [5]

SLIDE: VAN PUSHED OVER BRIDGE, FIRE BELOW

The shocking revelations from OPP testimony at the trial for the now-settled Brown-Chatwell lawsuit confirming that the Haldimand detachment commander was ordered *not* to arrest rioting natives - who he said were emboldened by the lack of police response - made national headlines [6].

A resident asked me to deliver this message to you today:

“The police and firemen were hiding behind my fence while a group of natives (terrorists)!! were lighting a fire behind my house. They said to my neighbour and myself we cannot protect you or touch them. [...] We were and are still treated as shit by the police. My trust in our system is gone forever.” [7]

SLIDE: TIRE FIRE

Residents were forced to stand guard one night at the home of a 92 year old World War Two veteran because OPP officers refused to stop native occupiers from throwing rocks at his house. This war hero later showed me one of the rocks and tearfully told me, “I spent 5 years in hell for this country and now I don't even know if the police will protect me. It wasn't worth it.” [8]

Residents have observed that the OPP's Major Events Liaison Team were not filing incident reports. According to an August 16, 2006 entry in her victim impact statement one wrote, “The residents of Caledonia now realize that MELT does not use file numbers nor do they inform the OPP of complaints. How convenient. On paper, it appears as if nothing is happening here!” [9]

SLIDE: YOUTHS W/CLUBS, MASKS

Pam's mother shared her feelings about the recent return of OPP policing:

We have lost 4 years of our lives which we will never get back. [...] I feel like Canada has let us down big time. For a land that is supposed to be free, we are prisoners of war who have been left to deal with this predicament on our own. [...] As for policing back down here, yes it's true. Do we feel any safer NO.

SLIDE: NAZI SYMBOL ON JIM SMITH HOME

False accusations by occupation supporters of being racists and white supremacists were commonplace against residents and non-native activists, an intimidation campaign that persists to this day and has included torture and death threats, racial slurs, and physical assaults.

SLIDE: CALEDONIA ARE RACISTS CARTOON

SLIDE: DCE SIGN – BOYCOTT RACISM, KEN HEWITT, MAYOR, CLARKE

SLIDE: DCE SIGN – KEVIN CLARKE COWARD OF THE COUNTY

SLIDE: DCE SIGN – KKK PLUNDER

SLIDE: JEFF PARKINSON IN HOSPITAL, GARY MCHALE IN HOSPITAL

SLIDE: FANTINO SHARES JOKE W/POWLESS

The OPP Commissioner testified in 2008 that he meets with native protesters but never with non-natives. **[10]**

After Gary McHale was sent to hospital in December 2007 after being swarmed by Six Nations residents the Commissioner was photographed sharing a joke with the man who had led the attack, but he refused Mayor Trainer's September 2009 request to meet with Six Line residents, which would have included the Dudych family. **[11, 12]**

SLIDE: ARRESTS OF BO CHAUSSE, RANDY FLEMING, GARY MCHALE, MARK VANDERMAAS

Non-natives who speak up have been targeted for public insults by the Ontario government, and for arrest (4 for trying to raise or walk with a Canadian flag near the occupation site) and even Police Services Act charges by the OPP - as was done against a Hamilton Police officer who criticized the OPP and Ontario's premier. [13]

In Mr. McHale's case the OPP repeatedly targeted him for false arrests, a campaign that eventually resulted in charges of *Obstructing Justice* against the Deputy Commissioner and a Superintendent, as well as a charge of *Influencing Municipal Officials* against the Commissioner himself. [14]

OPP officers have even visited hall owners to intimidate them into cancelling our room rental agreements. [15]

SLIDE: CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

It is difficult to convey to you the absolute terror, hopelessness, trauma and sense of betrayal the people of Caledonia feel to this day. Perhaps it is enough to tell you that Pam Dudych must take medication and go to counselling; Pam's mother takes medication for her diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder and has attempted suicide; Pam's father has had a heart attack; the family business is in ruins, and they cannot leave because they cannot sell their home. [16]

SLIDE: KKK SIGN MONTAGE W/SAM GUALTIERI, BRIDGE FIRE

This sign is from the Stirling Street subdivision where native occupiers burned down the Stirling bridge, and left Sam Gualtieri with brain damage from their vicious beating. [17]

The words 'heartless' and 'cruel' seem inadequate to describe the irony of a situation wherein an organized group from one race of people terrorized others with racial slurs, fire, violence, vandalism, and property seizures and then tormented their victims with false accusations of being white supremacists.

As the son of parents who lived in Nazi-occupied Holland I am offended to the very core of my being by the blaming of innocent victims for racially-motivated crimes committed against them.

SLIDE: MERLYN W/SIGN - 'TWO TIER JUSTICE VICTIMIZES
NATIVE PEOPLE TOO'

I am also offended that Aboriginals have been victims of the very same racist policing policies that allow illegal occupations to escalate and the sites to become lawless 'home-free zones' – as residents in both Caledonia and Ipperwash refer to them. Occupation sites have seen rapes, assaults, arson, drug use and gun violence.

In both Ipperwash and Caledonia – ironically - original occupiers have expressed fear over the lawlessness that developed in the aftermath of their own lawless takeovers. A Six Nations paper confirmed that the shooter of a Six Nations man at a nearby smokeshack had been on the occupation site near the homes of residents threatening another man over a drug debt with an AK47 assault rifle just prior to the shooting.

In August 2007 another Six Nations paper cited former Six Nations Chief David General's opinion that "he does not consider [the occupation site] sacred land, citing two reported rapes and several other unseemly acts which have been reported from the reclamation site." [18]

SLIDE: IPPERWASH INQUIRY COVER

The Ipperwash Inquiry report describes how a school bus was loaded with native children and driven by a 15 year-old boy who crashed it through the front gate of Camp Ipperwash, smashed the doors of the drill hall and backed into a jeep – part of a planned diversion while other natives took over the base.

Instead of criticizing this egregious child abuse, however, the Inquiry's Commissioner was almost breathless in his apparent admiration at the use of children to assault a Canadian military installation. [19]

Our Ipperwash Papers project reveals that, despite the Ontario government's ostensible defence of the OPP's so-called "peacekeeping" approach on the basis it is simply following recommendations of the Ipperwash Inquiry, it knows full well the Inquiry *never studied* the issue of aboriginal violence against residents.

Nor did it study the effects of racial policing in escalating violence even though, according to the town's Chief Administrative Officer, the events at Ipperwash - including the demise of Dudley George - were caused by unequal law enforcement in the years *prior* to Mr. George's death.

Out of 139 witnesses not one resident was allowed to testify about the violence and intimidation they experienced at the hands of native protesters. It should be no surprise, therefore, that not one of the Inquiry's 100 recommendations specifically addresses the issue of preventing aboriginal violence against residents. [20]

Ignoring and suppressing the voices of non-aboriginal victims has – based on a two year old estimate by the area's MPP - cost an estimated 4.1 billion dollars in economic damage in the Haldimand Tract; incalculable human trauma; and has reduced the noble goal of healing and reconciliation to empty words of propaganda. [21]

So where do we go from here?

SLIDE: RECONCILIATION: THE CANACE PATH

First, we must accept that talking about non-native victims does not diminish aboriginal grievances or their legitimate aspirations, and we must acknowledge that those who committed the acts of lawlessness in Caledonia do *not* represent Six Nations or aboriginal people as a whole.

This a drawing I presented to Brantford Council in September 2008 called, '*Reconciliation: the CANACE Path.*' [22] We must acknowledge the obvious: that violence and the appeasement of it begets more violence.

We must commit to a path of truth, justice - based on the rule of law - and apologies from those responsible: apologies from Six Nations; the OPP and the Ontario government. There are *no* shortcuts, *no* alternatives. If the government of Canada can – rightly - apologize for Residential Schools then these groups can apologize for Caledonia.

We must continue to demand a public inquiry into the conduct of the OPP and Ontario government. If Residential Schools represent ‘cultural genocide’ then those who deliberately refused to protect non-native Charter rights and actively worked to suppress non-native voices are guilty of ‘Crimes Against Democracy.’

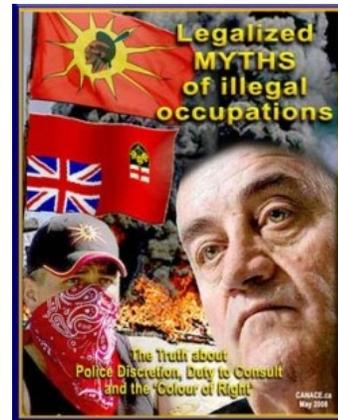
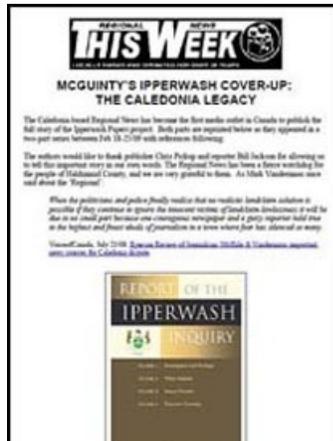
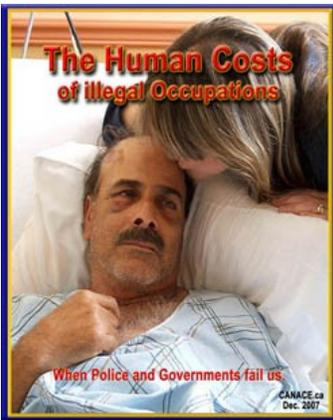
The urgency and importance of intellectually honest research and debate that is inclusive of victims cannot be overstated. Unfortunately, our personal experience shows that some ‘pseudo-academics’ have allowed biased personal agendas to get in the way of critical analysis and legitimate research.

Finally - we seek help in reaching out to the good people of Six Nations so we may find true partners for peace who recognize the inherent wisdom of a path to healing and reconciliation based on truth, justice and apologies. Despite the terrible things done to them, the hearts of the people of Caledonia remain open, and they are eager to restore the longstanding and deeply-valued relationship with their Six Nations neighbours.

I thank Dr. Widdowson, Mount Royal University, and the Frontier Centre for Public Policy for making this historic forum available to address these issues which are of vital importance, not only to the people of Caledonia and Six Nations, but to all of Canada. Thank you also to the other speakers for sharing their knowledge and perspectives with me today.

SLIDE: CALEDONIA VICTIMS PROJECT

- ‘Citations and Slide list below -



Citations & Slides

Citations

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PowerPoint Slides

Presentation download URL (21 Mb):

<http://caledoniavictimsproject.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/100505-mark-vandermaas-new-directions-forum-ppt.ppt>

SLIDE 1: Title Slide: LISTENING TO VICTIMS: A fresh approach to healing & reconciliation

SLIDE 2: Pam Dudych's Road of Hope, p1 (see #4)

SLIDE 3: Pam Dudych speaks at 'Remember Us' March, Caledonia Lions Hall, Oct 08/07

SLIDE 4: Deer carcasses on pole near home of Pam Dudych on 6th line, Oct 05/06

SLIDE 5: Van being pushed over bridge w/fire on highway below

SLIDE 6: Feeding tire fire in middle of Argyle Street

SLIDE 7: Youths on DCE occupation site w/masks and clubs

SLIDE 8: Swastika on resident's home

SLIDE 9: White supremacist cartoon "Duh. My mama is white"

SLIDE 10: DCE sign: BOYCOTT RACISM...

SLIDE 11: DCE sign: KEVIN CLARK COWARD, JANE STEWART CASH COW

SLIDE 12: DCE sign: K-K-K ATTEMPT TO HIDE THE THEFT...

SLIDE 13: MONTAGE

- CANACE founder Jeff Parkinson in hospital after smokeshack protest attack, Dec 01/07
- CANACE founder Gary McHale in hospital after smokeshack protest attack, Dec 01/07

SLIDE 14: OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino shares joke w/man who led attack on McHale, May 23/08, Turtle Island News photo, published May 28/08

SLIDE 15: MONTAGE

- OPP arrest Bo Chausse trying to raise Canadian flag across from occupation, Dec 01/06
- OPP arrest Mark Vandermaas, Dec 16/06 trying to raise Cdn flag, Dec 16/06
- OPP arrest Gary McHale trying to raise Cdn flag, Dec 16/06
- OPP arrest Randy Fleming while walking on highway with Canadian flag, May 24/09

SLIDE 16: 'Caught in the Middle' painting, Barb Patterson-Tuck, 2008

SLIDE 17: MONTAGE

- Stirling Street occupation sign: KKKANADA COMMITS GENOCIDE, Sept 2007
- Sam Gualtieri in hospital after attack by natives, Sept 13/07
- Stirling Street bridge on fire, April 20/06

SLIDE 18: CANACE co-founders Merlyn Kinrade & Jeff Parkinson w/sign: 'TWO TIER JUSTICE VICTIMIZES NATIVE PEOPLE TOO!', Dec 01/07

SLIDE 19: Cover for Ipperwash Inquiry report

SLIDE 20: Diagram: *Reconciliation: The CANACE Path*

SLIDE 21: Title Slide: LISTENING TO VICTIMS: A fresh approach to healing & reconciliation