

Glossary of Terms – A to C

Aboriginal Peoples – Section 35(1) of the Canada Act (1982) (The Canadian Constitution) states that the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples. These peoples are the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America and they have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. Their common linkage is their indigenous ancestry.

Aboriginal Rights – These are rights that some Aboriginal peoples in Canada hold as a result of their ancestors' long-standing use and occupancy of the land. The rights of certain Aboriginal peoples to hunt, trap and fish on ancestral lands are examples of Aboriginal rights recognized either through treaties or formal agreements. Aboriginal rights vary from group to group depending on the customs, practices and traditions that form part of the group's distinctive culture.

Anishinaabe – (Anish-e-naabay) The word used by the Ojibway people to refer to their First Nation in their own language.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) – The national political body representing First Nations people in Canada and composed of the Chiefs of the First Nations. It promotes, supports and represents members of First Nations in areas such as Aboriginal and treaty rights, environmental rights, economic development, education, housing, health, social services and land claims.

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs – The provincial political organization of Manitoba Chiefs representing First Nations in Manitoba. There are other organizations similar to this one

representing Southern Chiefs and Northern Chiefs.

Band – A term established by the first Indian Act in 1876 to legally identify a group of Indians with a particular Chief or Headman. A Band is a group of First Nations people for whom lands have been set apart and for whom money is held in trust by the crown. Each Band has its own governing council, usually consisting of one or more Chiefs and several Councilors. Community members choose the Chief and Councilors by election or through traditional custom. The members of a Band generally share common values, traditions and practices rooted in their language and heritage. Today, most Bands prefer to be known as First Nations.

Band By-Law – A law made by the Band Council to regulate local or internal affairs. The *Indian Act* gives Band Councils this power, but it can only be applied in the community.

Band Council – A Band or First Nation's governing body. The Council has the power to self-govern locally, though the degree of power varies with each Band.

Band List – This is the official list of members of a particular Band or First Nation. If you are not on the Band List, you are not an Indian unless you are a 'Bill C-31 Indian'.

Bill C-31 – The pre-legislation name of the 1985 *Act to Amend the Indian Act*. This Act eliminated certain discriminatory provisions of the *Indian Act*, including the section that deprived Indian women of their status when they married non-Status men. Bill C-31 enables people who lost Indian status to apply to have that status restored. Since 1985, about 105,000 individuals have successfully regained their status. These people are sometimes referred to as 'C-31 Indians'.

Chief – The elected leader and primary

spokesperson for the recognized governing Band Council on a reserve. The National Grand Chief is the elected Chief of the AFN. Vice-Chiefs are regional representatives in AFN. A Grand Chief is the elected Chief of a Regional First Nation group (e.g. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs - AMC).

Claims – Claims deal with rights and title to lands already ceded by treaty. In 1973, the federal government recognized two broad classes of claims: comprehensive and specific. Comprehensive claims are based on the recognition that there are continuing Aboriginal rights to lands and natural resources. These kinds of claims come up in parts of Canada where Aboriginal title has not previously been dealt with by treaty and other legal means. Their resolution can result in a new agreement much like the Treaty agreements already in existence. Specific claims deal with specific grievances that First Nations may have regarding the fulfillment of treaties. They also cover grievances to the administration of reserve lands and assets under the *Indian Act*.

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) – Formerly known as the Native Council of Canada (NCC) its members are First Nations people who live off-reserve, non-status Indians and Métis people in Canada. Its executive council is made up of thirteen affiliate organizations from all provinces and territories. CAP's mandate is to represent the collective and individual interests of its membership. It works to achieve equity for all Aboriginal peoples, regardless of residence or status, to rights affirmed in the *Constitution Act 1982* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Country-Born – Term used to identify the people born in Rupert's Land of Hudson's Bay Company fathers and Aboriginal mothers who were predominately English-speaking and Protestant. In the 1970's some Canadian historians (e. g. Fritz Pannekoek) used this term

rather than the pejorative 'half-breed'.

Cree – First Nation people whose members stretch from Western Quebec around James Bay all the way to the Rocky Mountains and into the northern United States. The various groups of Cree speak different dialects and have very different historical and cultural experiences.

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