

across Canada. In 1984, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the Musqueam, underlining that the Crown had ignored its obligation to act in the best interests of Native peoples, based on the idea of the *Honour of the Crown*, “an important Aboriginal contribution to justice for all Canadians,” as Saul points out. In a second case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Aboriginal tradition of oral memory was valid when establishing the ownership of land, thus breaking with the European tradition of the requirement of written proof. Thanks to our indigenous peoples, Canada has been provided with a new way of thinking about the laws governing the country. And because they have been betrayed and abused countless times by both the justice system and the Department of Indian Affairs, they, as treaty partners, are asking to deal directly with the prime minister and the Privy Council.

The book is not a retelling of history from the Aboriginal point of view by a

non-Aboriginal, but includes writings and speeches by Native Canadians who, themselves, optimistically explain current indigenous reality. Reprinted is the lecture delivered at the 2009 Lafontaine-Baldwin Symposium by Siila Watt-Cloutier, Inuk leader and International Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council. Entitled “Returning Canada to a Path of Principle,” the lecture highlights the importance of Canada’s Arctic and Inuit in shaping the country’s future: “We occupy a unique position in Canadian society and, increasingly, in world affairs.” Economic development must not take place at the expense of environmental sustainability.

In an excerpt from *Principles of Tsawalk: An Indigenous Approach to Global Crisis*, E. Richard Atleo (Umeek), hereditary chief of the Ahousaht First Nation on Vancouver Island, Professor at the University of Manitoba, explains the practical side of myths, or “origin stories”: “In this sense, myths are not

necessarily in opposition to the intent of scientific inquiry...”

Also reprinted is the December 17, 2012, *Huffington Post* article, “Idle No More Is Not Just an ‘Indian Thing’,” in which Wab Kinew, member of the Midewin and living in Winnipeg, explains this political movement triggered by Aboriginal opposition to Bill C-45. It sought to reduce the amount of federally protected waterways and to speed up the way in which reserve lands could be surrendered. Using social media like Facebook and Twitter, Idle No More managed to get young people from across Canada to pay attention to politics at a time when their rights were in jeopardy, and to try to find meaning in life. “Aboriginal people may be the canary in the coal mine. If we overlook one section of the constitution, does that mean others are in similar jeopardy?”

These Native voices, and so many more, speak for all Canadians of every origin. ■