

No More Fattening Frogs for Snakes!

A Surrealist Manifesto in Solidarity with the Unist'ot'en People

Various Authors

**A Joint Declaration by
Amphibians for Decolonization
Inner Island Surrealist Group** (Kómoks/Pentlatch territory)
Ottawa Surrealist Group (Algonquin Anishnaabeg territory)

“It took me a long time to find out my mistakes But I’m not fattenin’ no more frogs for snakes.”

—Sonny Boy Williamson

The Unist’ot’en are the Big Frog clan of the Wet’suwet’en nation. They defiantly croak at the colonizer’s yoke without reservation. They are hungry for decolonization. We honor their spirited resistance to colonial authority and offer our wholehearted solidarity.

That the Canadian government would like to fatten indigenous peoples up for the kill should come as no surprise. One aspect of colonial policy has always been “fattenin’ frogs for snakes,” either by cajolery, bribery or by the deadening domestication of the feedlot. In this case, the snakes are the extractive tentacles of the fossil fuel industry whose serpentine form is the pipeline. That venomous symbol is the opposite of the life-giving phallus of Eros. It is the phallus of death and destruction. Destruction of the land and death to the people of the land.

The autonomy of the Unist’ot’en frog pond is in danger as their unceded territory outside the confines of the reserve is threatened by TransCanada (TC Energy)/ Coastal GasLink predators. “Why not just cut your losses and fatten up at the corporate trough,” say the colonizers with a wink? But the hereditary chiefs have refused to allow the living body of the land to be carved up without a fight. They yearn for long-term sustenance rather than the empty calories of fast-food trickery. In contrast, the reservation band councils have signed on with the LNG industry for the chance to get a piece of the pie after having so long been restricted to the meager crumbs from the colonial table.

But the whole frackin’ pie is rotten! It has been (half) baked by the same people who came to these lands from Europe over 150 years ago with a bible in one hand and a gun in the other. They were the missionaries of cultural genocide who sought to colonize the minds of the next generation in the residential schools.

And the colonial drive for assimilation is not dead yet. Take your pick says the latest Great White Father, Justin “Sunny Ways” Trudeau: the bureaucratic carrot of government-sponsored “reconciliation” or the military stick of RCMP invasion. These are the current faces of the ongoing Canadian policy of assimilation which often amounts to little more than guilt-ridden calls for “healing” on the part of the descendants of the settlers while the “hurting” still goes on in relation to indigenous communities. While bewildered settlers, hypocritical politicians and smug media talking heads arrogantly presume that strawman “consultations” are enough to smooth over historic antagonisms, the colonizers relentlessly continue to drain the pond of its nutrients and pollute the groundwater of life that still flows in the veins of the land.

We stand with those traditional chiefs responsible for the health of the land in their opposition to the toxic pipeline and its world. Proudly they proclaim the sovereign basis for their actions in protecting their own territory: “We are not protestors. We are Wet’suwet’en!”

As surrealists opposed to the institutional violence of the Canadian state and the physical violence of the RCMP’s war on the Unist’ot’en land defenders, we dream of a mighty “rain of frogs” to cleanse the Earth!

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