



## **20th Century Warriors**

Marvin Perreault - Chief Editor, First Peoples Chronicle

Today's Aboriginal issues include the problem of native street gangs and their rising recruitment. Alternatives have not been successful, different organizations implement various methods on their fight on the gangs.

One way to combat this gang subculture would be to initiate traditional teachings to the youth in the urban areas. Many families have lost their culture through assimilation and urbanization. I was fortunate to attend a lecture at the University of Winnipeg in which Terrence Nelson, councillor, Roseau River First Nation was speaking. I have been aware of his work before of 'Genocide in Canada', which plights the struggle of Aboriginal Canadians and especially the people of Roseau River. It includes the history of Roseau River and Statistics of unnatural deaths. Ranging from murder, suicide, to health disorders caused by alcoholism. But what was interesting to me was the history of the "Okii jii daa" an Ojibway Warrior society that has been around for ages. It remained underground through the residential school years to today. He also talks about the Midewiwin society, which is an Ojibway medicine society.

The warrior society has many responsibilities among the people. From maintaining sustenance to protecting the elders and the children. It also has a great responsibility in the spiritual aspect of our culture. To carry on the information from ancestry to ancestry. It is in these teachings that we will grasp back that pride that we had once collectively as a people. It is in these teachings that will save our youth and future generations that are in danger of losing this precious information forever. The real warriors of our people have this responsibility and task.

But our First Nations governments in this country we call Canada, must unite and set aside its political agendas if they are to save our youth from urban turmoil. This includes urban aboriginal community organizations as well. To improve education standards which include aboriginal teachings in the curriculum and increase employment for native youth in the reserves and urban areas.

If these tactics are not deployed then the urban and First Nations communities will face revolutionary actions from the youth by civil disobedience especially when the federal government refuses to adhere to the issue of sovereignty and self-governance. Street gangs like Manitoba Warriors and Indian Posse will thrive by the downfall of our youth. Confrontations such as Ipperwash and Gustafson Lake will likely to occur.

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