

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: ELDER'S DOCUMENT ON TREATY 4  
BY THE SAULTEAUX, CREE, AND  
ASSINIBOINE NATIONS

INFORMANT'S ADDRESS:

INTERVIEW LOCATION:

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INTERPRETER:  
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- Indian interpretation of Treaty #4.  
ELDERS DOCUMENT

STATEMENT OF THE ELDERS

We, the undersigned elders, being of good health and of sound mind, make the following statement on the sacredness and the spirit and the meaning of our treaty with Queen Victoria to the best of our knowledge and our wisdom as it was passed down to us from our elders.

In accordance with our traditions and customs, we, in this statement, pass down to the next generation of Indians the sacredness and the spirit and the meaning of our treaty with Queen Victoria of England.

Long before the coming of the white people to this land, the Indian nations had self-government and sovereignty over all of the land; the minerals on the ground and in the ground; and all other resources which were in the ground; the waters, the fish in the waters; the growths which come up through the waters; the furbearing creatures; the large game animals; the small game and furbearing animals; the large and small fowl; all of the wood resources; the air of the four winds and all that is in the air.

We, the Indian people as nations governed ourselves. The Indian people governed themselves through head-chiefs and headmen. There was no separation between government and religion. Our supreme being was in our government and our government was in our supreme being.

From this we developed over the ages: principles; responsibilities; accountabilities; traditions; customs; philosophies; doctrines; practices; institutions; spiritual values; moral conducts; inter-Indian nations' protocol.

These are the base of our Indian constitutions from which all of our Indian laws have been made. Although our Indian laws have not been written as the white people have written theirs, our Indian laws are no less law in our Indian nations.

It is all of this which Queen Victoria recognized as a power capable of making treaty with her. It is the power which Queen Victoria in the presence of the supreme being placed herself in trust to protect these Indian nations she made treaty with.

The Queen's opening promise to the Indian nations was, "What I offer you will never take away your style of life, it is on top of that which you already have."

Laws made by the Queen's Canadian Government applying to Indians and not complying with her stipulations of treaty with the Indians reflects seditious attitudes towards Her Majesty.

The Queen promised to make strong laws to apply to all white people to protect the Indian nations from white people encroachment.

To ensure Indian nations just benefits on all of these resources never given up by treaty, in addition to their main reserved lands, she promised to protect for them their Indian traditional hunting territories; their Indian traditional fishing lakes and lands they reserved to use while fishing; their traditional Indian trapping territories; their traditional forests from which they derived their timber for lodges and houses; and the land they used while taking this resource; the meadows from which they gather their medicines to be used in future Indian ceremonies or religious practices; haying ground reserves for future ranching needs; traditional maple groves lands from which they derived their sugar needs; valley lands from which they derived nuts, sugar, root, crop, corn and vegetables; their traditional lands used by them as resting stations in their travels from one resource to another; burial grounds; treaty lands where sacred treaties were signed between the Indians and the Queen and between the Indian nations; inter-Indian nation territories where Indian nations gathered to hold their united nations assemblies.

She promised never to take away the Indians' style of life. The Indians would be free from fear. The Indians would be free to assemble, free to choose their form of worship and they shall be free from hunger.

The Indians will set aside their reserve wherever and whenever they choose to be of the best quality and in the dimensions of five persons to every square mile.

She promised to maintain one agent on each reserve to see to it that the promises that she had made would be carried out with the utmost good faith.

She will assist the Indians in their every effort in their economic development on reserves and off reserves.

She promised to maintain a commissioner through which her promises will be delivered justly, according to the terms of the treaty with the utmost exactness. The Governor-General is now the Queen's representative in Canada and must similarly carry out these same promises made to us in the treaty and in the treaty negotiations.

She promised ammunition and fish nets to every Indian nation to assist in their economy.

She promised to maintain schools and school masters to each Indian reserve. She agreed the stipulation on education required additional special reserved lands to Indian reserves.

She promised the Indian nations she would maintain medical and health services, the hospitals, doctors and nurses and other facilities.

She promised that no one would ever be permitted to sell or consume liquor on reserved lands.

She promised she, or her Canadian Government, would never call on the Indian nations to fight their wars.

She promised Indians will never be expected to pay taxes to assist Her Majesty to pay for her obligations to treaty.

With regard to the laws administering treaties Her Majesty assured it would also be written in the Indian language.

She promised to maintain four salaries in each band. A chief and three headmen, and other facilities to enable them to keep a good Indian self-government. All Indians must deal with her and others through their chief and council.

She will, at her cost, issue uniforms to the chief. A special uniform to show the chief is the head of his nation. To each councillor a uniform to show he holds a well-respected and responsible office in his nation.

She will maintain the cost of the coming together of the Indian nations and representatives of Her Majesty's government once every year to review the progress of the treaties. Her Majesty's governments shall have the highest regard for the chiefs and headmen of the Indian nations.

She promised never to take away what Indians held sacred to their survival.

She promised to give five dollars to each person of the Indian nation to show good faith and respect for the individual Indian and to assure them that the treaty would never be broken as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow and the grass grows.

She promised, if anyone of her servants who breaks the stipulations of the treaty, the Queen's ear (Parliament) would be open to the Indians at all times, and those who have broken any of the stipulations of the treaty will be dealt with.

She agreed to acknowledge the Indians oral transmission of the spirit and intent of the treaties as they would be handed down from generation to generation.

Our chiefs and headmen promised Her Majesty in the treaties to continue to keep good Indian self-governments.

That through education they would further develop their institutions.

That they would continue to keep good law and order between themselves as nations and Her Majesty's other Governments, between themselves as nations and other white peoples' nations.

The Indians promised that they would arrange with Her Majesty's governments an extradition process.

The Indians promised that they will turn their warrior forces to police forces to maintain laws and order.

The Indians promised that their administrative braves would be directed towards better administrators through education for the better development of their institutions.

The Indians promised never to alienate any of their lands and any of their resources never given up in treaty to hold the same in trust for generations yet unborn.

The Indian nations agreed with Her Majesty the treaty is a peace alliance for agriculture only. The depth of a plow share.

The Queen promised to rule all her Dominions and her Indian nations according to their traditions, customs and their laws.

(End of Statement)

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