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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Dene Nation: The Colony Within. Edited by Mel Watkins.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9gc7d5xz>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 5(4)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

1981-09-01

DOI

10.17953

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Micmacs and Colonists may not be definitive, but it is at least a step in the right direction.

Olive Patricia Dickason
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Dene Nation: The Colony Within. Edited by Mel Watkins. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978. 189 pp. pap. \$4.95.

Dene Nation is a frustrating anthology of essays. It should have, and easily could have, been a much more significant book. Certainly the issues which it addresses, pertaining to the economic, political, ethical, and historical rights of indigenous peoples to the territories they have used and lived on "from time immemorial," are cogent and compelling. Undeniably, editor Mel Watkins has assembled an interesting and diverse collection of contributors. Clearly the inherent conflict between the interests of big business and those of tribal people is central here, and as such this book should occupy a key place in a worldwide comparative investigation of this issue.

Why, then, is it so unsatisfying? One answer must lie in the book's curious organization. Most of the articles are culled from oral or written testimony presented to the Berger Commission, a Canadian government-appointed body sent to the western Sub-Arctic to ascertain local opinion on a proposed gas pipeline easement through their territory. As in the closely paralleled Alaska situation in the early 1970s, this oil-inspired construction quickly became inextricably tied to a realization and formalization of the nature and extent of aboriginal claims to the land, with Natives arguing, quite astutely, that title must precede any outside development.

Watkins limits his selections to those which vigorously advance this position. Most of his contributors perceive an historically and contemporaneously antagonistic relationship between southern, mostly non-Native Canadians, and the Native Dene who live in the Northwest Territories. They assert that dire consequences would follow the construction of any pipeline in territory *not* controlled by Native people, and advance the principle that the Dene constitute a "nation"

within the Canadian federation, with certain rights to self-governance guaranteed either through federal policy or the conventions of international law.

Unfortunately, Watkins fails to include an objective, straightforward article detailing the general context of the situation, and nowhere can the reader find any reasonable presentation of the arguments on the other side of the issue. Occasionally sarcastic allusions are made to the advantages of quick development as supported by big business, but what emerges in the book is a series of uniformly corresponding views *in reaction* to a proposal never fully presented. The result is that many of the papers seem unduly polemical, over-stated, and simplistic. Even the most sympathetic reader must eventually come to wonder what the balancing argument might be; are we to believe that the views included here represent those of *all* the Northwest Territories Dene? Or are we hearing from only one faction? In Alaska, legitimate though disagreeing Native voices were raised on all sides of the pipeline issue (and still are), but *Dene Nation* dilutes what would otherwise be a powerful argument by apparently choosing to avoid a non-biased mention of any point of view other than its own. To anyone unfamiliar with the political and social history of the region, *Dene Nation* offers little assistance. An introductory preface outlining the nature of the issues and the arguments, as well as their background, would have vastly improved the book.

The essays themselves are a mixed bag. Peter Puxley, in "The Colonial Experience," attempts to relate the political situation of the Dene to that of other oppressed and exploited peoples, but in the process of searching for generalizations the Dene themselves become more abstraction than real; they seem to be fit into a pre-existent theoretical slot rather than to stand uniquely on their own. Michael Asch writes an interesting and articulate paper on "The Dene Economy," and his fascinating and persuasive analogy comparing the effects of the fur trade to that of the gas pipeline is one of the truly insightful and exciting ideas in the book. Charlie Snowshoe and Georges Erasmus provide hard-hitting and moving epic accounts, though one might argue with the latter's contention that other North American Indian nations have become "lost and depressed."

Mel Watkins' centrally-placed article, "From Underdevelopment to Development," is tightly-written and entirely persuasive. He lets facts, rather than emotional appeal, inform his

argument, and thus instantly distinguishes himself from far too many of his collaborators in this volume. His is the single most valuable contribution in the book.

Since many if not most of the issues raised in *Dene Nation* will probably eventually be settled in the courts, the reader looks for clarification to C. Gerald Sutton's essay on "Aboriginal Rights," the single article dealing with legal precedent and context. And while helpful in familiarizing one with the history of Canadian-Native litigation and theory, the piece falls far short of what it might have been. Sutton seems strangely unfamiliar with comparative case law. He cites as a potentially beneficent example the transfer of aboriginal title to western title for Maori lands in New Zealand, apparently unaware that the Treaty of Waitangi has been repeatedly ruled as having no legally binding force under New Zealand law and offering no protection to Maori lands. He refers on several occasions to "North American" legal and political attitudes towards Natives, as if a tremendous difference between Canadian and U.S. Indian relations did not exist.

The kind of "nation" that the Dene apparently seek, at least as far as one can make out from the essays in this book, is of the "domestic, dependent" type. That is, internal self-government while remaining a part of the larger Canadian government. This is precisely the type of relationship that John Marshall described for the Cherokee and, by implication, all other federally recognized land-holding tribes in the United States. In both *Georgia v. United States* and *Worcester v. Georgia* (1830 and 1832, respectively) the rights of tribal sovereignty were upheld and set in precedent. To be sure they have, for large blocks of American history, been illegally suppressed, but they did remain on the books and were there for Native American attorneys and others to invoke in the mid-20th Century to re-establish Indian self-determination.

The problems and choices faced by the Dene—the pressure to develop exhaustible natural resources versus the desire to maintain cultural integrity—are similar to those faced by Indian peoples in the United States, from the Crow to the Navajo to the Passamaquoddy. What *is* different is the presence in the American legal code of historic judicial rulings which recognize territorial and sub-surface rights based on aboriginal title. That Sutton, and indeed the whole book, ignore this valuable, next-door example is incomprehensible. Much of what the Dene

Nation wants, the Navajo Nation has got; it is not necessary to make the same mistakes and learn the same lessons over and over. Native peoples, in their dealings with former (and present) contemporary colonial governments must share knowledge and methodology, and extend trust, among one another.

The case for Dene self-governance and territorial and developmental control is a strong one, but it would be more potent and convincing if presented objectively, accurately and clearly. *Dene Nation* has within it valuable elements which will be useful as supplements to other sources; it should have been able to stand on its own.

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To Run After Them: Cultural and Social Bases of Cooperation in a Navajo Community. By Louise Lamphere. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977. 230 pp. Hardcover \$12.50; pap. \$6.50.

The Navajo idiom for helping people out, literally translated into English, is "to run after them." Hence the title of Louise Lamphere's book, which deals with Navajo mutual aid and cooperation, activities central to Navajo social life and highly valued. A thorough study of an important subject, her book is a welcome addition to Navajo ethnography. It is based on fieldwork in 1965-66 in a pseudonymous community, Copper Canyon, on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico. Copper Canyon is located in an area with marked altitudinal differences and a seasonally transhumant pattern of pastoralism. Its 750 residents (where were another 250 people closely tied to, but living away from, the community) lived by raising livestock and farming, by weaving, and from welfare, railroad work, other wage work, and ten-day tribal work projects.

Lamphere begins with Navajo ethics, pointing out that helping out is a key positive value and that people who can be described as antisocial—the stingy, angry, envious, sexually jealous, and lazy—are those who do not help others out prop-