

Page 11 - Ben Christmas: Chants and Customs

ISSUE: Issue 25

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1980/6/1

kagi tla'sik koqoey ta'n tela'sikip malie'wi'titek. Kelu'lk ta'n teli tgonasi'tij, keknue'k na api ktapekiagn ji'nm ketapekiatk. Agg kisintog keju't klu'lktn ta'n teli tgwa'ma'tij. Agg apj wi'kupaltimk agg meski'k wlta'suagn. Katu mu kelu'lktnuk ta'n teli tgwa'ma'tij, apj na ji'nm kekinue'k ta'n ketapekiatk ktapekiagn. Agg kisintog na tlisip meskata'suagn agg atkitemuagn maja'sik. Na' na telamu'kiss niktua'tagn tmk ta'n nike' kinu telui'tmu'k aklasie'wiktuk, "divorce." E'pit skmtuk apaja'sit wnki'kiktuk agg ji'nm elp nekm apaja'sit wnki'kiktuk. Na teli kagiag malie'wutimuox 7. Katu kisi malie'wita'qq na apj a. Ji'nm pilue'l e'pite'sl kisi mknatal kisna e'pit apj mknuj kisi malie'witew. Kespi a'tuksijik pe'1." (Bernie, you were reluctant to translate these chants into English. Would it be a mistake then for people to take these as real translations of the chants?) Bernie Francis, Membertou: That's right. I think they are very subjective, because, even when I write the chant in Micmac, all I'm doing is putting down the phonetics--I'm just putting down sounds on paper--I'm not putting down words, I'm not putting down meaning, and I'm not putting down feeling, which is the essence of a chant. When a chant is chanted, it's something that comes from the soul, and that's why words are sometimes too"* superficial, too human-- just not adequate. (So you listen to a taped chant and, sound by sound, you are writing down what you hear?) That's right. (Do these words have any meaning at all?) Well, there are some chants that have words, yes. But for in- The Marriage Failure Song Nekm na teli pkwatog A' witape'kaltinen nekm na teli pkwatog A'witape'kaltinen To'g nike'j al talitutk a' Al talitutk al talitutk Nekm na teli pkwatog A' witape'kaltinen Nekm na teli pkwatog A' witape'kaltinen To'g nike'j al talitutk a' Al talitutk al talitutk Nekm na teli pkwatog a' Witape'kaltinen To'g nike'j al talitutk a' Al talitutk al talitutk Nekm na teli pkwatog a' Witape'kaltinen Nekm na teli pkwatog a' Witape'kaltinen To'g nike'j atkitemit a' Atkitemit atkitemit Nekm na teli pkwatog a' Witape'kaltinen To'g nike'j atkitemit a' Atkitemit atkitemit The Marriage Failure Song It is her doing that we became married and now she mopes around It is her doing that we became married And now she cries, sh'e cries, she cries. stance, the Feast Song--those sounds have no particular human meaning. It's next to impossible for me to try to explain to someone what this chant means--unless it was I who chanted and had the feeling at the moment when I was chanting. Some of Lobster Kettle Wharfsido Re'touraiit Steamed Ctams. Boiled Lobsters, Chowder Seafood at Its Best Havenside Road * Louisbourg, Nova Scotia * I'hone 733-2877 Look for us enroute to the Lighthouse.' Reservations: 564-6417 Featuring the fuel efficient Citation b;' General Motors. "Rates as low as or lower than our major competi? tors in this city! Where Canada's smart money rents its cars. Our U.S. affiliate is National Car Rental AIR CANADA? SERVING CANADA COAST TO COAST THE UNITED STATES • UNITED KINGDOM • EUIIOPE • CARRIBEAN For informoHoH teU your Trmoel Agent or AIR CANADA """flf"" I N OF THE KEN S KITCHEN * n dRzza 429 Prince Street, Sydney, 562-5538 . C.B. Shopping Plaza, Sydney River, 539-3983 20 Regent Street, North Sydney, 793-8248 (Soft Ice Cream Bar) Ponzo Originated in Cape Breton (11)