Tuesday November 14, 2017 Chair: James Arreak
Presenter: James (Jim) Aldridge Recorder: Richard Cywink

The Crown-First Nations relationship today is very political and currently enforced by the Supreme Court of Canada. Fourteen years ago the Land Claims Agreement Coalition was formed to help the Canadian Government and all of Canada's First Nations. Fourteen years ago, the legal aspects of today, led to the formation of the "Lands Claims Agreement Coalition" LCAC to help assist Canada's First Nations, Metis and Inuit, deal with Canadian laws.

The result was in 1973 with the Calder versus the Province of British Columbia to help the Nis'gaa settle a land claims dispute. More recently was an environmental dispute with the province of Quebec versus Moses in 2010. The James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement is a good example of a modern agreement where the statutes are part of the law of the land and also constitutional laws. We can say an agreement with both the government of Canada and some of Canada's First Nations, honouring a modern day pact, including hunting and fishing rights, economic development and self-government.

The consensus is that Canada must honour all its treaties in a generous way, when representing the Crown and not in an ad-hoc manner. We must note that adhering to treaties does not complete any reconciliation, but does help with the governments conscientious, because as long as they can make promises, they can break them. On this note; the Nis'gaa did not allow Canada to break their promise!!! This was considered unconstitutional, so the government promised to put monies aside to adhere to the treaty, but never used it. (The outcome…The Canadian government saved 15 million dollars not to monitor the environment.) The response by the Alberta Supreme court for the breech of the covenant was 14 million dollars.

The lawsuit in combination with a few other lawsuits helped to bring into effect a new set of legal and political actions within the Alberta government.