A Distinctive Worldview

Hundreds of different First Nations in Canada existed at one time, while only about fifty different nations exist today in any significant strength of numbers. Each nation had or has its own protocols in ceremony, general etiquette and basic ways of life. The fundamental essence of the First Nation world view, however, is unity or the oneness of all things – how we are all in the circle of life. Our daily work is to work towards living in harmony with all created things. The people are not to live separate from the land with its cycle of seasons or from the other mysterious cycles of living things. These are the stories around the fire, the stories in the songs a grandmother sings, in the dances. This is a story of the spirit - individual and collective. It honours interconnectedness with a focus on keeping strong the spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual self to enable "good" interactions with others. All things have been placed here thorough the will or direction of the Creator, the Master of Life, the Great Mystery. Thus all things are of equal value and have distinct purpose and spirit or life-force. This spirit or life-force from that of the stationary rock to the blowing wind connects us all.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

This Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was established on August 26, 1991. Events such as the confrontation, in the summer of 1990, between Mohawks and the power of the Canadian state at Kanesatake (Oka), Quebec and the demise of the Meech Lake Accord made this commission a very timely endeavour. The mandate of the Commission was essentially to illustrate what the aboriginal experience in Canada has been, what is happening now and recommend what can be the solutions to the problems which have beleaguered and continue to confront aboriginal peoples today. The Commission was to examine all issues which it deems to be relevant to any or all of the aboriginal peoples of Canada. In following the terminology of the Canadian Constitution, Aboriginal Peoples are defined as those people of First Nation, Métis or Inuit heritage.

The Commission was formatted into five sections:

1. Looking Forward, Looking Back
2. Restructuring the Relationship
3. Gathering Strength
4. Perspectives and Realities
5. Renewal: A Twenty-Year Commitment

In hundreds of pages the Commission thoroughly provides background into the Canadian Aboriginal Experience from a largely Aboriginal perspective. Included in this background are teachings such as the Micmaq Creation Story and other illustrations which gives a sense of history and perspective.

The complete document is available on http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/index_e.html