Native struggles connect Canadians

Thank you, NOW, for the great collection of insightful articles by aboriginal leaders on the meaning of *Idle No More* (NOW, February 7-13). Like Occupy Wall Street, this movement has changed the narrative about the logic of our economy.

The relentless drive by the Harper regime to remove any opposition to the greed of mining conglomerates and Big Oil has finally been exposed. It’s not the first government to try to extinguish title rights of First Nations, but it has been a long time since so many Canadians have connected the efforts of indigenous peoples with our common future.

Email: letters@nowtoronto.com
Idle No More prophecy

I loved Wab Kinew’s What Would Tecumseh Say? (NOW, February 7-13) and what he says about the power of Idle No More.

As far as I have read, the coming of this movement was prophesied a couple of hundred years ago.

Anja Sagan
From nowtoronto.com

Drake’s “Starting from the bottom” fairy tale

Re What Drake Thinks Words Mean (NOW, February 11). John Semley’s article is on point.

It makes me laugh that people (see ridiculous online comments) will defend Drake no matter what he does.

The point is, growing up in Forest Hill and being a child actor is not in any way, shape or form “starting from the bottom.”

I can’t wait for the day when Drake’s fan base is all 13-year-old girls. Those are the only people who rate this guy, period.

Vanessa B.
From nowtoronto.com

Ravi Shankar out of this world

I was jumping with joy as I watched Norah Jones and Anoushka receive the Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award for their late father, Ravi Shankar, this past weekend.

How pleasant to see. Great as Shankar was, the fact that he and his instrument were embraced by the Beatles [and other] Western musicians raised him to Almighty status not only in the West, where he played regularly, but also in the eyes of his fellow Indians.

Panditji, as Ravi Shankar was fondly called, wasn’t as vibrant, although he still played extremely powerfully in his later years, sending me more into a “dhun” than ever before. It was like leaving Earth!

Lachman Balani
Brampton
**Pesticides, not wind turbines, killing birds**

Many thanks for Wind Power Spin (NOW, February, 7-13), showing that cats harm far more birds than do wind turbines. Another huge danger to birds comes from pesticides. Research published by the Pembina Institute says pesticides kill about 700 times more birds than turbines. The real threat to our avian friends is not renewable energy, but cats, chemicals and tall buildings.

**Gideon Forman**  
**Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment**

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**Dead right on walking this way**

Brian Doucet's piece *Walking Taller* (NOW, February 7-13) was spot-on in advocating for more cycling and walking infrastructure.

However, his mocking of the advice to pedestrians from Toronto police “to wear light-coloured clothing at night to avoid being hit by cars” was among the silliest nonsense I've ever read in NOW.

This is a little like writing that we shouldn't wear helmets when biking or seat belts when driving because other vehicles shouldn't crash into us. True, they shouldn't, but every day they do. Ignoring reality leads to being “dead right.”

**Al Janusas**  
**Toronto**

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**T.O.'s big high-rise mistake**

Re *Condo Crush*, by Adam Giambrone (NOW, February 7-13). Preserving manufacturing should be about keeping high-rises from being built in Toronto in the first place.

Planning in Toronto is still a process controlled by developers and council. The much-touted public input process is more of an information session and usually ends with a picture that, amazingly, shows little traffic, clear skies, clean, unbroken streets and happy people.

Instead of pitching the same old stuff, we should be inviting a dialogue on adaptive reuse for urban agriculture and aquaponics, clean energy generation, local economic development and social programs that move the homeless and the hard-hit into clean, safe places that build skills and self-esteem. Certainly, we should not retain employment areas for the kinds of jobs that Walmart offers.

Toronto would do better to model itself after a city like Amsterdam, which has plenty of density and social atmosphere, and no high-rises. It's not perfect, but there's lots of sunshine and heritage for everyone.

**Chris Caldwell**  
**Toronto**
Dedicated streetcar lines, for heaven's sake

Every city I have ever been in Europe has dedicated streetcar lines. What would Toronto look like if King, Queen, Dundas and College had such lines? Heaven!

Dennis Raphael
Toronto

Theresa Spence stereotypes

I loved Alice Klein's article about Chief Theresa Spence (NOW, January 31-February 6). It's really good to read something not littered with misconceptions and stereotypes. Too bad some readers are commenting negatively online. There are some who refuse to accept the truth and persist in their narrow-minded, racist views.

But that's why people like you need to keep writing. Don't let the negativity of those reader comments stop you or slow you down. Stay strong. The Creator is truly with you.

Diane Cote
Melfort, Saskatchewan

Penny for your thoughts no more

I didn't know that the Canadian penny was going out of circulation (NOW, February 5). I don't read the newspaper, watch the news or listen to radio. If a current event is important enough for me to know about, someone will tell me.

That being said, I can't believe we're all going to become slightly poorer. I kind of like pennies, and I will miss them. I like that artists are using them as a medium. I like that my mother suggested our family gather all of our pennies and make an art piece. I can't wait for the first time I have to wait a little longer for a cashier to do the rounding math in his or her head.

It's sad [that] "Penny for your thoughts" will need to be explained to our grandchildren. It's crazy to think that now the value of those lucky pennies you find on the ground will be purely luck – which in a very real way makes them more meaningful.

And what to do about those little plastic "leave a penny, take a penny" things? This is amazing. I feel like our world is being shaken ever so slightly, and I love that stuff.

David Keystone
Toronto

NOW welcomes reader mail. Address letters to: NOW, Letters to the Editor, 189 Church, Toronto, ON M5B 1Y7. Send e-mail to letters@nowtoronto.com and faxes to 416-364-1166. All correspondence must include your name, address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length.
Gideon Forman has NO recognized expertise, training, or background in matters concerning either pest control products or wind turbines. Essentially, Forman’s background includes a starring role in ECO-PORN FILMS.

Moreover, Forman operates as a HIRED GUN and ILLEGAL LOBBYIST and FUND-RAISER. Forman is paid to COERCE, INTIMIDATE, and TERRORIZE Government Officials by CONCOCTING FRAUDULENT LIES AND IMAGINARY DANGER about pest control products.

Forman with Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment and Canadian Cancer Society DESTROYED the Professional Lawn Care Industry. Forget about the damage caused to birds.

Pest control products used in the Urban Landscape DO NOT HARM BIRDS.

But what about the CATASTROPHIC CARNAGE created by Forman against decent, hard-working, law-abiding, and tax-paying businesses operating in the Professional Lawn Care Industry. Their tax-dollars basically funded Forman’s SUBVERSIVE ENVIRO-LUNATIC CAMPAIGNS.

Forman’s organizations DO NOT DESERVE ANY DONATIONS OR SUPPORT, and are presently UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR CHARITY FRAUD AND CONSPIRACY.

Forman’s organizations DO NOT deserve a TAX-EXEMPT status. More information about Forman and his organizations can be found on The Pesticide Truths Web-Site ...

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