

Peace Between Cultures

Chief David Crowchild was an inspiring, intellectual icon of our past who believed that First Nations and people of European descent should all get along, and share the same rights. He believed in living in peace, despite cultural differences. As a member of the Tsuu T'ina Nation on the Sarcee Reserve, and an aboriginal citizen of Calgary, Crowchild wanted his people to have the same qualities as the European immigrants. He recognized that the Sarcee Reserve lacked infrastructure, like roads, schools and farmlands.

When Crowchild was elected chief of the Tsuu T'ina Nation in 1946, he helped to employ and empower many members of his community through improving infrastructure. He repaired the old roads and built a school. Crowchild was very interested in wild horses and loved bronc riding, so he made a living by raising cattle. As chief, he also helped to establish farming throughout the reserve, and his love of ranching led him to become involved in the Calgary Stampede.

Crowchild and his wife, Daisy Dawn, were very involved in many associations and were known to wear their traditional headdresses and clothing to important meetings. In 1971, Crowchild was honored by the City of Calgary. The council decided to name a major freeway after him in

honor of his commitment to the community, and his favorable goals to help create peace and rights between cultures. When the ribbon cutting ceremony was held, Crowchild's speech indicated that when he cut the ribbon, he would be cutting all barriers between all people. It was his hope that anyone who traveled on the road would travel safely, with dignity and friendship. Crowchild passed away on April 10, 1982, but his leadership and impact on Calgarians continues to be remembered today.

Crowchild fought for his people's rights, not just because it benefited himself, but because equal rights would benefit many people in his community. He didn't want to see his tribe fall apart because there were no jobs or schools. Crowchild's determination has shown me that I, too, can strive to make my community a better place. He helped fix roads and build schools to make the environment on his reserve more livable. He believed in himself and he felt that if he tried hard, he could make a change.

I think if students all over Calgary believed in their ability to make changes, they could make a difference in their communities too. It could be as easy as helping to clean up their school environments by not littering, or by picking up garbage in their school fields. They could also organize recycling or composting programs. Crowchild encouraged people to

tolerate and accept each other. Students today can learn from his example by thinking twice before we judge someone. Many kids are picked on everyday because their parents can't afford the top brands, or they don't have the right jeans. People are judged so harshly, by something so menial as 'appearance', and then they end up being bullied or becoming an outcast. Crowchild was part of a different culture and he wore different clothes, so he and his tribe members were treated with much less respect. He stood up against this, and changed the way his tribe lived from then on.

Imagine a world without judgment. People would finally all be treated equally. Maybe there would finally be peace. But that will never happen if we don't learn how to stand up for what we believe in. Crowchild helped me learn how to do that. He reminded me to think twice before judging others. A very inspirational writer named Gandhi once wrote, "*Be the change you wish to see in the world*". Crowchild did that.