

RECOIL

Shooting messengers: Why stars can't sell gun control. *Selley, A10*



Sequels to crowd big screens this year. *Page B4*

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ENGINES REVVING Auto sales end 2012 in high gear. *Page FP1*

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'OUR GAME' NO LONGER

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Chief gives Ottawa 72 hours



SEAN KILPATRICK / THE CANADIAN PRESS

Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence, centre, is helped back to her teepee after meeting supporters in Ottawa Thursday, the 24th day of her hunger strike.

The ghosts of Bill 115

SCOTT STINSON
Comment

The lone surprise in Laurel Broten's talking-points-laden announcement that she will impose two-year contracts on Ontario's public elementary and secondary school teachers was that the Education Minister will also move to repeal Bill 115 this month. This is somewhat akin to extending an olive branch after you've beaten someone senseless with it.

As Ms. Broten herself acknowledged at Queen's Park on Thursday, with the new contracts now legislated for the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSSTF), Bill 115 has now accomplished what it was intended to do — get new teacher contracts full of zeros in the wage department and reductions to generous benefit packages, even if the unions refused to agree to them.

See STINSON on Page A4

Misguided hunger strike is manufacturing dissent

PETER FOSTER
Comment

Nobody would deny the desperate conditions on many native reserves. Most Canadians are genuinely concerned and frustrated at how little improvement has been brought by the billions spent. However, to imagine that problems of poverty, ill health and poor education are best addressed — let alone solved — by histrionic threats, social-mediated mob scenes or blocked roads or rail lines is dangerous delusion.

Chief Theresa Spence, who was previously best known for declaring states of emergency — arguably rooted in her own mismanagement — at her Attawapiskat reserve, is suddenly being treated as some combination of Martin Luther King and Aung San Suu Kyi. Celebrity moths, bleeding hearts and clamberers up the greasy political pole have sought to invest her "hunger strike," which is now into its fourth week, with noble purpose.

In fact, her initial threat to starve herself to death failing a meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Governor General David Johnston suggested either a bizarre degree of narcissism, or revealed her as a witless puppet. Perhaps both.

Nevertheless, Chief Spence has obviously proved an embarrassment to mainstream native leadership, as has the recently unleashed Idle No More movement, with its dancing, drumming and transport blockades.

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INSIDE

THE ROAD TO ATTAWAPISKAT

James Bay Treaty root of modern native policy.

J. Kay, A13



WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

One author's tale of native uprising all too plausible.

Blatchford, A6

THE SCIENCE OF HUNGER STRIKING

A person can live on fluids alone for weeks. *Page A6*

CAN'T WAIT THREE WEEKS TO MEET: CHIEF

BY HEATHER SCOFFIELD

OTTAWA • The hunger-striking chief of Northern Ontario's Attawapiskat First Nation can't wait three more weeks for the prime minister to meet with aboriginal leaders, a spokesman said Thursday.

Theresa Spence, who's been subsisting on liquids since Dec. 11 to prod Stephen Harper and Governor-General David Johnston into talks with aboriginal leaders, is weak with hunger and needs the meeting to take place within the next 72 hours, said spokesman Danny Metatawabin.

Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, has urged Mr. Harper and Mr. Johnston to meet chiefs on Jan. 24 — the one-year anniversary of Mr. Harper's summit with First Nations.

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FRENCH FAMILY TRADES BRIE, BAGUETTE FOR LIFE ON A BOAT IN THE ARCTIC

BY JOE O'CONNOR

French geophysicist Eric Brossier does not remember a singular, crystallizing moment, when he consciously resolved to lead an unconventional life. To do things differently than most and to plant himself, and his wife, France, and their two young daughters, in the middle of a Canadian nowhere aboard a 15-metre yacht.

Stuck fast in the Arctic sea ice for

months on end and with a view out the boat's stern window that, on the first Thursday of the New Year, featured a band of Inuit hunters butchering a polar bear.

"The bear was about 10 metres from the boat when they shot it," says Mr. Brossier, a family man and Arctic ice researcher who, over the past 13 years, has redefined, or perhaps — single-handedly invented — the term: extreme family living.

See O'CONNOR on Page A3

SEE DRIVING SECTION OR NISSAN.CA FOR DETAILS