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**Chief Rita Cli Gives Update On Development In Simpson Area
CBC Special Report, October 2, 2002, 7:40 a.m.**

CBC: Rita Cli has been chief of the Liidlii Kue First Nation in Fort Simpson for five years. A lot has happened in the region over that span of time and Randy sat down with her to chat about some of the issues she's faced as chief.

HENDERSON: Chief Rita Cli, this is your second term in office now as chief. I am wondering what it's like being chief now compared to when you first became chief of the Liidlii Kue First Nation.

CLI: Well, to begin with, it was a challenge because I was the first female chief for this community. Because you are female, it's a fight all the way to prove to everybody that you can do the job. So in that essence, I am always fighting. The one thing that I found is that it's a challenge and if you are honest and you are not in it for personal gains, you can do things for your people.

HENDERSON: Now that you have had a few years under your belt is it any easier for you?

CLI: It has gotten easier whereas just about everyday, I get calls from my peers, not only in my region but outside my region running things by me to see what kind of advice I would give them, giving them direction. You know, having been involved in politics not only as chief, but previously as a councillor and sub-chief with Jim Antoine, I have gained quite a bit of experience and I am one that tends to do their homework, so if I don't have an answer, I will get back to that individual so I always get calls from people wanting feedback on some kind of issue.

HENDERSON: Now, Chief, what is the biggest challenge facing you as chief right now?

CLI: I guess the thing that I find, the challenge, like I talked at one of the meetings last week is reaching the youth. The challenge that we have is we have been saying we are doing things not for us to gain today but for the future generations. They have to start listening. What we, as leaders today, have is the challenge of facing the video games and the TVs and all these conveniences that are so available for our kids. That sort of supercedes your education. So in that way, you have a challenge everyday to try

to make them realize that education is so critical for them to move ahead. We want development to happen, but at the same time we have to ensure that our people are educated to venture into that avenue.

HENDERSON: You mentioned development. Are you satisfied that you can go ahead with development in your region but remain loyal to the Deh Cho process at the same time?

CLI: Yes. We know the Deh Cho process is in place and we know our interim measures are in place to protect us while we talk at the negotiating table, but you can still have development happen providing that you adhere to the Deh Cho process and it's got to be paralleled to whatever you do in development. If you know your Deh Cho process, your interim measures, and you do your homework, I can't see it going backwards. You have to go forwards. There are people that do read and write and know that if you follow all the stuff that's in place, I can't see it failing because the interim measures protects us as we do development.

HENDERSON: What is your position on the seismic testing proposal for the Mackenzie River?

CLI: Well, I wasn't around this summer when it took place, I was on leave. But from the feedback that I got, there was one of our hunters and trappers that was involved with what happened out there and his report...like he saw it first hand. There was no devastation that was done because our elders have always said the most important resource we have on our land is the water and for it never to be devastated. He went out there with some seismic group and the feedback we got is that there was nothing negative about it. He was there to oversee what is happening. As a hunter and a trapper, he didn't think there was anything bad about it.

HENDERSON: What do they do now to do seismic testing?

CLI: I think it has to do with air guns and that. The hunter that was out there with them was indicating that all the fish that they handled, only one was dead. Other than that, there was no devastation that was done. In the past, like I said in the paper, there used to be dynamite. Well, it's not like that anymore. Nothing can be done without First Nations consultation and participation. So industry knows they have to have First Nations people on site. So that's what is starting to happen and we see it happening. I can't see it failing. It will if we don't participate, but by us participating, I can't see it failing.

HENDERSON: Thank you very much.

CLI: Mahsi cho.

CBC: Rita Cli is the chief of the Liidlil Kue First Nation.