



COVER STORY
January 2007

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The Fourth Way Phil Lane Jr's vision for harmony, prosperity

By: Alex Valdes

For nearly four decades, Phil Lane Jr. has traveled along a spiritual path, one that now leads him to undertake the most challenging and ambitious endeavor of his life, and one that might just help save the human race, and the planet, from near-certain destruction.

"The Fourth Way" draws upon the Reunion of the Condor and the Eagle – the Indigenous peoples of South and North America and the Caribbean – to end war, environmental destruction and socioeconomic injustice, and give us a greater defense against terrorism than Homeland Security could ever hope to accomplish.

Sound daunting? Sure, but who better to help lead such an initiative than Lane, CEO of United Indians of All Tribes at the Daybreak Star Cultural Center in Discovery Park. This is a man who has endured plenty of traumas – sexual abuse, drugs and alcohol – only to emerge stronger through spiritual discovery, healing and forgiveness.

Lane has taken on huge challenges: developing Indigenous language programs for Quechua and Aymara Indians in Bolivia; starting the first Native-American self-help prison group in North America; and even talking for three hours with a man he swears was KGB at the Soviet embassy in East Berlin during the height of the Cold War in 1962.

Hence, The Fourth Way. The initiative was launched Oct. 4 under the guidance of Lane and longtime Indigenous leader and UIATF board member Mel Tonasket and is co-sponsored by UIATF and Canada-based Four Worlds International, an agency founded by Lane. The Fourth Way seeks to end "escalating cycles of poverty and violence and helping to build sustainable and harmonious prosperity across the



Americas. From our perspective, the current path is one of escalating conflict, chaos, violence, and potential terrorism,” Lane said.

The 42-page plan is subtitled “An Indigenous Contribution for Building Sustainable and Harmonious Prosperity in the Americas” and offers an Indigenous-led, alternative approach to global issues such as terrorism, environmental degradation and war.

Lane calls The Fourth Way a “strategic security strategy” that “will be far more effective than heavy-handed diplomatic or military approaches. Clearly, Indigenous peoples have the vision, the guiding principles and values, the growing capacity and collective resources to co-create a peaceful and harmonious future for all of our children and grandchildren.

“With all that’s unfolded since 9/11, a growing concern by many people on Mother Earth is, ‘how are we going to secure ourselves from terrorism and violence?’” asked Lane at his offices overlooking the Puget Sound. “We have to address those socioeconomic conditions that greatly contribute to terrorism. But arrogance and not understanding the incredible strength, spiritual wisdom, power and potentiality of what’s unfolding in Latin America because of concerns in other places in the world, is leading us to one of the greatest security crises that we could ever experience.”

Unveiling the Fourth Way

The Fourth Way is so named because the other three have been catastrophic responses to oppression for Indigenous peoples in the 500-plus years since Columbus’ invasion and subsequent rape and exploitation of the Americas’ resources and peoples:

- **Assimilation** – surrendering identity, history, culture, spiritual beliefs and lifestyles to become part of the homogenous mass – has only resulted in most losing their land and remaining marginalized, poor and desperate.
- **Resignation** – accepting powerlessness, poverty, victimization, sickness and despair as Indigenous peoples’ destiny – has resulted in alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide and defeatism.
- **Resistance** – either armed or nonviolent struggles to defend lands, families and lives, and win concessions from governments – has had limited success in achieving goals while at the same time fostering ill will from the mainstream.

In contrast, The Fourth Way utilizes empowerment and constructive development to create Indigenous and related social movements to improve education, health care, infrastructure and economic development, and allow true participation by Indigenous people to rebuild the torn nations of the Americas.



"Indigenous people still have their hearts open to co-creating a sustainable, peaceful, harmonious future together," Lane says. "But I believe that door is closing ... closing because of the arrogance (of white society), because they've mistaken true spiritual humility and community that has a great respect for life as weakness. And they've pushed these communities to the edge.

"The heart of The Fourth Way must be manifested first in the heart of our own communities or it won't have impact beyond this area," Lane adds. "The development of this part of The Fourth Way is our priority at this time.

"It's received a lot of support. There are many Native communities that want to be involved ... and we have several individual donors who really support this vision."

However, Lane says the major obstacle will be "fear. This is fear-based society: fear of losing power and control, fear of scarcity, fear of hunger, fear of death, fear of loss of economic power. What's going to happen all of a sudden when there's an awakening of consciousness, when masses of people are able to think and act freely?"

Lane, 62, said The Fourth Way actually had its real start on May 5, 1999, when leaders of more than 100,000 Indigenous peoples from the U.S., Canada and Mexico signed the first International Indigenous Trade and Social Development Agreement and Unity Pact at an amphitheatre built by the Otomi people outside of Mexico City and dedicated to the Reunion of the Condor and Eagle.

"That's where we really formally initiated this whole concept of the Reunion of the Condor and Eagle," Lane says. "This old prophecy foretold that the old union – that is, the mutual support and trade network across the Americas – would be reunited, but at a different state of consciousness that would involve all members of the human family."

The Fourth Way is based upon "[The Sixteen Principles](#)," which emerged out of consultations spanning more than 20 years between Indigenous spiritual, cultural and community leaders and which began in December 1982 at a meeting of traditional elders and community leaders in Alberta, Canada. They had gathered to find solutions to the myriad tragedies facing their communities in the U.S. and Canada: substance abuse, poverty, suffering and death.

The Sixteen Principles are a framework for human and community development based on the ideas of sustainable change, healing and development that are at the core of tribal cultures around the world.

Lane's and Tonasket's first step toward implementing The Fourth Way is a pledge of support for Bolivian president Evo Morales, one of only a handful of Indigenous elected leaders in the history of the Americas. Morales said at the United Nations in September that Bolivia and other Latin American countries must reclaim their natural resources from multinational corporations in an effort to end poverty. He also said that the U.S. "war against drugs" was merely an excuse to interfere in Andean communities.



In backing Morales and Bolivia, Lane is fulfilling a promise he made in 1972, after leaving the country following the rape of his wife by the son of a wealthy landowner. Lane had gone there in 1970 to help revitalize Quechuan and Aymaran cultures and establish literacy programs in their native languages. Upon leaving, Lane had vowed to return one day to Bolivia with allies from the north.

The Fourth Way will be implemented in four areas:

- **Diplomacy**, in which Indigenous people will work with government to shape policy to lessen the extremes of wealth and poverty and ensure that Indigenous communities receive a fair share of their nations' resources
- **Partnerships**, between Indigenous peoples and governments, NGO's, international development agencies, business, and mainly between Indigenous communities of North and South America to share knowledge, capacity and resources for mutual aid, trade and development
- **Negotiation**, in which Indigenous people will be able to work with governments and business to address needs and concerns
- **Economic assistance**, to improve education, health care, business development, cultural revitalization, a social safety net, and more in Indigenous communities

But The Fourth Way is only the latest stop, if not the most monumental, on the path Lane embarked on nearly 40 years ago. After leaving Bolivia in 1972, he served in several leadership positions at UIATF under founder and CEO Bernie Whitebear, one of the most influential and revered leaders of color in Seattle history who died in 2000.

Lane eventually moved to Canada, where he spent 25 years as associate professor of Native American education at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta and co-founded Four Worlds International, which uses principle-centered methods for human and community transformation, healing and development.

In 2005, Lane was unanimously appointed CEO of UIATF, which provides a wide array of services and programs including Head Start, foster care, elder services, housing, substance abuse prevention and treatment, GED testing, an art market and an annual pow wow as part of Seafair Indian Days.

He immediately made a big impact, says Randy Lewis, a board member and longtime Native-American activist who participated in the invasion and occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco in 1969 and months later the occupation of Fort Lawton at Discovery Park, an action that led to the building of the Daybreak Star Center.



"What he's done is nothing short of a miracle. He pulled us out of a nosedive," says Lewis. "We were running on empty, had no funding. He literally brought us back, gave us a breath of fresh air."

"Phil is hyper. And generally when someone is in charge of a Native-American organization, one that has so many facets, you have to be hyper, and go at breakneck speed because there are so many bases to cover. He has a sense of humor and really recharged us."

Along the way, Lane also earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington and a Master's in Curriculum Instruction in Education from National University in San Diego. Additionally, he was awarded an International Fellowship from the Harvard University Business School's International Institute for the Arts.

He's won the same awards (Windstar, International Award for Freedom and Human Rights) as such luminaries as 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, oceanographer Jacques-Yves Cousteau, the Dali Lama of Tibet and former U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali.

Lane is an award-winning author and film producer, with credits including the National Public Television series "Images of Indians" with Will Sampson, "Walking With Grandfather," "The Honor of All: The Story of Alkali Lake" and "Healing the Hurts."

"I was extremely happy when he was offered the job at United Indians," says Roberto Maestas, executive director of El Centro de la Raza, who has known Lane for more than 30 years and is one of the most powerful activists of color in Seattle. "After Bernie Whitebear died, UIATF went through a tough period. It was wonderful to see Phil Lane come back. He's got a hell of a big job."

Lane has spent his career helping to fulfill old prophecies that foretell a winter of suffering followed by a springtime of rebirth for Indigenous peoples in which the northern (Eagle) and southern (Condor) tribes join forces to take leadership roles in establishing world peace, social justice and economic prosperity.

"I, with all my heart and soul, believe in these old prophecies and that today, more than ever, we need to come together and co-create a future for all members of the human family and all those generations yet to come," Lane says.

"Adversarial politics is not going to get us there. It's only through constructive dialogue and development that balances the extremes of wealth and poverty that is based in life-preserving and life-enhancing values – respect, kindness, love, compassion – and not politicized values, that partisan politics is deepening the crisis of the human family around the world.

"We're in the fulfillment stage of all the sacred prophecies around the world. The springtime is here," says Lane, who points to Indigenous movements in Latin America and the election of leaders more concerned with the rights of their peoples rather than simple power and profit.



Lane has been deeply influenced by the sacred prophecies and visions of many Indigenous peoples around the world, including Black Elk's Daybreak Star vision. Black Elk was an Oglala Lakota (Sioux), who fought in the Battle of Little Big Horn in 1876 at the age of 12, was injured during the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 and later became a medicine man.

At the age of nine, Black Elk had one of several visions that enabled him to prophesy that Indigenous peoples would suffer a spiritual winter followed by springtime of revival. From the root of what remains from a sacred tree, the white, yellow, red and black tribes would finally work together to achieve peace and harmony throughout the world.

This vision is called the Daybreak Star prophecy, hence the name of the building that houses United Indians.

"Black Elk's prophecies concerning the need for bringing all the tribes and nations together based in a spiritual foundation has been the thing that's animated me these past 40 years," Lane says. "The whole prophesy of the Daybreak Star, that was something very much in my heart and mind. Now I've come back and I can really see this incredible time in history in which Indigenous peoples and their allies have a tremendous opportunity to make a tremendous contribution in finding together a way out of this deepening crisis and chaos.

"If more consciousness is put into this rather than into making bombs and missiles and more sophisticated ways to kill each other and destroy each other and annihilate each other, we will be able to see how we can resolve crises like energy and pollution and global warming.

The process of violence and armed conflict as a way to bring peace or to conquer is continuous and it's leading us now into a place where we're increasingly going to get into disaster. That's a reality."

Lane's life is itself a microcosm of Black Elk's prophecy of suffering followed by rejuvenation and growth.

Lane was born at the Haskell Indian Residential School in Lawrence, Ks., as a member of the Yankton Dakota and Chickasaw tribes and later moved to Walla Walla, where he graduated from high school in 1962. He had the gift of being immersed by his parents and elders in Native American culture. But, like many Indigenous youth, he says he experienced generational physical and emotional abuse by his parents and community members, who themselves had endured the very painful residential school system.

That system was seen by many as a governmental policy aimed at destroying Native culture in the U.S. and Canada and is thought by many to be responsible for the sexual, emotional and spiritual trauma of thousands of Indigenous children forced to attend such schools over the years.

At 12, Lane says an older white child got him drunk and sexually abused him, an experience that launched Lane into years of self-hatred, shame, fear and rage.



Lane tried to mask his pain and fury with drugs, alcohol and violence – he once delivered such a brutal beating to a 6-foot-5” U.S. Marine who had just returned from Vietnam that the Marine had to have one eye removed. Witnesses said the Marine started the fight, exonerating Lane from prosecution.

Lane also had plenty of other fights and abusive, unhealthy relationships with women.

“Sometimes I didn’t care if I lived or died,” Lane says. “The only thing that saved me from a painful, premature death was the spiritual and cultural teachings, prophecies and stories of the greatness of our Indigenous peoples that were shared with me by my beloved parents, elders, extended family and loved ones, as well as learning about the spiritual teachings and prophecies of the great spiritual teachers who have always guided the human family.”

A spiritual experience in 1968 helped Lane free himself from his self-destructive addictions and he devoted his life to serving the Creator and his people. But his suffering was not over.

After two years in Bolivia, Lane’s wife was raped by the drunken son of a wealthy Bolivian family responsible for many years of brutality and abuse of Indigenous peoples. Years later, Lane’s 9-year-old daughter was sexually abused and his spiritual sister sexually assaulted.

But, like many Indigenous peoples, Lane endured, healed and learned the difficult art of forgiveness.

“The hardest thing I’ve ever had to learn in my life is the same thing that Chief Gall told my great-grandfather Teepee Sapa Philip Deloria ... and that is to love and forgive those who spitefully use you. It’s not easy. But the ability to forgive and forget is paramount in spiritual traditions all over the world if you look at the essence of the actual scriptural or spiritual teachings.

“How can you learn to be forgiving and develop the spiritual quality of forgiveness if people do things to you that you don’t deserve? How can you learn to be forgiving unless you’re treated unjustly ... unless you’re treated mercifully? How do you learn that quality?”

One of the things that always comes up when people talk about Lane is his ability to unify and build bridges between people.

El Centro’s Maestas says Lane revamped a coalition of minority leadership in Seattle that had been a “model for the rest of the nation.” That coalition was developed in the 1970s by the so-called “Four Amigos” of Maestas, African-American King County Council President Larry Gossett, Asian-American activist Bob Santos and Whitebear.

After Whitebear died, the coalition became frayed until Lane became CEO of UIATF in 2005.



"When Phil Lane came back, one of the first things he did was restore, reconnect and restrengthen the black-brown-yellow-Indian coalition. No major city in the U.S. has this kind of multiracial coalition," Maestas says.

Willard Bill Sr., a UIATF board member and historian for the Muckleshoot Tribe, said that Lane is "is very good at bringing people together. He has invited many groups to come in to have dinners and spiritual gatherings. He's very interested in giving people access."

Adds Maestas, "Phil Lane has an international perspective, he's a true global citizen. He's obsessed with the notion that we are all one fabric, like Martin Luther King said. He's been to Geneva, Venezuela, the Hague, the United Nations, pow wows, healing ceremonies, everything. I don't know how he does it. He's tireless."
From birth, it seemed Lane was destined to accomplish great things for his people.

His great-grandfather on his father's side was Chief Philip Deloria, or Teepee Sapa, who was a hereditary chief and spiritual leader of the White Swan Dakotas and represented his Dakota people of the Yankton Sioux Tribe in treaty negotiations with the U.S. government. In 1936, he was included as one of the 60 Saints of the Ages whose statues are in the High Altar of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

Deloria's father, Owl Man, also a traditionally recognized chief and leader of the Holy Man Society, represented all eight Yankton Bands at the White House in Washington, D.C. completing the Yankton Treaty of 1865.

On his mother's side Lane's great-grandfather was John Wesley Parker, who as a child survived the Trail of Tears, the forced march by the U.S. military of the Chickasaw people more than 1,000 miles from Tennessee to the Oklahoma Territory in the bitter cold and snows of winter. Parker spoke 17 different Native languages and was the official translator between the many tribes of the Oklahoma Territory, and served as commissioner, senator, president and representative in Chickasaw Nation political system.

Philip Lane Sr., also known by his Yakota name "Brown Bear", was an award-winning engineer, a military boxing champion, a raiser of quarter horses and above all, a tireless servant to his people, including outreach to Native American prisoners and recruitment and counseling of students at Oregon State.

The junior Lane has extended that lineage of leadership now to The Fourth Way, which could wind up being his masterpiece of a career spent helping to heal and transform Indigenous peoples.

He quickly points out that The Fourth Way already "is underway, under various names, from various parts of Mother Earth, but I can see very clearly beginning to merge together. And I believe this can happen a lot sooner than people think. "But it has to involve everybody. That's why one of our 16 principles says, 'No participation, no development.'"

He adds that Indigenous youth will play a central role in the success of the movement, considering that there is a baby boom among Indigenous across the



Americas and that many teens are battling alcoholism and drug addiction, most notably methamphetamine.

“Many young people are already moving forward in The Fourth Way. If we really listen to hip-hop, in its most uplifting, universal form, we find symbolism of The Fourth Way. I believe young people have taken a major step out of the prejudices, the narrow-mindedness of the past.

“I believe that young people have a much greater sense of the global community than my generation ever had because of this everywhere spirit that binds us all together now in which we’re able to communicate with people in different places in the world.”

The relentlessly optimistic Lane has many reasons to believe The Fourth Way will succeed. He and Tonasket have been and will be meeting with businesses, governmental officials, NGOs, Indigenous leaders and other entities. The ultimate goal will be to develop a model that will demonstrate the power of the initiative to create change and development without war, environmental destruction and socioeconomic injustice.

And they think the alchemy exists right here for Seattle and Washington state to be that model.

“We have a tremendous philanthropic community here, and a business community and NGOs who are working with people of color who are all facing similar issues regarding poverty, lack of health care, education. It’s really about bringing people together and working together to solve issues.”

Lane recently returned from a two-week trip to Thailand and China to discuss The Fourth Way and found that Indigenous groups there and other people were “fascinated with the whole concept of governments, Indigenous people, NGOs and philanthropist working together.”

However, Lane said the trip reconfirmed to him that the Western Hemisphere, and particularly the Americas, is where The Fourth Way will have its best chance of implementation.

“We are in an incredibly strategic position in the state of Washington, with relatives in Latin America. I think the place where our learning and support and development would be most accepted and where we could learn the most is Bolivia,” says Lane, who pointed out that Microsoft has been working with Bolivia to translate Windows into Quechua to digitally empower the 10-13 million speakers of the language there.

Moreover, Lane says, “There is no other state in the U.S. or province in Canada where the tribes have developed as positive a relationship with state government as here. You have incredibly powerful tribes here in Washington that in unity and harmony and are a tremendous political and economic force.

“Microsoft, Boeing, Starbucks, Vulcan, there are so many businesses here that have industries that fit with Latin America and the positive development of markets. I can



guarantee you that if we don't wake up pretty soon to the needs and hopes of our relatives in Latin America, there are other economic forces in the world that are."

The Latin-American swing to the left has helped The Fourth Way's chances, Lane says, with a growing tide of movements opposed to globalization and the "Washington Consensus" – as represented by the neo-liberal policies of the United States, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

Nine Latin-American nations are now led by leaders from the left: Venezuela (Hugo Chavez), Brazil (Lula da Silva), Rafael Correa (Ecuador), Evo Morales (Bolivia), Michelle Bachelet (Chile), Alan Garcia (Peru), Daniel Ortega (Nicaragua), Néstor Kirchner (Argentina) and Tabaré Vázquez (Uruguay).

"I believe all of these governments are open to dialogue," Lane says. "But it's all how you approach the dialogue. They want to work with others. They are open to working with others."

Lane, who is now married to his second wife, Suthida. has four daughters and one son. He realizes that trying to implement The Fourth Way could be the most difficult project of a life and career spent trying to empower, develop and heal Native populations, but he'd have it no other way.

"I believe that every human being's elder part of their life should be their greatest. Why should we live a life only to have the last quarter of it, the last part of the circle be the least fulfilling, it should be the most fulfilling. So, whatever it is to make a contribution, I would hope it would be the greatest contribution I've ever made or else why was I building the foundation in the years that went before?"

I don't believe the best years of your life according to some economic charts because you can produce the most money at 45 or 46. I believe the greatest fulfillment in our lives is to become older, to become elders."