

Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples, United Nations

May 15, 2003 New York, New York USA.

REPORT: Agenda Item 4, (b)

Introduction and statement to all Indigenous Peoples, UN agencies, UN
Permanent Forum Members, NGO's, For World Review of the Current
Situation of Oneida Haudenosaunee Iroquois Territory, USA, NY.

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On behalf of the Onyota'a:ka "the People of the Standing Stone", who are part
of the Haudenosaunee, I extend our greetings to the elders, leaders, men,
women and children of the Nations of the World. I present the best wishes of
our people to those whose faces are yet in the ground, that we may present
to them a world defined by liberty and ecological clarity:-

I stand here to bring to your attention a grave situation currently taking place
within Haudenosaunee Territory. We are the guardians of our traditional

territories which extend from the St. Lawrence River in what is now Canada to the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania; from Lake Champlain to the Niagara Peninsula. This land was entrusted to us by " ^Sa-gwyunt'tsi:unh' "(the Creator)and it is here where the world's first United Nations was established by the Iroquois almost 1000 years ago on the shores of Onondaga Lake, (now one of the most polluted bodies of water in North America).

The world's first and oldest, true democracies were established then, as were constitutional governments which guaranteed specific human rights. Our leaders were servants of the people subject to the popular will and held to the highest moral standards. Our government had, by law, an obligation to maintain a pure environment in trust for the coming generations: an undisputable fact in which compelled the Europeans to seek entry onto our territories.

We sought to secure formal agreements with the Europeans, which would protect our lands. Those agreements or "treaties" became the roots of what is now Indian Law and have become the most critical defense used by indigenous people in North America, as they struggle to preserve their rights as independent nations. There are 400 years of history between the Haudenosaunee and the United States right here in New York State. We sought the rule of law in our dealings with the Europeans and to that end enacted an agreement with Netherlands, France, England and the United States called "Gus-wen-ta" or the Two Row Wampum. This agreement bound the Europeans to respect our sovereignty, which meant they would never interfere in our internal affairs.

imprisonment, denial of due process or arbitrary arrest and detention. We have a right to peaceful assembly, the right to take part in our government and the right to free and open elections. We have, according to the United Nations, a right to education, medical care and housing.

I am here to state that these basic human rights are denied for the Haudenosaunee. Although the BIA has been notified by the Six Nations Haudenosaunee Confederacy that the Federal appointed leader of the Oneida Indian Nation of New York, Arthur Ray Halbritter, does not hold any title-ship position and is not recognized by the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy, the issue of the Federal installment and federal recognition has empowered and enabled Halbritter to continue these violations against our people. My privately owned home on the territory was demolished as the Onyota'a:ka Oneida Indian Territory Community has been targeted for destruction. The Haudenosaunee Iroquois traditional community and Iroquois people are now being forcibly evicted from our ancestral homelands, as we are subjected to the dictatorial rule of a single individual who has no regard for the rules of law. This tyrant was illegally empowered by New York State and the United States:

- to compromise our standing as an aboriginal Nation
- to use our lands to secure vast personal wealth
- to exchange our lands for commercial gambling ventures
- to deny our access to all resources, tribal and federal
- to deny us our basic humans rights

Because of his untraditional practices, the Oneida Clan Mothers and the Haudenosaunee Council of Chiefs formally removed this dictator from his position. The U.S. Government reinstated him, within 24 hours of his removal. This dictator, imposed by the U.S. Government, has methodically stripped the personal rights of the Traditional Onieda Nation members. His imposition upon us is in direct contradiction of our sovereign rights.

Our Longhouse has been locked and we are denied entry into our place of Sacred Ceremony. We have been threatened with arrest if we enter into our Longhouse. All non-native tribal heavily armed police forced under Halbritters direct command, has ordered our food bank shut down permanently that once serviced 280 native people. We are threatened with arrest if we enter any other of our Nation's buildings. This includes the Turning Stone Casino, which is not upon Oneida Nation land, and is open to the general public.

Our Traditional Clan Mothers, recognized by Haudenosaunee, have been publicly tried for treason for removing him from his position. Furthermore, he has established a "Men's Council", violating Haudenosaunee cultural heritage and traditional values.

Without the approval of the Oneida people he has entered into contracts,

instituted gambling interests in the name of the Oneida Nation. This is a violation of our Nation's beliefs, as gambling is against the Six Nations Iroquois Haudenosaunee "Great Law".

He has seized control of all facets of Nation government and finances. In doing so he has rendered many Oneida Nation members voiceless, removed them from their Nation position of employment, thereby cutting off their ability to serve the community and earn a living to provide for themselves and their families. His victim's names are kept on Nation roles for the sole purpose of applying for governmental funding. He denies the Traditionals any portion of said funds when received.

This dictator has imposed upon the Oneida people, a police force which is repressive/oppresing/threatening and physically dangerous to the Oneida Traditionalist. Furthermore, he has instituted a "Sham Court" which does not function under the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace. It functions solely under his direction in all actions. This court denies justice or recourse to the Oneida people.

Under this Tyrant's rule, there is no security of self or property. Ordinances have been written and put into place without the knowledge and/or approval of the Oneida people. Under these ordinances, which were specifically designed to punitively punish certain members, homes and property can be entered, condemned, seized and destroyed without the

owner's permission or consent. There is no recourse in this matter. There is no replacement or compensation for the loss of homes and property. We are not permitted to rebuild upon our land. These activities are specifically designed to force the Oneida Traditionalist off the 32 acre territory, rendering them and their families homeless.

Those who attempt to protect their homes and property, no matter how peacefully, have been and can be summarily arrested, transported clandestinely across state lines, imprisoned at a location not revealed to family members, denied access to family and to legal representation. I have been Strip-searched, coerced, and forced to agree to his demands under duress.

The Oneida Traditional people of the 32 acres live under a constant state of surveillance (i.e. police patrols, video taping). We never know when we will have our homes invaded, be restricted in our own personal lives and activities, and be denied our spiritual practices.

This is a regime of duress, repression, oppression, stress, fear of physical retribution/punishment, loss of home, banishment from our Nation land. This is a glaring example of persecution. It continues to be a catastrophic situation for those of us who have been singled out by this dictator. All human and civil rights are denied to us.

Monies, which come to the Oneida Nation, no matter what the source, come under the sole control of this dictator. He has used his position to accumulate vast wealth, and uses that wealth to bludgeon anyone who disputes any of his actions or activities.

We have brought our concerns to the United States Federal Courts, exhausting all remedies to no avail. We have had no assistance in ceasing the criminal and civil human rights violations currently affecting our people and community. We have sought whatever peaceful remedy was before us, yet the acts of oppression continue. The hypocrisy within the Oneida Indian Nation must be challenged on all fronts, even as it attempts to use the United Nations to hold an indigenous journalism conference; this by an organization which has banned the media and denied the Oneida people the right to free speech.

I am here asking the United Nations to assist the current situation at Oneida before it degenerates into more violence against our people, destruction of our homes and eviction from our aboriginal homeland. Indigenous nations have for many years sought a permanent voice within the United Nations family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is comparable to the Haudenosaunee "Great Law of Peace" which is our own governing constitution based on peace and conflict resolution for all life. I believe this

should apply to all indigenous sovereign nations and be bound by its provisions.

The United States has repeatedly declared it is not in the business of creating colonial governments to rule other nations. The United States has gone on record as supporting freedom and democracy in Iraq. I now implore the United States to tender the same respect to the Haudenosaunee, the Oneida Nation and all First Nation peoples of North America.

I hold my Haudenosaunee passport and I am seeking political asylum as the federal appointed leader of the Oneida Indian Nation has now claimed sovereignty to force his dictatorial rule upon and targeting the traditional Oneida and other Haudenosaunee people by using the U.S. Federal Laws, New York State laws, NYS courts against the traditional Haudenosaunee, that we are citizens of. Without recourse or relief for the Traditional Iroquois people, I stand before you and ask for immediate assistance not only on paper but also in reality. Since my children and I were forcibly removed from our traditional Oneida homeland the only fate our traditional Iroquois people face is to be forced to become wards of New York State, although we have the inherited birthrights to live in peace upon our land with our people. I urge and invite the UN Permanent Forum Members, UN Agencies, who is the final course of our suffering to come to the Haudenosaunee Territory to coordinate the activities for investigation. Assistance in witnessing with your own eyes

and to stop these continuous violations of our people that would not only assist the Haudenosaunee, but all natives who are faced with similar situations. I have a solution to indigenous community sustainability process that would prove useful to the many indigenous nations and people who are working towards cultural survival within our aboriginal rights.

Ny^Wen ~Thank you,

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