

Sewatonosiost - Mohawk Nation

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As a member of the Kanonsonniowé (a union of United Indian Nations), the Mohawk Nation has its own constitution called the Gayanerokowa (Great Law of Peace). The Great Law of the Confederacy is based on principles of righteousness, Reason and Power. Righteousness means justice practiced in a pure and unselfish state of mind.

Reason indicates tranquility of mind and body. Power is Authority of law and custom, carried with force to ensure justice prevails.

Each nation has the ability to make agreements with other nations in regard to their people.

On August 12, 1990 the Mohawk Nation made an International Agreement with the Government of Canada and of Quebec. Since this agreement, there has been considerable proof by the International Federation of Human Rights Report, the Fifth report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Quebec Human Rights Commission Report, and the Preliminary Report on the role of the Red Cross at Oka, that the agreement was violated by Canada. The three principles of the agreement dealt with basic human rights. In addition, the International Federation of Human Rights Report says that the Canadian and Quebec government abdicated their responsibility during last year's Oka crisis by leaving its resolution up to the army and police. This supports the Mohawk position that there never was good will by Canada to resolve the conflict peacefully. It also says that the Canadian judicial system is fundamentally unsuited to protect the rights of natives.

The participation of Canada in this process we thought was a step in the right direction - at a Nation to Nation level, but as we progressed, we realized, that Canada was not truly committed to this process.

The recommendations of the International Federation of Human Rights should be taken into serious consideration and should be based upon the principle of co-existence through equality. The suspension of legal procedures during this process is imperative. It is our contention that the Mohawk Rule of Law has been violated.

In addition, during the final stages of the siege, several Mohawks were ill-treated by the Sûreté du Québec after their arrest and the matter is still being investigated by Amnesty International. During this ordeal, a young girl, fifteen years of age, was stabbed in the chest by a soldier's bayonet. To this date, there has been no response to Amnesty International from the Quebec Minister of Justice on these allegations.

The events of 1990 were so serious and urgent that the European parliament found it necessary to send a delegation to the Mohawk Nation Territory on a fact-finding mission. Although no conclusions were made by the Canada Relations delegation, the report exposes all the problems encountered by Mohawk people caused by Canada's paternalistic attitude. Mohawk world-view is based on co-existence through equality. There exists a fundamental clash between the Canadian system which is based on individual rights, and the Mohawk system which is based on collective rights.

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Paragraph

Currently, our territory is still occupied by Sûreté du Québec and R.C.M.P. agencies who are imposing an unofficial economic blockade on our communities by way of harassment on our people and those who do business with us. At this time, there exist 100 plus arrest warrants for Mohawk freedom fighters. There are 85 accused persons who are in the criminal court system against their will. It is still necessary to maintain checkpoints to prevent further attacks on our people and our land. There seems to be no change in attitude by Canada, despite all that has happened over the past year. Even the international criticism that has been directed towards Canada does not change things. We also charge that the United States is guilty of the same injustices and conspiracy against our people who reside on what is referred to as the United States.

There have been physical attacks by government forces over the past eighteen years on Mohawk territories in Ganienkeh (U.S.), Akwesasne (U.S. and Canada), Kanasatake (Canada), Kahnawake (Canada), Tyendenega (Canada), and Osweken (Canada).

With reference to the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, we would advise affirmative action take place. It is our suggestion that activities should reflect co-existence through equality.

Such activities would include:

- ✓- Reaffirmation of Treaties and freedom of movement within our traditional territories
- ✓- Restoration of traditional homelands
- ✓- Return and protection of cultural properties
- ✓- Re-establishment of solid economic activity, especially in the area of products and institutions developed by indigenous peoples
- ✓- and Application of traditional indigenous values with reference to the environment.

The theme "Co-existence through equality" would engulf all suggested activities.

Submitted in the Spirit of Seven Generations

*3th European Meeting N.A. Ind. Support Group  
Mohawk Nation Delegation  
Resoltn by Ind. Amer. Supporters for treatment of Mohawk  
at Kahnasatake*

*Passed July 20th 1991*

23.7.1991