

Tribe's Mediator Proposes Truce; Two Chiefs Walk Out Before It's Discussed

April 19, 1990

John Vance, the federal mediator for the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, tabled a proposal for a truce based on his meetings with the chiefs and nine interest groups on the reservation. The truce would include:

- the barricades will be removed;
- the casinos will remain closed;
- smuggling and gunfire must cease;
- New York State Police will resume patrols.

Chiefs Leo Jacobs and Lincoln White left the meeting at 11:20 a.m. claiming that the mediator's meetings were exclusive to the chiefs and that either Sub-Chief Hilda Smoke or Chief Tarbell must leave the room. Head Chief Tarbell replied that the April 2, 1990 agreement establishing the mediation process was signed by all seven elected tribal officials; chiefs have the right to share their authority with their sub-chiefs in any way they see fit; and he never agreed that the process should exclude any duly elected tribal officials.

Persons close to Chief Tarbell also explained that he had only five hours of sleep in the past 42 hours as result of his one-day trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with Rev. Jesse Jackson and deliver an appropriations request of \$1.5 million to restore peace, law and order and legitimate jobs to the reservation.

A tribal resolution recognizing the activities of the Warriors Society signed yesterday, was directly attributed to a shooting incident early Thursday morning, Tarbell said.

Automatic gunfire directed at the eastern barricade at 3 a.m. Thursday wounded one woman. A shot hit her hand as she covered her head as gunfire riddled the barricade. The resolution, signed by Chief Jacobs, Chief White and Tribal Clerk Carol Herne, stated "The Warrior Society, also known as the Mohawk Sovereignty Security Force is fully recognized as the party of the second part who follows the mandate of and in accordance to the people."

After the two chiefs left, Chief Tarbell and Smoke informed the Bureau of Indian Affairs field representative, who coordinated the meeting, that they would wait in the conference room for one hour in the hope that the two chiefs would reconsider their technical objections and return to the meeting to discuss the grave situations at the reservation. They had not returned by 1 p.m. when Tarbell and Smoke returned to the reservation.



Winston "Gabby" Benedict Family Expresses Thanks

The family of the late Winston "Gabby" Benedict would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all those who expressed their sympathy during our time of loss. Your support and words of comfort made our loss easier to bear. We are sure Winston joins with us in our feelings of gratitude. Niawenkowa! Akwesasne.



MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

All governments in Canada, provincial and municipal governments receive federal funding to operate. Indian reserve governments also receive federal funding to operate.

Indian reserves receive the same human services funding as all other non-Indian communities. However, because Indians have outstanding land claims and because Canada and the provinces have exploited the natural resources which we have never surrendered; they have a debt to Indian peoples which far exceeds the normal funds available to the white society.

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) has a financial arrangement with the federal and provincial governments (Ontario and Quebec). The Council currently administers seven major contribution agreements with three federal departments and one provincial ministry with 30 minor contributions agreements. Funding undermines effective community as a result of this.

-Lack of financial stability, improper planning and development.

-Restrictions are imposed so there is no flexibility to allow reallocations of funds.

-Funding formulae leaves programs severely underfunded. Pay levels for MCA staff are not comparable with government staff.

Government Formulae

- Set without MCA consultation.
- Driven by fixed population ceilings. Do not take into account actual population.
- Base statistics are rarely accurate.
- Do not take into account Bill C-1 returns.

Akwesasne Funding Formulae Position

-MCA will seek a new funding formula to meet the needs of Akwesasne.

-They will use Akwesasne Funding Formulae.

-They will calculate on a multi-year formula base.

-Transfer arrangements will be implemented into programs which MCA can exercise their authority.

Mohawk Council seeks a commitment from the federal government that a new Akwesasne Funding formula be developed by a committee consisting of representatives from MCA, governments of Canada, Ontario and Quebec.

The formula must take into account:

- accurate population figures;
- amendment formula (new programs);
- technical, legal and professional service cost;
- start-up investments for training;
- development, administration programs;
- annual escalators;
- any unusual cost over and above the services and programs.

Presently the MCA is accountable to the Minister of Indian Affairs. They have to adhere to the regulations and reporting requirements of the federal and provincial bureaucracies. It involves annual audits, detailed quarterly reports and some programs statistics and operational information.

Council accounts to the community by way of posting financial statements and audit reports in newspaper publication. Further accounting is provided to commissions and boards who consist of community members and elders.

MCA Position on Accountability

The Mohawk Council recognizes that they have to maintain a reporting relationship with the federal and provincial governments. This will be done through annual audit reports.

They will seek authority to gain accessibility to books of accounts and financial records of the Minister of Indian Affairs.

Mohawk Council proposes to transfer accountability for management from the Minister to the Akwesasne community. They will include in the Mohawk Charter, law and procedures for responsible reporting on financial matters.

Budgets once accepted by Council would be published. Three open community meetings could be held annually. One after the public budgets were set, one after six months of operation and one with the External Auditors present after the audit is completed. These meetings would function as the main forum for community access to financial information.

The individual boards also having elected community members such as membership, education, etc., will also have detailed financial and administrative reporting and open meetings several times per year. This will facilitate ongoing community involvement in both the financial and operation aspects of each program.

Financial Management

Factors that hamper financial planning and management under the Department of Indian Affairs:

- MCA has little control over Island Revenue funds. Access to these funds is difficult.
- Surplus dollars cannot be transferred to other programs.
- Funding requests are often held up pending on the review and process reports by INAC staff.

MOHAWK COUNCIL'S POSITION:

-Akwesasne seeks transfer of Indian Affairs authority from the Minister to Mohawk Council;

-MCA financial administration laws will be amended and expanded to reflect new authority.

Over the past years, the MCA has capably demonstrated its competence in financial management. It has been accountable to the community and will further expand their accountability through laws and procedures of a Mohawk Charter.