

Dear Editor:

I have been keeping up with the newspapers and TV news as much as possible about the events which have lead to the two deaths of our Mohawk men. I cannot believe the lengths that the pro-gambling faction will go to in order to keep the illegal gambling thriving here in Akwesasne.

They may not even notice or maybe just don't care about the lives being affected by all the controversy surrounding the smuggling, gambling and drug issues.

They state their children are being harassed by the "antis" which proves my point. Obviously, they are using their own children to suit their own purpose. If these people cared as much about their children as claimed, they would also be as concerned about the same issues as we are.

Drugs and assault weapons are being brought onto the reservation and yet they protect those bringing them in. The gambling, whether legalized or not will eventually bring taxation to the reservation. Yes, we paid taxes to the non-Natives when we had to go off the reserve because of the closures of many businesses when the roadblocks were erected by anti-gamblers, but how many non-Natives have used our tax-free status when winning or being employed at the casinos and bingos, buying tax-free cigarettes or gas, purchasing anything for that matter on the reserve?

Many times the anti-gambling faction has stated that they would accept casinos if regulated. Various times we asked for a community wide referendum, but the COMMUNITY, in the eyes of the pro-gamblers, are only those who support gambling, smuggling and gun-running. The excuse being used now is CANADIANS. Canadians make trouble. Canadian Chief Mike Mitchell wants to take over. Canadians can't vote on the AMERICAN side. Canadians erected the blockades. What government paid for "Speed" and Carol Herne's education, dental and eye wear? Answer me, Mr. and Mrs. Herne. In 1988, while attending Mater Dei with none other than Carol Herne, she informed me that being an enrolled tribal member but residing on the CANADIAN portion, that I could still VOTE in the Tribal election. She's certainly changed her tune. Is it because she does not have enough CONFIDENCE in her candidates?

I will not lower myself to the standards of the pro-gambling faction's idea of "economic development" and the belief that without casinos we'd all be on welfare. Please speak for yourself. I have educated myself to the best of my ability and am continuing to do so and I know for a fact that illegal gambling and smuggling of whatever is not the answer.

Its been five years now, people. Where are the shopping malls, schools, arenas and hospitals? Where are the BENEFITS that could keep casino/bingo workers from being penniless and starving to death as said by Guilford White?

Loren Oakes is not the COMMUNITY spokesperson for anyone but the minority of pro-gamblers. I have kept tapes and clippings of the past events and they are all contradictory and should therefore be acknowledged by anyone who wishes to deny or debate any statements made. If anyone has family problems it's Minnie Garrow, not Mrs. Adams. Unlike Mrs. Garrow, Mrs. Adams does not want her children involved in illegal activities and so does her best to try and keep one from doing so. Mrs. Garrow condones these actions by her children but Mr. and Mrs. Adams do not.

If in fact the pro-gambling faction is truly the MAJORITY why must they go to great lengths to disallow many from voting and are so afraid of a referendum vote of the entire community? Ripping down "VOTE FOR HAROLD" posters only proves they are unsure of themselves and their choice of candidates; not to mention it's also childish. For such an educated person, Mr. Speed Herne should know that we cannot claim sovereignty on only one portion of the reserve but must do so as a united Nation. Mr. Herne should go back to school, preferably to learn more about real sovereignty and laws within our culture.

Fed up with lies,
Margaret Peters



MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE HAS PUT FORTH A PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT BASED ON MOHAWK CULTURAL VALUES AND COMMUNITY NEEDS. THE PROPOSAL IDENTIFIES THE COMMUNITY OF AKWESASNE TO BE UNIQUE TO ANY OTHER COMMUNITY.

THE AREA OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ILLUSTRATES THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE INDIAN ACT. IN RESPONSE, THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE'S PROPOSAL PROVIDES SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVES IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social Development Programs

The following social development programs are hampered by the overlapping provincial and federal jurisdictions

- Child and Family Services
- Drug and Alcohol
- Social Community Services
- Welfare
- Social Aid
- Health Care Services
- Ambulance
- Community Health Representatives
- Medical Transportation
- Environmental Health
- Home Support/Home Nursing, Etc

Akwesasne has twelve legislative and judicial authorities governing its social development programs. The Indian Act has few provisions for Council jurisdiction and these few are working in cooperation with Ontario and Quebec provinces. The result is varied funding arrangements and inconsistent service delivery. This situation seriously violates the fundamental aboriginal rights to social welfare and health care as guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution

Child and Family Services

Presently, a contractual agreement is in place with the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Mohawk Council. The funding provided by Ontario covers staff salaries. The Quebec province has delegated their authority under the Youth Protection Act to the Mohawk Council but provides no funding. The Department of Indian Affairs funds voluntary and involuntary placement of children.

One example of services most affected by jurisdiction uncertainty is the Child And Family services which operate with two provincial legislations, different degrees of authority, different procedures and policies and two provincial court systems. The services under this program deals with family intervention, apprehension and youth protection. This is one area the Council has assumed responsibility to give better service delivery. It also eliminates jeopardizing the welfare of our children.

Income Maintenance Program

The services provided under this program are Social Community Services, Welfare, and Social Aid. The Income Support Program is funded 100% though the Department of Indian Affairs for short term assistance. The Ontario and Quebec provinces fund the long term welfare recipients with Social Aid. Although the provinces operate under separate guidelines the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne established policies in an attempt to provide flexibility and uniformity among the two systems. However legislative change in Quebec's Social Aid program, scheduled for implementation in August 1990, may drastically alter the levels assistance offered dependent on which program individuals may qualify for. Council has appointed an Income Support and Appeals Board to provide the community members with an opportunity to appeal decisions.

Health Care

Previously, the federal government supplied two native Community Health Nurses and one Doctor. The Mohawk Council initiated a medical clinic in 1987, with the support of the community. The medical clinic opens six days of the week with three doctors and two receptionists. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne absorbed most of the costs and Quebec provided a grant for the remaining costs. The rental costs are paid by Health and Welfare. The ambulance service was started in 1981 and was certified and registered in Quebec.

Some of the healthcare services are Drug and Alcohol, a clinic with doctors, ambulance, medical transportation, Community Health Nurses, Community Health Representatives, Home Support, Home Care, Nursing.

The healthcare services operate under two different legislations, federal and provincial. Federal funding though health and welfare provides primarily prevention services thus eliminating treatment and research components. The treatment component relies on the provincial healthcare systems.

Geriatric Residential Care

The geriatric Residential Care Unit has a separate board with long range plans and policies. There is a three part plan for the three districts: Cornwall Island will have a chronic care facility, construction for the Home for the Aged in Chenail is presently underway and a healthcare centre with physicians and equipment to provide much needed hospital care will be built in St. Regis.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE'S POSITION

The Mohawk Council through negotiations with the federal and provincial governments will assume responsibility for all matters concerning child and family law. The legislation regarding child custody, maintenance, adoption, youth protection, and the division of matrimonial property procedures will be developed in conjunction with Mohawk legislative and court commissions (civil courts and appeals boards)

The Mohawk Council will assume full authority to design and administer long and short term needs of social assistance including eligibility criteria, rates and ceilings, and allowable expenses.

Primary healthcare programs must serve members residing in Akwesasne. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne assumes the authority to plan, design, control, and manage comprehensive primary healthcare and treatment services.

The legislative agreement signed by the governments of Canada, Ontario, Quebec, and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne will ensure that the inclusion of insured services, and non-insured services will be secured.

Note to Cindy Terrance:

The biggest compliment I ever received was when you insinuated Doug wrote my first letter I sent to you. I didn't know I wrote that great!
Thank you,
Margaret Peters



Police Lift Blockade

New York State Police have lifted their blockade of an Indian reservation three weeks

to quell violence, authorities said

May 25
State police had barred all non-residents from entering the St. Regis reservation since May 1, when two Indians were shot to death in a shootout between "warriors" and opponents.

Traffic was opened Thursday night because tensions had eased in the reservation, which straddles the U.S.-Canadian border, said state police Sgt. Michael Downs.

"We feel it's come to a point where it is safe to travel through for everybody," Downs said.

Police will not allow the eight casinos on the U.S. side of the reservation to reopen, Downs said. Before the gun battles began between the Indians, the casinos had drawn busloads of Canadians on weekends.

Casinos owners have agreed to keep their gambling halls closed until tribal leaders settle the gambling issue.

Downs said police opened the reservation because the blockade had been inconveniencing local residents. A 16-kilometres detour around the reservation had been set up, interrupting state Route 37, which cuts through the U.S. side of the reservation.

"We've been aware that there has been a great deal of inconvenience to some of the non-residents," Downs said. "Hopefully, there will be a little normalcy returning."

State police checkpoints throughout the reservation will remain and troopers will occasionally stop vehicles to question drivers entering the reservation, Downs said.

How to Vote

The 1990 St. Regis Mohawk Tribal elections will be held at the Community Building, Tekahswenkarorens, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Voters will be asked to select either Harold Tarbell or Norman Tarbell for the three year position of chief.

The voters will also elect a sub-chief for a three year term from candidates Hilda Smoke, Melvin White or Julius Herne.

To vote a person must be at least 18 or over and enrolled as a member of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. The voter must have an enrollment number. A list of eligible voters is currently on file at the tribal offices.

Before casting a ballot a person must sign their name and have that name on the enrollment list. Identification might be requested so carry some sort of photo i.d.

Two ballots will be given to the voter: one for chief and one for sub-chief. A write-in space will be provided for persons not on the ballot. DO NOT write in the name of the candidate printed on the ballot; simply write a X in the box next to their name. Remember, any markings on a ballot other than an X or a write-in name (you cannot do both) will make that ballot invalid.

The ballots will be counted by volunteers from the community in the building at the time the doors are closed. Results will be made known after all the votes are counted and certified.