



Investigation Needed

Begun in July of 1983, the Indian Times is a news journal dedicated to reporting on what is happening in Akwesasne and our Sister Iroquois communities. The news policy at Indian Time insists we try to give our readers as truthful reporting as we can. We encourage and invite opinions different than ours. We are committed to a free and open press at Akwesasne. We believe in the unrestricted flow of information to our people. By this means, we have the ability to make intelligent, informed decisions about our collective future.

Indian Time is a product of the people of Akwesasne. It is your newspaper printing stories about you. Please feel free to contact our Kanatakon offices in the Akwesasne Communications Society Building if you have concerns, compliments or plain old curiosity about the material printed in Indian Time.

Niawenkowa, Akwesasne for your support.

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With a circulation of 1,350 within Akwesasne, Kahnawake and surrounding Iroquois communities, advertising in Indian Time can be a profitable move for your business.

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One of the most tragic dates in Mohawk history is about to have its second anniversary: the May 1, 1990 shooting deaths of Mathew Pyke and Harold J.R Edwards. As yet, we are no closer to finding out who killed these two young men than we were two years ago. Just as important as discovering the identities of the killers we must find out who gave orders to "shoot to kill." One of the greatest tragedies of all is that many people know the identities of those who committed these horrible crimes yet either are frightened to come forward or seemed to have put aside their human feelings and are content to walk around saying nothing. What suffering awaits a people who have learned to live with such tremendous guilt!!

The decision by the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne to begin an investigation into the May 1st murders is a good one, if it is to succeed, however, it must be undertaken by professional investigators working under the direction of capable and experienced judges. Any hint of political interference will only be met with opposition, mistrust and hostility. If Akwesasne is to begin healing, the truth must be brought to light regardless of whom is involved. The M.C.A. might consider the following suggestions if it decides to proceed with the inquiry.

1. A three judge panel should oversee the investigation. The judges should not be Mohawk, for there is no such a thing as neutrality when civil strife is involved. The judges should include at least two native persons, preferably from within the Iroquois Confederacy. One of the three should be an attorney or a judge of considerable experience with not only the legal process but have extensive knowledge regarding native issues. Since the issue involves the Americans, one of the three should be from the U.S.

2. The judges must have full powers to investigate every area of the case. They must be able to issue subpoenas, require people to testify, obtain police records, question witnesses. Those who fail to cooperate will face penalties in accordance with the law.

3. Witnesses must have the right to an Attorney if they are asked to testify. The lawyers will have the right to cross examine any hostile witnesses, protect their clients against self-incrimination and insure that their basic rights are protected.

4. The investigative panel must have the right to question government officials, both local, regional and national. Since Canada and the U.S. were involved in the events of 1990 they must come forward with any information they had at the time and any other data collected since then.

5. The police, Mohawk, American and Canadian, must be required to co-operate fully with the judges. They must open all of their records to the investigators including the names of the people questioned during May of 1990.

6. Bank records, telephone records, gun shop owners, doctors, casino lists, all must be open to the investigators. The people need to know how much money was made here, who was paid, who bought the weapons used in the murders, who had the ear of Mario Cuomo, where the weapons are now being stored.

7. The three Mohawk councils here must be fully involved in the investigation; they too must allow the judges access to their records. Since individuals from Kahnawake were said to have taken part in the shootings, the investigation must look to that community as well.

If the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is truly committed to the truth then it must release itself from having any control over such an investigation. What happened on May 1 of 1990, and the months before, has yet to be told. We need to know and by taking the above mentioned action the M.C.A. can finally shed light on this tragedy and perhaps prevent it from happening again.

April 3, 1992

Executive Director
Massena Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 387
Massena, New York
13662

Dear Merchants and Businessmen, and to Whom It May Concern:

Re: Use of Fraudulent Band Cards and Unofficial Indian Cards

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne would like to bring to your attention the possibility that individuals may be fraudulently or improperly representing themselves to be "Status Indians" under the Indian Act of Canada or as aboriginal persons in order to gain exemption from Sales Tax.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne wishes to alert you to this situation as we feel that the right and entitlement of First Nations citizens to exemptions to taxes may be adversely affected if this right is improperly extended to individuals who are not entitled to enjoy such exemptions.

In some cases, individuals may be in possession of a fraudulent card which has been sold and issued by "The Indian Nation of North America." This organization is not recognized by any government and has no authority to grant rights or benefits which are normally enjoyed by the aboriginal people of North America. The Government of Canada has advised that these cards have been fraudulently produced and businesses should be warned that use of these fraudulent cards to obtain exemption to the taxes in Canada would be illegal.

In other cases, individuals may have a card issued by the Native

Alliance of Quebec [Alliance Autochtone du Quebec] or the Native Friendship Off Reserve (Quebec) [Amities Autochtones Hors Reserve (Quebec)]. These card also purport to convey aboriginal entitlements to the bearer, but the issuing organizations are unknown entities. The individuals holding these cards may be "non-status" natives, but membership in the organizations can be purchased without proof of native ancestry. In situations where these cards are presented, merchants are warned that honoring such cards for exemption to the sales tax may result in some difficulties to your business if the Governments do not accept the exemptions as valid.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne advises that only aboriginal persons who have been duly registered with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (or other recognized First Nations) and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada may possess a valid "Status" Card. These cards are issued under the authority of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and are intended to identify those individuals who are entitled to tax exemptions and other benefits. Merchants or businesses who honor any other forms of identification do so at their own risk.

Copies of the Federal Government advisory notice and samples of the fraudulent and valid status cards is shown below for your reference. Please ensure that this information is made available to all interested parties. For further information, contact this office at (613) 575-2348.

Chief Rose Marie Sunday,
Membership Portfolio.

The Crisis of Policing at Akwesasne

One of the things most people take for granted in any community is the presence of a well trained police force supported by a working justice system and a stable government. In many places the police are monitored by a citizen's group which insures the concerns of the people are addressed. What is important is all elements within a society working together in a spirit of trust to insure the lives of the people are protected from abuse and their property secure against loss or theft.

Given the tensions at Akwesasne over the past few years it should be a priority of the three councils to work together to create a policing service to handle all of our problems and give us protection. In 1987 the three councils appointed a Justice Committee to draft a set of laws which would be approved by the people in a community wide referendum. The system the Committee created was true to our heritage and in harmony with our traditions yet it took into account the realities of today. It was to include the creation of a single police service for the entire reservation. The Committee's findings were presented to each council in early 1989 but the gambling and "warrior" crisis prevented any possibility of the Mohawk Nation Justice code from becoming a reality.

In late 1989 and throughout 1990 we all felt the pain of violence as our community fell apart. The "American" side was left without any policing at all and became the scene of many acts of terror. North of the border the Akwesasne Police were given the almost impossible job of securing the peace while trying to enforce laws which were not our own. They were assaulted, fired upon, their vehicles smashed, their headquarters stoned. Yet because the good people of Akwesasne

came to their defense time and time again they were able to survive and carry on. No police service we are aware of could have done the work of the Akwesasne Police during those terrible months. In the end, they were abandoned by the Surete du Quebec, O.P.P., State Troopers and R.C.M.P. This would have caused any ordinary officer to simply give up but our men held on.

In recent months there have been some credible attempts to heal the divisions within Akwesasne. This cannot be done, however, be compromising our principles and what some of us fought for. We view with concern the actions by the Police Commission of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne in regards to the case of Ernest King, the Chief of Police. One of the things which has guaranteed our survival is our independence. Although not always successful, we try to live as if we have the right to do things separate from the U.S. and Canada. The very fact we are Mohawks prevents us from rolling over before any outside force. If we don't, then we are no different than anyone else and have no right to claim we are sovereign.

While commanding the Akwesasne Police, Chief King made it a unit which refused to back down from anyone. They were often in dangerous situations because they were doing their jobs in a way which told the outlaw Akwesasne was not wide open to criminals. They fought when necessary and were prepared to give their lives for the community. They were rightly defiant of the efforts by the S.Q. and O.P.P. to control them for they were answerable to the people and not the bureaucrats in Toronto and Quebec, most of whom felt Indians were little more than

See Crisis
Cont'd on pg. 3

It is with appreciation to the North American Travelling College that we will be reprinting, as a weekly feature, stories from the book *Traditional Teachings*. These stories are copyrighted and may not be reprinted without permission of the NAITC.

Skanientario's Life at Ohio

Our story begins at this place called "Ohio" or "Complanters Village," also called (burnt house). It was in the end of the 1700's that the Iroquois Confederacy started to deteriorate. They had been fighting a war for nearly two hundred years. They had protected their territory from the Dutch, German, English and French and the American colonies which later became the United States of America. Their population was down to one quarter of what it was when the white people first arrived here. Measles, chicken pox and small pox had swept through their village. They had no immunity to such diseases. At that time the U.S. government in their campaigns of waging war, had torn up their corn fields. They had destroyed a large quantity of the warehouses which held their food supplies. The people of the Hotinonshonni were finding their territories decreasing and a large number of their people turned to the fur trade for survival.

In those days after the harvest many people would gather and a leader would decide when it was time for the men to go to their hunting places. They would set a time and prepare their canoes. At that time they would take one half of the harvest and leave the other half for the people who remained in the village. When they arrived at their hunting place they took great care of their canoes, making them safe. There was always fear that the ice on the river would damage their canoes. They would walk into the woods and make camp, for they knew what to expect from the winter there. The men were very fortunate that winter hunting and trapping were bountiful. Again the leader was watching the weather and sent a runner to check the river. When it was safe to travel, and the ice on the river went down they would get ready to leave, putting all their game into the canoe, they would leave the area to go upstream to a settlement called Pittsburgh.

Once they arrived in Pittsburgh the first thing they did was their fur trading. They would trade for kegs of rum and whiskey. As they started on their journey home they would start drinking. In those days they traveled in canoes and would tie them so that the people that were riding on the outside did all the paddling and the ones on the inside did all the drinking. They would get so drunk that some of them would fall out of the boat and drown. This would go on until they reached their village. Meanwhile, the people who remained in the village would hear their warriors returning from trading the hides and would gather all the children and run off to the shore, meet the canoes and help them unload the whiskey and rum.

For a number of days a huge party would take place until all the alcohol was gone. Sometimes some of the people would run away into the woods and would return to the village days later only to find bodies lying here and there. Some of the people would be hurt, some passed out and others would have killed each other during the course of the drinking. When this was all over the people would bury the dead, clean up and try to start over.

Skanientario was a member of the Seneca Nation. He was born in 1735 in the Seneca Village of Ganawagas on the Genesee River. He was a man who held an important title position for his people. His title name was Skanientario, a most honored Seneca title. Skanientario was a heavy drinker. He was one of alcohol's many victims.

Next week, continuation of Skanientario's Life at Ohio.

Obituary

Catherine D. Cree

Catherine D. Cree, 55, of 137 Pike Road, died at 9 a.m. Friday, April 24, 1992 at her home, following a lengthy illness.

The funeral was held April 27, 1992 at St. Regis Catholic Church, St. Regis, Quebec, with Rev. Robert Boyle, assistant pastor, presiding. Burial was held in Kateri Cemetery, Hogansburg. Arrangements were with the Donaldson Funeral Home, Massena.

Surviving are her husband, Francis F.; three sons, Michael, Leslie and Jason, all of Hogansburg, four daughters, Marie Cree, Massena, Mrs. Kim (Hattie) Bashaw, St. Albans, Vt., Mrs. Dean (Carla) Point, Cornwall Island, Ontario, and Hilda Jean Cree, at home; seven grandchildren; a brother Wilfred David, Rochester; two sisters, Mrs. Mike (Christie) Arquette and Julia David, both of Hogansburg, and

several nephews, nieces, uncles and aunts.

A son, Allen Francis, died in January 1965, a son, Daniel F., died July 3, 1985, and a son, Kevin W., April 18, 1986.

Born on Cornwall Island, Ontario, on October 8, 1936, a daughter of Joseph and Margaret Buckshot David, she attended Cornwall Island schools. She married Francis F. Cree on October 8, 1955, at St. Regis Catholic Church, with Father Brodeur presiding.

Mrs. Cree was employed with St. Regis Nursing Home, St. Regis, Quebec, as a cook, with Levi Strauss Co., Cornwall, Ontario, as a seamstress, and with Hogansburg Senior Citizen Center as a health aide.

She was a communicant of St. Regis Catholic Church and a member of Akwesasne Senior Citizen group. She enjoyed making Indian baskets.

MILITARY

Cont'd from front page

"AKWEKS" Press Release

April 29, 1992

After 32 days of jury selection, the Mohawks of the <<T.C. 39>>, on the last day, have chosen a jury. Contrary to speculation by the press, the Mohawks and their native allies refused to file a motion to dismiss on the grounds that it is impossible to seat an impartial jury. Rather than allow the issues to be <<swept under the rug>>, the Mohawks preferred that the unjustified accusations brought against them by the foreign justice system be challenged and refuted. It is not enough that these charges be dismissed on a technicality. The time and effort which brought them to this point must not be wasted or forgotten.

<<Akweks>> legal defense coordinating committee
Joe Deom, Kahnawake
Lorne Oaks Akwesasne
Joe David Kahnawake
For more information,
514-638-1300.

"The Mohawk people of the three brother communities are constantly being painted as troublemakers in the media, and this distracts from the real issues that are at hand. I for one am sick and tired of hearing Canada blame the Mohawks for everything under the sun, when it's their policies that create all of the problems in the first place."

"All of the factors that led to the violence of 1989 and 1990 were external in nature. The gambling, the smuggling, the jurisdictional problems, the failure to deal with our land claims...all of these contribute to the division in our communities. Canada has turned a blind eye to the fact that it is their laws and policies that put us against each other."

"I feel that Akwesasne will one day reach the point where we all recognize that the real fight is out there, with the external governments that put us in this turmoil. Canada's persistent campaign of tarnishing the reputation of Mohawk people may actually serve to unite us."

