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RONATO HETSTON

George "Kaheroton" Jacobs

George Jacobs died at the Hotel Dieu Hospital on Monday, April 17, 1995.


George "Kaheroton" Jacobs of St. Regis, Quebec; age 53 years. Husband by a previous marriage of Shirley Beaulieu. Dear father of Sharon and Melissa Jacobs both of Cornwall, Massachusetts, Sheldon Jacobs and James Johnson both of St. Regis, Quebec. Predeceased by two daughters, Amanda and Ashley Johnson. Dear son of the late Jonas

Jacobs and the late Annie Thompson. Dear brother of Basil, Alfred and Joseph Jacobs, Mrs. Harriet Adams, Miss Louise Jacobs and Miss Cecilia Jacobs all of St. Regis, Quebec and Mrs. Mary Oakes of Syracuse, New York. Predeceased by two brothers, Michael and David (Chuggo) Jacobs and by one sister, Mrs. Louise Jock. Also survived by 8 grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by four grandchildren, Tekwene and Kellie Jean

Lamb, Marcia Herne and David Isaac. Resting at the residence of his brother, Alfred Jacobs, Second Street, St. Regis, Quebec from 7 p.m. Tuesday.

Funeral was held on Thursday, April 20, 1995 at the St. Regis Catholic Church. Burial was at the St. Lawrence Cemetery, St. Regis, Quebec.

Funeral arrangements were under the care and direction of the Cornwall Funeral Home, West Branch, 20 Seventh Street West, Cornwall.

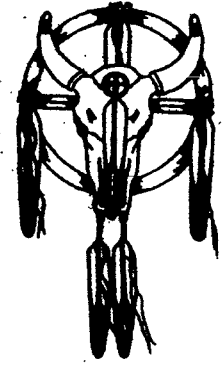


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EDITORIAL

Letter to the Editor

She:kon,

When I attended the symposium regarding Mohawk Immersion at the Kana:takon Community Center it made me extremely happy to know that the community was finally going to begin the first steps towards practicing self government. It was through the education system that many indigenous communities have lost sense of who they are and in realizing that our identities are enveloped within our language it only makes sense that the same system be utilized to regain the language.

Being Haudenosaunee in which everything is taught and learned through oral teachings there is only one possible way to give our children an identity and giving them the chance to learn their language is the first major step.

Having been a teacher and parent of the

Akwesasne Freedom School for several years I can honestly say that teaching a child in his or her own language will not affect their academic growth in any way.

Although my first association with the AFS was not a positive one because I had the attitude that because the teachers were not qualified they could not teach my child properly. I felt that without the proper education how could the teachers possibly teach what my child needed to learn. Through the years seeing how successfully Mohawk Immersion was working I began to question the definitions of "qualified and education". Did being qualified mean being able to teach without having to be taught how? What is education? I suppose it can be perceived in various ways depending on the cultural group. It seems to me that we have

been given a message by a dominant group that in order to function we need to be "educated" but by whose standards. The only comparison I can think of is comments made by Tiorahkwathe Gilbert of Kahnawake who also attended the symposium.

Cats say meow and dogs say bow wow. We, the Onkwehonwe are cats who have been barking up the wrong tree. We need to be comfortable in our own habitat which encompasses our language, beliefs, ceremonies, and spirituality. Without them we will succumb to the assimilation process which began centuries ago thinking and believing we are still "Indian". We allow our children to be Indian for forty minutes a day at school. To internalize the Kanien'kehaka language it has to be more. Do we want our children to be Indian who have part of the language or Onkwehonwe who speak it fluently?

Tewa'kerahkwa Herne also stressed that it needs to be a community effort. not just left up to teachers but that the people of the community need to respect the need for the children to learn their language. I fully agree with this because it has saddened me on many occasions when I have heard comments that children of the Freedom School do not speak Mohawk the "right way". Or having been laughed at when they have tried to speak. While it is true that students from AFS may not be fluent by the standards of some Mohawk speakers by my standards they are.

In order for the language to survive it may need to change. We, as community people need to recognize the severity of the loss should we lose our language entirely and be more accepting to those who are trying to learn.

I would like to recognize the many people who have supported the school,

thereby supporting the language. AFS students have been invited many times to various gatherings to recite the Ohen:ton Karihawate:kwen or to sing. Those people who have extended those invitations give the children a chance to share what they have learned. I hope that the idea of Mohawk Immersion soon becomes a reality in the Akwesasne community. Our students will no longer be a novelty but will have others with whom to share their language with.

Niawenhko:wa to Dan Thompson and Dorothy Lazore in realizing the need for the children to learn their language and for helping to make it possible.

Kaweienonni

