

STRENGTH
PEACE
UNITY

Mohawk Council of Kahnawake



P.O. Box 720
Kahnawake, Quebec J0L 1B0

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS

Tel.: (514) 632-7500
Fax: (514) 638-5958

BY FAX: (613) 941-6900

cc. Jean

16, Ohiari:ha/June 1998

Jean Chretien
Prime Minister
Langevin Block
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Wa'tkwanonwera:ton (Greetings),

This letter and attached "Official Notice" is being sent to all provincial, federal and territorial governments including the Assembly of First Nations.

As the attached Official Notice declares, we, the Mohawks of Kahnawake, have been denied accessibility to our traditional lands and resources that you, the Canadians and Quebecers, have grown fat, rich and lazy on.

Over the centuries, our land base and economic ability has been reduced to a minute fraction of our original home lands. For years you have criticized and attacked us because of what you have termed illegal activities. Yet, when we have attempted to do business legitimately and according to the law, as you have encouraged us to do, we find your bureaucracy is unwilling to follow through and that you do not have the political courage to stand up with us. Your political and public image is more important to you than doing what is right.

This most recent move by the province of Quebec to do indirectly what they cannot do directly is a blatant example of their utter contempt for the Mohawks of Kahnawake and other First Nations in Quebec.

All parties at both the federal and provincial levels are to blame for the deterioration and erosion of our rights because of the fact that we have been used frequently as a political football by both opposition and majority governments for their own political purposes.

Case in point. In this most recent cigarette/tax issue, Mr. Jean Charest and his jackals took great delight in making the Quebec government squirm at Kahnawake's expense. Mr. Charest may be hailed as the next savior of united Canada and the anglophone, but he certainly is no hero to the Mohawks of Kahnawake.

*Originals ltr sent .../2
to: Mario Dumont & Lucien
Lucien Bouchard
Gilles Duceppe
Preston Manning.*

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Let us not forget where he comes from - Mulroney (Tories) and what happened in 1990 under his Party's regime. Now, he is leader of the same Liberal Party who caused the Mohawk Crisis of 1990. The future does not bode well for Kahnawake if the pattern of erosion continues.

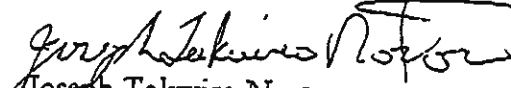
Therefore, it is our duty and responsibility to protect and defend ourselves against the maneuvers and manipulations of both levels and all Parties in government. We must and will secure our jurisdiction which is the basis for sovereignty. We must exercise effective control over all aspects of our territory including the usage of all utilities, highways, railways and navigable waterways.

In effect, as the attached Official Notice states, the implementation of a user fee.

Finally, since neither level of government and/or Party has shown any inclination to assist us to become economically viable, on the contrary have used methods to suppress us. We have chosen to establish Kahnawake as a Duty Free Zone.

You have left us no choice and we do not have the time nor the energy to spend waiting for you to do the right thing.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWAKE


Joseph Tokwiro Norton,
Grand Chief

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OFFICIAL NOTICE TO THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

It is time to once again remind you that your society is rich at the expense of our People. It is our land and resources that support your People and governments. It is you and your governments that have exploited the wealth of our country while excluding us from our rightful patrimony and its benefits. It is you and your governments that have confined us to what little land base remains under our jurisdiction. It is you and your governments that have sought to control our lives and destiny to our detriment. You have proven again that you cannot be trusted.

The recent move by the Province to impose taxes on our People is another example of a direct attack on the legal and aboriginal rights of First Nations peoples. The Kahnawakéron:non totally reject this blatant unilateral infringement on our tax immunity. We have consistently over the course of years attempted to resolve outstanding issues including taxation issues without ever receiving a cooperative response from either the federal or provincial governments. We have also been subject to tax maneuvers by both governments which have resulted in a serious erosion of our unique tax immune status, first by the imposition of the harmonized GST and provincial tax structure, then by the Revenue opinion on the William's Court decision and now with this tax imposition.

The fact is we possess our tax immunity for a reason which is supported by federal law. Our tax exemption is a tangible form of recognition of our aboriginal land rights and distinct status as aboriginal people. The attempts to limit and control our rights to the point of their extinction is tantamount to absolute assimilation and political genocide. Furthermore, these tax schemes will result, if they are successful, in the elimination of our distinct identity as aboriginal peoples with ties to the North American continent which no other people can ever claim.

Due to the failure of the federal and provincial governments to come to reasonable terms regarding our position on taxation and given the magnitude of the threat to our national Mohawk identity with these continuing infringements of our aboriginal and legal rights we are left with no recourse but to exercise our jurisdictional prerogatives unilaterally. You can take comfort in the fact that we have taken this lesson from your playbook. We will begin our jurisdictional control over economic development matters with attention concentrated on third party interests in land being nationalized or taxed. We will also initiate user fees on our highways, waterways, railways and on utilities. We will plan a tax protest starting in Kahnawake. As part of our economic development we will establish a duty free zone for the territory of Kahnawake.

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The denial by the federal government to uphold it's fiduciary obligations and the assimilationist policies of the provincial government have forced us to act in a manner we have avoided for far too long. Since we have been unable to get you to work with us we are left with working alone for our own interests. Our own best interests will be the only consideration from this point forward.

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P.O. Box 720,
Kahnawake, Quebec. J0L 1B0
(OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS)

13-a-1

Tel. (514) 632-7500

May 27, 1988

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
Buckingham Palace
London, ENGLAND

Object: Seigniority of Sault St. Louis

Madam:

She:kon (Mohawk greetings). This is to advise you that the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake, on behalf of the Mohawks of Kahnawake, hereby declare our ownership and jurisdiction over all the area of land in the Province of Quebec formerly known as the "Seigniority of Sault St. Louis".

Our ownership of the Seigniority of Sault St. Louis was recognized by the French Crown and confirmed by the British Government. We have never surrendered our rights in this territory. On the contrary, we have consistently asserted our ownership and jurisdiction over this land.

We have been deprived of the practical benefits of this ownership and jurisdiction by the illegal concession and occupation of tracts of land within the Seigniority of Sault St. Louis. Moreover, governments have illegally appropriated our lands.

We have carried out extensive legal and nistorical research into this matter. We now have legal advice that we retain a valid ownership interest in the Seigniority of Sault St. Louis and that we can claim it as our land.

The Mohawk Council of Kahnawake have determined that the time has come to reassert our rights over this territory. In consequence, please be advised that:

- a) the area of land formerly known as the Seigniority of Sault St. Louis is the property of the Mohawks of Kahnawake;

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Queen Elizabeth II.
May 27, 1988

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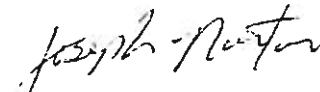
- b) the Mohawks of Kahnawake intend to assert our sovereign jurisdiction over this territory; and
- c) we are prepared to discuss with representatives of Quebec, Canada and the municipalities concerned a treaty to deal with the past and present illegal occupation of these lands as well as with the future occupation of same.

You are requested to communicate with the undersigned at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter. If you choose to ignore this letter, we will be obliged to avail ourselves of our legal recourses.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Nia:wen (Thank you),

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWAKE



Joseph Norton,
Grand Chief

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Tel. (514) 632-7500

June 6, 1988

Mr. Jean Bosco Bourcier
Mayor of Chateauguay
CHATEAUGUAY CITY HALL
5 Youville Blvd.
Chateauguay, Québec
J6J 2P8

RE: Seigniory of Sault St. Louis

She:kon (Mohawk Greetings):

This refers to our letter of May 27th, 1988 advising you of our claim of ownership and jurisdiction in the Seigniory of Sault St. Louis. A perception appears to have developed in the public that our assertion of this claim is related to the raid by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Kahnawake on June 1st, 1988. This perception is mistaken; the two events were entirely unrelated.

Our decision to advise the municipalities concerned of our claim respecting the Seigniory of Sault St. Louis was taken at a Council meeting held on May 25th, 1988. Our letters notifying the municipalities of our claim were mailed on May 27, 1988, five days before the R.C.M.P. raid and the subsequent blockade of the Mercier Bridge.

This claim is not a new matter. The Governments of Canada and Quebec have long been aware that our interests in the Seigniory of Sault St. Louis are "unfinished business".

We do not seek, in pursuing this claim, to expel residents of the municipalities concerned from their homes.

We do intend, however, to see that our rights are respected.

The letter of May 27th, 1988 was sent to you as a courtesy, for your information. We trust that you will support us in having this long standing situation resolved.

Mr. Jean Bosco Bourcier
June 6, 1988

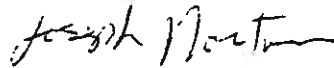
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We are calling upon the Governments of Quebec and Canada to assume their responsibilities, long neglected, for the resolution of this matter.

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Nia:wen (Thank you),

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWAKE



Joseph Norton,
Grand Chief

/dg

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6-13-2

Mohawk Council of Kahnawake

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Tel. (514) 632-7500

June 1, 1988

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney:

This is to demand that you cease and desist from any military and/or police invasion/activity on the people and Territory of Kahnawake.

We demand release of our citizens without charge and the full return of any and all confiscated material.

The citizens of the First Nations of Canada will hold your government responsible if any citizens of Kahnawake is injured or killed as a result of the actions of your government.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWAKE

By 6/1/88

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Tel. (514) 632-7500

June 1, 1988

Messrs. William McKnight
Jim Fulton
Keith Penner
Robert Bourassa
Raymond Savoie

This is to demand that you cease and desist from any military and/or police invasion/activity on the people and Territory of Kahnawake.

We demand release of our citizens without charge and the full return of any and all confiscated material.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWAKE

By [Signature]

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Queen Elizabeth

Prime Minister, Mulroney

Premier Bourassa

liberal critic - Keith Penner

NDP critic Jim Fulton

Minister of Indian Affairs

Minister of State for Indian Affairs - *Richard ...*

Bernard Valcourt (?)

MP - Laprairie - Fernand Jourdenais

MP - Chateauguay - Ricardo Lopez

MNA - Chateauguay - Pierrette Cardinal

MNA - Laprairie - Jean Pierre Saintonge

Minister of Municipal Affairs - André Bourbeau

Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs - Raymond Savoie

Mayor of Chateauguay - Jean Bosco Bourcier

Mayor of Saint Isidore - Bernard Dubuc

Mayor of Sainte Catherine - Raymond Bellavance

Mayor of Saint Constant - Jacques Perreault

Mayor of Delson - Georges Gagné representative of MAC

Mayor of Saint Mathieu - Roger Robert

Mayor of Candiac - Claude Hebert

Mayor of Saint Philippe - Carol Dupuis

Mayor of Laprairie - Jean Guy Tessier

Mayor of Brossard - Georgette Lepage

Mayor of Saint Rémi - Maurice Wolfe