

the ACTivist

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Newspaper of the ACT for Disarmament Coalition • Volume 6, Issue 4 • July-August 1990 • pay what you can

Remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki: NO NUKES!

45 years ago, on August 6 and 9, the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed with nuclear weapons. It is not simply a morbid fascination with past atrocities that make us remember these events. Rather, it is because their legacy is still with us.

From the beginning of the atomic age, nuclear weapons and nuclear power have gone hand in hand. Despite the myth of Canada as a peacemaker, this applies particularly well to the Canadian nuclear industry.

•Canada provided the uranium without which Hiroshima and Nagasaki could never have happened

•Since 1945, Canada has been selling uranium to nuclear weapon states such as the United States, France, and Britain

•New uranium mines in Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories raise the risk of further exports to current and emergent nuclear weapon states, including South Korea and Romania

•Candu heavy water moderated reactors have been exported to third world countries with poor living conditions for their people, militaristic tendencies, and a

record of human rights abuses •And tritium, a waste product of Candu reactors required in the trigger mechanism of all modern nuclear warheads, is sold to the US, where it adds to the stockpile of tritium available for use in military research and nuclear weapon production.

This is the legacy of the Canadian nuclear industry. Despite claims of the Canadian nuclear industry to have peacefully harnessed the power of the atom, nuclear power and nuclear bombs are inextricably linked.

Though Premier Peterson went on public record as being against the expansion of nuclear power prior to his election in 1985, he is now allowing Ontario Hydro's current proposal — to build up to 15 nuclear reactors in the next 25 years — to go before the Environmental Assessment Board. While the environmental assessment will take 2 to 3 years, Peterson and the Liberals will be running in a provincial election this September claiming that the proposal to expand nuclear power in Ontario is Ontario Hydro's, not their own.

This is political duplicity and moral cowardice.

Since its inception nuclear power has been dependent on state support. The federal and provincial governments guarantee the nuclear industry's domestic markets, guarantee Ontario Hydro's loans, limit liability in case of nuclear accident, procure loans for foreign customers, and strive to open export markets for the nuclear industry. The creation of the nuclear industry was state policy; and so is its continued existence.

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- Update Niassinan

Nato calls off low-level bases

The spring was not easy in Niassinan. Though Fr. Jim Roche was released from jail in March (sentenced finally to one day in jail, after serving more than six months), Judge Barbara Reid, in Toronto, rejected the arguments of the Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association, who had applied for an injunction against the flying until a full environmental assessment could be made. The community was exhausted from repeated arrests, jail terms, court cases, trips across Canada and through Europe; and there seemed to be nothing to do but wait. Wait for the injunction application to be appealed; wait for the court cases to resume; wait for the flights to start up again; wait for the NATO Defense Ministers' meeting on May 22.

Meanwhile, both the Innu and their supporters were trying to keep the pressure on, especially in the days just before the NATO meeting.

On May 19, ACT held our annual spring demonstration, this year focussing specifically on the Innu. About 500 people gathered in Queen's Park and marched through downtown Toronto, joining with an anti-racism demonstration outside the Royal Ontario Museum. Innu speakers Louis Riche and Sylvester Andrew (as well as Sylvester's five year old grandson, Bobo), took part in the march — they had spent the week before on a speaking tour of Hamilton, Burlington, Peterbor-

ough and Guelph, as well as the Wandering Spirit Survival School and several other schools in Toronto.

International support messages came in from activists in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Italy, the United States and Scotland.

On May 21, Madeleine Gilchrist, part of a delegation of women from NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, spoke to the NATO defense ministers and presented them with a large box decorated with green and purple balloons, and containing ACT's petition in support of the Innu, signed at that time by just over 20,000 people.

On May 22, ACT members gathered outside the Dutch consulate to begin a vigil, scheduled to

last for the duration of the NATO meeting. We had been there for about three hours when we got the news—NATO had scrapped plans for a Tactical Fighter Weapons Training Centre, in Goose Bay and in Konya. They were not going to build it anywhere.

What's more, a few days later it was announced that no more countries will be allowed to sign into the bilateral agreements.

Of course, the flights go on. Even without the NATO base, as we've said before, the flights could potentially triple. But this is a significant victory for the Innu and their supporters, one that seemed impossible little more than a year ago.

Now, with this encouragement behind us, we can go on to stopping the flights altogether. ACT's petition campaign (with a slightly rewritten petition—see back page) is continuing, with about 27,000 names now gathered. We plan to present the total number of signatures to the federal government at the conclusion of the Freedom for Niassinan Walk being put on this fall by the Alliance for Non-Violent Action and other groups. Further actions are planned across the country, and, of course, the Innu will be continuing their actions at the base, and their cases in the courts.

It's not so hard now to keep on hoping — and working.

•Maggie Helwig



Thursday, August 9
8 pm, Yonge & Bloor
Commemorate the 45th anniversary
of the bombing of Nagasaki

ACT Calendar
July 27: ACT Benefit (see p. 7)
August 9: Nagasaki commemoration, 8 pm, Yonge & Bloor
August 24-26: ACT Annual Conference, location T.B.A.
ACT Meetings: August 1, 15, 29 (every second Wed.)
Weekly
Thurs • Free East Timor vigil, 12-2 pm, Indonesian Consulate • ACT Volunteer Night 7-9 pm
Sat • Petition Drives on Toronto street corners
For details on all events, call ACT, (416) 960-2228

A New Threat

When Czechoslovakia's President, former dissident and human rights activist Václav Havel, called for the removal of all foreign troops — including US, Soviet and Canadian — from Europe, he was indignantly rebuffed by Nato. (Soviet troops are already leaving Czechoslovakia.) With radical and dangerous ideas in Prague (the banning of arms exports, human rights for all citizens, a Citizen's Assembly (as opposed to governments) of Europeans and North Americans) Havel's government is obviously seen as a greater threat to Nato than the Warsaw Pact ever was.

Gamma Ray Golf

Nuclear power may soon revolutionize the sports world. Researchers have discovered that irradiating golf balls with gamma

Jo Peacenic

rays increases their range significantly. This follows on the heels of food irradiation: preserve your food with safe, economical nuclear radiation! We await breathlessly a cure for AIDS.

Flipper vs. the Navy

"The Navy calls dolphins 'advanced biological weapons systems'. I have a problem with that", says Richard O'Barry, the man who trained TV's Flipper. O'Barry has been arrested several times trying to stop a US Navy project that trains dolphins to use .45 calibre nose guns to kill enemy frogmen. Several dolphins are said to have committed suicide rather than remain in captivity.

The Navy refuses to say whether dolphins will be granted conscientious objector status.

Demand a Police State

The following press release is offered without comment:

Members of the George Bush is Alright Committee will be holding two events tomorrow in support of a police state for Canada.

At 5:30 PM, we will be demonstrating in solidarity with Concerned Citizens for Order, Peace and Security (CCOPS) at Police Division 52 under the theme "Support the Police—Beat Yourself Up!"

At 6:30 PM, we will show our solidarity with the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) which is holding a public forum on Albania. "Albania is our Heaven—We Demand a Dictatorship for Canada Too!"

"By participating in the actions of CCOPS and groups like it, we hope to achieve in Cannada what is already in place in Albania—a peaceful, orderly police state", said Ramona Albania, a spokesperson for the group.

Nothing has been heard since of Ms. Albania or her group.

From Our Governments Lie Department

"Any Republic has the right to secede" said USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev. Except, that is, for Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Moldavia, Ukraine....



ACT for Disarmament's Eighth Annual Spring Protest for Peace was led by Innu activist Sylvester Andrew (with grandson Bobo)

[Oakville Beaver photo]

No Nukes!

(continued from p. 1)

Attempts by the Liberals to distance themselves from Ontario Hydro's proposal are nonsense and misinformation. The

continued existence of nuclear power is not a technical question; it is a political decision, whether Peterson intends to sneak it through in the middle of his next term or whether Peterson acknowledges it in an open and honest fashion (which would certainly be a change for Ontario's energy policy). The real question is whether Ontario energy policy will continue to be driven by a deeply flawed anti-ecological vision of unlimited, export oriented growth and the secrecy, centralisation, and lack of accountability that it entails.

We live in one of the last bastions of nuclear expansion. If Ontario chooses a non-nuclear energy policy, then the Canadian reactor industry will die, for no other country will buy Canadian reactors that Canadians don't buy. If on the other hand, as seems likely at present, David Peterson's government does give the nuclear industry a reprieve, the nuclear industry will continue to despoil the environment, fuel regional nuclear arms races, and undermine human rights.

Far from being green, as is the latest rage among politicians, David Peterson is poised to wage a war against nature.

— David Goodman

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THE ACTIVIST

Volume 6, Issue 4
July-Aug 1990

2nd class mailing registration #6769
Subscriptions: \$5 per year (6 issues)
\$25 for institutions

The ACTIVIST is published 6 times a year by ACT for Disarmament, 225a Brunswick Avenue, Toronto M5S 2M6.

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• Is the Cold War over in Asia?
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Akwesasne

Violence at the Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve last April ended in the death of two men in what amounted to a Mohawk civil war over the presence of casinos. Doug George, Mohawk peace activist and editor of Akwesasne Notes, recently told a Toronto audience about what happened at Akwesasne, and what it means for the Mohawk and for the future of all native people of North America.

I have a great sense of relief that I'm here in Toronto. It's the first time in I think about two or three months I've actually left the reservation after spending nine days in a Quebec jail, and it's nice to see there are other realities that are not defined by violence and by fear and by intimidation and by doubt. So I want to thank everybody for coming here and taking the time to share some experiences, and at least listen to my version of what is going on in the Akwesasne community, and what's ahead for us, and what our people are doing in order to resolve the problems, and the trauma, that we've had to experience over the last couple of years.

For those who might be unfamiliar with Akwesasne, I'll go into a short background. The point of reference is why the issue is so serious and what has led us to the present crisis, the ongoing crisis. On its outward, it seems to be gambling, and it seems to be smuggling, and it seems to be Warriors, but it's something perhaps more fundamental than that, and perhaps something that's just basic to all of us as human beings.

Now, Akwesasne is a Mohawk community... Historically, the Mohawk people have lived in Akwesasne for many, many generations, and it has always been defined as our territory. In recent times our people left that area — by recent times I mean since the coming of the Europeans to our shores — but re-established a community in that area in 1747. It was, and continued to be for some time, a community that was defined by a common heritage, a common pursuit of values that were instinctively and distinctively Mohawk.

The problem between us and the people who were moving into our area began after the American Revolution, when surveyors came onto our territory and began to carve up the

This tabloid was produced from a transcript of Doug George's talk in Toronto in June 1990, and originally published as an insert to The ACTIVIST. It does not necessarily express the opinions of The ACTIVIST or of ACT for Disarmament.



Mohawks' aboriginal claim area. And after the War of 1812 they put a boundary in between the community, and effectively divided in half the people there, at Akwesasne. Since that time we've had to deal with administrations in Washington and in Ottawa, in Albany, in Toronto, and in Quebec. The community, geographically, could be seen to be divided into quarters, two quarters or half of which is on the American side, about 14 thousand acres, and a quarter on the Ontario side and a quarter on the Quebec side. In addition to that we have three distinct Mohawk governments. Two were created as colonial-type governments — one by Ottawa, it's called, it was called, the St. Regis Band Council but has now been renamed, and since 1986 has been called the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The other one is the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, which is the colonial government that was created by an act of the state of New York, and was recognized as the legitimate government by the state of New York and by the federal government in Washington. The overall administrative unit is the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, which has historical precedent at Akwesasne, and is the traditional body. And throughout our history, our contemporary history on the reservation, it's been a never-ending struggle to retain not only cultural harmony, and to sustain ourselves as a distinct people, but to retain some kind of political sanity as well.

Life at Akwesasne is unbelievably complicated. You have to deal not only with those two national govern-

ments in Ottawa and in Washington, but you also have to, on a day-to-day level, respond to the dictates of governments in Toronto and Quebec City and Albany, and that is further complicated by having to deal with local governments, local counties, and then have the three Mohawk Councils. So you can see it's a society, a community, that is ripe for the type of things that happen to us. The grounds were there...

Throughout this part of the century, we have repeatedly made a stance, a pro-unity stance, for the Mohawk community. Our feeling was that if you could take this one community, this Mohawk community on the banks of the St. Lawrence, that is subject to all these arbitrary differences; if you could bind them together as a people again, and begin to heal those wounds, you could unleash a formidable force for the unification of native people throughout the continent. If you could do that at Akwesasne, where the odds are so incredible, and the forces against you formidable, then it would give inspiration and perhaps light a spark for other native people.

Along those lines, in 1968 in Akwesasne, we took certain actions that got us a lot of national attention — and then it seemed to begin, for us. In 1968, when we blockaded a bridge that was going through our territory, that got national attention. From that national attention, we began to launch efforts throughout the continent to reach out to other native people. There was a whole series of unity conferences called in the

northeast. And then they would travel about, and go to Hopi territory, and visit the native people out in Alberta, in an attempt to find out, what is going on with other native people.

It became obvious to us that there was an absolute need for Indian people to get involved in certain technological areas that would enhance our ability to communicate with each other — not subject to the outside media, but something that we could control ourselves. And accordingly we began to produce our own newspaper *Akwesasne Notes*. And we began to produce radio tapes. We began to train our young people to be adept in the art of communication, since 1968. That has worked well, with mixed results. In some cases, people who were among the most articulate, the most well-spoken, the most well-respected of our Mohawk leaders, became those people who are leading the opposition against us today, and became those people who are leading the attack not only on the Mohawk nation, but on the Iroquois Confederacy itself.

Nonetheless, that was our duty, to reach out and communicate. We could not sit back and be passive. We realized we had to take an active role in how people perceived us, and we've been doing that...

Now, in 1978 and 79, [the state of New York] began to negotiate [the Mohawk land claim] with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, the weakest of the three governments at Akwesasne, and the one most likely to be infiltrated and corrupted from within. The one most responsive to coercive methods from without. In 1979, the Tribal Council was going to resolve our land claims, land claims that on a conservative estimate, in the Akwesasne area alone, amount to close to a billion dollars, a land claim that stretches all the way from Akwesasne and includes the city of Albany, they were going to sell this all for five million dollars cash and 22 thousand acres of swamp. That was on the table, that was what New York wanted, and they were ready to sign, they were days away, hours away, from signing.

At that time, a certain event happened in Akwesasne among the traditional people who had opposed this but who were not aware that this was going on, but nonetheless opposed any attempt by New York to deal with the Tribal Council. There was a dispute, which led to a standoff, that lasted for a year and a half, between us and many of the people who were backed up by the state of New York, the St. Regis Tribal Council. Which, if you remember, was created by the state of New York for one specific purpose — to do away with Mohawk land, and to divide the Mohawk people. Well, we had opposed that, and we almost came to a full-fledged fight in 1980, it came very close. In 1979, we took direct measures to try to disband a corrupt police force that was being used by the Tribal Council to oppress our people,

the traditional people.

I myself was, you know, a frontline kind of guy. I didn't take a leadership position, that was not my role. But nonetheless, I was involved in the physical removal of those police from their barracks, and I was arrested and spent a little bit of time in jail, but charges were subsequently dropped.

Nonetheless, our people had to face the fact that we had come close to a civil war. And we didn't want that to happen. Those amongst us who still retained the ideal of a united community, who still retained the ideal of a united Akwesasne, they began to organize and try to find ways to avoid a repeat of that internal conflict, so we wouldn't fight with each other any longer. We realized we had to move on a number of fronts — that we had to get beyond rhetoric...

We realized when you are moving towards sovereignty, real sovereignty, it has to be much more than just words. It has to be much more than just a banner or a rally, it has to be something rooted in what people actually need. And what people need in order to survive is, they need things like food, clothing and shelter. As a people, we recognized that it was our responsibility, absolutely, to provide that for our community. Not Ottawa, not Washington, not Albany, not Toronto. They were creating a dependent welfare state, as they had done with many Indian communities across the country. We needed the means to wean ourselves away from that.

But we realized it had to be a gradual process. We had to exercise the principles of patience and reason within our own community, because there were so many that didn't understand this. There were so many that were apprehensive about a return to a traditional government.

Now, Akwesasne is not only divided according to geographic lines or boundaries, but it's also divided according to religious beliefs. The majority of the people are Roman Catholic, and for many, many years they were brought up to suspect or to doubt or to fear traditional ways, the practice of traditional rituals. One of the miracles of Akwesasne to happen in the last ten years was that, because of our efforts to internalize, to perhaps cut down on our travels throughout the country but to work at Akwesasne, we had achieved the understanding and peace that exists today between the different religious disciplines. So you have Methodists, and Catholics, and Longhouse people, all functioning very well together, all meeting together, all taking part in the same type of activities together. We've achieved that. But it was deliberate.

In 1983 we started a local newspaper — this is just one example of many, many programmes. In 1984 we started a radio station. We started alcohol rehabilitation centres, because our people, like many other native people, were cursed by substance abuse. And we had to have our own people dealing with our own problems in our own way. Sure enough, our people went out and got those skills.

We realized that we needed things like updated housing, so our people went out and began to develop programmes for that. We realized we needed a water treatment service, because we could no longer get our water from the St. Lawrence, which had been contaminated. So we began that. Developing the infrastructure for gradually reaching that point where we could say that Akwesasne is once again fully functional as an independent sovereign state...

Now, one of the most pressing concerns was the environment. Indians are, by definition, expressions of the land in which they are born. That's the best thing Indians can be, is custodians of that land, in harmony with that land. At Akwesasne, if you go there, it is safe to say it is probably the most contaminated Indian reservation, or any community for that matter, in North America. We knew that. We knew General Motors was polluting us. We knew that Reynolds Aluminum and Alcoa and Domtar Chemicals were contaminating our air. But we knew we had to do more than just protest. We had to have the ability to gather that information and use it in a constructive way, to compel them to clean that pollution up. That was another way. We formed a joint committee amongst all the councils, we had this in common, and we began the process of training our people, they came back with these skills, and the immediate result of that was that we finally got the environmental protection agency in Washington to allocate 136 million dollars to clean up one part of the reservation. There are other parts that need to be cleaned up, but this is a beginning... So we have an environmental group, it's called the Akwesasne Environmental Task Force...

We have a North American Indian Travelling College. And what they did is they provided cultural teachers for the schools, so regardless if you're Catholic, Methodist or Longhouse, suddenly an Indian approach to reality became legitimate within the schools; which is in itself a remarkable accomplishment... So to be Mohawk, to take Mohawk language, to exercise some aspect of Mohawk culture, was considered legitimate and good for the first time in the history of education systems.

Perhaps the biggest issue to face us, though, was land, and what to do about land — like it is in any culture, in any world. You are essentially defined as a people by how you interact with the land and its resources. Indians had approached a certain understanding, over many thousands of years. At Akwesasne, we were finding ourselves being removed from that, because when they began the process of industrialisation in that area, when they put in the seaway, when they put in dams, it changed the whole course of our economics. No longer were we a people dependent upon the soil and the things that were produced from the water, but we had to move away from the land and get involved in working in cash economies, defining our lives according to the clock. Now, we realized what a

great danger that was to us, and so, again, one of our projects in the mid-80s was to try to find means whereby we could restore the biological health to Akwesasne, and find ways people could earn a living working on the land or things directly produced from the land. We were going to pool our resources when it comes to planning for the community, and find out what ... and we have been doing that ... what is acceptable to Akwesasne, given the limited land that we have. We were going to use that money that came in, clean money that came in from this electric power utility — well, as clean as money can get, I guess — and that was going to be the basis of it. That alone would have achieved economic independence for Akwesasne.

There would be no individual ownership, it would all be collectivization, and we would develop the land in ways that would enhance not only the earth but our abilities to secure a living from the earth. We wouldn't do forestry, there would be limited hunting and fishing, most of it would be towards growing crops. And the distribution of those crops according to historical trade networks.

Now, Indians for thousands of years initiated trade among each other. We wanted to develop that in contemporary terms. Now, you have Cree living in James Bay, or you have Naskapi (Innu) in Labrador, just west of Labrador — now, they go to a store. The store is controlled by a certain business — I don't know if it's Hudson's Bay anymore, it might be, it might be another business. They go to those people. There's no way around it. What they pay for a loaf of bread, or for milk — not that they drink milk much, but another product — is very, very high. Akwesasne has a unique geographical location. We can take food from the United States, develop our own transportation, by air if necessary, and get it to them, and cut that price right down. In half, if need be...

And so an idea which follows along traditional lines is that we will simply make use of existing transportation networks and get them the product. Akwesasne then becomes a market area, like it used to be. Mohawks used to be very good at that, with the fur trade, taking goods from Montreal and Albany, acting as transporter and taking it in to the Great Lakes and even further, for generations.

It's sound, it's good for the environment, it's good for them up there, it's good for us, it's good for the earth. That's what we wanted to do. There's endless ideas like that that were coming forth, especially in '85-'86, man, everybody had an idea. This is what we want to do. And it was good, that one magical year, '85-'86, it looked like we might be able to pull it off ... We had great ideas. That's something Mohawks are never, apparently, free from, the ability to dream, a vision that somehow we can get somewhere, that we can realize that mission the Peacemaker gave us a thousand years ago. On Akwesasne we wanted it, and we were willing to

work for it, we were willing to sacrifice for it. And by golly, we were well on our way to realizing it, the unity of Akwesasne.

We needed the seed money, but we didn't want the money to come from gambling — gambling wasn't that much of a concern. We were worried, because they had two commercial bingo halls, and we knew what would happen if we didn't control it, but we assumed we could control it, because we were going to be unified. It didn't work out that way. Our idealism, and this is where people who are involved in campaigns against various vested interests like industries and government — I've seen this before, and the people who are idealists almost inevitably lose against the people who are practical, you know? Eminently practical, because they have nothing that qualifies their actions. They're just ambitious. They do what they have to do and they have no moral restraints. That's what we came up against...



We started a land claims committee. Now, this is where the problems started. Some of our people were taking advantage of Mohawk sovereignty, of Iroquoian sovereignty, of Indian sovereignty, in order to pursue a certain sort of material well-being, a certain type of material lifestyle. They assumed that the problems at Akwesasne were only going to be resolved when everyone was earning \$50 thousand a year and had the latest model of television and the latest electronic games, and it was defined by becoming part of the consumer society, that was how they defined it. Because they had come from, in some cases, a very impoverished background, they naturally assumed that to be good, to be accepted as equal, to be acknowledged as somebody who had become a "success" meant that you had to achieve a certain amount of material well-being. They were prepared to do whatever they had to in order to get that material well-being.

Our approach, the committee approach, was far different. Money that came into Akwesasne was only a tool for the revival of our traditions, the revival of our political systems, and the restoration of some kind of sanity to the earth. It was only a tool. To them it wasn't. It was the end. And beginning in the early 1980s, some of our people — and this is true of any

society, that it will have a criminal element, a dissident element who will not willingly abide by community standards — they began to get involved in things that were considered criminal by the community. First they began to get into fuel smuggling, when they had a fuel crisis in the United States. Then they moved on from that and they began to get involved in cigarettes. Then they moved on from that to narcotics. And then from there machine guns. And then from there gambling. These were the expressions of people who were determined that they were going to do exactly what they want with what little rights we had left, and damn the consequences. And damn anybody who would stand in their way, or any Iroquoian government or Mohawk government that would cast aspersions or make statements about the legality of what they were doing. And damn those who were connected with those councils.



Well, we tried to fight with them. We tried first to reason with them, and the fight was a reasonable fight, it wasn't a fight of violence. We tried persuasion. We tried meetings. We tried petitions. We tried every conceivable peaceful option for trying to control this. But it seemed that the rise of the criminal element at Akwesasne was directly related to the intensity with which we pursued our land claims.

Now, the state of New York ... can't afford to equitably resolve Iroquois land claims. And if they resolve Mohawk land claims, they have the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas and the Senecas, in turn, each one bigger than the next, and they have to come to some kind of resolution of that.

So New York wants to sell out cheap. I firmly believe this, that Mario Cuomo has adopted a policy of appeasement with certain elements at Akwesasne who he believes will sell out these land claims at the minimum dollar, and without real justice for our people, without any consideration for the coming generations... And the closer we came towards total unity, developing a total Mohawk community, the more resistance externally and internally. The closer we had come towards consensus, the greater the attempts by these outside forces to infiltrate Akwesasne and destroy us

from within. It is no coincidence that when we were the closest to resolving, coming up to an equitable solution of one of our claims, in 1987, that's when slot machines first began to come on the reservation...

The smuggling began to increase, the corruption began to infiltrate all phases of our government, there were even some Longhouse people who were coerced and corrupted by this, but the problem was, those Longhouse people, former traditional people, had been trained very, very well in how to organize, in how to mask criminal activity in the guise of patriotism. And they had done this exceptionally well. How to seduce younger minds. How to form cults, and how to indoctrinate people into believing what you're telling them, even though it goes against your common sense. How do you do that? Well, these people knew how to do that. Some of them were even certified counselors. They knew how to get to people. They knew how to play upon people's emotional weaknesses, upon, perhaps, their need to belong to a group. And that formed the basis for the so-called Warrior Society.

Now, those people who had been true adherents to the Longhouse ways realized that historically there is no room for this type of paramilitary organization. When Mohawks would resist in the past, and use weapons to do so, they did so as a type of militia. They were always under the control of the civil government. When it came time to respond to a crisis, the men and women were organized.

And they readily admit that the ones they took, the people they took into their group, were the marginal people in society, the ones who had been outcast, the ones who had been accused of acting in immoral ways and lacked community standing, and had an absolute need to try and regain face. Regardless of who would give them that opportunity — in this case it was something called the Mohawk Sovereignty Security Force. Now, it's very interesting that in Akwesasne they call it the Mohawk S.S. Force. There's no mistake in the use of German terminology and Nazi symbolism in what they're doing... The fact is these people have engaged in acts of terrorism, they've shot at people, they've burned houses, and they've murdered two of our people. That's the fact.

The lie that apparently has taken hold of some people is that they are protecting Mohawk sovereignty. That is not true. Now, don't just take my word for it. There's councils all over Iroquoian country, starting at Ohsweken, going to Onondaga, Tonawanda, Tuscarora, Akwesasne, that have universally condemned the rise of this paramilitary group. They are used for one purpose, and that is to protect the rackets that go on at Akwesasne.

And that is directly related to our land claims. The state does not want us to expand, they don't want to see a unified Mohawk people, they are afraid of that, they've always been afraid of that. Therefore, they're encouraging the disruption of our

drive for unity internally.

We realized what was happening to us. It was painfully clear. What we didn't realize was the degree of the intensity with which these people were going to hit us. The gambling came in. It was controlled by non-natives. The money came from non-natives. The money came from cigarette smuggling, the gamblers will admit this. The weapons were not made by Mohawk people, they came from somewhere. The slot machines came from Las Vegas and New Jersey. Without a doubt there were connections with organized crime. Where do you get a machine gun in North America, an AK-47? Not an AKS-223, I'm talking an AK-47, 7.62 millimetre. Where do you get those things? You can't go to Toronto and buy those on the street. They come from a certain place. Where do you get an M-16 fully automatic machine gun? Where do you get a 9 millimetre Uzi? Or a Mach 10? Where do you get an M-60 machine gun, or a rocket launcher? You can't go and buy those things in stores. You have to have a connection. Inevitably that connection is with people in New York City. And we know those people in New York City are connected with organized crime...

At Akwesasne, we were determined, using free media, to make those things known. And of course we ran into opposition. Quite intense at times. But nonetheless we tried to put a stop to it. And we couldn't. We asked the President of the United States to exercise the Treaty of Canadeguda, 1794 — Mohawks did not sign that but are nonetheless bound by it because the Confederacy agreed to it — that says, in Article 6, that we can ask for the help of the United States' President to remove things from our territory that are causing disruptions that come from the United States. Now, Mohawks do not make slots. Mohawks do not produce machine guns. Mohawks do not make Bingo cards. Mohawks do not produce cocaine. So we asked the President, on May 29 of last year, to help us out. Exercise Canadeguda — first of all, investigate those non-native investors. Prosecute them when warranted, get them out of here. Second thing, stop those things from coming into our reservation, those cigarettes, whatever comes in here. They come from the United States, it's the American people that control it — you know, stop it, please. Work with us.

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. It seemed that the only time they'd respond was when there was an act of violence. On June 6 last year they got it, when some of our people were assaulted in a bar by employees of the casino. That seemed to be the expression of a growing trend of violence — so some of our people went into the casino and removed four hundred thousand dollars worth of slots that weren't supposed to be there in the beginning. Why? Because we couldn't get the cooperation of the outside police forces. Again, we did not want them to invade Akwesasne, we wanted our own police force, our own peacekeeping unit, backed up by our own justice code. But we were fought

every inch of the way by some of our own people.

The acts of terrorism are rooted from around that time, when certain articulate, well-spoken people began to get these young men together and they organized this S.S. force. And they began to use it against us, it was very clear what these people were about. And they have vested interests. Virtually every member of that force is involved in the smuggling of cigarettes. I don't just say that as an allegation, it's a matter of police record. Look up the records of RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police, our own Akwesasne police, and match up their arrest records for smuggling with members of the S.S. One and the same. No mistaking about it.

We tried to oppose it. It was getting beyond the point of frustration. In August of last year they had a Grand Council at Onondaga. It was disrupted by these people, who could not stand the truth to get out. And our people got frustrated at Akwesasne. So they confronted them, and there was a fight. A week later, because of the nature of this organization, some of our young men were going to physically remove this S.S. force from our territory. But they were stopped.

The tensions continued throughout that fall. In the spring of this year there began to occur repeated acts of terrorism — my place was shot up with a machine gun, the homes of our Longhouse chiefs were shot up with machine guns, other people were shot at, and we couldn't get any help. The state called it an internal problem, despite those innumerable examples we had of outside investors coming in. In fact, these people even hired outside people to shoot at us.

Well ... you know ... we tried. All throughout the spring we tried. We thought we had it in the middle of March, when we had meetings between the members of the S.S. force and the men. Their leaders were not there to try to coerce them into thinking differently. They had agreed at one meeting — the S.S. force guys, the front-line fighters — to put away their weapons and to work with us to achieve peace at Akwesasne. They agreed. Because it was reasonable. There was no coercion — you know, we don't want to kill each other, right? Okay, fine. Let's find ways to do it. First thing is to put aside the guns. Then we can talk. What you did about the drugs, about the gambling, we'll put that aside, about the smuggling; let's just talk as human beings. They fully agreed with that. They went back to their leadership, and their leadership just chopped them right down. They said, nothing doing. No agreement with those people. Our people were pushed to the wall. What do we do? How do we stop illegal gambling? How do we stop smuggling? How do we stop the rising wave of crime? What do you as a human do?...

Well, March comes along, the unity talks collapse, there's nothing left to do, the people take to the streets. It was spontaneous, it was not organized, they went to the roads, they barricaded the roads, they held off for thirty-two days. The Creator threw

everything the Creator had at us — you know, to test us. First day, huge snowstorm. The next week, record-breaking cold. Next week after that, thunder, lightning, rain like you wouldn't believe. And those people stuck with it, you know. It was incredible. They just stuck with it.

Now, as the warm weather came, however, we knew that there was going to be increased acts of violence, and sure enough that was the case. Gunshots, people driving by, people drunk in cars trying to ram the barricades, a whole series of things happening. Again, appeals to the outside police agencies; not to come and invade us, but to work with us to restore peace and order at Akwesasne, and as long as the casinos were open and gambling was fueling these things, that was never going to occur. Those things had to be stopped.

Nonetheless, working with people like the Martin Luther King Institute in Atlanta, Georgia, we adopted a non-violent approach, and we held it, under extreme provocation, for thirty-two days. On April 24, they came at us with everything they had. The gamblers gave these guys cocaine, they gave them booze, they gave them guns, and they hit us.

One roadblock sustained fire for almost two hours, machine-gun fire. That was at the eastern roadblock; we sustained fire for about half an hour, machine-gun fire. This was not automatic. Akwesasne people, if you were to go to a shooting range and fire off ten rounds and say, identify the gun, they could identify the gun. "Oh, that's a 2-23, I can tell by the sound of the bullet." "Oh, that's a nine-millimetre over there; that looks like a 30-06, 30-08-8..." That's how well versed we are in these acts, these shootings going on there.

And without regard for who was there. There was women and teenagers at those roadblocks. Mostly, during the thirty-two days, it was women and young people. But the shooting went on.

And it was incredible. Even at that time, we asked, "Help, help, help". RCMP, help us — well, it's an internal matter. OPP, help us, State Police ... But will they do anything about it? No, they won't. Why? It's an internal matter. That's Mario Cuomo's statement.

Now, April 27 ... well, I was at the police station April 26, when they came under massive attack. It was amazing what was happening there. And our people fired back. Not at anybody, but our police were firing over the heads of people to keep them away. We realized our community was ill-equipped to deal with a massive paramilitary invasion. And the order was given to evacuate, with the assumption that the Canadian militia would come in, and secure the homes of the people. They didn't come in.

On April 27, my brother made a decision that he wasn't going till the police got there, 'cause he knew his house would be torched. We knew they were going to torch houses. He made a stand.

Some of us went there — I couldn't see my brother die without

me there — I made a stand. And aside from all this stuff about being a reporter and not carrying a gun — when somebody's about to blow your head off and shooting at you, you damn well do what you have to do to survive.

And that's the decision I made. And I'm obviously paying for it, but that's fine. I stood there.

On April 30 we knew we were going to get shot at again. I still was down there. Calls were made to the state. At ten o'clock we had sustained a lot of gunfire, I called the governor of New York, I talked to him for ten minutes, got into a nice little debate with him, and the end result was he defended the Warriors, he said to me, some of those guys are military veterans. Don't you think if they wanted to shoot you they would have shot you? That was his comment. The second thing is, he said I was exaggerating the situation. And then he asked me, what did I do? I said, I edit *Akwesasne Notes*. And he said, you're a professional at this, aren't you? And I told him, in conclusion, that I would see him on election day.

Well, a few hours later the attacks began again, it was almost an ongoing firefight for almost ten hours; the end result was we lost two people. But the police finally did come in ... they finally came in, I guess that's what they were waiting for ... our people gradually began to come home ... in Akwesasne right now, it's a situation of anticipation. Those people have not been disarmed, those M-60 machine guns are still there, those machine guns are still there, the assault weapons are still there, the grenades are still there, the potential of violence is incredibly high — the only thing that stops it is the fact that these people are afraid to shoot state police and afraid to shoot Mounties...



If you are in another Indian community and you see what has happened in Akwesasne, don't for one instant think that you're immune from it. But learn from our experience, and try to find out the realities of what we're going through, and how it's going to affect your people as well. Because the way that is in Akwesasne, the violence, the trauma, is going to affect Indian policies on a federal level, both in Canada and the United States...

As other Indian people look to what's happening at Akwesasne, and

might be seduced and persuaded into using their sovereignty, their native rights, for economic development, it could very well happen to an Indian band like the Sarcees in Alberta, or somebody in Manitoba. You have to be on your guard.

We need the means to exchange information and ideas about these operatives. Because what we are dealing with is no less than Indian organized crime, as violent and as corrupt as the Mafia. And that's a matter of fact.

To find out how Akwesasne affects you in Toronto, go to Chinatown. They have a market for these unstamped, untaxed cigarettes in Chinatown in Toronto. And if you suddenly go into a shop and find out, "Hey, I can buy a carton of cigarettes for twenty dollars instead of twenty-seven!" I'll lay you odds where those cigarettes came from ... Yeah, there are people [from the Warrior Society] here, because there's a market here for various products, and we know they're in Toronto. They're in Toronto for a couple of reasons. One is, they have a hard time on their own reservations, from my understanding, and the second thing is publicity. Now, they don't have legitimacy in the eyes of credible Iroquoian leaders, or Indian leaders, for that matter; anybody who knows this and is aware of the issues says the same thing — these people are doing wrong. They are outlaw, that's without exception. It's much easier to come to Toronto, hold a press conference, and gain legitimacy and support by claiming that they are being subject to the attacks of a hostile police force and unfriendly governments; there's always a knee-jerk reaction in some groups against the federal government, and I understand that. But, by golly, we're doing the work, and when we're counselling people, we're developing programs, we're putting out newspapers, we're cleaning up the land, I never see those people there.

And to me, the act of sovereignty is the act of doing, the act of being, you do it, you are sovereign, you work, you get your hands dirty, you plant, you work with your people, you attend ceremonies, you do everything and anything that'll keep that culture and that community growing. That's your absolute obligation. Then can you call yourself a warrior in defense of the people. Not a warrior in defense of the latest press release, or money, or political position, but somebody who's actually worked for the people. That to me is what a warrior is. You're not born warriors, it's something you have to work at.

But we have to get away from that word, you know? That word sounds so mean and hostile. And we are after all defined by the Great Law of Peace, not the Great Law of Machine Guns, the Great Law of AK-47s, Kalshnikov's Great Law of Peace. This is supposed to be peace. This is what we tried to do. We knew it would take years. We knew it. We knew it. It's slow, it's painfully slow, and some people are impatient. They couldn't wait.

Had we had the peace to develop a unified Mohawk nation, had those

people not done what they did in '85, '86, we would have had something right now, in 1990, that would have been miraculous. It's gone, and it's not going to come back, in my lifetime anyway...

Sovereignty, in the words of Warren Lyons, is an exercise, it is what you do to be sovereign. In Akwesasne we've tried to do that. To create the roots for sovereignty, the structure for sovereignty. We license our own radio station, the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, we issue our own passports, we're trying to establish a greater land base, and an economy that's conducive to our way of life, whatever that way of life is, who knows what it is now. But we're trying to act against formidable odds. And I believe right now that the chances of a peaceful resolution there are next to none, if not impossible ... if not impossible ...

The interest in Akwesasne should be universal in Canada. We are the worst example of policing, the worst example of the judicial system collapsing, the worst example of political meddling with the lives of the people, that you can find. And the same holds true of the United States. That's where we are now, at the end of June 1990.

But the people, everybody, at Akwesasne, Onondaga, Kahnawake, is operating under a lot of stress. An example of how bad things are in Kahnawake, in Montreal where a lot of cigarettes go, they were trying to nominate people for the band council. The Mohawk council of Kahnawake has been crippled because it has refused to talk a firm stance against this activity. As a result they lack any kind of really public support. They had nominations, they had ten people running for twelve seats. They had to suspend the elections. Why aren't people, good people, coming forth and saying, "I want to be part of my community government." Because it's corrupt, and it's ineffective, and they know it. And so people are expressing their resentment and their hostility by not even getting involved. And that community will be crippled if they don't have some kind of sustainable administration. And the problem is, Kahnawake and Akwesasne were held up, until a couple of years ago, as examples by the Department of Indian Affairs of what self-government can do for you. Now, we're certainly not that — we're examples, all right, but of the worst case of how it can collapse, and how tentative it is.

Police Barricade Oka

On July 11, Québec Provincial Police attempted to remove a long-standing non-violent blockade set up by Mohawks trying to prevent the construction of a golf course on their land, at Kanestake (Oka) outside Montréal. Mohawk Warriors, recently arrived at the blockade site, fought back and a policeman was killed. Now the territory has been sealed off and police are not allowing food in.

To contribute to the people at Kanestake (donations go towards food for the people), send donations to: Kanestake Band Council, Box 607, Kanestake Québec, J0N 1E0.

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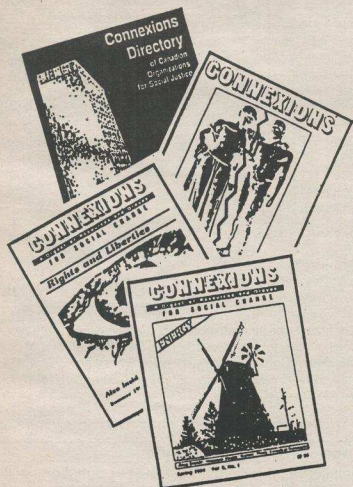
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