

The Revolution

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Revolution:

2 A: a sudden, radical, or complete change. B: a fundamental change in political organization; esp. the substitution of another by the governed. C: activity or movement designed to effect fundamental changes in the socioeconomic situation (as of a radical or cultural segment of the population).

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary
(Merriam-Webster)

Revolution, in its most common understanding, is the act of removing an existing oppressive and corrupt totalitarian institution, and replacing it based upon specific social, political, or economic reforms. With this understanding one can see that a true revolution is in progress at Kahnawake. Within the Kahnawake revolutionary campaign, there has been a movement by various camps, traditionalist and not, determined to liberate the community by dissolve bringing down the Indian Act and reestablishing a unified traditional government under the Kaianere'kó:wa.

This author, having participated in some failed campaigns of overthrowing the Indian Act government at Kahnawake, has examined the mistakes made by such movements and offers this consideration for any further campaigns. The failed September Uprising of 1995 (Policing Agreement) especially taught the Kahnawake revolutionary the most important lesson; a revolution of violence and arms will not succeed in a situation whereby the so-called "enemy" is your family.

Although this revolution could have been accomplished by now through the use of arms and violence, the many individuals directly involved in this revolution, in the trenches if you will, have recognized the true purpose of the Peacemaker's original message. By understanding the good tidings of peace and power, they have now committed to a revolution of enlightenment and consciousness using the arms of education and unity.

Before contact and the colonization of our people, the Haudenosaunee had evolved to a state of utopian proportions whereby its institutions and social systems were refined to a point that continues to marvel the world today. Indeed, it is a lesson of logic and history that teaches us that it is easier to destroy than it is to create. The same is true for the Haudenosaunee cause, for it is in a state of "re-evolvement" or "revolution", whereby there is a movement to restore what once was. If it took 300 years for Kahnawake to devolve into what exists today, imagine how long it will take to restore.

Kahnawake revolutionaries have been fighting the Indian Act system for some time now, and within this period, have unconsciously utilized a "trial and error" system of revolutionary activity, which at a glance may seem to have proved unproductive and insignificant. If one made such claims, they would be justified, as there is no real tangible booty from any of the previous uprisings. But was there any intangible

accomplishments made as a direct result of these activities? To answer this question, let us analyze these events further, in comparison to the personal experiences of the late Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara. In his book, *Guerrilla Warfare*, Guevara acknowledges that a revolutionary needs not wait for the appropriate conditions to be in place in order to commit a revolution; for the act of revolution itself will in fact create the necessary conditions.

This theory has now been proven here in the Kahnawake experience whereby a quiet revolution of unity and education has been initiated by various groups of nationalists and traditionalists. This quiet revolution has now evolved into a more sophisticated and effective movement by strategically establishing appropriate conditions for a more aggressive campaign with very tangible objectives. This is of course attributed to the enduring “trial and error” system that slowly but consistently gained momentum one step at a time over a period of roughly 20 years. Methodically, the revolution at Kahnawake has also matured to a point where more effective action could be launched because of the currently ripe climate for change. Moreover, the once separate parties have now concentrated their efforts in sync, which has also created an atmosphere of optimistic expectation for the collective Kahnawake.

Much like an expanding field fire, momentum is a vital factor in the success of any revolutionary movement. The more the flames expand, the more momentum it gains; until ultimately the old husk is turned to ashes; thus revealing the fertile soil beneath eagerly ready to sow the seeds of peace, righteousness and power. The existing momentum of the Kahnawake revolution has come to a point of no return that makes it apparent that the revolution will succeed after all. However, there is a possibility that the present path of the revolution could be manipulated or misguided by some. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all Kahnawa’kehró:non to ensure the discipline and morality of the revolution and its course.

The Haudenosaunee way of life is in cycles. Each year at midwinter, the Haudenosaunee “stir the ashes” to symbolize and celebrate the mundane existence of a New Year; recommitting and renewing their responsibilities and duties in the Long House cycle. Likewise, there are many steps that have yet to be taken and just as many social stages to be experienced before we as Kanien’kehá:ka can come to full circle or “revolution”. Thus, as we embark in this new era by symbolically stirring the ashes of change, let us not pause for a moment in ensuring the proper delivery of the good tidings of peace and power to Kahnawake!

Ever onward towards the good tidings of peace and power!