

The Politics of Economic Development Part III: Mohawk Globalization

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In last week's edition, the *Eastern Door* printed an expose on the continuing controversy surrounding Kahnawake Aviation Resource Authority (KARA), the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake (MCK), and its "arms length" economic development commission; Tewatonhnhisáktha. This writer could not help but put all other writing projects aside to address this issue that definitely needs to be scrutinized.

Throughout the past two years we have seen many violent clashes in both Canada and the United States over a controversial issue called globalization. Globalization is the act of international free trade between transnational corporations. Corporate empires like Nike and McDonald's utilize and profit from capitalist globalization by exhausting many resources from poor countries for almost nothing in cost in an effort to achieve maximum production for minimum investment. In essence, the result of globalization will see the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer.

We as Kanien'kehá:ka, may look upon these opposing foreign groups and corporations with criticism and reservation, but then overlook the fact that this dark cloud of globalization has now blackened the economic community of Kahnawake. This recent dilemma that faces the MCK is a perfect example of the devastating effects of globalization. Under the guise of economic development for self-sufficiency, the MCK (through its arms length commission Tewatonhnhisáktha) has now created, and attempted to create, a number of questionable business ventures such as KARA, MIT, ADM and a casino.

Without attacking these businesses and proposed businesses from the angle of its immoral implications (which have already been exhausted), an attempt to defile these projects will be made from the angle of feasibility. These so-called community business ventures, that are mostly managed by non-Kanien'kehá:ka personnel, gamble with our community's equity and sell our nation's resources to foreign nations. The resources that exist here in the Mohawk Nation at Kahnawake, human and natural, should be only utilized by our people to establish and promote tangibly self-sufficient projects for the true independence of the Mohawk Nation at Kahnawake.

Originally, the Kahnawake Economic Development Authority (KEDA) served the community well, as it seemed that its main function was to help Kahnawa'kehró:non entrepreneurs to start businesses. As it has now evolved into Tewatonhnhisáktha, it seems that its main function has also evolved into creating business ventures allegedly for the community, but of course under the guidelines and authority of the MCK. It seems as though the MCK has also evolved from a governing administration (for some) into a governing corporation.

Let us now examine globalization from a Haudenosaunee perspective. When the Great Peace was established amongst the Haudenosaunee, the Peacemaker placed the five unified nations into a symbolic Long House that stretched from the western door to the eastern door of Iroquoia. The Peacemaker also placed a bowl before the leaders of the Haudenosaunee. The bowl contained a beaver tail inside of it and the Peacemaker told the leaders that all Haudenosaunee would eat from same bowl. He also asked the leaders to note that there was no sharp objects in the bowl, as if there were, someone would surely be cut. This analogy of wisdom, of course, describes the nationalization of all resources in the territories of Iroquoia and prohibits the Haudenosaunee to fight or draw blood over trade and commerce within their country as a fundamental principle in the establishment of the Great Law of Peace.

Another Haudenosaunee perspective on trade and commerce is the Kahswénhtha (Two Row wampum). This historic agreement asserts the sovereign integrity of the Haudenosaunee and its foreign relations. Indeed, trade agreements can exist between nations, but not at the expense or compromise of certain national rights, resources, and equity. The fourth principle of the Haudenosaunee Trade and Commerce Committee states that,

“We have the right to develop cooperative trade agreements, contracts, and commerce arrangements with other sovereign entities and corporations.”

Pursuant to this principle, the MCK is neither the inherit government of the Mohawk Nation, nor is it a sovereign entity and likewise are not eligible to enter into trade compacts with outside governments as the official representatives of the Mohawks of Kahnawake.

The resolution this author suggests is a unique Iroquoian brand of socialist economic reform and investments in tangible self-sufficiency (see part I for definition and ideology). This author calls for the nationalization of all Haudenosaunee resources and to return all foreign interests back into the hands of Kahnawa'kehró:non and the Mohawk Nation. A return to the Kaianere'kó:wa and its institutions would stabilize a socialist economy for the Mohawk Nation at Kahnawake by placing all equity and resources under a common ownership with the most democratic institution ever devised by man to monitor and administer it.

Ever onward towards the good tidings of peace & power!