

...economies, First Nation leadership says in rejecting the bill

(Continued from page 2)

with more bills coming at First Nations are a threat of terrorism against First Nations.

"This threat of terrorism that they are going to stop us from providing for our families that's the real harm here."

Turtle Island Trade and Commerce has been looking at this issue for some time now.

She said like the Indian Defense League said more than 40 years ago, when Six Nations international border crossing rights were at risk from government intervention, "they said we needed to hold the line to protect our border crossing rights. Well we need to hold the line for our people and our families and hopefully the leadership will

stand up and say we have to do something for all of us."

TITAC holds weekly meetings at the GREAT building auditorium and is currently running a series of talks on taxation.

She said the tobacco issue is a nationhood issue. "We are our own nation and no outside government has control over us."

She said she wants to see the Confederacy take the lead on the issue with the administrative assistance of the band council.

"This is outside of the band council. They don't have the GREAT Law. It lies with our traditions, but that doesn't mean it has to be adversarial. The band council is very capable of handling the administration but the leadership has to come from the traditional council or the federal gov-

ernment will enforce all kinds of acts on us and implement them through the Indian Act."

She said the Confederacy needs to take leadership.

This past weekend an off-reserve newspaper held what it called a "community meeting" on the tobacco industry and sent ripples of panic through the community.

"I think that's why the rumour spread the OPP had shut down a smoke shop."

She said, "It's unfortunate but the meeting made it sound like Bill C-10 was in effect now. It caused shock and our people have not had a chance to rally around the issue or figure out what they are going to do about it and here we were at a meeting and I thought we were gonna hear about what the act

was but it was a more reactionary meeting. They have everyone in panic mode."

Jan Longboat, a community elder said she attended the meeting, "there were a lot of people there I didn't know. I thought it was a community meeting but it was more activist," she said.

Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill said, "We do not support Bill C-10 and have signed a declaration denouncing this bill along with the other Iroquois communities who attend the Iroquois Caucus. This could have serious impacts by criminalizing our people for transporting tobacco products."

She said band council will discuss having a community meeting to include people who are involved in the tobacco industry to decide on the next steps in



Ava Hill

fighting the bill.

"Six Nations was never consulted on this bill," she said.

Joe Delaronde, spokesperson for the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake, says the Iroquois Caucus has passed a resolution to reject Bill C-10.

He said the Caucus is, "looking at other solutions

to the problem but basically rejecting its implementation and the criminalization of our people. From the perspective of all the Iroquoian communities in this area, we're basically rejecting C-10, including all its components and contents."

He said there has been a "complete lack of consultation" with Iroquois people on the proposed bill.

"Even if they've spoken with us, there's been nothing meaningful and no attempt to accommodate Iroquoian people. The fact is, C-10 basically is looking at the Iroquoian communities. It just seems to strike right at our people."

The Caucus is made up of elected leaders from seven Iroquoian communities: Kahnawake, Six Nations, Akwesasne, Kanehsatake, Tyendinaga, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Wahta.