

Group threatens to shut down roads, sparks concern

By Lynda Powless
Editor

Six Nations community leaders are calling for calm in the wake of rumours that Toronto activists with Six Nations supporters are planning to launch road and rail blockades protesting the impending Bill C-10.

One source told Turtle Island News a weekend meeting involved activists associated with a purported area weekly newspaper suggested a plan that would see Toronto activists and Six Nations people shutting down roads in surrounding communities along with rail

lines in protest of the federal Bill C-10, an amendment that targets the first nations tobacco industry.

The activists also claim if police move onto Six Nations they will shut down all entranceways to the community to keep police out.

One person who was at the meeting called for calm saying Six Nations needs to "go the political route. Our chiefs are moving on this so why start that kind of action."

Another said she would not attend the protests. "I don't know who those peo-

ple are. It seems to be, being organized by the Two Row Times." Newspaper general manager and co-owner Tom Keefer refused an interview with Turtle Island News. According to one of the owners there are five owners of the newspaper, three are non-native.

Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI) director Hazel Hill said she had heard the rumours about the meeting. "I have heard about it from people that were there and I am concerned. They are talking about taking action, boots to the ground demonstra-

tions against the bill but I think it could be detrimental if it is being led by people who are not Haudenosaunee and as a result are not directly affected."

She said she is concerned the actions are being held without giving the Confederacy Council a chance to act. "These people have to give the chiefs a chance to put their position out there. Businesses have to realize, by their presence at Confederacy they have instilled in the chiefs this effort to draft a paper on these concerns. They need

to respectfully allow them to continue this before they take any action which could jeopardize any action the chiefs are trying to get to on a national or international level."

Hill said she was pleased to see the decision made Saturday. "People expressed their concerns. The Turtle Island Trade and Commerce group were quite articulate and made it clear what the issues were and the chiefs responded to their concerns which included all these bills. Now they have to give them time to act."

She said, "the decisions

are not about tobacco but about our future and it has to be handled with that understanding and state of mind. That's why it goes through our council process. The people took an issue to council and demonstrated by their presence an issue of great concern. Council has responded to that. Now they need to allow the process to work its way through. Sometimes it means sitting back and letting the chiefs deal with this without interference or jumping ahead of the chiefs."