

Haudenosaunee Grand Council position on Elected Councils

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tributary elected councils, along with both the NCAI and USET, do not represent the Haudenosaunee or its member nations. While the Grand Council of Chiefs feels that it must be firm on this matter, our council reminds elected councils of the Haudenosaunee remedy to standardize governance in our communities under the Kaianere'k6:wa (Great Law of Peace).

In 1991, the Haudenosaunee Chiefs outlined its prerequisites to begin meaningful dialogue on how we can all live by the principles and laws of the Kaianere'k6:wa, within the Longhouse of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. At that time, Haudenosaunee Chiefs asked the elected councils to respect and recognize its authority over eight political areas it historically claims jurisdiction over. While we understand that at this time Canada and the

United States only recognize the legitimacy of elected councils, we feel this will never change so long as our own people wilfully accept this colonial imposition. The Grand Council of Chiefs remains steadfast to this necessary show of good faith and is prepared to begin the necessary work to help decolonize the political structures in each of our communities. This issue is challenging in many ways because of the

personal impact this has on individuals who have a heartfelt connection to the Haudenosaunee and wish to express it in ways that they think is helpful. What is not realized is that by representing the Haudenosaunee within colonial constructs it furthers the colonial agenda of Canada and United States. The elective systems are foreign entities that are colonizing the culture by misappropriation. Placing our teachings, laws, and

symbols within the colonial construct of the elective band council system is morphing decolonization into a meaningless apparition of cultural revitalization and transformation. The Kaianere'k6:wa is based upon inclusivity, peaceful co-existence, and strength through unity bound by laws that ensure a democratic and consensual decision-making process. The Grand Council of Chiefs makes no judg-

ments of the moral character or sincerity of those individuals who currently serve as elected councillors, but we do encourage them to bring their gifts, skills, and dedication back into the canoe and take shelter beneath the Great Tree of Peace. Bound together by the good tidings of peace and power, we can be stronger than ever.
Da·ne'thoh,
Chief Sidney Hill, Tadodah&l