

THE TWO ROW TIMES TOBACCO SERIES

Interview with Leroy Hill on Bill C-10

SIX NATIONS - The *Two Row Times* met with Haudenosaunee Confederacy Secretary "Jock" Hill to talk about the pending Bill C-10 and its implications on all Six Nations residents. Note that Mr. Hill's opinions are his own and should not necessarily be construed as that of the Confederacy Chiefs Council at large.

TRT: *How would you see the Two Row Wampum is not being applied? How do you see the Canadian government, the province, or the City of Brantford relating to the Two Row?*

The way I see it, Canada is still under the Queen and they'll admit it is still so. When the Queen and the Crown comes into the picture, it's already laid out how we're supposed to relate. It's been established centuries ago. It was meant to last along as the rivers are still flowing and the grass is still green in the spring and the sun shining. So there is no debating that on our side of it. So it's almost like they are in denial. Now it's important to understand why it's like that. The reason it's like that is because they launched a plan a while back, to assimilate and eliminate us. Now because we haven't

been assimilated or eliminated, they don't really have papers to say, 'Well, what do we do? These people didn't abandon ship.' That was the intent. So this is why there is a difficulty because their manual they have been following since the Duncan Campbell Scott days in the 1920s, he's the one who really laid an agenda out and to this day, the Harper government is following that. And it's sad because we're still here and our people are determined as can be to remain who we are. That's what our struggle is, to remain who we are. We're supposed to be absorbed into their society by now.

In bill C-10, what I see is they're taking some aggressive action on our people. That's what's it's going to be amounting to. And they're going to see what they can get away with, again.

TRT: *Is this where they're hiring more RCMP officers for a special task force to go after "contraband"?*

Right. They say, 'we feel that it's funding organized crime and these gangs and they've linked it in to the worst things in society.' But why don't they have some courtesy and sit down with

our leadership and have a discussion about this? Is their claim even factual? First start there, and work with that idea of the equality, brotherhood, respect and peace and friendship that we're supposed to have. Instead they make an announcement that they're going to hire more goons.

TRT: *We say that our people have never been defeated in war but what if people say that was a war when the RCMP attacked us in 1924?*

I wouldn't say so because the Haudenosaunee are spread across many, many territories, in many different states, and different provinces. I think that for them to really, really say they beat us in war, we've had battles we've won and lost, in the world, and there's not one country in the world that can't say that. The fact of the matter is, we're here and we don't intend on going away so what would you rather have, conflict and pressure and stress on your grandchildren, or friendship and harmony and this feeling of mutual aid and brotherhood that's in our hearts?

It gets lost in the shuffle here. So right away the government is gonna put

more goon squads on the ground to fight Indians and it's gonna be good for Canada. Well how many Canadians think it's gonna be a good move to make? They already got everything settled down. Like that's the work that I've been doing. I went through a lot of stress to keep the peace. You know, like a lot of work has gone in by the traditional leadership, the men and women, to help our people stay in a good place where they don't wanna be taking up arms or blowing up bridges or taking out railway lines.

TRT: *What can the Chiefs do?*

Well like I say, what I see is that the Harper government is intent on following Duncan Campbell Scott's agenda: 'By the time I'm done my term there will be no Indians to worry about.' Like maybe he wants us to battle. But our Chiefs have to advocate. Our Chief's cannot say we're gonna battle with you. But it can happen. You know if he's going to push, the Chief's will step back, and that seems to be where he wants to go.

I don't know if he (Harper) or his advisors really know the feeling on the ground in Indian

Country they'd see there's a lot of desperation, and there's a generation that's had enough. That's not somewhere off in the distance, that's right there in front of you.

TRT: *What do we do if, say 20,000 people wanted to uphold the Two Row in a proper way?*

Well I know the function of politicians, right from in towns and municipalities, regional directors and all this stuff that's in place. People that are voted in rely on votes and the fact of the matter is, the people, they really do have some influence, especially unions and things like that. A good example of that is this C-10 thing I talked about earlier. Now you see big headlines on the news saying these Indians are in bed with a bunch of criminal organizations and all that. I think we have to step back and take a look at what we want in Ontario and even in Haldimand and Brant. When most of those people are voted in, they have to answer to some degree. I think people want to support this idea of the Two Row abiding by peace and friendship and all these good things that they have agreed to. That's a

treaty that we've agreed to uphold, so we have to apply this because it's entrenched in the Canadian Constitution.

Through C-10, they're attacking something that's making our people somewhat independent. That's really what they're attacking. Let's cut to the chase.

I had gotten a message that feds made an announcement that they're going to hire more RCMP to enforce their law on tobacco. I'm concerned because, although I'm not employed by (anyone in the tobacco trade), I have relatives who are employed or are in some way tied to it.

The attack is on any measure of our independence because that goes against Harper and Flanagan and Duncan Campbell Scott's agenda for us. They're attacking our ability to be independent with the chains they want to put on us.

In closing I would like to see us put something in place that benefits all and that we all can defend. That's what I see as needing to be done if we're to handle this issue as a Nation. I still believe we can and should be under our own Tobacco Law.