



A high-powered boat, loaded with cigarette cases, speeds along the St. Lawrence River at Akwesasne.

## Natives rely on 1794 treaty

More than any other document, the Iroquois rely on the 1794 Jay Treaty to support their right to bring goods across the border without paying taxes.

Named after John Jay, then chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, the agreement between Britain and the United States was primarily intended to resolve commercial disputes which were threatening to lead to war.

In addition, one article of the treaty granted native people the right to pass freely between the U.S. and the British colony and to carry "their own proper goods and effects" across the border free of tax or duty.

Many natives say this treaty formally recognized a right which existed for aboriginal people since time immemorial.

Shortly after Canada was created, the British reassured natives living north of the new Canada-U.S. border that it would not affect their right to travel freely and trade with natives on the other side of the boundary,

June 24



Wayne Roper, Exposit

**John, whose family includes two smugglers and two native border officials, looks out over the St. Lawrence River at Akwesasne.**