

Six Nations man faces jail time for notarizing Canadian documents

By Jim Windle

VANCOUVER, COAST SALISH TERRITORY – It may appear to be a Hail Mary pass to some, but others see it as a potentially ground breaking legal face-off between Canadian Law Societies and the sovereignty of Onkwehonwe people.

Sino General is a Wolf Clan member of the Cayuga Nation, from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, who is now living in British Columbia. He defended himself in a BC Court of Friday against charges laid by the Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia (SNPBC) for, they say, impersonating a “real” Notary Public.

In 2013, after General refused to comply with an injunction ordering him to stop the practice, more charges were laid against him including Contempt of Court.

General was stamping documents with a seal with his Onkwehonwe name “Hajistahenhway” and the words “Notary Public – Cayuga Nation.” General has been helping members of the public seeking to have documents notarized in disputes with corporations and the government.

Under British and Canadian law, the service offered by a Notary Public is to certify that whatever a transaction or official signature that may be needed for a person is in fact true and legitimate. In a nutshell, a Notary Public vouches that a person is who they say that they are and that they are affirming their statements to be true.

For a number of years, General, who also goes by his traditional name, Hajistahenhway, has been providing this service in BC for free, saving people money in an already expensive legal system. He designed his own official seal for that purpose.

“I follow the law of peace and the governments of the (Six Nations) nation,” he said. “Our government’s system was here thousands of years before they (Canadian government) got here. I am exempt from Canadian law.”



Sino General claims to be exempt from Canadian law because he is of the Cayuga Nation.

General cites the Two Row Wampum treaty as the foundation of his argument and holds that as a member of the Cayuga nation he does not need the approval of the BC government or its regulatory bodies to preform the functions of a Notary Public.

According to the Two Row Wampum, Onkwehonwe and non-Onkwehonwe were to honour and respect each other’s laws and customs, without the interference of the other.

Hajistahenhway believes that these legal assumptions practiced as fact by the SNPBC, do not apply to him doing the same service under Onkwehonwe law.

“I told them that if you have proof that you have the authority to make such demands, that I would stop being a notary public,” General told the *Two Row Times* in an interview Friday.

“The members of the public need to know that the legal fashions he’s carrying out are not valid,” SNPBC General Counsel, Ron Usher, told APTN. “He’s not qualified...nor a member of any body. Our role is to protect the public from such things. The law says we’re the people who determine who is a notary and who is not.”

General is hoping to find if the presumed authority of the BC government supersedes a treaty.

Under the Two Row Wampum, which is still supposed to be a part of Canadian Law, Canadians have every right to establish their own institutions and regulations for Notary Publics, but not to impose their rules or system

of government on Onkwehonwe people, who are to stay in their own vessel.

The Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee – Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora – operate according to their own politico-legal system known as the Kaianere’kó:wa, which has been in effect since long before Europeans arrived in North America

General is not alone in his opinion either. Lisa Monchalin, A Kwantlen

Poly-tech University, Department of Criminology professor, agrees with General that the courts are challenging his sovereignty.

“He has never once declared himself as a B.C. notary,” she told APTN. “He helps people out,” said Monchalin. “If the B.C. courts think what he’s doing looks similar to them then so be it. But he has every right to do what he’s doing under treaty.”

For General, it’s more

about principle than anything. He refuses to recognize someone else’s authority because he believes Canadian and provincial laws do not apply to him as a sovereign Onkwehonwe person.

“This is something that’s been coming down the pipes for a while,” he said. “We are the people who are original. We always had the agreement that we’d share the lands as friends and not tell each other what to do. Their

laws would be theirs and our laws would be laws for our people.”

General faces 30 days in jail and a \$5,000 fine if found guilty. His court case resumes at 9am on Thursday in Vancouver Superior Court.

To hear General go further into detail about his perspective on these matters, go to <https://soundcloud.com/two-row-times> to listen to our interview with him.