

# Six Nations men found guilty in Eagle's Nest Occupation

Two men were found guilty Monday of mischief to property, for their part in the 1995 occupation of the federal Indian and Northern Affairs office at 188 Mohawk St.,

Trevor Doxtater, 29, was sentenced in Ontario court (provincial) division) to six months of probation and ordered to perform 30 hours of community services.

Richard Hill, 50, was given a suspended sentence and six months' probation. He was also ordered to make a charitable donation of \$200 to a women's shelter in Ohsweken.

Court heard that approximately 75 people occupied the office in the Eagle's Nest Business Complex, which is owned by the Six Nations Band Council and leased to the Department of Indian Affairs between Aug. 30 and Oct. 14, 1995.

The Occupation ended peacefully with an agreement signed between the occupiers and the elected band council.

Witnesses testified that equipment was stolen, walls were taken off the hinges and locked confidential files were viewed and stolen.

"It was trashed," said department employee Catherine Hill. "It was totally trashed."

Although 18 people were charged in relation to the incident, only six have come before the court.

Hazel Hill, 36, was also being

tried for mischief to property, but the Crown dropped the charge against her on Monday because of lack of evidence.

No estimate of property damage was made.

The net loss of rental income to the Six Nations Band Council was about \$369,000. DIA has since moved their offices from Eagle's Nest to a Brantford location causing more rental loss to Six Nations Band Council.

Employees of the department told the court that on the morning of Aug. 30, about 10 people arrived at the southern district office, told them it was Mohawk property, ordered them out, and refused to let anyone enter.

Richard Hill told the Expositor at the time that the occupiers wanted the abolition of the Indian Act and the resignation of the Six Nations Band Council.

Six Nations police testified that a surveillance camera, set up across the road from the office, showed Hill and Doxtater going in and out of the building several times a day for two weeks. It also showed Hill receiving documents from others coming out of the building.

In a CKCO-TV news story shown at the trial, Hill told a reporter that the occupation was meant to "wake up the Six Nations people" and to show support for the native standoff at Gustafsen Lake, B.C.

Judge Gethin Edward noted that

none of the evidence against Hill or Doxtater indicated they did any damage to the building, and that Hill's statement on the TV tape could be simply an expression of sympathy for the occupiers. But the frequency with which they entered the building proved they participated in the occupation, he said.

Edward, a descendent of Joseph Brant, told the defendants they were not the only ones who wish for changes.

"In my opinion, we have made strides in our native community," he told them.

"Those strides may not be in the direction you would wish to see," he said, "and you have the right to your opinion."

But that right, Edward said, must be tempered by the rights of other citizens.

Of particular concern to him was the viewing of confidential documents. People have the right to provide information to government with the trust that it will remain secret.

Hill said after the trial that, contrary to what Edward suggested, the charitable donation he was ordered to make would not give him back some respect from the community.

"We had respect for what we did," he said "In our community, respect is not bought with the dollar."

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