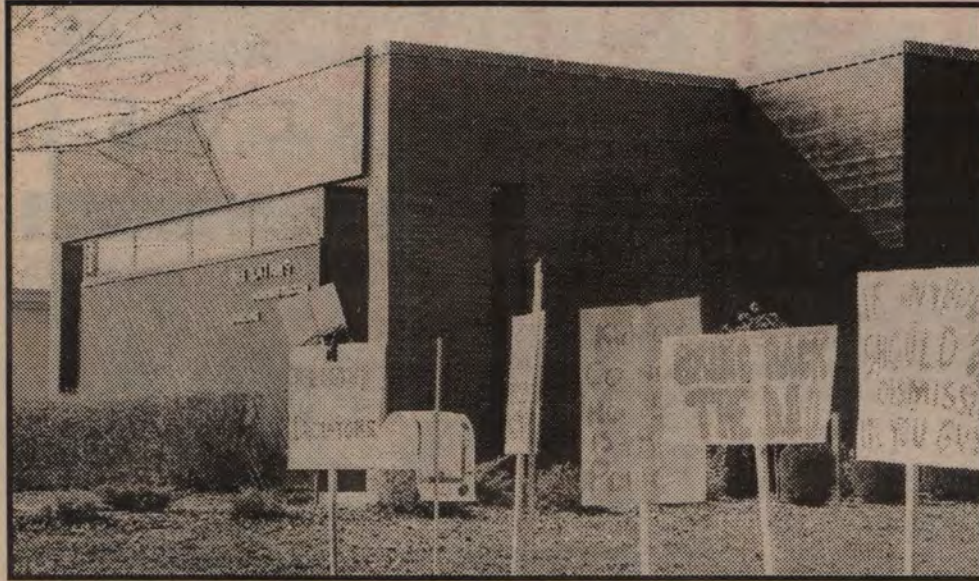


Signs of the times taken to the streets in community rally

by Paul Baswick



Messages of rally supporters remain outside the Band Administration Building following the rally's conclusion early Thursday afternoon.



David General speaks of the need for community members to channel frustration with band council into positive action.



Mary General holds her simple message to band council high during the Oct. 26 rally.

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something that is positive and constructive, because I don't want to be here next spring or next fall doing exactly the same thing," said General, who addressed the crowd from the top of a picnic table on the Band Administration Building lawn.

"You try to get (council) impeached. You try to get them to have a vote of non-confidence, to resign — it doesn't work. Let's focus our energy at each other. Let's get interested. Let's let them know we're watching them. We don't need just need one Director of Operations watching them — we all have to watch them."

General specifically addressed community issues which preceded Jamieson's dismissal that still demand resolution on Six Nations, including the expenditure of Casino Rama Dollars without community consent, land claim disputes, and the lasting legacy of the failed Grand River Mills project.

All of these issues, contended General, can be traced to a larger, fundamental problem within the community.

"The common denominator in all of this is the current administration," said General.

"Let's make this message very thorough. It's not just about the releasing and employment of the band council. It's not just about Rama money. It's not just about GRM. It's about how (council) regards this whole territory."

In a bid to help change band council's perception of Six Nations while invoking constructive action, General informed those at the rally of an request he had sent to council to attend a community meeting at the Social Services Building on Thursday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. General added that Roberta Jamieson, former Ontario Ombudsman, had already agreed to chair the meeting.

"She has proposed that representatives from the community and the band council

sit down and set a very specific so that it doesn't get diluted in anger and accusation," said General, who suggested that following a tighter format may result in more getting done at the meeting.

"It (should stick) to the point, and when we leave that meeting, we leave with something constructive."

General, when contacted by the Teka Tuesday night, said that while next Thursday's meeting is still on, the format may not be as originally planned.

General said he will meet with Roberta Jamieson and Band Chief Wellington Staats today to discuss their participation and the format of Thursday's meeting, but that no one from council has so far confirmed they will attend.

"We may not be able to proceed with the format that we had talked about for the next meeting, with three or four councillors present, Roberta Jamieson, and community representatives," said General.

"Even if it doesn't quite happen as planned, the meeting will go on."

"If General is unable to secure a commitment by council to attend this Thursday's meeting, he says, he, Staats and Jamieson will lay the groundwork for another upcoming meeting which would follow the preferred format.

"It could be a week or two before that meeting happens now," said General.

"We've waited this long, though, and another week or two wouldn't be too long to hold off."