

NO GUNS FOR CANADA CUSTOMS OFFICERS!

UNITY MARCH AGAINST ARMING CBSA! Saturday, May 9th @ Noon* Akwesasne Mohawk Territory

The arming of CBSA Officers in a residential area on Akwesasne Mohawk Territory will escalate an already tense situation. It will also place the safety of surrounding residents and all border travelers in jeopardy.

The majority of travelers passing through the Kawehnoke Port of Entry are Akwesasne residents. Combined with documented acts of racial profiling and provocation by Customs Officers, our community is opposed to arming Canada Customs Officers.

Join the Mohawk community of Akwesasne for a Unity March in calling for an urgent meeting between the Minister of Public Safety Peter Van Loan and Akwesasne Mohawk Leadership.

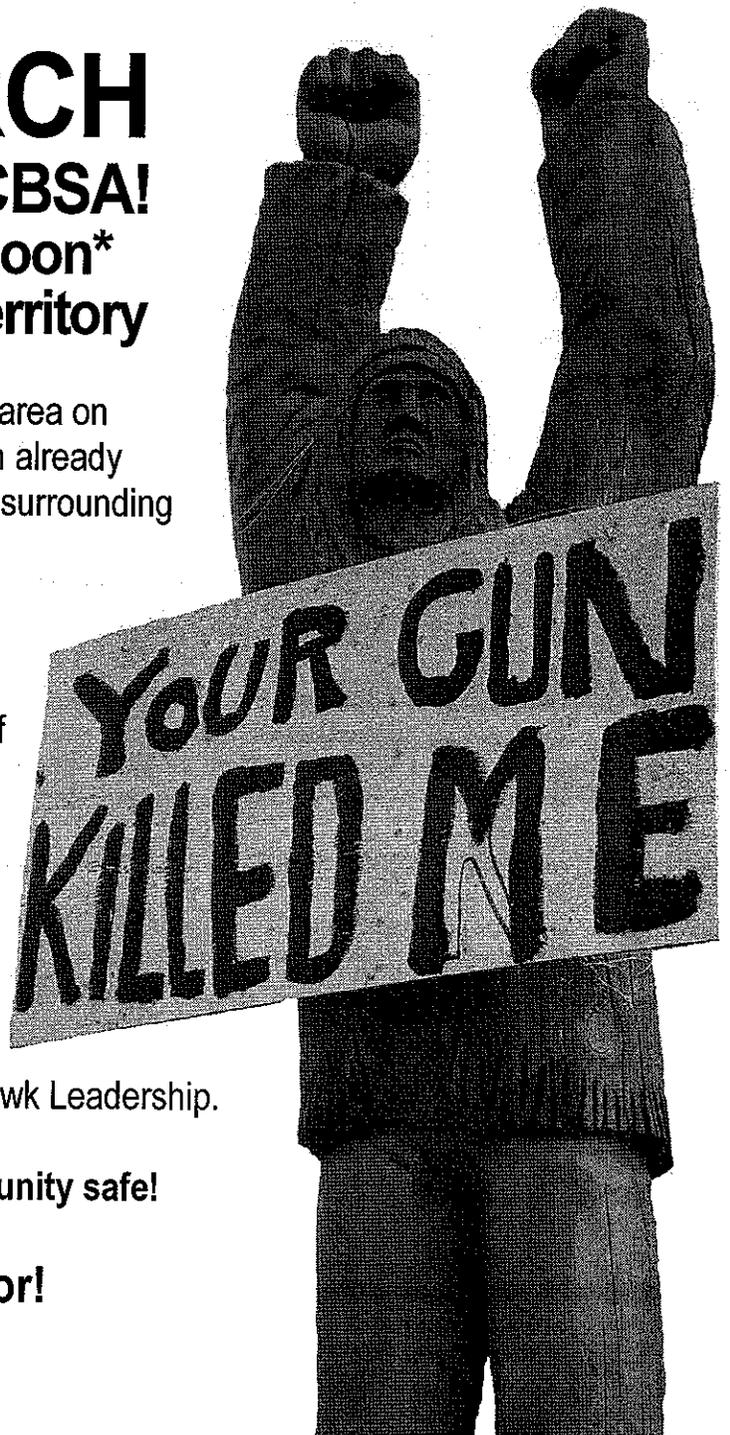
Your support is needed to keep our community safe!

- **Guns are banned in the corridor!**
- **Guns will not increase safety!**
- **Guns are not the solution!**
- **Guns will cost lives!**

A DAY OF ACTION FOR AKWESASNE!

March will begin at the Unity Rally Site next to the Canadian Customs on Kawehnoke and proceed across the International Bridge to the U.S. Port of Entry.

** more dates to be determined.*



NO GUNS FOR CANADA CUSTOMS OFFICERS!

The Mohawk community of Akwesasne is opposed to the Government of Canada's plan to begin arming Customs Officers at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry in June 2009. The arming of CBSA officers is viewed as a direct infringement on our sovereignty.

CANADA CUSTOMS IS ON AKWESASNE MOHAWK TERRITORY!

The Kawehnoke Port of Entry is one of a few border facilities located on First Nations territory managed by CBSA. There was no federal consultation on how this act will impact our First Nations community. It is situated in a residential area at a major crossroad on Kawehnoke; which is the location of a bus stop for children, recreational fields and a play area, a large number of homes, a district convenience store, several small businesses and other features of a well-populated and high-trafficked area.

FACT

70% of border travelers at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry are Akwesasne Mohawk people that cross the border on a daily basis to:

- travel within our own community,
- visit family or friends,
- get to work, or school,
- attend to many health, social, cultural, recreational gatherings, or
- shop or conduct business.

KAWEHNOKE PORT OF ENTRY IS IN A RESIDENTIAL AREA!

Additionally, the majority of travelers that pass through the Kawehnoke Port of Entry are Akwesasne residents. According to an August 2002 report co-commissioned by Transport Canada and reaffirmed by a recent socio-economic study, Akwesasne Mohawks account for nearly 70% of traffic that passes through the border facility.

MAJORITY OF BORDER TRAVELERS ARE AKWESASNE RESIDENTS!

Combined with documented acts of provocation by CBSA officers, Akwesasne residents do not support the use of guns at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry. Numerous reports have been filed with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Justice against CBSA officers for violation of our community member's individual rights. Two of these cases have been filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

DO NOT ARM CANADIAN CUSTOMS OFFICERS IN AKWESASNE!

There is an existing working arrangement for CBSA to utilize the protection services of Mohawk Security Officers, which are located in the same border facility. Additionally, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Services have a sub-station at this location and regularly assist in maintaining the integrity and safety of this Port of Entry. **This has provided for a safe border crossing for nearly 35 years, without the use of guns!**

FACT

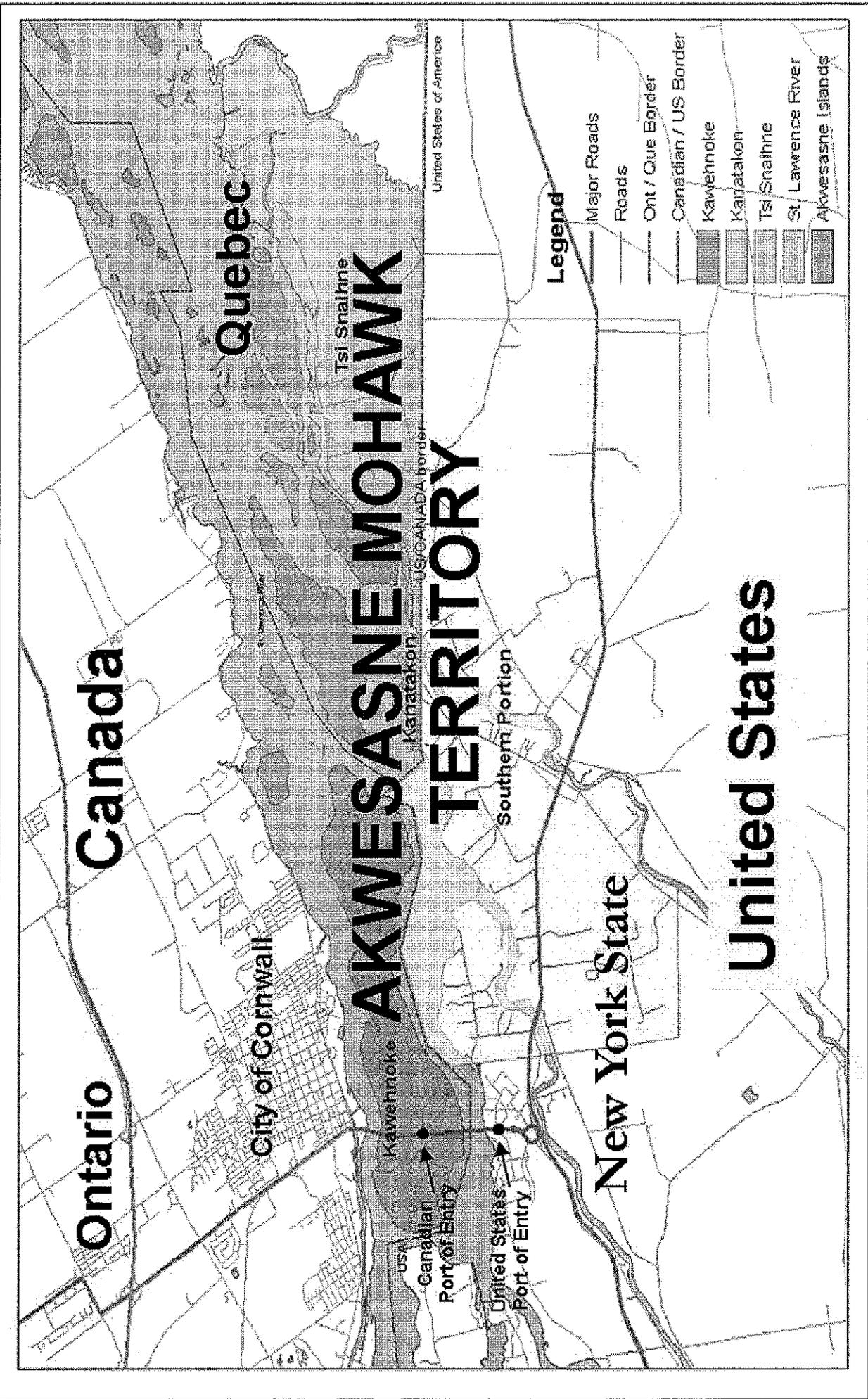
The Kawehnoke Port of Entry is located in the middle of a residential area:

- Our residential homes are directly adjacent to the Customs.
- Our children slide during the winter on the hills next to the Customs.
- Our people ride horses and walk in the open space next to the Customs
- Our children play volleyball, basketball and lacrosse next to the Customs.
- Our little corner store that is frequented by hundreds of residents throughout the day is at the edge of the Customs compound.
- Our children gather every day to get on and off the school bus here.

For more information contact:

Chief Wesley Benedict: (613) 551-2573, Chief Larry King: (613) 551-1930,
or Chief Joe Lazore: (613) 551-5292

SIGN OUR ONLINE PETITION AT WWW.AKWESASNE.CA



*To the Residents of Akwesasne - To our Friends and Neighbors
Surrounding Akwesasne – (Listen to our Hearts and Minds)*

{A Message of Peace}

The announcement that Canadian Border Customs officials are going to be armed as of June 1st, 2009 at the Port station on Cornwall Island which serves as the border-crossing from New York State to Cornwall, Ontario, is a very dangerous example of thoughtless stupidity from wherever the decision was made from. There is already a fully trained multi- police force at their disposal for any emergency that may require the handling of guns. The day to day security is provided by an unarmed Mohawk security staff that has proven to be very effective as there has not been any major incident of any kind during the last thirty five years. In fact the reason there hasn't been an incident is because the Mohawk security officials chose to perform their duties without the use of fire-arms and that is what has been supported by the community of Akwesasne. We acknowledge that this is part of a cross-Canada initiative but this border-crossing is very unique in Canada and there has to be special safety consideration for the residents who live on the territory. This Customs station is surrounded by a highly-populated "Mohawk Reserve Community" which in turn is located on a large island in the St. Lawrence River, part of the Mohawk Territory at Akwesasne.

When the Customs station was placed here on the island after the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the International Bridge, it was never contemplated that the officials who worked there would be armed. Had that been the case, the Mohawk people would have objected from the very beginning to a squad of foreign armed officers being placed in their neighborhood. Today, the situation is even more contentious – and dangerous, both for the Customs officials and for the Mohawk people.

The site has been the scene of countless daily disagreements between Mohawk residents who have to pass through the Customs check-point to go from one part of the reserve to another to go to school and to work. In recent years there has been a steady increase of racial profiling of our youth and Elders going through the check point, complaints have been directed to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and to the Canadian Human Rights office in Ottawa. The investigation has been going on for three years with no indication of a resolution and now the issue has reached a boiling point. What's needed now are steady minds and solutions to our problems, arming the customs staff will gave the opposite effect as the Mohawk people can no longer tolerate this treatment.

Akwesasne is our home, it is not a prison and we should not be treated as one.

The situation is tense enough that if the Customs officers are armed, there are going to be Mohawks who will then feel it necessary to be prepared to defend themselves. Presumably, the Customs officers will find themselves in situations where they might have to draw their firearms. The result could easily become inflammatory, with tragic consequences. It would be a matter of minutes before Mohawk families would pour out of their nearby homes with the news that "someone was just shot at the Customs." And the results would be horrific for all sides, let's not go there.

The Mohawk people do not understand why the Canadian government would bring about a situation which, although difficult at times, has generally been peaceful, to one which is fraught with dangerous conflict for Customs personnel and to the Mohawks families that reside in the community.

Despite the tension, over the five decades the Customs station has been in that location, residents cannot recall any situation that would have required an officer to draw a firearm as the wisest and best alternative. The Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne is united in its determination that no armed personnel will be stationed at the border crossing. The Canadian Government has two alternatives

- one is to continue operations in the same way it has done for nearly half a century and always look to peaceful ways to resolve Native border-crossing issues.

- The other alternative will be to move the Customs building and compound off the island once and for all, if there is no more consideration for peace in our community.

On Saturday May 8th 2009, we are asking for the residents and friends of Akwesasne to "Walk for Peace" across the international bridge to Cornwall Island starting at Noon from the U.S side of the International Bridge. Bring our families, our children, our Elders and walk for one people and one Nation, show we are determined to find a more peaceful solution to resolve the ongoing issue related to our border crossing at Akwesasne.



Akwesasne Wolf Belt

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL CHIEFS

Onerahtohko:wa/May 4, 2009

Dear Editor:

Re: Akwesasne Opposition to the Arming of Canada Customs Officers at Akwesasne

Akwesasne existed as a Mohawk Community long before the international border was overlaid on our ancient territory.

This border has naturally caused us concern over the years, and we have had to make many adjustments to our lives because of it. Throughout it all, our people have maintained that our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, including our Border Crossing Rights must be respected.

There have been many times when situations at the border have interfered with our lives and direct face to face meeting with Canada have resolved the issues. There have also been other times when our concerns have fallen on deaf ears. At those times, we have had to express our concerns through the courts, or we have brought attention to them through peaceful demonstration or complaints to the Human Rights Commission.

It should be no surprise that a recent traffic study showed that Akwesasne people are the major users of this crossing, representing 70% of the traffic. Akwesasne people of all ages cross the border on a daily basis to carry on regular day to day activities

- to get from one part of our community to another
- to get to work, or school, or
- to attend to many health, social, cultural, recreational or economic needs.

It is plain to see that this crossing has a direct impact upon our people. Naturally then, the safety and security of this crossing is a major concern of our people

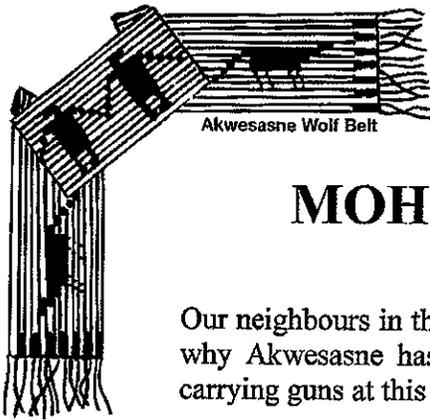
For more than 25 years, Akwesasne has worked in partnership with Canada Customs to insure a safe working environment and crossing experience, by providing a detachment of Mohawk Security Officers, to assist Canada Customs in its daily operation, **without the use of firearms.**

Additionally, Akwesasne Police have a sub-station at this Port of Entry and regularly assist in maintaining the integrity and safety of this Port of Entry.

Mohawk Gov't Office (613) 575-2348
(613) 575-2220



Admin. Office (613) 575-2266
(613) 575-2222



Akwesasne Wolf Belt

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL CHIEFS

Our neighbours in the City of Cornwall may be wondering what all the fuss is about and why Akwesasne has chosen such a firm position against Canada's Customs Officers carrying guns at this Port of Entry at Akwesasne.

First of all, this is the only Port of Entry into Canada that is right in the middle of a Native Community.

- Our residential homes are directly adjacent to the customs facility.
- Our children slide their sleds on the hills beside Customs.
- Our people ride horses and walk in the green space beside the Customs buildings.
- A volleyball, basket ball and lacrosse practice area are right beside the Customs buildings.
- Our little corner store which is frequented by children and hundreds of community members throughout the day is at the edge of the Customs compound.
- Our school bus pick up points are located here
- And this is the hub of activity for those community members leaving Kawehnoke (Cornwall Island) to go to work, school, appointments, shopping and other daily activities.

The use of firearms in an area of such high community-use should in itself bring cause for concern.

Recently, we have received numerous reports that there are some Customs Officers that have worked to instigate confrontation, humiliate individuals, and provoke sensitive situations. That kind of attitude should never be acceptable.

We worry that improvident use of weapons in the hands of Customs Officers that have confrontational dispositions toward our people, will build volatile relationships whereby the safety and security of our people will be in danger.

Although Akwesasne people are committed to strengthening border security and addressing threats of terrorism, we are also equally committed to protecting our people, our community interests and our Aboriginal, Treaty and Border Crossing Rights.

Akwesasne does not support the use of guns by Canada's Customs Officers at the Akwesasne Port of Entry.

Thank you,

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

Mohawk Gov't Office (613) 575-2348
(613) 575-2220



Admin. Office (613) 575-2266
(613) 575-2222

JOINT STATEMENT

For immediate release:

Onerahtokha / April 30, 2009

For information contact:

Brendan White

David Staddon

Beulah Hill

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs

Tel: (613) 575-2348

Tel: (518) 358-2272

Tel: (518) 358-3381

AKWESASNE MOHAWK LEADERS ISSUE JOINT STATEMENT AGAINST ARMING CANADA CUSTOMS OFFICERS

AKWESASNE -- The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, and Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs issued the following joint statement today as the Mohawk community of Akwesasne prepares to mark the 110th anniversary since the passing of Saiowisakeron, also known as "Jake Ice." Saiowisakeron was a Mohawk activist that was shot and killed by Dominion Police on May 1, 1899 as he opposed the Government of Canada's effort to impose federal policies in our territory.

At the Kawehnoke Port of Entry, Akwesasne Mohawk leaders will commemorate "Saiowisakeron Day" at 9am on May 1st and bring attention to the Government of Canada's ill-conceived plan to arm Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) Officers stationed in Akwesasne beginning in June 2009. Akwesasne Mohawk leaders are united in viewing the arming of CBSA officers as a direct assault on our sovereignty, which resonates into an act of aggression against our Mohawk people and community.

Akwesasne leaders condemn the Canadian Government's intention to permit its custom officers to begin carrying weapons at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry. The act of arming federal agents in the Mohawk territory of Akwesasne will unnecessarily worsen an already volatile situation. It will intentionally and haphazardly place the safety of surrounding Akwesasne residents and all border travelers in jeopardy.

Mohawk leaders draw attention to the fact that the Kawehnoke Port of Entry is **one of only a few border facilities located on First Nations territory—out of 119 land-border crossings managed by CBSA**. Additionally, it is situated in a residential area at a major crossroad on Kawehnoke; which is the location of a bus stop where children gather, recreational fields and a play area, a large number of homes, a district convenience store, several small businesses and other typical features of a populated residential area. All of which, would be placed in harm's way if CBSA agents begin carrying firearms.

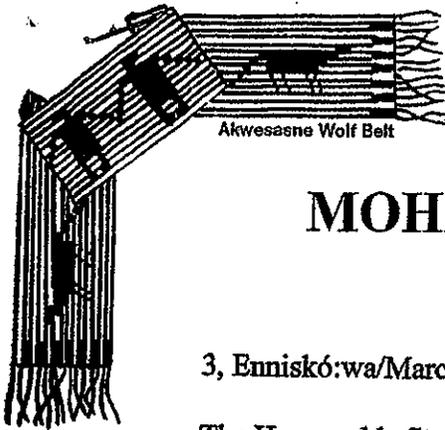
Additionally, the majority of travelers that pass through the Kawehnoke Port of Entry are Akwesasne residents. According to an August 2002 report co-commissioned by Transport Canada and reaffirmed by a recent socio-economic study, Akwesasne Mohawks account for nearly 70% of traffic that passes through the border facility. This includes Kawehnoke residents that use the border crossing several times each day on their way to work or school; to carry on daily business; to visit friends and family; or to attend the health, social, cultural or recreational facilities and events throughout Akwesasne--a community bisected in the middle by the international border.

In response to Canada's plan to arm custom officers at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry, Akwesasne Mohawk leaders support the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's ban on the carrying of firearms by CBSA officers within the Akwesasne corridor. They also support MCA's demand for an immediate consultation process or commission of inquiry be implemented to re-evaluate the Minister of Public Safety's plan to arm officers at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry.

Combined with documented acts of provocation by CBSA officers, Akwesasne Mohawk leaders do not support the use of guns at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry. Numerous reports have been filed with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's (MCA) Department of Justice against CBSA officers for violation of our community member's individual rights. These complaints have in turn been filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

They note that there is an existing working arrangement for CBSA to utilize the protection services of Mohawk Security Officers, which are located in the same border facility. This has provided for a safe working environment and border crossing for more than 25 years, without the use of guns. Arming CBSA officers will unnecessarily and irreparably damage this cooperative working relationship and efforts by Akwesasne Mohawk leaders to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to address mutual concerns related to border security.

Akwesasne Mohawk leaders stated that an exception was previously made by the Government of Canada to make the Kawehnoke Port of Entry one of only a few Canada Customs on First Nations territory--another exception can be made to not permit the arming of its customs officers.



Akwesasne Wolf Belt

Box 579, Cornwall, Ontario K6H 5T3

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

VIA FACSIMILE: (613) 995-1154

3, Enniskó:wa/March 2008

The Honourable Stockwell Day
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Parliament Hill, Ottawa
K1A 0A6

Wa'tkwanonhwerá:ton/Greeting Honourable Minister:

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne [MCA] has been informed that the Government of Canada intends on arming its customs officers at Akwesasne, beginning April 1, 2008.

Please be advised that the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne strenuously condemn this aggressive act with our territory. We seriously consider your Government's actions in arming the Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] guards as a direct assault on our sovereignty, which resonates into an act of war against our people and community. [Please see the attached Mohawk Council Resolution]

This is the only Canadian Customs port of entry on a First Nations Territory. It is located at a major crossroad area within one of our residential districts. We therefore have a great interest in keeping this border crossing a safe and secure travel route for our community and all those who travel through our Territory.

In support of a peaceful crossing, our Community has provided the CBSA with the meaningful support of our Mohawk Security guards and Akwesasne Police Service. This relationship has shown peaceful co-existence between our peoples for more than 25 years.

Recently, some of your customs officers, in order to demonstrate a need for firearms, have instigated or provoked altercations with our people. These numerous deliberate assaults on our people have been filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission as complaints, which have fallen on deaf ears.

We have found your government and the Canada Border Services Agency show to react to rectify the incidents of ethnic profiling and harassment that have persisted in some of your officers. The lack of remedy for this situation is a source of sincere discontent among our people.

.../2

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The years of good faith and good relationships established between the Akwesasne community and CBSA, should not be placed in jeopardy due to the treatment being displayed by customs officers.

Canada's passing of legislation whereby the Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] officers will be carrying loaded firearms will not work in Akwesasne. CBSA has not worked to fix the root of the problem. We believe therefore, that this new legislation will cause your officers to become more provocative toward our people.

The Customs Port of entry Akwesasne is located in a residential area where a school bus stops to gather children each day. There is a volleyball court, basketball court, and sliding hill where children play on a daily basis. There is a community store which is frequented all day long by hundreds of community residents including CBSA officers. Our elders, community members, infants and children travel through this port frequently throughout the day.

It is no place for loaded weapons. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne believes that the safety, security and peace of mind of the Akwesasne Community will be put in serious jeopardy, if arming of CBSA officers is allowed to occur.

Our Mohawk Community has not been consulted on this issue. The looming approach of this unilateral act which is a little more than a month away has raised strong opposition among our people.

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne demands that you meet with us immediately so that we may demonstrate the serious issues before us and so that we may begin to discuss the implementation of a consultation process or commission of inquiry regarding the issue of the arming of CBSA officers.

In the interest of Community safety, security and peace we remain.

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE



Tim Thompson
Grand Chief

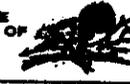
AKWESASNE MOHAWK COUNCIL RESOLUTION

2007/2008- #318

FILE REFERENCE

THE	MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE
AGENCY	SOUTHERN ONTARIO DISTRICT
PROVINCE	ONTARIO / QUEBEC
PLACE	KANATAKON SCHOOL - MULTI - PURPOSE ROOM
DATE	28 FEBRUARY 2008
	DAY MONTH YEAR

THIS MEETING TOOK PLACE IN THE TERRITORY OF AKWESASNE, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE AKWESASNE MOHAWK COUNCIL PRESIDING.



RECORDED VOTE:
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTENTION: 0

DO HEREBY RESOLVE:

MOVED: Wesley Benedict
SECONDED: Cheryl Jacobs

Re: MCA Protests the Arming of Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) Officers at the Port of Entry at Kawehnoke

Whereas, the Mohawks of Akwesasne have the existing and inherent right of self-determination, which includes the inherent jurisdiction over their lands, peoples and territory; and,

Whereas, the Mohawks of Akwesasne have aboriginal and treaty rights, and other rights and freedoms that are recognized and affirmed in the Constitution of Canada, which include the inherent right of self-determination and jurisdiction over their lands, peoples and territory; and,

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is the Community government within the Territory of Akwesasne and has inherent jurisdiction to make laws, regulations, and policies to meet the needs and concerns of the Mohawks of Akwesasne; and,

Whereas, the Mohawk Council intends to preserve the cultural, political and economic integrity of the Mohawk Territory and Community of Akwesasne, and,

Whereas, the Canada Customs Border Services Agency (CBSA) Port of Entry is located on Kawehnoke at 90 Akwesasne International Road, Akwesasne, Ontario, K6H 5R7; and

Whereas, this is the only Canadian Port of Entry situated on a First Nations Territory; and

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has promoted a safe border crossing, whereby the CBSA has employed Mohawk Security Officers, at the Kawehnoke Port of Entry, through a positive working arrangement between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the CBSA, which has produced a safe and secure environment at this facility for more than 25 years; and

Whereas, the CBSA has also had the benefit of reinforced security through the support of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service, on an as-needed-basis, which is memorialized in a protocol agreement between the parties; and

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Akwesasne Community are furious with the resolution of issues regarding the abuse of authority by certain CBSA officers, which have lead to voluminous community complaints asserting human rights violations, culminating with an intervention by the Canadian Human Rights Commission, which remains unresolved to this day; and

AKWESASNE MOHAWK COUNCIL RESOLUTION

2007/2008 -# 318

FILE REFERENCE

THE	MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE						
AGENCY	SOUTHERN ONTARIO DISTRICT						
PROVINCE	ONTARIO / QUEBEC						
PLACE	KANATAKON SCHOOL-MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM						
DATE	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">28</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2008</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">DAY</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">MONTH</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">YEAR</td> </tr> </table>	28	FEBRUARY	2008	DAY	MONTH	YEAR
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DAY	MONTH	YEAR					

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RECORDED VOTE:		
FOR: 11	AGAINST: 0	ABSTENTION: 0

DO HEREBY RESOLVE:

MOVED: Wesley Benedict
 SECONDED: Cheryl Jacobs

Page 2 of 2

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the Akwesasne Community vehemently oppose the arming of CBSA officers at this Port of Entry, due to the residential location of the Port of Entry and the lack of consultation with the Akwesasne Community and our various human rights issues; and

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has consistently expressed its disapproval of the Canadian Government's plan to arm CBSA officers at this particular Port of Entry (see attached position of the MCA); and

Whereas, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne believe that the safety, security and peace of mind of the Akwesasne Community will be in jeopardy, if arming of CBSA officers is allowed to occur; and

Therefore Be It Resolved That, the MCA condemns the arming of Canada Border Services Agency Officers at the Port of Entry at Kawehnoke; and

Therefore Be It Resolved That, MCA can not and will not allow for firearms to be carried by CBSA officers on the Territory of Akwesasne; and

Also Be It Resolved That, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne places a ban on the carrying of firearms by CBSA officers within the Akwesasne corridor; and

Further Be It Resolved That, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne demands that a consultation process or commission of inquiry be put into place immediately regarding the issue of arming CBSA officers; and

Finally Be It Resolved That, the Mohawk Council demands an emergency meeting with the Minister of Public Safety, other relevant Federal Ministers, and senior officials, with regard to this issue, no later than April 1, 2008.

<u>Julie Phillips-Jacobs</u> CHIEF	<u>Terri Thompson</u> GRAND CHIEF	<u>Nona Benedict</u> CHIEF
<u>Flora Phyllis</u> CHIEF	<u>Connie Hall</u> CHIEF	<u>Abenad</u> CHIEF
<u>[Signature]</u> CHIEF	<u>John Logie</u> CHIEF	<u>Cheryl Jacobs</u> CHIEF