



Kahnawà:ke Ratitsénhaiens

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

P.O. Box 720 Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory JOL 1B0

Phone: (450) 632-7500 Fax: (450) 638-5958

Web Site: www.Kahnawake.com E-mail: communications@mck.ca

Enhsakotò:kénhte Nitiotié:ren Tsi Ietsenhaientákhwa

Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

MCK issues Letter of Support for Attawapiskat Chief Spence regarding hunger strike

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 14, Tsothóhrha/December 2012) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to inform the community that it has issued a Letter of Support for Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence, who has embarked on a hunger strike to cause awareness in regard to the continuing disaster her people are experiencing in the northern Ontario community.

The letter (attached) is addressed to the Assembly of First Nations, who is assisting Chief Spence while she undertakes her journey on Victoria Island in Ottawa. A copy will be forwarded to her. The MCK is hoping to visit Chief Spence next week to offer face-to-face support.

“We hope that Canadians take a long, hard look at the situation that Chief Spence and all First Nations people living in Canada find themselves,” said Grand Chief Michael Ahríhron Delisle, Jr. “I personally applaud her extreme bravery. Canada has to step up and do the right thing and stop the increasingly paternalistic attitude that is allowing situations such as that in Attawapiskat to fester.”

“It’s not a good situation,” he concluded.

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Please contact:

Joe Delaronde, Political Press Attaché
Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke
450-632-7500, joe.delaronde@mck.ca

STRENGTH
PEACE
UNITY

Mohawk Council of Kahnawake

P.O. Box 720
Kahnawake Mohawk Territory J0L 1B0

Tsi Ietsenhaientáhkwawa
" OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS "



Tel.: (450) 632-7500

Fax: (450) 632-7276

Website: www.kahnawake.com

**VIA FACSIMILE & COURRIER
1-613-241-5808**

Facsimile

14, Tsothóhrha/December 2012

Assembly of First Nations
Trebla Building
473 Albert Street
Suite 900
Ottawa, ON K1R 5B4

Subject: Letter of Support for Chief Theresa Spence of Attawapiskat

Wa'tkonnonhwerá:ton/Greetings,

I am writing this letter in support of and in solidarity with Chief Theresa Spence of Attawapiskat. As many people are aware, Chief Spence has embarked upon a very challenging journey, having decided to go on a hunger strike to cause awareness of the extreme frustration that her people are feeling in regard to the horrible conditions imposed on her community by Government inaction, as well as the increasingly paternalistic approach the Harper Government has taken recently. Most notable in this regard is today's passage of Bill C-45, which Kahnawà:ke vehemently opposes

For many in our relatively comfortable community, it is hard to fathom the level of poverty and despair that permeates Attawapiskat. The very basics that we take for granted are in short supply or, in many cases, are non-existent. Despite intensive media coverage last year, the situation remains unresolved. As the Government's Band-Aid solutions have made the barest of headway, it is obvious that Canada needs to give this issue the priority it deserves. Because of the remoteness of the communities, Attawapiskat and other such First Nations are easily forgotten or put on the backburner, while other issues are deemed more 'important.' What can be more important than the so-called 'Honor of the Crown'?

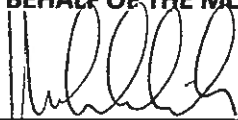
Chief Spence has taken a step that puts her health and her very life at stake. For someone of her stature to take such drastic measures should force the Government to stand up and take notice. More important, the fact that the situation has reached this point should cause the Canadian population to examine the country's relationship with First Nations. The people of Attawapiskat continue to endure third world conditions that are unacceptable and an embarrassment to the entire country.

The Prime Minister and the Queen's representative need to act responsibly and meet Chief Spence and other First Nation's leaders, as she has requested – and they need to do so now. She is fast becoming a beacon of inspiration for the great numbers of Native people who are growing increasingly frustrated with this Conservative Government's aggressive and outrageously insensitive approach to dealing with First Nations.

The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke and the people of this community offer our support to Chief Spence and the people of her community. We are adamant in our insistence that Canada acts in a manner befitting the 'Honor of the Crown.' Nothing else is acceptable.

In Peace and Friendship,

ON BEHALF OF THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF KAHNAWÀ:KE



Grand Chief Michael Ahrihron Delisle Jr

Md/jd/12142012/AFN

CC: Chief Theresa Spence