

Sovereignty and Haudenosaunee Passports

Introduction: Before discussing the specifics of a Haudenosaunee passport relating to female athletes who refused to travel on a “foreign” (i.e., Canadian) passport, it is necessary to explore the facts in relation to the assumption that would lead some at Six Nations to consider a Canadian passport to be a "foreign" one. It all hinges around the concept of sovereignty.

The Haudenosaunee are not the only Canadians to assert claims of sovereignty. Back in 1963 the Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ) with their history of violence, shifted gears to become more political and formed the Parti Quebecois (PQ) which came into power during the 1976 Quebec election, defeating the incumbent Liberals and leaving the rest of Canada feeling that the country was about to fragment, and uncertainty became endemic. In 1980 the PQ established a referendum for what they termed "sovereignty - association", however this initiative was soundly defeated - although during their term of office they enacted Bill 101 the "notorious" "Language Law" which is a red flag for many Canadians to this day (the "language police" are an all too real entity). Referendums followed in 1985 and in 1995 - again, each went down to defeat, although the latter by less than one percentage point. Later the Bloc Quebecois (or simply, "the Bloc") emerged at the Federal level and put forward an agenda that was hauntingly similar to what was seen with the PQ.

The supporters of independence have failed to consider the fact that Canadians would do everything in their power to make it difficult for Quebec to succeed in promoting their "romantic but unrealistic" viewpoint. Canada would be unlikely to allow the perceived traitors to share its currency, consular offices, and on and on. Furthermore, the pro-independence group underestimate the can of worms that would be opened. The aboriginal groups stated they would never agree to an independent Quebec. For example, the Mistassini Cree, Kahnawake Mohawks, and other First Nations groups polled showed that over 95% wished to remain in Canada. They have made it abundantly clear that they have agreements with Canada, and would do everything in their power to stand in the way of the independence movement.

While the assertion by many Six Nations of being a "sovereign nation" is not precisely the same as the situation in Quebec, the latter provides a relevant background or comparison point for a discussion of the "Six Nations version of sovereignty".

As the author has noted elsewhere, the concept that Six Nations are a sovereign people is a fiction, fueled by a fabricated document which is only a 1613 trade agreement with the Dutch and uninterpretable wampum belt (Two Row Wampum). The second underpinning of this false assumption is a bogus "treaty" which is actually a gift of land with a request to retain hunting rights gifted by the then Five Nations to the King of territory, not then owned by the Five Nations since it was taken from them by right of conquest by the Mississauga in 1696. This is the Nanfan "Treaty" of 1701. There is nothing, except documents taken out of context, that could be used to support any claim that the Six Nations are a sovereign people. In truth they

acknowledged that they were subjects of the King of England and Great Britain, and their land tenure along the Grand River reflects this reality - the Haldimand declaration is a grant, not in fee simple, but a document offering the Six Nations rights of occupancy of lands vested in the Crown.

This misconception, this twisting of history, has been in place since the Six Nations were acknowledged as allies of the Crown in the wars against France. The word "allies" in the 18th Century context does not automatically invoke sovereignty - but that fact eludes many.

The Women's Lacross Team: In an article in "Two Row Times" (TRT), 15 July 2015, p.4, we learn that, The U-19 Haudenosaunee Women's Lacrosse Team has dropped out of the World Field Lacrosse Championships which they were to compete in Edinburgh Scotland at the end of this month. The reason, Haudenosaunee passports they were to travel on, were not acceptable according to Canadian, American and Scottish border crossing policies.

Consider the world we live in, with a very palpable terrorist threat resulting in stepped up security at every level, so should this refusal be a surprise? Entry into the UK is a privilege not a right. It must be supported by documentation that can be validated through a computer-based system that will allow customs agents to be satisfied that the individual does not pose a risk. In other words, a foreign national who wishes to enter the UK or Canada or any other recognized country and has a criminal record which is equivalent to what is found in the Criminal Code of Canada will be barred admission. The obvious necessity is to be able to access criminal records in the home country and Interpol. An obvious problem is that Haudenosaunee is not a country, and at least since modern record keeping has been in place, can not in any way shape or form be considered to be a country. So here someone or a group wishes to enter the UK but they are not from a recognized country. There is also no evidence that their passport would meet even the most basic of security requirements such as holograms and other devices countries use to make counterfeiting very difficult. Looking at the tattered example of a Haudenosaunee passport included in the TRT article, it would be hard to imagine the border agents not shaking their heads in disbelief in the UK.

While it is politically correct today to give "aboriginals" across the world special privileges (which many see as rights), this does not extend to the level of the ridiculous and absurd. Anyone who has watched the show "Border Security" on DTour or National Geographic will realize the immense security issues that face agents in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Trying to imagine these first line defenders of the country trying to assess whether someone with a "dodgy" and unregistered Haudenosaunee passport is suitable for admission is a no brainer. There is no way that the prospective entrant could conceivably be admitted on any basis whatsoever, hence they would be refused entry and turned back (placed on the next available flight to the country or origin). A bit of a problem, there is no country called "Haudenosaunee". This is an ethnic group residing within the borders of Canada and the United States, the latter two being recognized as countries world-wide.

Further information is provided by the above article about the stance taken by the women's lacrosse group. It is stated that, *“The UK requires security standards that our Haudenosaunee passports do not meet, so they were willing to allow us to travel on Haudenosaunee passports along with a Canadian or American passport. The Confederacy would not agree to this because we are not Canadian or American citizens”*. The obvious question is, if you are not Canadian citizens, why are you willing to accept funding from a "foreign" country such as Canada so that you can have municipal services? Apparently the Confederacy boils things down to the fact that there is a, *“lack of recognition of our Haudenosaunee peoples as a sovereign nation by some countries”*. I think that should read "all" countries. Then the old chestnut about Turtle Island and having always been a separate, sovereign nation is brought to the surface. The spokesperson for the lacrosse team stated how proud they were of the stand taken by the team, which is a, *“proud statement for Haudenosaunee sovereignty and national pride”*.

While some comments to the article were sensible, of the "it is rather a shame that it came to this" variety, there were some off the wall extremist points of view expressed. One columnist wrote, *“This is BS There is fault to be laid here. For the U.S., Canada and the UK to deny our people the right to freely travel without claiming their citizenship is a crime. This violates the Human Rights Conventions"* Would it also be "BS" if the Basques demanded the right to enter the UK based on their Basque heritage rather than on Spanish or French citizenship? It would never be accepted by any country in the world, so why should it be any different for the Haudenosaunee?

The article ends with a discussion of the Jay Treaty of 1794 which has absolutely no relevance for travel to the UK or any other country in the world except the USA.

If the Haudenosaunee are so adamant that they are not Canadian citizens, not Canadians at all, then why are so many Haudenosaunee thrilled to represent "their" country (Canada) at Olympic and Pan Am Games? This brings me to the second article in the TRT, p.18, entitled, *“C-L T” excited about Pan-Am Games”*. The author is not recording her name to protect privacy in a sensitive matter). The large picture on this page shows Ms. T wearing a baseball cap with the maple leaf and "Canada" as its logo, and her uniform shirt says "Canada" and right beneath it is the symbol of Canada the country, a maple leaf. It is reported here that, C-L T *“will be representing Canada, once again on the international sports stage this summer as a member of the Canadian National Softball Team which is getting ready for the Pan-Am Games in Toronto this summer. Ms. T is Six Nations, Cayuga, Bear Clan”* who was "proud" to make the "National Team". As a star player for the Women's Softball team, she has been called, "an outspoken ambassador for Onkwehonwe women in sports", and sees herself as a role model for all young women (she has been able to successfully juggle being a star athlete and mother). In her role she has traveled (presumably on a Canadian passport) to compete in games as far away as South Africa.

So are Six Nations only "Canadians of convenience"? Does the concept of separatist, or sovereignist apply? Most people would agree that in these situations, either you are in or you are out. Either you are a member and a citizen or you are not. Something is very very wrong when one attempts to reconcile the content of this article focusing on Softball athletes, versus the above article on Lacrosse athletes. One is willing to represent Canada and the other is not? It is all very strange, and inconsistent.

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