



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Kahnawake facing new assimilation threat

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 13, Kentenhkó:wa/November 2018) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to inform the community that it has taken a stance against the 'Collaborative Process,' which is the second phase of Consultations on the Bill S-3 amendments to the *Indian Act* – legislation that will have devastating consequences for Kahnawà:ke and all First Nations across Turtle Island.

The MCK has been warning the community, the Mohawk Nation, the Iroquois Caucus leadership, and Chiefs from across the country about S-3. According to Canada's own estimates, over a million new Status 'Indians' will be created based on very open criteria. Of this, between **35,000 to 65,000** are expected to be added to the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke Federal list. Many of those persons would likely have no connection to our community by either ancestry or family ties and, over a very brief period, they will *significantly outnumber the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke*.

A Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Executive Directive (MCED) rejecting the S-3 'Collaborative Process' was passed unanimously at yesterday's duly-convened Council meeting. The MCED, along with accompanying open letter, will be sent to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Crown Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett, reiterating the MCK's disapproval with the poor to non-existent level of discussion with First Nations on the potential impacts these amendments will have on our communities.

These changes are contrary to Canada's highly-touted promise of a Nation-to-Nation relationship and Reconciliation. In effect, Canada is dictating to First Nations who belongs within their respective Nations instead of letting us make that determination. Kahnawà:ke has maintained the position that only the community can determine who is a Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke. Additionally, more protective measures, such as a Residency law and a potential Land Holdings law, are being established to help to defend our community from this explicit attempt to assimilate us.

"The citizenship of the Haudenosaunee or other First Nations is within the jurisdiction of those Nations – not Canada," said Grand Chief Joseph Tokwiro Norton. "The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke cannot support the Federal Government's so-called 'Collaborative Process,' which is an attempt to appropriate the Haudenosaunee's inherent right over citizenship. We will engage our community on how our people wish to deal with S-3 and come to a unified community position."

"Now, more than ever, we need to assert ourselves as Onkwehón:we and as Kanien'kehá:ka and work together to combat this threat," said Ietsenhaiensh Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer, who is the Membership portfolio lead on behalf of the MCK.