

system and involve clan mothers in the selection of leaders, the two systems are distinct. The Longhouse people have stated that contrary to the system of Hereditary Chiefs, the Iroquois Confederacy does not acknowledge a Grand Chief nor Head Clan Mothers nor do people vote on clan mother decisions. As the events of the past summer show, the Longhouse continues to exist at Kanesatake and with this institution, resistance to the Indian Act or any form of federally delegated local government also continues. In fact the refusal of the Longhouse to participate in any federally sanctioned activity affecting local government extends to refusing to participate in referenda and elections. The existence of several competing groups and the refusal of Longhouse members to participate in federally sponsored referenda and elections, has contributed to the difficulty of any one group achieving more than a plurality.

The Committee's hearings have not revealed much about the relationship between the Longhouse people and the Mohawk Warrior Society, other than a relationship of mutual support between those identifying themselves as Mohawk Warriors and the Longhouse members present in The Pines on July 11, 1990. The Longhouse and the Warrior Society are most closely associated with Mohawk assertions of sovereignty. The Warrior Society as it is currently known appears to be of relatively recent origin. It is often described as having been inspired by the "Manifesto" of Louis Karoniaktejeh Hall entitled Rebuilding the Iroquois Confederacy written in the early 1970's. However, Mohawk sovereignty claims are at least as old as the institution of the Longhouse. The Mohawk communities of Kanesatake and Kahnawake argued their sovereign status long before the summer of 1990. For example, in 1946 before the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on revision to the Indian Act, a delegation described as the Iroquois tribe of Lac des Deux-Montagnes asked for the abolition of the Indian Act, said they were not subject to any federal or provincial laws within their territories by virtue of their treaty rights and that "by virtue of our treaty rights we demand of the Canadian Government the recognition and respect of our sovereign rights and privileges as a Nation". (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, No. 33, p. 1795, Brief dated 24 October 1946)

The legitimacy of indigenous peoples' claims to self-determination and some form of residual sovereignty is being seriously debated as an issue of international law within the legal community. These are also issues beginning to arise in a substantive way in Canadian courts. There is a range of legal opinions on these questions. Most contemporary academic legal authorities conclude that aboriginal peoples constituted sovereign nations before the arrival of Europeans in North America. There appears to be less agreement on the effect of simple acts of "discovery" by European nations on the sovereignty of indigenous people and the impact of subsequent acts of European powers on the status of indigenous peoples. Legal commentators have reached almost every conceivable conclusion from denying any indigenous sovereignty even before "contact" to finding some form of residual sovereignty today.

Independent of this legal debate, the Longhouse people assert a sovereign status for the Mohawk Nation. Indigenous people across the country assert a right to recognition as sovereign nations but, with a few exceptions, in a sense falling short of complete