



## Six Nations "Iroquois" Confederacy GRAND RIVER COUNTRY

Ohswéken, Ontario

September 18, 2017

Open Cease and Desist Letter to Terry Widrick

At a duly convened Council of September 16, 2017 I have been directed to write this letter in regards to a non-native man named Terry Widrick, claiming to be from the Mohawk Nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

It has come to our attention that you continue to self-identify and knowingly misrepresent yourself as a member of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Your revolving identity claims in the past include Onondaga and Seneca nationhood. More recently, you claim both Mohawk nationhood and Wolf Clan membership. Further, you have publicly stated you are our Elder and claim to be sanctioned to speak on behalf of the Mohawk Nation. Any attempt by a non-Haudenosaunee to claim authority within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy will not be tolerated.

Unlike the Canadian and American governmental agencies and institutions of higher learning, we do not acknowledge or recognize any self-identification processes. We do not accept outside governmental definitions of "status" developed for a patriarchal Indian Act and reject all colonial attempts to influence our original definitions of citizenship. The only undisputed proof of nationhood is found in the matrilineal line, traditionally, you are what your mother is. Marriage does not bequeath citizenship. Internally, we continue to debate how to account for those who claim patrilineal ancestry, but you have neither.

That you continue to perpetuate a false heritage and identity is questionable. Online, the Widrick Historical Photos and the Widrick Blogspot provides 5 generations of genealogical evidence to disprove your statements. In 2013, an extensive post appeared that you and your family are Swiss, German, Irish and English. The following statement was posted by a sibling of yours;

**"When I started this journey, I promised I would find truth and believe the truth that I found. I have found that there is in fact no Native or Indian blood in my family line. I say this respectfully as I have great respect for Anishinaabe people. A boy named Ben and a girl named Winona both members of status I call my own children in fact. The fact that there was native blood in us was a myth believed by my family and talked about for years. I have a sibling that has based his life on this myth."**

We understand how much you want to be one of us, but your desire is insufficient and your attempts to integrate into the community are based in appropriation. By aligning with and hiding behind the names of some of our most influential Haudenosaunee leaders, you escaped immediate detection.

We must advise that you must immediately cease and desist using the name "Sakoieta-He Wakes Them Up". Our names are unique and bestowed upon us by our Clan Mothers, Faithkeepers, and Eldest Female Clan family members. There are strict protocols to be followed in order to be given a name. While colonial disruption has caused some duplication across the Confederacy, we are conscientiously working to restore our naming practices. The name you have appropriated already is in use in the community of Akwesasne, hence it is unavailable.

We are accustomed to welcoming our dispossessed back into the circle, as well as continue to pursue relationships with non-Haudenosaunee people through the Two Row Wampum, and accorded you the same opportunities to learn some teachings as we offer to the many who come to us. Learning directly from Haudenosaunee people instead of books is admirable and preferable. However, it does not make you one of us. At best, learning and working with the Confederacy makes you our friend. Our friends do not steal our culture, our names – or claim to speak for us. Our friends do not attempt to use an association with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy for personal gain.

We are currently writing a policy on authentication and identification of "Elders", which will include an open database to debunk charlatans and fraudulent claims of ancestry or citizenship. We are doing this because these actions must come to an end. We insist that you, and others, stop these practices immediately.

In Peace and Friendship,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hohahes Leroy Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hohahes, Leroy Hill  
Council Secretary