



CANNABIS  
REGULATION  
AND CLAN  
GOVERNANCE

BY KANENHARIYO

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This document is circulating in draft form. Feedback welcome.

To contact the author email [kanenhariyo@gmail.com](mailto:kanenhariyo@gmail.com)

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# CUSTOMS AND CONVENTIONS

Cannabis rules and laws should follow the same format as our customs and usages in other parts of our economy. We shouldn't start creating new rules and new ways of making rules and systems that will make our way of life confusing. We have to maintain our continuity. Especially since we're saying we're a sovereign people. We have a right to be independent and to be our own unique people, and we have to stay true to who we are. We can't be making whole new systems that don't fit our culture.

I'm watching all these band councils making regulations, they're basically adopting European models for policy and governance and rules. They're trying to mimic European laws written by European lawyers. That's not following our laws.

We already have the rules for medicine. They already exist. Fully. It's just a matter of adding cannabis to that same set of rules and applications. Now, because people are seeing the cannabis industry as an opportunity to make some money, we're looking at adding or implementing an aspect to our culture that we haven't followed in a long time and that's giving back to the group. For a long, long, time people were so poor they couldn't afford to do that or they stopped doing it on a community-wide basis.

People forget that there's lots of different ways in which we pay for things. There's this mystical nonsense from people who don't understand our cultural practices. They will say things like, "you're not supposed to charge for medicine."

But we charge for everything in our culture as a beneficial exchange. And there's a payment. It's not

that we charge, it's that we pay. It's a mutually beneficial relationship. It's not that you're supposed to charge, it's that you're supposed to pay. The one who's accepting the payment isn't supposed to be setting the price. It's the one who pays based on their honor and how much it is of value to them. They want that person to be around to be able to provide that product or service again, so they pay.

## CANNABIS AND FISHING

Not all parts of Onkwehono:we culture survived in all of our communities. In some of our sister communities, there's different things that survived – certain songs and dances or ceremonies. None of our communities remembered everything, and none of our communities forget everything. None of them know it all. In Tyendinaga our fishing economy, and the rules and culture around it survived. Our relationship to the fish can inform how we think about cannabis.

When I think about our fishing culture, there are rules about it, and it's not rules that are regulated by some kind of fishing police – it's that the people regulate it themselves because it's the moral and ethical rules associated with fishing. It's environmental rules, the ecological rules, the economic rules that are all embedded in our culture.

The rules say that everyone has an equal right to access those fish. No one is told they're not allowed to have fish or that they have to go and fish. The only time that that could happen is when someone has broken the rules. When someone has broken the rules, then the people can come together and say you're being hurtful to the fish population or harmful

to the people. Maybe you stole all the fish and hoarded them for yourself. And in that way the people could come together and address that issue.

## WHO ENFORCES THE RULES?

We have a society where everyone is the police. How do you enforce the rules? You don't let them get broken. If someone breaks the rules, you don't tolerate it. You throw them in the river. It depends how much they don't listen, and the people could enforce all the way to the point that they evict the person from the nation – it could go all the way to there.

The hardest problem is when people come who don't believe in our rules or don't care and then grab the European law to protect themselves so they can't be punished, and the issue can't be addressed. If you're acting up and you get thrown in the river, you don't call the police, you go and sulk, you should be embarrassed. Or they take your spear away, or they take your nets and fish.

I think we need to be looking at the cannabis industry in the similar way. There's this talk about 'oh, we're only going to have a certain number of dispensaries.' That's contrary to our cultural practice. Everyone has equal rights to be involved in the industry. If they want to do this with their industriousness then they have a right to do it. If they want to be a dispensary owner then they can. No one has a right to interrupt that. If there's somebody who wants to grow it then they can.

It's a similar issue in terms of the collection of resources to support the people, if the road is the

stream and the traffic that's coming is the fish coming up the river, then in our way, you do things to make the stream nicer and encourage more fish to come. You make the ecology thrive. You also help one another to harvest the fish in the river together. Our cannabis laws need to be thought about in that way. It should be a rule that you should help one another to harvest and make sure that everyone has what they need. Everyone should have the opportunity to sell to people that want it. They should have the opportunity to participate. There's an issue that some locations or fishing spots are better than others, and that's true, so there's different ways in our culture that we address that.

Sometimes certain families or fishermen will have one specific spot that they know how to fish and they stick to it. They'll know it and learn it well, and they'll pass it on to the next one that they train and teach. That's the old way of doing that. It's not that they had a permit or a license or even a deed, but everybody knows that 'that's where those Hill's fish,' and you don't go setting nets over there. And if you do, they might take your nets and cut them off. And they'd be in the right to do that because you were setting nets where they fish and interrupting what they were doing. They weren't bothering anyone.

But there needs to be room for everyone so that we can make space for everyone to have the opportunity. If there's not enough space we need to meet together and figure where else we can fish. That kind of mentality needs to be applied to the cannabis industry.

Even in the cases when you get to the point where people just don't have access to a particular land base that's good for selling, there's still opportunities

to get involved. Just like in fishing. You might not have the physical ability or the tools to be able to get into the river, but you can still get fish down by the river. You can take some bags down to the river and ask. You could also be some person like my grandmother. My grandma never got in the river to fish but her freezers were always full of fish.

My grandmother would offer services and trade. She would offer to clean your fish and in exchange she would be paid in fish. My Grandma was super good at cleaning fish. Fast, no bones, everything was trimmed, frozen, you just dropped it off and came back the next day. She got paid in fish. That was her way. It was easy, you would just come back the next day and it was done. My grandma always had fish in her freezer and fish for sale, and she didn't have a single fishing pole, spear or net. She had an access point that she allowed people that didn't have a spot to use and she cleaned their fish. She participated in the industry.

There's always a way to participate. People shouldn't be complaining that only this one or that one has a spot. There's always a way. Grow it. Make oils. Make signs. Do things that support the industry. Get in the business of making driveways and fix up the parking lots. There's lots of ways to participate in a cannabis economy that doesn't necessarily mean that you have a dispensary.

In terms of cannabis rules and law, we need to look at it from within our cultural framework. Who's allowed to grow corn? Everyone. Who's allowed to cook corn? Everyone. Who's allowed to eat corn? Everyone. Who's allowed to sell corn? Everyone. Whose genetics are they? Everyone's. Nobody can

capitalize to become owner of genetics cause we all do it all together.

## TAXATION AND WEALTH

Who gets to be super rich and super poor? That's a choice. It's about how much initiative and energy and desire you want to put into it. Some people will go down to the river and get three fish and come home. Others will stay all night and fish until morning.

We never taxed ourselves in thousands of years of being here. But we do have some customs for economic sharing and some redistribution. You can't say no if someone comes and asks you for food. But if someone chooses to starve themselves to death, that's their choice. If someone wants to live in poverty that's up to them. Unless they're causing harm to you or someone else. Our custom is that you have full freedom unless you're harming somebody else by what you're doing.

The question is, when does it become a negative issue? That's when the community needs to get together and talk about things. But that's a different thing, and just means people need to get together to talk about their issues.

The ways that we set up our laws and rules should be congruent with our culture. It shouldn't be these authoritarian councils, groups or committees. It's not our way of doing things. It's not our organic human family way of doing things. It needs to be organized around the family, not a government institution – family is as organic as trees.

## THE ROLE OF CUSTOM

Custom is about how you do it here. It's our custom that the children and old people eat first. Then the people who didn't cook, and then the cooks eat last. That's our custom. When someone's going to die we turn their bed to the west so they can fall asleep and die and leave with the setting sun.

Customs have purpose and meaning and they help society function. We've got a lot of these rules or customs. And we have a reason for why we do it the way we do it. When an outsider comes and says they have the right to fish, but they don't know the rules and customs for fishing, they disrupt the ecosystems and the people's systems. The same thing is true for cannabis.

Each community needs to set up its own customs about how it's going to deal with cannabis. Maybe even each family. We have the right to do that because that's our custom. It's our custom that everyone has freedom, and every community can do it the way that they want to. That's why each longhouse is a little different.

There's been some fanatics running around saying that we're all the same. That we're all Haudenosaunee. That's new fanaticism, that's not the old way. We don't need to have laws that are all the same.

In Kahnawake, cannabis is banned with a moratorium and the Longhouse is saying they don't support it. In Tyendinaga it's Longhouse people running the industry and it's huge. At Kanehsatake it's a mixture of attitudes. At Six Nations it's almost all longhouse people in the industry, but the Band Council is trying to monopolize it. So each

community has the responsibility to follow its own customs and to adapt new things to those customs.

When we're talking about building cannabis laws and frameworks we've got to build them so they're congruent with our customs and our world view. There's no sense in making one congruent with what Europeans expect it to be. We keep hearing from European lawyers that we need our own laws in place or else Federal or Provincial law will apply. But if we have our own customs, then it's racism for them to impose their own. It's not that we have a lack of rules. We have a whole procedure about how things are done, and what's appropriate and what isn't. We need to be prepared to articulate our own rules and customs. We don't have to make one that looks like the Europeans.

## BRIDGING THE GAPS IN TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE

All our traditional government structures – at least what remnants of it are left in the longhouse and confederacy – are so dysfunctional that I don't think that in any of our communities, could you just turn to the longhouse people and say, "Okay, you're in power, you're governing it now." And that it would turn out okay.

So what it makes me think of instead is that we need to look to our traditional governance structures and systems. We need to build on our old laws and use our customs and conventions to update and augment them such that our governance structures address our needs today.

We have changed as a people and nation since colonization and since the genocide that we've been

put through. We've got some new factors. We've got a whole bunch of these people who don't have clans, because Canada's tried to breed us away. So we've got mixed people and we've got people who don't have the language anymore. And we have people who just don't know our cultural practice.

We've also got a whole bunch of people who don't live in our community anymore and we've been disconnected from them because the way the Indian Act functions. And we've got a whole bunch of people with clans who have a birthright to have a voice in our politics and to actually be decision makers who have been isolated away from our territory and culture for so long that they don't know anything about our way of doing things.

I feel like we have to bridge those gaps. We have to find the solutions for those things and then put them into application, or we need to create new ones, or create ones that haven't existed yet because we didn't have these problems in the past, not like this. A system that integrates our customary governance in a way that addresses our social needs of today and the facts of colonization is our best way forward.

I'm not a supporter of just saying go straight to the longhouses and they'll be the governing body, because they've become a religious body or a spiritual sort of entity. The longhouses are struggling with the impacts of colonization as well, and so there's a whole myriad of problems within them that have led to the majority of the people not being confident that they would be able to govern in a manner that would be fair and just. That's the bigger issue. I think people are afraid that they're going to be power mongers who will take all the land and all the resources, like we've seen in the past.

The issue is whether we prop up the Indian Act system and keep using it with regulations and structures that support that system of governance. Or we don't build them for that. Kahnawake is a perfect example of where there's a number of "community" based laws and structures in place, including the Kahnawake Gaming Law, the Kahnawake Alcoholic Beverages Control Law, the Kahnawake Membership Law, the Kahnawake Peacekeepers Law and now the Kahnawake Cannabis Control Law.

Kahnawake's cannabis law was forced onto the people of Kahnawake against their will and has become the basis for the laws passed by Band Councils in Six Nations and Akwesasne and what they tried and failed to pass here in Tyendinaga with their plebiscite vote.

The Mohawk Council of Kahnawake has used these laws to get economic revenue streams coming back in to support the Indian Act system to keep it in power. That has made being able to deconstruct the Indian Act even more difficult because they've got those systems and laws in place that support it already.

Because that system has not been put in place here, we have the opportunity to be able to gain wisdom from watching what happened in Kahnawake and we can recognize that that's not going to assist us if we want to get rid of the Indian Act system.

So that's why I think the clan system is the way to go. It is our original governing system. We need to have a strong policy within the clans about how we're going to deal with the fallout of the Indian Act system, and allow there to be a place for our people who are seeking to return to our governance system.

Whatever regulation and systems to structure the industry or make contributions needs to occur through the clans – the place or source where issues of governance should be determined.

## THE MBQ BAND LIST

The relevance to the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte band list is only that it might help to use it for the purpose of making a family tree. Indian Affairs must have some sort of a tracking system that has all those numbers linked to each other. Because they'll ask you to send in a birth certificate and the names of your two birth parents and their numbers to confirm who you are. So that list is only valuable if we've got the whole tree that we could follow back to see who everybody is and where they come from. Without that, you've just got a list of people that the Federal government perceives as Indians. While that would give us an opportunity to reach out to a larger group of people, that's not how we define ourselves, so I don't know that using the Band Council's band list is the way forward in determining who we are.

It's still relying on somebody else to decide who you are and who you are not. A genealogical study on the first people who came here and then everybody after, and the adoptions and the marriages would be excellent, but that's a huge undertaking. I believe probably lots of that work is already done. It would be good if we put out a request for people to do and compile research like an open source family tree, sort of like an archive that people would donate their research to help fill it all out. It would have to be done like that. That would be, more valuable than a Band Office list. But the thing about having the MBQ list is that that we could at least inform people that this is what's going on here.

## A PAYROLL SYSTEM OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE CLANS

I think that instead of paying a contribution back to the Indian Act Band Office, that everybody should be set up in a payroll system where all of us pay back a percentage of our earnings or our wage back to our clans. And that money should be used as the money that the collective group, the constituents, the members of the clans access to pay for the things they want to pay for collectively. It's similar to union workers. They're all associated with a union and then they pay dues back into that union, and that union uses those resources to invest in, to pay for negotiators, to pay for its leadership. This would be the same sort of thing.

The union members have a say in what happens. So I think that we should structure our governance in the same manner. And that's consistent with our traditional culture in terms of everybody pitching in to the clan for the costs of governance. You're going to have a big meeting and everybody would put in to support that. It's the same kind of thing. And if we structured it so that each of our clans ran like national payroll companies, so we actually worked for our clans, whatever the job is out there in the world that we do, is subcontracted from our clan to do that. And that way, even if we're operating our own businesses, that we pay back into our clan for part of our wage or salary. And if we're working off-territory, that income would be non-taxable because we're in effect working for our clans.

It would also allow us to be able to have transparency on what everybody's wages are, so that would be clear. And a percentage could be taken out,

that would automatically come out for administrative fees and could also include our contribution back into our clan. I think that could be rather positive.

We've also had some discussions about what to do with these people that don't have clans, who are outsiders to us. And in those cases, I think the ideal thing to do with the people without clans is to separate them with the people that are coming from the outside.

## ADOPTION TO THE CLANS

Those who for whatever reason, have been a part of us and are claimed by our people, need to be formally claimed. So Indian Affairs might say "Well you're an Indian and you've got a status card." But we, as a community or as a nation or as a people, need to take ownership and responsibility and take claim to them. So we need to be the ones to say, "Well they need to belong with us here, whether it's in the Wolf Clan or the Bear Clan or Turtle Clan." And if the clans aren't willing to take lovingful responsibility of somebody, then that person needs to go.

It should not be a matter that the Indian Affairs says they're an Indian and therefore they've got the right to be here. It needs to be in the collective body of the people that you get to be here because we assert that you're one of us. It is a part of our traditional governance structure, that if somebody is really actively working to break the peace of the people, and I don't just mean their tranquility, but I mean actively working to undermine the traditional government structure, to seek to destroy it or to break it apart, to hack away at the roots until the tree falls over – those people need to go.

There's no shelter for the people who attack our laws. That's the ones that you expel. Not just somebody who comes to meetings and heckles, or the one who acts up and causes all kinds of chaos. That's just the nature of that individual. They're not actively out selling the secrets of the nation so that competing nations can come and steal all our land away. Those sorts of things. There's a very big difference between a local mischief maker and a traitor. There's a difference between that. You don't say "Well we're going to kick him out because he always drives a car with no muffler and it's loud and disturbing everybody's peace in the neighbourhood." But sometimes people get a little fanatical and they think that's what we're talking about or something.

## THE ENTREPRENEUR AND THE COLLECTIVE

There's certain things in our society and in our system that should be nationally run and some things that should be left up to the individual entrepreneurs to do themselves. I don't know if it's a socialist governance a bit, or a communist governance a bit, but there's certain things that are in our national interest. And a whole bunch of our stuff is collectively done or is done in a way that all have equal right and equal opportunity to do it. But we also are supposed to always give back to the collective pots of our family, our clan or our nation, those sorts of things. Today, we don't have an economy that's based on trapping or based on the exchange or trade of products that we're producing.

In the past, we had trade routes and we would exchange for goods from one land to another, and then retail the product that we got in amongst our

own people, distribute it though a whole bunch of micro-exchanges. But that kind of economy has kind of come to an end for us. Now, we are limited in our mobility, our numbers are lower, and our cost of living is greatly increased because of the reduction of our access to our own resources. And a part of it is our colonization, that we're now in a monetary economic system.

As a way to update and address our economic need, we need money to pay our bills, and to support our leadership. Our clan mothers and chiefs certainly can't live on "thank yous" and squash and potatoes and a bushel of tobacco and a place to sleep. Our lifestyle is such that we can't do that anymore. And if we did structure it where we fully supplied our leadership with all hand produced products and so on, they would be so disconnected from the rest of the people, the way that we're living, that they really couldn't be able to provide actual leadership. There would be such a divide in our realities.

We need to have the capacity to be able to provide a salary for those people. We need to be able to pay for travel expenses, and the things we need money to exchange for. Our economy has changed. In the past, we didn't exchange our labour for financial compensation. That's fairly new for us to do.

## WAGE LABOUR AND THE ONKWEHON:WE

The earliest accounts that I can think of our people working for wages certainly don't come from our history or our stories or our oral representation or our creation story. They all come from all those examples

of us exchanging our labour for money or some payment with the Europeans. And we had people who went to work as explorers, paddlers in canoes, translators, mercenaries. They exchanged their labour for items in economic trade. Silver or trade goods or whatever.

There were a number of things initially that were used as trade goods and weren't money. It took a while to transition us into a monetary system because we didn't have an economy to use when we had a trade economy. So there were a number of items that the Europeans came with that were acceptable trade items to us, none of them being money because it wasn't really valuable to us. Things like kettles and axes and knives and ammunition and guns, rum, beadwork, etc. There was a fashion industry craze that happened. Big trade items were all associated with fashion, which is kind of crazy.

In the current day context, almost everybody either trades their labour for financial gain to somebody else, whether they're working in the Kellogg's factory, or they're working for one of our own people who's operating a business, and then they are paying people for their labour. This is a new concept. This is new for us to do that.

So to address that, I think a reasonable way to do it is to structure everything such that the businesses and so on pay back to the clan, and then our clan disseminates the wealth throughout our clan members. So our clan would basically invoice for all of their people's labour and then just divide the wealth up from those invoicing to all of our clan members. So even for an entrepreneur who runs his own business, we should be paying ourselves a wage or salary or however you're going to do that. But we

need to, as entrepreneurs, be paying back and being transparent to our clans.

In the analogy of the union, the people are paying “union dues” that are going to support their clan mothers and chiefs and to pay for them. But that’s also their political or labour representation. If there’s something going bad at work or there’s something that’s not right, or there’s an abusive situation, then they would go “Hey, what’s going on? You’re doing this to our people.” And they could also seek to find somewhere else for them to work. So it addresses that much larger issue.

I thought about how the Bear Clan has a responsibility to be the medicine people. For a long time I thought, well maybe how we should structure it, is that each clan be assigned a couple national economy things to tend to. And the other clans not interfere and not do them too, and that way then everybody’s kind of got some equal opportunity to have an industry of their own to rise.

The problem with that, is that one industry might be able to do better than another. And then we’ll get an imbalance of wealth between the clans, and just like in any society where you’ve got an imbalance of wealth, that can cause issues. The other thing that I’ve been contemplating is that maybe each clan should aspire to a certain level of autonomy in its ability to support its members. So if we go in that direction, then maybe instead of having one clan be the employment agency for all the nation, they all should have one.

Okay well the Bear Clan takes care of medicine, the Turtle Clan does all the financial administration for the nation, they tend to all of that stuff. And all the

payments go through there, and all the distribution of payment fees, or whatever, like they're the ones that has to be responsible to take care of that. Everybody agrees that they're the ones to do it, so now they do that. That's their integration and the industry that they get to run. I thought that might be a solution.

But another way is for each clan to handle that sort of stuff on their own, using their own autonomy. This would then mean that each of the Bear Clan and the Wolf Clan and the Turtle Clan would be running their own stuff. But it also means that they're not exposed to the same degree they would be if one other clan was running it for them. They're also less likely to cause conflict where one or two of the clans are accusing the other one of stealing from them or robbing from them. Or they have a major fuck up and someone does something they shouldn't be, maybe there's theft in the organization. Those sorts of things can happen.

If somebody decides to get greedy and takes half a percentage out of everybody's pay and puts it in a special personal account, and it gets exposed, that could cause a real conflict between the clans. So if each clan did their own stuff like that, then the Bear Clan could be taking care of its own members' pay and that sort of thing and invoicing and whatever. And then they're representing their own interests, and then they're paying into it. I think that might be a better approach. It would be less likely to create conflict between the clans over that issue.

It would also mean that the clans are not competing because they're just tending to however many members they have. The interesting thing

about doing it that way, is that if people were working elsewhere in the world, we would still invoice for their pay back home. So even if they're off in Japan, they would be paying back into their clan. And then there's still responsibility of the clan for that individual and vice-versa. We would be maintaining those connecting factors back to our home territory. In the Canadian courts, the tax laws just happen to be that the people that are working off reserve, if they're working in a manner that they have enough connecting factors back to their home community or back to the Indigenous community, then they're considered tax exempt.

These people aren't paying income tax in Canada because they work for their own nation, their own clan and their own family, and they're paying back into themselves. And that's a way to do it so that we're propping up the clan system and building up our governance system. It also avoids the situation that the cannabis industry has been complaining that "Well why are we the only ones who are going to get taxed. What about fuel? What about tobacco?" Well this would address that. I mean, maybe it starts at the cannabis shops being like "We'll opt in first and the people that we hire will get paid in." But then it can spread into other industries. It could develop from there.

## PEOPLE WITHOUT CLANS

There needs to be solutions for the people without clans because there's so many of them. And in some cases, they may even be the majority, particularly in places that don't have residency bylaws. I doubt that there's more people without clans in Six Nations than people with clans. Or the same thing in Akwesasne or

Kahnawake. However in Tyendinaga and Kanehsatake and Wahta, where there are no residency bylaws, I'm guessing that there's more people without clans than there are with clans.

It doesn't mean that there aren't more Indians on the Band list from those other bands, it doesn't mean that there's more clanless people in those lists. It's that in the community in the physical geographic area that's called the community, there's a concentration of people who are choosing to have partners that are Indians because of the way their Band residency bylaws are.

I'm not sure that creating those sorts of bylaws and trying to force implement those in communities like this one will work. That in itself has huge implications, and while I'm not afraid of those implications, I do think that there would be a tremendous amount of resistance to try and implement them in some of those communities. Because some of these families have multiple generations of non-Native relatives in a row. And so there would be a great deal of fear if you were like, "Well we can't allow this to happen anymore." So I think there's other ways, social ways to do it so that we can use to curb that from happening.

If we do things like opening up greater opportunity for youth to meet each other from other sister communities and building up the social belief that it's important to choose someone with a clan for your partner and those sorts of things. So if we can incentivize those sorts of things, I think we can curb it.

There was an incentive to have a kid with blonde hair and blue eyes. It was more likely they were going

to get a job. There was a whole bunch of Indian men here who went out and picked blonde women, a whole bunch of them. There was a reason for that. And there was an incentive to have children that were going to be able to get work.

So I think that if we are aware of or at least thoughtful about those topics, then we can create some reasoning that would incentivize people to return to the clan system. Maybe where a person doesn't have a clan, their portion, their payback goes to all three clans. Or maybe it'll be what will drive the clans to be like "Alright, we'll take them." Because they're going to gain the wealth that comes in with them. That might be in itself a way to help overcome some of the resistance by the Wolf Clan and the Turtle Clan to take on non-clan members.

For multiple generations now – amongst the Mohawks anyways – Bear Clan people have been most inclined to adopt those without clans. It's changing a little bit, but not that much. So that could be a factor. But with all of those people, we need some sort of a way to do the payroll for them and have them pay into the clans. So maybe if you allow outsiders to work, they make a contribution that's higher than the one our own people are paying. So if you're coming here to work, you're going to get taxed more than if you're one of us. And maybe you get taxed by all of our clans because you're taking a job away from one of our people.

So maybe I'm working here and I'm going to get a three percent tax from my clan and if somebody from wherever else comes to work over here, he's going to pay a nine percent tax because there's three percent getting paid out to all three clans from this one

person. That will, of course, drive everyone to just hire all outsiders.

It's still lower income tax than anyone is going to pay out in Canada. So they're still all going to be willing to come to work. If you've got really high skill, high value people from outside to come in to produce large value, it's not really a problem, as long as there's a way to disseminate some of that. They have to be giving back too, not just taking the wealth and leaving.

## ON AVOIDING LAND MONOPOLIES

I was thinking about how when we go and set nets, or when we harvest syrup or maybe in cases where an individual or a group or a family are assigned an area that they can harvest from. They might have their own area where they get in the water, like their own boat launch kind of thing. Their own spot off this island and between this island and this part of the shoreline is where they fish and where they set their nets and harvest from.

And it's known amongst the fishermen that you don't go put your nets in there. Unless you go ask and say "Hey, you're not fishing there. Is there a reason, or do you mind if I pop a net in," or something. But if generally that's where they go, then that's how they do that. And I have never experienced a situation where they gathered up and had a meeting and said "Okay, from now on, you fish over here. And you guys fish over there." I've never seen that, because like Uncle Mar says, "those decisions were made so long ago, that that's just the rules and we're just going to follow them. I wasn't there when that got done."

So there's certain areas along the bay where there's certain people that are fishing, that's where they fish. And then if they die out and they don't have anyone to take that up, then someone else can move in there. And I just watched that happen, they just kind of moved into that spot. And there might be a little bit of jostling until someone is like "I'm the one here." Like whatever. But that's how I've just seen that play out. I don't know that that's necessarily the way it should be, but that's the way I've seen it happen.

But they don't get to say, this is my spot, and over here is my spot, and over here is my spot, and over here. No. Just one spot. So I've been thinking about that and thinking about the issue that we've got limited land. But in addition to limited land, there's certain lands that are more advantageous or beneficial for business than others. Those on the outside or right by the 401 exits and these sorts of things. They're more advantageous for business than being in the interior. So I think that we should structure it such that with the cannabis laws, that if you're going to be a retailer of a product within our territory or on our territory within a certain range, you should only be allowed to have one location for that product.

Say it's tobacco or let's say it's gas, or let's say it's cannabis. You shouldn't be able to have seven gas stations on the reserve because then you become the monopoly. And now that it's changed, you're taking too many fish. And it's not that you should be limited to how much wealth you get, it's that the amount of wealth should be spread amongst more people.

It's more an issue that people shouldn't be able to accumulate this amount of wealth while others aren't anywhere near able to accumulate that much. It used to be better and more justly dispersed. So whatever

your cleverness and your ability to lure the fish to your net is, ultimately you shouldn't be able to put in fifty nets. There's been talk about regulating the cannabis industry, and I think that we should be regulating not so much the product, but rather how many retail locations an individual can operate. Like maybe in a community as small as ours, you're only allowed to operate one shop. Period.

Because we're going to be limited to how many shops the market can stand before they go out of business. I believe it's totally fine to let the market demand determine what that number should be, instead of trying to arbitrarily say well, only six. Because then you're basically saying well, six of you will become rich and no one else will. So it will be a lottery. But you could say everyone has equal opportunity, but you only get one opportunity, and you only get to go until it's saturated.

So what happens is that the market gets spread over however many number of people who are willing to do it, and then it's not the six of us that won the lucky lottery to become millionaires, but that the forty of us are now spreading out what the six would have been sharing. And 41 shops isn't going to work because there's not enough for that. And so some will fall away. And we'll find that balance and that's how many it'll be. And it's spread out. It may not be equal, but it certainly will be spread out.

I think that's an important thing to implement when we're looking at upgrading our traditional governance structure to solve our problems today. Because in the past, when the Great Law was made, we didn't have retail stores. That wasn't a thing. And the first time that we encountered that, that I'm aware of, was when the Europeans came with trading posts. Before that,

everybody just exchanged their wealth and their goods with each other.

## CLAN BASED TOWNS AND INDUSTRIES

I believe we used to set up towns that were set up around certain kinds of industry. For example, Kanehsatake was a pottery production plant, like a city, and that's what the people did there was they made pottery and traded that with everybody else. They fished and they made pottery. And other villages, they grew tobacco. So each town had their own industry that they did based on their geography and topography. And then they would exchange what they made with others.

These were clan-based towns. So it was like this clan has this land to use, and no one else can come here to set nets in the water. No one else can come here to make pottery because these guys are the pottery makers of this area. And the town kind of built around that. Well really ultimately it boils down to how much resources are there. So I think that we can apply that similar thinking as part of the cannabis regulations and the governing structure. If we tear the system down to build a new one, you've got to start with building the new one.

You can't tear it down and then build it. You've got to build it until this one is obsolete. You don't really tear it down unless they try to compete with you. But until then, until they come over to be competitors, I think we just keep building this over here, the alternative, until it's finished. What's going on right now in Tyendinaga is there's a race to put two

locations up. One on either of the main roads. There's a race to do that.

It was done with fuel, it was done with tobacco, and now it's happening with cannabis. The same thing is playing out all over again. The geography tells us about the economy, and the same process will happen again with cannabis as it happened with tobacco. And sure enough, it has. It's followed its course all the way through. The last piece is that the big guys will put their stores at either end. And we're seeing that now. There's the race for that. That's already played out, and then will come the price wars. So were already through the whole basis of who's going to be the long term players in the cannabis industry in Tyendinaga.

## LAND USE, RENT, AND THE ARISTOCRACY

Another issue is what's happening in Six Nations where the super rich are just trying to buy up all the land and then be landlords to everybody else. This creates an aristocracy that owns the land.

So in our old ways, I'm not sure if there was a tribute paid or if there was rents paid. I don't know that. I have a suspicion we probably did pay rents, because at the time that we left the Mohawk Valley, during the American Revolution, we lived in log homes with stained glass windows and hardwood floors. And we had mills and we had bridges. We did in fact charge rents to european farmers who we leased lands to. We were at that stage of our technological development. So I think it's unreasonable to think that we didn't have financial things organized.

I'm sure there were loans going on, and I'm sure there were rents going on. I was thinking about how the clans ran stuff. If an area is assigned to a particular clan, then that clan should be the ones collecting rents to people that are not their clans to have access to participate. And that is not a family aristocracy, because everybody is associated with a clan, everybody's clan is doing it somewhere. There should be a difference between free use because you're of that clan, or maybe paying a much smaller rental fee back to your group. Or it gets rented out to somebody else, another clan, to have access to it.

But the problem with individuals buying up the land and then renting it to the people, is that they can create an aristocracy. We never experienced an aristocracy before, I don't think. I think that happened in Tyendinaga and Six Nations when the Chief's Council first came to Six Nations and Tyendinaga and there were land allotments. I think that happened because the British gave out greater allotments to people in their military and that's their system.

I've never come across any complaints about the traditional government or the Chiefs or whatever, where there were arguments amongst the people about the system of land tenure or governance over land access or use or controls, until after we were put on reserves. I never came across that prior. So I think that's one that we've been struggling with for a couple hundred years. And I'm worried about it.

There's a couple of wealthy fellows here. In fact, the one guy, his family members came from Six Nations, and back in the '70s and '80s he went around buying up what he thought was going to be the prime economic real estate. And now thirty years and forty years later, he's financially benefiting from buying up all of what he thought was the prime business

locations, because he's charging huge rents. And there's a few others that are doing that as well. They're charging huge rents for those lands and renting them to outsiders.

I think that as part of our cannabis laws, I think that we should pass it that you can't rent your land to non-Onkwehonwe, period. And I don't think that the clans should be able to do that either. Maybe I'm mistaken about that. Maybe we should open it up to allow renting property out. But my experience is whenever we did that, we lost the land.

I don't think we should be allowing that. I think that the clans need to have a certain amount of lands allotted or set aside that have economic potential that they keep for themselves, that either the clan operates or they can allow access to their own clan members, but be kept as theirs. Just like how it used to be, this fishing hole is for them people, and they may die and new ones come along, but it's still them people there, that's where the Hills fish, like that kind of thing. So I think that we should be structuring our cannabis laws in that manner, and that regulations should be based around that stuff. And then we need to enforce it.

## A CANNABIS AUCTION HOUSE

I was thinking about running a cannabis auction as a way to overcome some of the problematic or negative impacts of the cannabis industry. Quite a few community members here were concerned about organized crime. They're worried about the influence of biker gangs – the Hells Angels, Tong Mafia, the Triads, Rock Machine, and the Outlaws. I think those were the main ones that people are worried about

having influence, or that their product lines would find their way here.

To be clear, I've never heard anyone say, "Well we're worried about money going to the black market, to those organizations." I think the police are concerned about that. But what I heard people being afraid of is, that if this element gets invested here, then maybe there could be a business mistake that results in people being murdered or people being enslaved, or those sorts of things.

Also there was like the continuous propaganda about laced cannabis, which is ridiculous. Because the price of cannabis has already been driven down so low that it makes no financial sense to put other drugs on it. And people like cannabis. And they treat it like a very strong habit, with addictive qualities. I've read a number of studies and articles to say that cannabis isn't addictive, but I don't believe that, because I see the way people use it and it may not be chemically addictive but certainly it's habitually addictive. And there are certain cannabinoid combinations that help to foster habit-making behaviour. So I don't buy that.

But nonetheless, I'm not above selling products that are addictive. I mean, tobacco is addictive and coffee is addictive and chocolate is addictive. And one might argue that electricity and the internet and gasoline is addictive. So I'm not above those things. I'm not suggesting saying "Oh, well we need to not do that." We're not just selling unicorns and popcorn farts.

Another issue is this concern about there being an economic decline in the value of products being sold. So how that happens is shrewd businesspeople work

on the suppliers' numbers until they go down, down, down. And what happens is these businesspeople are then in economic competition with others like them and they're all buying from the same vendor market.

And so they begin to get a better spread of profit margin by paying less for the wholesale product, and then they begin to price war each other with the retail, and they just end up passing on that price reduction to the customer, to the point where the producer doesn't make any money or very little, or considerably less than they did when they got started. And the retailers end up producing way more volume but considerably less value as well.

The only thing that does is to undermine Ontario's cannabis industry. It doesn't benefit the Indigenous cannabis industry at all. And it doesn't benefit anybody except the non-native customer who is getting products for less, but they're going to buy it no matter what the price is.

I was thinking that a solution is to create a clearing house where all the cannabis products are brought to be purchased by the retailers. So the distribution network retailers buy all their cannabis products from a clearing house that would then take in everything that comes in from whatever sources. It might be locally grown or produced. It might be externally grown or produced. And they could actually take it from the black market, and any other market for that matter at whatever price that it's brought at, that they say is their minimum that they can take for it.

Then it comes into the system and is tested. I think that that testing cost, if it's an outsider's product, they need to incur the cost of it, so that test should be subtracted from what the final purchasing price was. If

it was internally made, then costs should be divided between the retailers and the producer and a reduced cost payed to the tester.

It could be either set up as a community wide thing, or it could be set up as a clan thing. You just do an auction and you let all the retailers come, and then you just certify who the retailers are. Anybody that's not compliant with the cannabis regulations the clans have created, you just don't let them have access to that auction to come to buy that supply, and you don't provide them with any of the security or safety, and they don't get to be a part of the rules and regulations.

It could go one of two ways. It could be run as a three-way partnership of all the clans. Or it could be run by one clan. Like each clan could run it for themselves. The Bear Clan runs the Bear Clan auction and brings in product, does all that sort of stuff, it sells it. And then it certifies who can come buy. And whoever wants to come to purchase it that way, purchases. The market will then dictate what the value of those cannabis products is.

If the producers put the lowest amount they can accept for the product before they're not willing to accept it, they set the minimum standard which essentially it has to be the producers' material cost plus labour cost. It is whatever the bottom line is. You'll have to at least cover that and a little bit of profit, a small margin. That would be the actual minimum. And then anything above that is profit.

If they set the minimums and then the market leaders compete with each other to bid over the products, then what the side markets demand will determine what the value of that product. Say I'm willing to pay three thousand dollars a pound for New

York City Sour Diesel because it's going to sell for twenty dollars a gram. So I don't mind paying that. Because the market is willing to pay that. That's the opposite of the price we're giving them now.

Instead of the price wars, what will happen is that the retailers will battle each other over product scarcity. And they'll buy it up. There will be some competition, for sure there will be. They'll also try to buy at the lowest numbers, they're going to buy the base quantity on the last bids. So the first bids, they bid up as high as they can and then you get to pick however many you want out of that lot. Then they start the auction over again. They may not go as high, or it might go higher.

And then however much that you're willing to take it at, that the market will stand, you'll take that volume. And it might be that you'd buy all of it, and then you'd be able to keep the number up. I think it's a solution for "organized crime" having a direct relationship with the individual business owners, and potentially having conflict. And I think it also reduces the risk of the price war and the numbers going down. It should keep prices up.

We could also set a tariff on all the product that's coming in from outside of the community and an automatic hundred and fifty dollars a pound more is put on all their product. Locally grown stuff doesn't end up getting that tariff on it. There's no reason why we can't do that. And if we did that, if we added the tax and we tested it, so it's certified and it's in our system, then we could be buying it from the Hells Angels because it doesn't matter. It's cleared our customs and its paid our duties. They're not our underworld. They're somebody else's underworld. What do we care?

# ON LICENSING AND NAMING AMONGST CLAN PEOPLE

I feel like it's important to talk about how one is claimed by one's people. How an individual is claimed by their people, by their clan, and how that legitimacy works. I got there by thinking about how that judge in my cannabis case said I couldn't operate a dispensary without a license.

When I got to thinking about it, it seems inappropriate for any of our clans to issue licenses. This is not something that we've ever done. And it creates this authoritarian relationship. So I wondered if there was some way we could do that, because part of the purpose of a license is to confirm in fact that somebody legitimately has the authority, right or knowledge to do something, or is in compliance with whatever sort of regulations have been put in place.

Licenses could give us some control over people so that we can now dictate what they can do and what they can't do, and it also provides a means to collect revenue from them. Some of that is useful, but it's not in accordance with our customs and conventions as Kanyen'kehá:ka people. So I started wondering if there's an appropriate way for us to perhaps achieve these results another way. And I got thinking that it's the clans who need to authorize or acknowledge a person as being of our clan, and we acknowledge they're a part of us, and have the business and the authority and the right to do whatever it might be.

We as a clan are claiming ownership of the person and their conduct. We condone it. As opposed to licensing them. So then that got me thinking about

what does that actually look like? What do we need to do that? What does the Great Law say about how do you do that?

I realized that there's the need to talk about naming and what role the Onkwehon:we name has in the Great Law and within the system of claiming people. And what sorts of documentation one ought to be able to have access to by having a name, including a Red Card and Passport, and whatever business pursuits that they're acknowledged by their clan to be involved in. I think that's a wise thing to do.

I also think it goes along with the whole working for your clan under a clan-controlled payroll system. In that way, the work you do is being recompensed through a clan-run payroll system, so that even if you're selling your labour to whoever, it is your clan who is billing for your labour and paying you, and is then controlling or maintaining a bit of that revenue to go back towards the clan as operating capital. So it's not like someone can just claim "Well I'm Bear Clan and I can do this." No, that's not how it works. It's in fact the clan that says "Well you're Bear Clan and you can do this. We've got you."

The clans claim ownership over people by giving them a name. They're the only ones that can take it away too. You can't name yourself.

## HOW ADULTS GET NAMED

The process of getting a name differs depending on whether you're a child or an adult. It can be quite a lengthy process. Say you're an adult and you weren't raised inside the Great Law so you don't have an "Indian" or Onkwehon:we name. Usually you have to

have some reason why you'd be seeking asylum within the shelter of the Great Law. And so it might be that you're one of the '60s scoop kids that got stolen and you're coming back. Or maybe you're the offspring of a residential school survivor who was too screwed up to raise you in the culture.

Or maybe it's that the Indian Act says that you're an Indian but you don't have a clan because you don't have a Onkwehon:we mother. So you might have been raised on a reserve and identify as an Indian, but don't have any real rights within the Great Law. So maybe you've been alienated from that and have an interest to be part of that. Or it could be that one of your ancestors was a traitor and fully accepted the Indian Act, the church, and rejected all aspects of his own culture. And so you're the offspring of those people. There's a lot of those too.

What these people are really wanting is to be accepted by, and to become part of a clan. That's what they're really asking for, not a name. A name is the way in which the clan does that. So usually they say "I want a name" because of all the rights and responsibilities that come attached to it. So the first thing they have to do is ask somebody to take them in. And usually what happens is that they want to attend the ceremonies at the longhouse. But it might be more of a political or economic thing, and they're like, "I want to participate in the people's economy and live in the community, so I need a place to be, I need to join."

The first thing that happens is that someone has to be willing to accept you, and take responsibility for you. So usually you're going to have to reach out to somebody and ask them if they'll do that. The way that this is done is that an individual seeking

adoption will create a length of wampum, they say the span or width of your hand. So that will vary in how many beads that is. And when you ask that person for that wampum, you are effectively asking that person to take you in, to accept you and to adopt you.

Those people who were born to a clan, but who weren't raised in our ways, should go to the clan that they originally came from and ask for acceptance. They don't have the right to claim belonging and to name themselves. The clan always has the authority to name you, and to accept you, and to take you in. And there's all kinds of circumstances why it might be that somebody doesn't have access. It could be that the previous generation of that family got kicked out, abandoned, or got banished. There's a whole myriad of reasons as to why someone might not have an Indian name.

So they would go to somebody and ask to join that clan and become part of that. And if they come from ancestors who had a clan on their mother's side, it makes sense to go to that clan and ask those people to accept them. So the individual of that clan that they approach will go to their clan and say "This individual approached me, and would like to join our family. I have an interest to bring them underneath me and inside our clan. What do you guys think about that?"

In my experience, when that happens, the other clan members will want to see a family tree. They want to see that this person is who they say they are, and to make sure that they're being placed in the right spot. Sometimes, somebody thinks that they're this clan or that clan or have ancestral heritage. But in fact that's not the case, so they actually belong

somewhere else. So then they'll be directed to where they ought to go.

But let's just say they approach a clan, and they don't have a clan. Every individual within every nation and within every clan has the right to adopt any person, family, or nation. An entire nation can be adopted through one individual. So they're going to have that discussion in their clan and then they're going to say, "Okay, well we want to see them for a while, and we want to get to know them. And we want to make sure that they know what they're getting themselves into, and also that we know what we're getting ourselves into, because we're going to be responsible for this individual."

Usually that requires, at the bare minimum, to be actively involved within that clan, participating in clan activities including all of the ceremonial rights and responsibilities for at least a cycle of all the moons, a whole year. And so they're supposed to attend all the ceremonies during that year and attend all the clan meetings or whatever things they're invited to. And they might be put to work, they might be asked to come and work, to do different things. During this time, the people are testing them and seeing if and how they fit within the family structure of the clan and all that sort of stuff.

And then at the very bare minimum of a year, they might be inclined to say, "Well we want to adopt this person." And so then in a big public forum or often during one of the big ceremonies like harvest, mid-winter, and strawberry, where the chiefs and clan mothers are required to be present, the clan will proclaim that it is taking them in. But it's not the only place it can be done.

The individual that's accepted the person's wampum, will stand up and announce who this person is and give them an Indian name right then and claim them as their own sibling or their own child or whatever, and say what clan it is. And the people are instructed that they're not to bring up what their life was prior to that, or who they might have been. So maybe they're a Frenchman, but you're not allowed to call him Frenchman after that.

Or maybe they were Ojibwe, they're not allowed to raise it anymore that they used to be Ojibwe, because they're not that. They're now that new clan and new family and nation. Also, the individual who is being taken in is instructed not to bring that up either. They leave that behind and they're accepting this new identity. And the first thing they're bestowing on their nakedness is this name, and they hang this name on them. They pick it up and they stand it up, this name. That's what they do.

And sometimes if they're an adult, or if they've ever in a part of their life acted against the best interests of the traditional people, they might have them do a reinstatement ceremony in front of everyone. This is for people who were once our people and left, for whatever reason. Maybe they were traitors or their family was. So they get reinstated back into their rightful place.

In the reinstatement ceremony they ask them if they pledge a responsibility and accept their specific responsibilities as a man or a woman, and all that that entails. And they'll give a speech and talk about it all. They'll talk about all the things you talk about to a young boy that's becoming a man, like rights of passage. They'll talk about those things, just in a very

general sense though. They won't get into super detail about it. It might be a ten minute speech.

Anyways, they have a wampum, they bring up the council fire and they give a speech and they talk about the responsibilities of the individual to the clan within the Great Law. And what those responsibilities are, specific to either a man or to a woman.

Then they ask them if they accept that, in front of everybody. They have them take that wampum and pass it through their hands, that they accept the Great Law and they accept that they're going to follow that and abide by it, and they say they're going to follow the rules and regulations, and the responsibilities of the people, and of the clan that's accepting them in. And they won't work against it, and they won't work to undermine it, and that they fully submit themselves to Kayenere:kowa (the Great Law). This is what they do, man or woman. And then they announce what their name is and who they are, and that is how one becomes accepted in. That's what happens, I've seen it happen before.

The other way is there might be like adoption where they're like a visitor, they might come and go. They might not always live amongst the people. So in that case, they'll hang a name on them, they'll say *ronwasennenkehte*, like 'they hung the name on their neck.' And that's a temporary name. It's not like the other one I described which is a permanent name indicating membership in the clan and nation. It's a temporary one, and this is the name that they will have while they're amongst us.

And that name will provide them with protections within the Great Law so that no one can molest them or just do what they want to them. They are safe

within the Great Law, that no one is going to interfere in what they're doing, what they're about, and what they're going to do. While they're within our territory, they're free to move around. And they have most of the rights and responsibilities as everybody else, except they don't necessarily have the responsibility to go to war when the people go to war. They don't have any voice within the political council, unless they are asked to speak. But the people, and the council is not required to listen to them.

So when they get up and talk, they can be told to shut the fuck up and sit down. And that's perfectly fine. Also, they're not required to give up their previous identity. They can hang on to that and they can travel back and forth between different worlds. They still get assigned a clan to be responsible for them, and that clan and the individuals that accept them are responsible for their behaviour, just like the other one, they're responsible for as well.

However with the other one, if they can act up and they get in trouble, then the clan is the one that gets scolded and then the clan has got to address it and correct the behaviour. In the case of someone who has had a name hung around their neck, if they act up, anybody can scold them. The clan is still responsible though, and it doesn't need to be as severe, but people can request that that person be expelled or expunged from the territory if their actions are causing a disruption.

However, it is the responsibility of the clan that's taken them in, to make sure to guide them in what direction to go in so that they're not being so disruptive. Because they don't expect that people are going to know all the nuances and all the ways that we're supposed to act when they just come to us as

outsiders and as adults. It's different than the child. So that's how that goes.

## ADOPTING CHILDREN

When it comes to children, we simply name them. We announce who they are and what their family is and put a name on them when their head gets hard. And that's that. When a child gets adopted, it's just announced who the parents are and who they are, and who's claimed them, and it's announced that way and they're given a name. And that's it. And then that child is guided with their responsibilities as they grow up.

What's problematic is where you have people in our territories who don't have any rights within our laws or our treaties, but are only allowed to be there because the Indian Act says they can. Our system doesn't require that we have to accept those people. If they don't confirm to our rules and our laws and our system, then we're not obligated to keep them or provide them with any shelter. They're, in effect, false citizens assigned the ability to live in our territory by an outside invading force.

I think one of the reasons why there's reluctance to move towards traditional governance in lots of places is because there's so many of those people and they don't want to give up their Indian Act status. Or they feel that they have some sort of a right or privilege, when in fact they don't actually have the right.

There are solutions and ways to fix it, but it requires a humbling and it requires an acceptance of where they are in the pecking order, as things develop. The other thing is when somebody gets adopted, the people have got to claim them. "This is my sister,

therefore my parents are her parents, or his parents.” And their line is not allowed to sit in a political role as a chief or a clan mother for three generations from that person who was first accepted back in.

However, we know that historically that hasn't always been the case. We haven't always followed that rule. There's lots and lots of people who are made chiefs and given political responsibility that weren't necessarily born with it. Or they were adopted and taken in and had that time. But the current way in which the Great Law is interpreted is that it's three generations. This is the explanation that was given to me, how I heard it, it was told to me. It was Thomas Delaronde who told me this, and his wife, Lorraine Montour. And then I heard it again by uncle Gene Hill, and I heard it again from Mary Swamp.

## GENERATIONAL ADOPTION

The person who's adopted can't hold the position of a clan mother or any official national political position. This is because they grew up influenced with another way of thinking that's outside of our way of doing things. And so if they're allowed to influence the political arena and agenda, then they will influence it with the mind that they were raised with, which is not our way of thinking. So that's why they can't participate as a national leader.

So then they have a child. And they are required to have a child with someone who has got a clan, who is a part of our way. Preferably someone who's got a mother and father who both have a clan, so they're getting together with somebody who is braided, who's got both a male and female clan. And so they have children, and so now they've been adopted into

a clan and they've been influenced by the clan that's adopted them, and they've had children with someone who has a clan, who's a part of a clan, and someone whose parents have clans, so there's a continuity there.

This individual can participate in politics and have a voice in what's happening, but they can't hold the position of national title, of national responsibility, because one of their parents wasn't raised entirely in our world. And so there's going to be some influence that came from the outside upbringing in the beginning stages of the parent's life now. So it's still having an impact. And so now that person, child, man or woman, but let's just say it's another female, so two females in a row, has a child. And she's perceived and understood as having a clan and perceived and understood as being a part of the nation. She has a child with another male, just like her mother did.

So her father has a clan, and both her father's parents have clans. So she's very invested into that nation by this point, and so chooses to have a child with someone who's in the same situation, both parents have clans. What happens then is they have a child and that's the third generation, and that child will only be raised in our cultural world and all of its grandparents are our people. So by now, it has a clan and grandparents on both sides all have clans, and that child is now interconnected in all the clans.

So this child can hold a national position of authority or responsibility, and fully have all the rights and voice and political aspirations as any other individual. That's how I understand how that works. That does not apply to someone that has a name hung around their neck. That is temporary and only goes as far as them.

If it's a child, like a baby, if it's a child before puberty, and has become adopted by a family, and is being raised in a household as a family by a man and a woman who have got a clan, and they accept complete ownership as a father and a mother, and that this is their child, regardless of whose child it is, that child is not considered to have the same kind of adoption. And from what I understand or recall, that doesn't require three generations. That's a simple adoption and no one is allowed to bring it up again as it will cause harm to the child. They don't even need to know.

If an indigenous person from another nation wants to join our nation, then they're seeking asylum and a place of belonging within one of our clans. It doesn't matter what nation they come from. So whether they're Cree or Navaho or Scottish, they've got a clan, but it's not one of our clans. Adoption needs to be specific to the nation and the clans of that nation.

When we place them with us, they still need to be accepted and claimed. Someone doesn't have a clan, someone belongs to a clan. And people can be expelled from a clan too. They can be told to get out. And they don't get to keep their clan identity with them.

## CLANS AS A POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL UNITS

Clans are a family unit and an economic unit and a political unit. It's this entire way of life that is also a military unit. When you go to fight, you go in your own clans. Groups of men go as their clans. They don't go as a big massive group, they go as clan cells. And they're directed to war by their clan

mother and the head man. If it's an economic thing, then that's your clan that's meeting to talk about how you're going to economically develop something, or what they accept or what they believe is a reasonable sort of thing to do.

And then if it's a political thing, that's the political decision-making body that directs the chief as to what the people want him to do or say, or directs their head man, or informs the clan mother. And they're supposed to work together for the extended family political unit they were appointed to.

We're not organized by communities. There's been a lot of chatter lately, people talking about community, their community, our community. I think that might be an Indian Act saying, or maybe it's a new age saying, or maybe it's a result of the influence of Sesame Street, in their neighbourhood or something. I don't know. But it's not our way, it's not our system.

Our system is your clan, and so your clan exists across geographical spaces and areas and villages, and there are clan members throughout those places. And you're to look at your clan members as brothers and sisters. So you're family. You refer to them as brother and sister. We refer to the other clans as your cousins. Like I'm Bear Clan, so the Wolf Clan or Turtle Clan are our cousins. But we're not brothers. Whenever you see old documents where they wrote something down attributed to a chief or some sort of speech being given by our people, and he says "Brothers..." You know one of two things. Either that speech translator is full of shit. Or the speaker is only talking to his own clan members, because you will never say that to everybody.

In the language, in the longhouse, we say *tysarase'a tisewenteren ken?* when we're speaking across the longhouse. We're saying "Cousins, are you home?" We don't refer to them as brother and sister. Only our clan members refer to each other that way. And that's why you're not supposed to be having children inside your own clan because that would be an incestual relationship. And you're not allowed to have children with your own sister or brother. If you have children with your fellow clan member, then you've forfeited the political voice for your children for the next three generations. If you and your partner are in the same clan, for three generations of the females, they can't participate as clan mother or have a voice on the council.

It's one of the only things that you can do to actually forfeit your political voice. No one can interfere with you if you want to have sex with your own clan member. However, if you get together and make a relationship, while that's going on, you forfeit your voice in the political arena. And if you have children, you forfeit the voice of your children for three generations. So although it's permissible, like no one is going to stop you, there can be consequences for your behaviour. And it's certainly frowned upon. But it's not something you can get kicked out for.

Part of the reason why they say that you shouldn't get together with somebody in your own clan, and why they take away your political voice, is that you'll be one-sided, that you won't have the compassion and love and concern for the other side, you're tied only into your own family, in your own house. If your partner is the same clan as you, you're not going to have the same compassion or concern or worry or love for the other clans that you will if you're Bear Clan and your partner is Wolf or Turtle Clan. So it'll

create an imbalance. The house becomes lopsided, we say. It's too heavy on one side.

Also if you do that with children, then you've got children who have both their parents are in the same clan. And so they're even worse for not having a concern or compassion for other clans.

## CLAN MEETINGS

Anyone in a clan can call a meeting at any time. And a healthy clan should be getting together and meeting regularly. In the old days, the clans all lived together, so every day was a clan meeting because you got up and ate breakfast and had dinner and worked together. So it should be quite regular like that. And you see how people nowadays, they embrace European ideas about last names and they'll have family reunions on the basis of last names.

That's kind of a funny way to do it. Really you'd think it would be more appropriate to have a Wolf Clan family reunion every year, or a couple times a year. Or Bear Clan, or Turtle Clan. And they should be meeting every single time there is an issue that's been put on the floor at a chief's council, the clan should be meeting to discuss the issue and to inform the chief as to what direction they want him to go in.

Every issue that gets tabled and addressed at the chief's council, at the confederacy level, and at the national level, requires that there be at least two clan meetings. One clan meeting to hear what the issue was, to deliberate on it, and to tell the chief what they want him to say. And then a second clan meeting to hear what the outcome was about what they told him to say.

There should be at least two clan meetings for every issue that gets brought up, unless maybe they're trying to tackle a couple issues at once. And then you still need to have two clan meetings. And they should be having a clan meeting for when there are babies going to get named, or when there's going to be a baby born, and you should be having a clan meeting whenever there's a clan member having a wedding or funeral.

There should be a clan meeting whenever any clan member is experiencing a hard time, so they can come together and be supportive for them. And any time they have to replace a political leader. And then whenever that political leader does any work, to report back and to be able to meet with their clan and tell them what's going on. So the clans should be meeting all the time.

Years ago, the way they had it structured was that every clan, every community had their clan organized with a chief and clan mother and then the chiefs and clan mothers met. They all met with their clans and then they would go and meet with each other, and then they would select amongst them who was going to national council. And they rotated that group. That's how they did it, because the people couldn't afford to travel.

All these people who want to participate in the cannabis industry, these are the steps that they have to take to be able to have shelter underneath the Great Law. It's not just automatic. And if they're not willing to take those steps and responsibilities to be a part of that, then they don't have the right to that shelter. These are the requirements to be a part of that, and to be active participants, not just looking for an easy way to protect themselves to do whatever they want to do. They still are required to be

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