

Mark Vandermaas, CANACE

From: Barrett, Toby [toby.barrett@pc.ola.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2008 2:52 PM
Subject: Caledonia email update

Re: Land Dispute Hearings

Toby here:

You may remember last December I made a request to the McGuinty government, on behalf of petitions signed by residents of Haldimand, to begin public hearings on the land dispute through a select or standing committee. I also requested that they do this immediately.

Nearly eleven months later I have received a written response, if you call it that, to the request. I have included the news release I just sent to the media concerning this response.

Take care.

Toby

October 15, 2008
For Immediate Release

McGuinty axes land dispute hearings - uses Ipperwash as excuse

Queen's Park - Haldimand-Norfolk MPP Toby Barrett has finally received an answer to his request for land dispute hearings, after nearly 11 months of waiting, and the local representative says the response is far from acceptable.

Barrett made the request to the Legislature by means of a petition, which was certified on December 4, 2007 and tabled on December 11, 2007.

"It is appalling that it has taken the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs eleven months to respond to the thousands of constituents who are affected by the on-going land dispute and took the time to affix their name to the petition," Barrett said. "What I asked for on behalf of the people of Caledonia and Haldimand County was not unreasonable."

10/27/2008

In his petition. Barrett said: “land dispute deliberations to date, have operated under a veil of secrecy, without transparency, and have created an atmosphere of privacy and scepticism, shutting out people from information and decisions that impact them directly”. He also pointed out that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (at the time Michael Bryant) indicated in the media, and during a visit to Caledonia, that he would garner local public input and therefore requested that the province commence public hearings through a select or standing committee.

According to the Legislative Standing Orders petitions must be responded to within 24 days. Barrett was further miffed by Minister Duguid’s response which read: “Justice Linden’s comprehensive report arising out of the Ipperwash Inquiry includes a road map for progress in our relations with First Nations and Metis people, and the government is following those guidelines.”

“This is one of the all-to-common Ipperwash excuses this government dishes out,” Barrett said. “I’d like to see the Minister stand before the people of Haldimand County and share his response with them.”

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