

Put an end to land-claim industry

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Re: Flashpoints for protests remain 'as intense,' June 1.

So the Ipperwash inquiry report has been made public and both the federal and provincial governments have been found responsible for the events of Sept. 6, 1995. What will become of this report?

We know that the Ontario government and the federal government have been presented with recommendations regarding the outstanding land-claim disputes. Both governments are involved in land-claim negotiations with the Algonquins of Ontario.

For years, there have been complaints ranging from questionable election practices to the double-dipping of allocated funds by one community. To date, both governments have ignored these complaints. There are five communities not included in the Algonquin land-claim negotiations. These communities have complained for years to the governments as well as to both federal and provincial negotiators about the irregularities within the process and their reasons for not wanting to participate until these are dealt with. To date, nothing has been done.

It is my hope that the governments put a stop to the native land-claims industry that has been created as a result of these disputes. All it has done is make lawyers rich while their clients are wondering what happened to the settlement.

This April, the Ottawa Algonquin First Nation withdrew its support from the Algonquin land claim. We left the table because of the above outstanding issues and other disturbing problems. A letter detailing our departure from the negotiations can be found at ottawaalgonquins.com.

I suggest that before both governments begin to implement Justice Sidney Linden's recommendations that they clean up the mess within the Algonquin land claim.

Paul Lamothe, Ottawa

Chief, Ottawa Algonquin First Nation

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