



For Immediate Release

Anishinabek against any honours for Mike Harris

UOI OFFICES, NIPISSING FN (May 21, 2010) – Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee says that Mike Harris does not deserve any honorary treatment, in the view of First Nations citizens in this province.

“He doesn’t deserve titles or tributes of any kind,” said Madahbee on learning that Nipissing University plans to confer an honorary Doctor of Letters on the former Ontario premier in a June 11 convocation ceremony.

“I can think of some appropriate letters Mike Harris should have in front of his name, not after it,” said the Grand Council Chief.

Chief Marianna Couchie of Nipissing First Nation has already released a statement saying that that her community would be withdrawing funding support for the new university Learning Library because of Mike Harris’s connection.

“We support the recent decision by Nipissing First Nation to cancel their contributions to the new university-college campus library if Mike Harris’s name is attached to it in any way,” said Madahbee.

“You don’t reward a person who was directly responsible for so much economic hardship and divisiveness in this province. Our organization is right now working with the current government on 100 recommendations from a judicial inquiry whose job it was to contribute to changing the relationship that existed between the Harris government and First Nations – a hostile relationship that led to the death of Dudley George at Ipperwash on Sept. 6, 1995,” said Madahbee. “That is what Mike Harris will always be remembered for.”

National Chief Shawn Atleo was also named by Nipissing University as a recipient of an honorary education doctorate, but it has been reported that he will decline because of Mike Harris’s involvement.

The Union of Ontario Indians – corporate arm of the Anishinabek Nation – is playing a lead role in the Ipperwash Inquiry Priorities and Action Committee (IIPAC) process, working with other First Nations organizations and the province to implement the 100 recommendations of the Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry.



Dudley's brother, the late Sam George, who pursued the truth of Dudley's death and dedicated his time and energy to public education said in an October, 2008 Toronto Star interview: "I don't believe yet in my heart that all people are treated equally in our country," he said. "You can never change history, but you can start to correct it."

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 40 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

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