

**THE ALGONQUIN COALITION REMIND QUEBEC
THAT,
MEDIATION IS MUTUALLY DEVELOPED AND
AGREED TO,
NOT UNILATERALLY IMPOSED**

Algonquin Coalition Strive To Get A Proper Mediation Process Off Ground

Twin Rapids, Quebec, November 3, 2004; Quebec unilaterally appointed Justice Rejean F. Paul, a Judge from the Superior Court of Quebec to “Mediate” a solution to the conflict between themselves and the Algonquin communities of the Long Point and Lac Simon. Further, exasperating the issue, Quebec unilaterally developed and issued the Judge’s mandate, citing in an Order of Council that the Judge mediate a solution in line with Quebec’s directions.

Although the Chiefs of the Coalition of the Algonquin communities have been suggesting a facilitator for some time now, they were quite surprised to learn that a mediator was appointed by Quebec without being consulted. *“This unfortunately, is another clear example of Quebec’s attitude in dealing with First Nation issues.”* states Chief Mathias. What Quebec is imposing is not mediation, but rather a negotiation by someone mandated by them to resolve the issue according to suit their own agenda.

As stated by Chief Daniel Pien, *“We didn’t even know that Quebec was going in this direction until we found out by the media. I have never heard of mediation being unilaterally imposed or the selection of a mediator with a mandate decided upon only by one party.”*

Though the Coalition is enthusiastic to see the positive opportunity here to engage in a real mediation with high hopes of bringing success to this conflict, they can’t help but see the continued pattern by Quebec. *“Rather than treating this issue seriously, they just seem determined to continue playing games in lieu of working in the spirit of bringing the communities and people of this Region the success they deserve”*, states Chief Mathias.

Though the Chiefs were disenchanted by the way Quebec has gone about this, out of respect and courtesy, they still decided to meet with Justice Paul to assess his views and approach to mediation. Rather than receiving a proposal from Justice Paul on how the mediation should take place, the Coalition received a proposition reaffirming Quebec’s position. The recommendations made no reference to the issues expressed by the Coalition, and interestingly enough reflected exactly the proposition made by Quebec to the Coalition on October 22, 2004, leaving the Coalition with the impression that there is no real intent to mediate.

The Coalition has submitted a letter to Quebec outlining their willingness and are determined to begin a true Mediation process which could actually commence as early as Monday November 8, 2004. The letter describes a process designed to generate balanced solutions in the best interest of all involved and is obviously subject to mutual consent. The letter goes on to encourage Quebec to take the matter seriously and respectfully suggests to Quebec that they have somehow confused mediation with negotiation.

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Source :

Jean Cotten

Chief of Communications

Lac Simon First Nation & Long Point First Nation Coalition (819) 722-2441

For More Information Contact: For Evergreen Innovative Strategies Inc.