

From: "howard doughty"
Sent: Sunday, February 24, 2019 at 12:33 PM
To: Office Mayor; Joe DiPaola; Carmine Perrelli; Greg Beros; Tom Muench;
Castro Liu; David West; Karen Cilevitz; Godwin Chan
Subject: Indigenous Acknowledgement

Good afternoon:

With respect to the forthcoming vote on the matter of acknowledgement of the occupation of indigenous land, there are two plausible perspectives:

(1) It is an obvious and necessary step toward reconciliation and justice, and must therefore be approved;

(2) It is an empty symbolic gesture, the value of which is compromised by the hypocrisy of giving lip service to an aspirational relationship of mutual respect that is otherwise denied in practice, and may therefore be neither supported nor opposed.

What is not plausible is a perspective that would support voting "No".

Comparisons to the hypothetical recognition of various ethnic immigrant groups (English, Scottish, Irish, French, Chinese, Italian or any other) are, of course, absurd on their face and quite beside the point.

Indigenous peoples are different from all other Canadians - whether they arrived in the wake of John Cabot (1497) or Jacques Cartier (1534), the putative leaders of the two primal branches of European migration, or settlers from anywhere else in Europe, Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

Indigenous peoples were the first to inhabit the land. Their aboriginal legal title has been recognized (though less often protected) ever since the Papal Bill *Subimus Deus* (1537) and, more explicitly for Canadian purposes, since the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763.

To oppose a simple recognition of what is further acknowledged and guaranteed by Section 25 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and Section 35 of the *Constitution Act* is utterly unacceptable.

Accordingly, I urge *all* members of the Town of Richmond Hill Council to vote "for" this simple measure as a positive gesture in accordance with perspective (1) above, and not to abstain as per perspective (2), since it is plain that the indigenous peoples affected support the initiative.

Again, to vote "against" it is *not* an option.

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