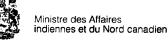
# **RESPONSES**

Re: Athabasca Denesuline Special Report on the Treaty Harvesting Rights of the Fond du Lac, Black Lake, and Hatchet Lake First Nations Ronald A. Irwin, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, to Daniel Bellegarde and P.E. James Prentice, Co-Chairs, Indian Claims Commission, January 17, 1996

Re: Sumas Inquiry: Indian Reserve No. 6 Railway Right of Way Claim Ronald A. Irwin, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, to Daniel Bellegarde and James Prentice, Indian Claims Commission, December 20, 1995





Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

### JAN 17 1996

Mr. Daniel Bellegarde Mr. P.E. James Prentice Co-Chairs Indian Claims Commission 427 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 400 OTTAWA ON KIP 1A2

#### Gentlemen:

Thank you for your letter of November 30, 1995 enclosing your Special Report on Treaty Harvesting Rights of the Athabasca Denesuline.

This information will certainly be useful in the review of the Athabasca Denesuline claim to treaty harvesting rights that the Department of Justice has agreed to undertake.

I have, as yet, received no word from counsel at the Department of Justice as to when the review of past opinions on this subject may occur. I will be sure to keep you informed on the matter as developments arise.

Yours truly,

Ronald A. Irwin, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Allan Rock, P.C., M.P.

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## Ministre des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

DEC 2 0 1995

Mr. Daniel Bellegarde Mr. James Prentice Indian Claims Commission P.O. Box 1750, Station B OTTAWA ON KIP 1A2

Dear Messrs. Bellegarde and Prentice:

My officials and those from the Department of Justice have reviewed the Commission's report regarding the Sumas Indian Reserve No. 6 specific claim.

The issues raised in the report are currently before the courts in several railway actions, including the Mathias case.

In light of the fact that these complex legal issues are before the courts in well advanced litigation involving other parties and given the ramifications that a decision on these issues may have for other First Nations and third parties, the Government of Canada is of the view that judicial guidance is appropriate prior to substantively responding to your recommendations. Once the courts provide some direction with respect to these issues, Canada will be pleased to consider your recommendations further.

Yours truly,

Ronald A. Irwin, P.C., M.P.

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