

OTTAWA OFFICE
House of Commons
West Block Room 151
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
(613) 993-6654
Fax: (613) 993-9007



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

676013
Windy Craggy
CONSTITUENCY OFFICE
4519 Lakelab Ave.
Terrace, British Columbia
V8G 1P3
(604) 635-1601
1-800-661-2208
Fax: (604) 635-4109

MIKE SCOTT, M.P.
SKEENA

December 15, 1994

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Reform MP Mike Scott blasts Harcourt for flagrant misrepresentation of facts to Aboriginals over the Tatshenshini

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nations have long been on record opposing a World Heritage Site designation for the Tatshenshini, which is within their land claim area. "Provincial Government officials including Premier Harcourt and Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Cashore apparently met with Paul Birckel, Chief of the Champagne/Aishihik, on Dec. 5 in a desperate bid to persuade Birckel to withdraw his opposition to the World Heritage designation" said Scott.

Chief Birckel is quoted in the Northern Miner as being "told by Government officials at that meeting that Windy Craggy was "all promotion" and "a flash in the pan". They told me there was nothing there." He was referring to the vast copper-cobalt deposits in the Tatshenshini valued at more than \$10 billion by the mining industry. The Champagne/Aishihik have no doubt considered the opportunity such a rich deposit would mean.

"It is shameful, deceitful, and reprehensible, that Government officials would make such statements" said Scott angrily "will the Premier let nothing including the truth stand in his way as he pursues his agenda?" "The Premier knew full well that Paul Birckel's opposition to a World Heritage designation would have killed the nomination, so he and his officials perpetrated a con job on the very people he and his Government profess to care about."

Scott went on to say "apparently parks are more important to the NDP Government than Aboriginal people. We already knew that parks were more important than due process, public consultation, jobs and tax revenues. Now we know they rank ahead of Native aspirations and the truth!"

The Tatshenshini was officially declared a United Nations World Heritage Site on Dec. 15.

- 30 -

For further information contact: Mike Scott, MP for Skeena
(604) 635-1601