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# News Release

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## The Tsawwassen Treaty - Who Gets the Money?

**Ottawa**—“The assets and benefits given the Tsawwassen Indian Band in Treaty represent an unending liability on future generations of Canadian taxpayers,” said Delta-Richmond East Member of Parliament John Cummins. So who gets the money?

Who besides the Vancouver Port Authority, which operates the Roberts Bank container terminal, will profit from the industrialization of farmland? Who will be the recipient of the tax dollars paid by “non-citizens” resident on the Reserve? Who gets the GST? Who gets the huge annual salmon allocations? Who will get the millions of dollars of money that will accrue to the Band every year under the Treaty?

Who are the members of the Tsawwassen Indian Band that are now the beneficiaries of the Tsawwassen Treaty?”

- At the time of the Treaty signing in December 2006, the Band claimed that it had 358 members. In March 2007 Indian Affairs claimed the Tsawwassen Band had 273 registered members.”
- The difference, 85 Band members are not recognized as registered Indians by Indian Affairs and therefore they do not qualify for tax exemptions and other generous benefits available to registered Band members. At best these non-registered Band members are understood to have only one grandparent or one great grandparent who was a registered Tsawwassen Band member. Most live off Reserve.

Why should the federal government now recognize these people as beneficiaries of the Treaty? Why should they now be in line for the millions of dollars in salmon, income taxes, property taxes and GST that will accrue to the band *each year* as a result of the Treaty?

- Of the 273 registered Band members recognized by Indian Affairs, only 163 live on the Tsawwassen Reserve. Of the 110 living off Reserve, 4 live on other Reserves and the remaining 106 Band members, we are told, live elsewhere in the Lower Mainland, Washington State, California, Manitoba and Ontario.”
- Combining the 110 registered Band members who live off Reserve with the majority of the 85 non-registered Band members who also live off Reserve means that over half the Band has abandoned the Reserve community and they and their families now live permanently elsewhere in British Columbia, other provinces or the United States. Why should they now and forevermore be recipients of our tax dollars through this Tsawwassen Treaty settlement?

“The benefits of the Treaty should be directed to those 163 registered Band members who live on the Reserve, whose parents and grandparents have lived there for generations and for whom the federal government has had an acknowledged responsibility. The benefits should not go to the 85 new Band members who are not legally qualified to be registered Band members or the 110 registered Band members who live elsewhere,” Cummins maintained.

“Treaty benefits must not represent a long-term liability on our children and grandchildren,” Cummins said.

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