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December 11, 2006

**The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.**

Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Prime Minister:

The residents of Delta-Richmond East are perplexed as are sports and commercial fishermen by the decision to have Mr. Prentice sign the Tsawwassen Treaty on behalf of the Government of Canada on December 8, 2006.

I have yet to receive a satisfactory explanation for Mr. Prentice's action.

Last Wednesday when I sat down with Mr. Prentice to discuss the deal he was about to sign, he provided me a Backgrounder that only deepened my concerns. In the section entitled "**Why This Treaty is Important**" the Backgrounder proudly states:

**"Allows for the expansion of the Roberts Bank Superport,  
linked to the Asia-Pacific Gateway."**

Indeed this ill-conceived deal does open the way for massive port expansion by removing hundreds of acres of prime farmland and wildlife refuge from the Agricultural Land Reserve. Much of this land that our farmers so painstakingly reclaimed will be lost forever to agriculture and migratory birds and will be turned into an industrial wasteland for the storage of containers from the port.

This will happen without the normal protection for farmland and wildlife because it will become treaty land. Further eroding our precious farmland, an enormous transportation corridor for both rail and road traffic will be required to move the container traffic to and from the port. The quality of life in Delta will be severely diminished as a result.

Mr. Prentice is in error if he used the port expansion as the driving force leading him to sign the deal. Trying to move forward a port expansion outside the normal environmental constraints *is a reason not to sign* rather than a reason to sign the Tsawwassen Treaty.

In responding to questions on why this section or that was in the treaty, Mr. Prentice's standard reply to me was that it was necessary if he was going to get a deal. Buying an agreement at any price on the backs of the people of Delta and to the detriment of the world famous Fraser River fishery is not an explanation that I am prepared to accept.

I would also like to bring to your attention the "talking points" on the Tsawwassen Treaty released by your office on December 9, 2006 with the request that Members of Parliament "use the following lines when bridging out of interviews, or when speaking with local media."

The first "line" to be used by Members of Parliament begins by trumpeting that:

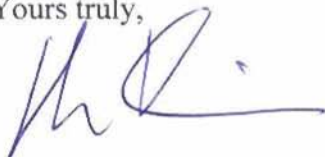
**"For thirteen years the Liberals paid lip service to aboriginals.... Canada's New Government is finally making progress on aboriginal issues after thirteen years of Liberal talk on this issue."**

Prime Minister, if this ill-advised rush is all about signing more treaties than the defeated Liberals, that is hardly the kind of explanation I can use to tell the people of Delta-Richmond East and British Columbia that Mr. Prentice has signed a Treaty that is good for Delta and for British Columbia. This race to get a Treaty at any cost only confirms that on this matter Mr. Prentice is totally lacking in common sense.

When the people of Delta-Richmond East elected me as a Conservative Member of Parliament this was not what they were voting for. Mr. Prentice's action has broken faith with the people of this Province who elected Conservatives in the election earlier this year.

I cannot and will not use such "talking points" to confuse or mislead the media nor can I support Mr. Prentice's actions or the Tsawwassen Treaty he signed. Mr. Prentice has badly advised you on this matter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Cummins', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Cummins, M.P.  
Delta-Richmond East

cc. Mr. Dick Harris, M.P.  
Chair of B.C. Caucus