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**The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.**  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Prime Minister:

I have made known my concerns to you about the treaties under negotiation in British Columbia and have expressed specific concerns to you about the agreements signed with the Yale and the Lheidli T'enneh Bands.

Only last week I raised concerns with you about proceeding with a Final Agreement with the Tsawwassen, an Indian Band in my riding. Today I am advised by Mr. Prentice that our government is signing the Final Agreement with the Tsawwassen by the weekend.

Why the rush to sign and irrevocably enter into a seriously flawed and quite dangerous new constitutional arrangement? The Tsawwassen Final Agreement will be the third in the past few months, not counting the Agreement-in-Principle with Yale.

The proposed Tsawwassen treaty poses long-term trouble for the residents of Delta:

- **Disenfranchisement of non-aboriginal Canadian citizens**

Hundreds of non-Tsawwassen "citizens" who own homes on reserve lands will lose the right to vote and to participate in their local government. Currently they vote for Delta Mayor and Council. There are over 700 non-aboriginal Canadians living on reserve land and approximately 160 aboriginals.

- **Taxation without Representation**

The Delta residents who reside on Band land will be subjected to taxation without representation becoming resident aliens in their own community or in treaty jargon, "non-citizens".

- **Loss of Protection for Prime Farmland**

Prime farmland is being removed from B.C.'s Agricultural Land Reserve. This fertile delta land will be lost to agriculture forever and will become an industrial wasteland for the storage of shipping containers and other industrial uses.

- **Loss of Wildlife Habitat**

Farmers in Delta have been very sensitive to the needs of wildlife and migratory birds. Turning these irreplaceable farmlands into a heavy industrial zone is fundamentally incompatible with the needs of wildlife and in particular with the vast numbers of migratory birds that rely on this area as an essential part of the Pacific flyway.

- **Loss of Protection for Burns Bog – a Nature Conservation Area.**

Race-based ability to use all lands in “Traditional Territory” including Burns Bog, which is a designated nature Conservation Area with no trespassing and no hunting allowed, to hunt, gather, cut trees and in general do whatever the Band or Band members wish.

- **Ability to Effectively Ignore Environmental Laws on Treaty Lands**

Delta contains the most valuable lands for wildlife and farming in British Columbia. The Agricultural Land Reserve was in large part established to protect farm land in Delta. Under the treaty this farmland will become storage for shipping containers.

- **Encumbering of Farmland at Brunswick Point**

The Brunswick Point lands will be encumbered such that if the lands are not being sold to a family member of the previous landowner they must be offered to the Band. This amounts to expropriation and flies in the face of the commitment that all transfers would be based on the principle of willing seller/willing buyer.

- **Virtual Open-ended Treaty Right to add to Treaty Lands following signing of Treaty.**

This Treaty that will provide the Band with the opportunity to purchase lands post-treaty and add them to lands under their jurisdiction without the agreement of the municipality in whose jurisdiction those lands presently exist. This is discriminatory and unfair to Delta and an invitation to irreconcilable difficulties relating to infrastructure, access and compensation.

- **Loss of Access for Delta Residents to Traditional Recreation Areas**

Dikes and roadways on Treaty Lands can be posted “No Trespassing” or admission can be charged to areas now open to all residents. These areas were developed and maintained by Delta taxpayers.

- **Treaty Rights Extend Beyond Treaty Lands**

The so-called “Traditional Territory” is a vast area. It will put the Band in conflict with the Municipality of Delta, non-aboriginals and other aboriginal bands as far west as the Gulf Islands and east to Harrison Lake. You cannot not have two separate groups in a densely populated area with two different sets of “rights.” It simply will not work.

- **Creation of a commercial fishery based on race.**

- **No Taxation**

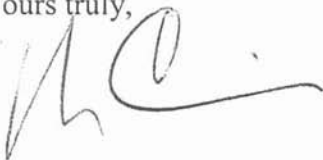
Taxation is handled through a side agreement and has never been made public. What has been made public suggests that 50 percent of the Provincial tax collected and as much as 100 percent of the Federal tax collected will be returned to the Band government in perpetuity.

- **Contrary to the Diverse and Inclusive Nature of B.C.**

British Columbia has an extraordinarily diverse population, particularly in the greater Vancouver area. This treaty offends the very basic tenets and principles on which British Columbia operates. In British Columbia everyone, no matter where they were born, their ethnic background, religion or race is equal. This treaty stands opposed to the very glue that makes B.C.’s lower mainland such a wonderful place to live.

If Mr. Prentice goes forward with signing the Tsawwassen Final Agreement, I will be forced to vigorously oppose Mr. Prentice and the treaty which he has signed.

Yours truly,



John Cummins, M.P.  
Delta-Richmond East