



## **\$20 Million Class Action Settlement**

**MEDIA RELEASE: July 09, 2011**

### **Caledonia – what went wrong? What next? Longtime volunteers stand ready with answers & help**

Gary McHale of Canadian Advocates for Charter Equality (CANACE), and Mark Vandermaas, founder of the Caledonia Victims Project – along with other dedicated volunteer activists such as Caledonia resident Merlyn Kinrade, Jeff Parkinson; and former Ipperwash community leader Mary-Lou LaPratte, have invested many thousands of hours during the past five years to gather the evidence necessary in order to be ready to help address these vital questions when the time came.

Now that the suffering of Caledonia's victims has been recorded in the October 2010 release of Christie Blatchford's book, *Helpless: Caledonia's Nightmare of Fear And Anarchy, And How The Law Failed All of Us*, and they are about to be compensated thanks to the settlement of the Class Action lawsuit brought about by lawyer John Findlay – who also represents McHale & Vandermaas on several outstanding Caledonia actions – and his tireless work as one of the unsung heroes of Caledonia, it is time to ask *'What went wrong, how can we prevent it from happening again, and how can we bring about meaningful healing and reconciliation?'*

Our work reveals that the real story of Caledonia is not the burning bridge, or the destroyed hydro station or the land claim issues. It is that a government – without benefit of legislation – permitted the defacto suspension of the Charter rights and Police Services Act protections for an entire class of citizens in order to appease a small group of violent extremists.

This was done under cover of an illegal 'peacekeeping' mission on Canadian soil which was continually 'justified' by the government's insistence that it was merely following the recommendations of the Ipperwash Inquiry. The evidence shows, however, that the Inquiry's 'peacekeeping' recommendations were arrived at without ever studying the issue of native violence against innocent residents.

Out of 139 witnesses at the Ipperwash Inquiry, not one was a non-native resident even though they suffered in a manner nearly identical to those who would come later in Caledonia. The failure to admit evidence of native lawlessness against residents is why, out of 100 recommendations made by the Inquiry, not one specifically addresses this important issue.

This illegal peacekeeping mission in Caledonia brought the very foundation of our democracy - our precious rule of law - to its knees before the abyss of anarchy, and it can never be allowed to be repeated.

CANACE and the Caledonia Victims Project stand ready to assist educators, journalists, politicians and researchers in any way possible to further the goal of facilitating a meaningful truth, healing and reconciliation process for the victims – both native and non-native.

For a sampling of the resources and expertise we can offer, please refer to the following resources:

- *Caledonia: No More Nightmares* event, Ottawa, March 22/11 [[LINK](#)]
- Audience Handout (p2): CANACE diagram: *Reconciliation: The CANACE Path* [[PDF](#)]
- Audience Handout (p3-6): Policy and legislative recommendations: ‘*The Caledonia Act*’ [[PDF](#)]
- Caledonia Victims Project: Caledonia Milestone: DCE occupiers & OPP respect rights of non-natives during Truth & Reconciliation Rally [[LINK](#)]
- HelplessByBlatchford project: *post-Helpless Reading List* [[LINK](#)]
- Caledonia Victims Project [[LINK](#)]
- About – Gary McHale [[LINK](#)]
- About – Mark Vandermaas [[LINK](#)]

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