

**National Post editorial on Dalton McGuinty's Caledonia policy:
'The coward at Queen's Park'**
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[Editorial](#)

It's been a long time since we've received as much response to an article as we did following our Jan. 17 editorial, [Caledonia redux](#). A huge number of Ontarians from the Caledonia area -- many of them with first-hand stories to tell about militant native activity -- thanked us for shining a light on the problems they've suffered. Few could understand why their provincial government is standing by as violent protesters wreck the region's economy, intimidate private citizens and render local homes and businesses virtually worthless.

As [reported](#) earlier this week, the freshest outrage to come out of the land claim by the Six Nations band in southwestern Ontario amounts to an extortion racket. Members of an entity calling itself the Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI), which apparently has the official blessing of the Six Nations council, have been confronting developers along a 10-kilometre swath on either side of the Grand River -- a tract potentially almost 300,000 square kilometres in size -- demanding exorbitant development fees and "royalties." Even just to "apply" for a permit to operate on land the band claims as its own can cost up to \$7,000. Businesses that don't pay up are threatened with blockades and standoffs of the kind that have paralyzed the Douglas Creek Estates development at Caledonia, southwest of Hamilton, for the past two years.

Were a motorcycle gang or organized crime family shaking down the same entrepreneurs for protection money, the Ontario government and the province's police force -- the OPP -- would move swiftly to identify the guilty parties and lay charges. But because the culprits this time are members of a politically correct minority -- aboriginals -- and because the government of Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty is deathly afraid of any and all confrontations with natives, which they fear might summon memories of the Ipperwash standoff in 1995, the best it can bring itself to do is advise business owners not to pay.

It is a case study in cowardice, and everyone who voted for Mr. McGuinty should be ashamed of it.

Business owners aren't listening to the Premier, and with good reason. They know the Ontario government won't protect them. The government at Queen's Park has stood by for almost two years while Six Nations squatters have illegally occupied unfinished homes at Douglas Creek. Rather than enforce court orders for the occupiers to leave, the province bought the land from the original developers and effectively handed it over to the squatters.

Nor have the OPP been any more help. Aboriginal protestors have caused untold damage to the economy of Caledonia, blockading main streets, burning vehicles, harassing citizens, even assaulting seniors, television camera crews and residents near their protest site. Yet police have done little more than stand by and watch.

Nearly 18 months ago, protestors swarmed an SUV full of U.S. police officers who were in Caledonia to observe. Three occupants were dragged out and assaulted, then one of the swarmers stole the vehicle, attempted to run down an OPP officer and fled to the nearby reserve. The OPP didn't even investigate who might be hiding the alleged perpetrators.

No wonder Don Courtney, president of a new landfill site in Cayuga that has been shut down by Six Nations "warriors" (read: unemployed thugs) since November despite seven years of start-up

work and a \$14-million investment, insists "We've just been hung out to dry" by politicians and the police.

Not only has the Ontario government ignored the plight of people in the Caledonia area, but so has much of the media, which often evinces a reflexive pro-native bias. In fact, some of our letter writers were surprised that anyone was taking an interest in their situation. Among the comments we received this week from people in the Caledonia area:

-- "Thank you so much for having the gonads to print the truth about what is happening in Caledonia. For so very long, we residents felt that we no longer lived in a Canada that cared."

-- "Thank you. The OPP have done nothing. Through articles like yours, I hope we can bring the truth to the forefront to show what is really happening here."

-- "Man, you hit the nail on the head. We all hope here in Kitchener and the surrounding areas considered 'disputed land' that the entire country gets wind of this. You have earned the respect of all those living with the threat of native occupation over our heads."

-- "Thank you so much. I hope [Mr.] McGuinty reads your last paragraph over and over until he understands what to do. This week, [a] native spokesman warned that they are going to start 'kicking ass.' As a once proud Canadian, Ontarian, property owner and taxpayer, I must say: This is a hell of a way to live."

Much as we are proud to take this issue on, we find it astonishing that it falls to a newspaper to air the grievances emanating from a patch of Canadian territory that a provincial government has surrendered wholesale to thugs.

The saddest part is that the disgrace here is bipartisan: This is not merely an indictment of Ontario's governing Liberals, but also the opposition Conservatives. In the face of Mr. McGuinty's spinelessness, the best John Tory's party could do was suggest bringing civil lawsuits to try to recover lost income. Among other things, this is a pathetic microcosm of why Mr. Tory can't win an election.

It's hard to believe that this is happening in a civilized country founded on the rule of law. So we are inviting Ontarians directly threatened by the HDI to send us their stories to letters@nationalpost.com or jkay@nationalpost.com.

How has the lawlessness around the Six Nations' land claim affected you? Tell us, and we'll publish the most interesting accounts. Maybe, just maybe, Mr. McGuinty will listen.