

From: Romola <circleofallnations@sympatico.ca>
Subject: AN URGENT MESSAGE RE: William Commanda's (OC) Legacy Vision for the Sacred Chaudiere Site, current developments and challenges and an exhortation to advance the Commanda vision jointly without delay
Date: June 4, 2015 at 6:30:15 AM EDT
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Greetings, Honourable Leaders,

AN URGENT MESSAGE TO animate William Commanda's (OC) Legacy Vision for the Sacred Chaudiere Site, a word about current developments and challenges, and an exhortation to advance the Commanda vision jointly without delay.

During the last decade of his life, William Commanda, late Algonquin Elder with direct family links to the Sacred Chaudiere Site, developed and expounded a profound and comprehensive vision for shared public space, reconciliation and collaboration on this central meeting place in Canada.

Over the years, originally in his 1968 meeting with former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, then in 1987, during the Constitutional Debate hosted by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, then in 2003 with Prime Minister Chretien, in 2005 with Prime Minister Paul Martin, and later in writing to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, late Algonquin Elder William Commanda repeatedly raised the matter of this central place of the First Peoples in this country. He also affirmed this to former Governor Generals Adrienne Clarkson and Michaëlle Jean. This was consistent with the mandate of the Sacred Three Figure Wampum Belt with which his ancestors had welcomed newcomers to share their homelands and their values.

He presented his vision for a fully inclusive Indigenous inspired Healing and Peace Building Center at the Sacred Chaudiere Site; he also wrote to the Queen in this regard. I attach his note about his reflections upon receipt of the Order of Canada, to illustrate the nature of his thinking. Yesterday, his daughter Evelyn Commanda Dewache reiterated the prayer for his fully inclusive healing heritage centre to you with much passion, prayer and love.

At the same moment, on June 3, 2015, several of us were appealing the City of Ottawa's decision to rezone the historical and Sacred Chaudiere Site to permit privatization and intensive condo development. Many are appalled at this affront of the Legacy Vision of most remarkable and influential Indigenous man of our times - he touched the hearts and minds of people all over the world, and his vision is of global relevance. We are also gravely concerned with this move to rezone lands designated as open park space, lands at the heart of the National Capital Region, (hence the heritage of all Canadians), in this most geologically unique, historically significant and culturally important heritage site from prehistorical times, to permit intensified high rise condominium development and privatization.

In our response to motions by the City of Ottawa and the developers, Windmill Green Fund LPV, to dismissal our appeals, we have been obliged to examine their submissions, and are even more disturbed by the collusions, the duplicity and the intentions. A lawyer sustained a heart attack with the stress of the proceedings. We therefore come to you to reawaken awareness of the immensity of the William Commanda vision, and call once more, as he did so many times, for a multi-disciplinary task force to advance this work, consistent with the fair sharing of the grand natural resources of the land, with a broad spectrum of Indigenous, federal, provincial, municipal and community partners.

We appeal the City of Ottawa's decision to rezone Chaudiere and Albert Island from Parks and Open Space Zone to permit commercial and intense residential development (1200 condos and 2995 underground parking spaces) on a sacred historical site iconically embedded in the hearts and minds and memories of countless Canadians, and insist that this matter should have urgent federal oversight.

Appellants have appealed the City's Decision from a range of perspectives -

a. Indigenous title to the lands, (and that remains unchallenged in any historical documentation, irrespective of industrial utilization);

- b. Preservation of the integrity of an unparalleled site of stellar geological significance, centred on a circular waterfall, deemed second only to Niagara Falls, one of the wonders of the world; and of critical importance to survival of the American Eel, on the federal and provincial endangered species lists;
- c. Respect and adherence to the Provincial Policy Statement and in particular with respect to obligations to First Peoples;
- d. Direct challenges on ownership, Indigenous Rights, traditional territory, and adequate consultation, with Algonquins, First Peoples, and public at large, in this National Capital Region, with respect to both the City's rezoning and planning decisions, consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The City of Ottawa and the developers, Windmill Green Fund LPV, made motions to the Ontario Municipal Board to dismiss our appeals and to seek relief. Their own submissions reveals

- a. collaboration and collusion (I accept his words as mine)
- b. duplicity in claims to decontaminate (this is entirely dependent on government subsidy, and it is noted that federal, provincial and municipal commit \$195 million dollars to Ottawa River Cleanup in April 2015) and this demands the question why the "owner" Domtar is not accountable here;
- c. grave concerns with respect to crown lands and perpetual leases and objectives to convert land to fee simple, and dismissal of acknowledged Algonquin rights to the land;
- d. questionable transactions to sell National Capital Region lands at the site to Windmill Green Fund LPV; it is noted that Domtar is also a player in this negotiation; and
- e. most disturbing, positioning for acquisition of Energy Ottawa.
- f. Finally, "consultation" with Algonquins" is completely flawed and could be viewed as pressure and harassment; consultation with the public at large for National Capital Region site was next to non-existent.

Given the global environmental crisis and climate change, wars, increasing relief humanitarian needs, and national scandals impacting the psyche of this nation daily, too distasteful to itemize, and the mental health crises which oblige us to question the quality of our lives, in this most privileged of countries, and at this moment when the Truth and Reconciliation movement demands that we look not only to the misery in the lives of First Peoples, but our complicity in their continued struggles and alienation in their homelands, it is time for that *great noble change* called for by William Commanda - we trust our country will rise to this higher case at a most critical cross roads in the history of our times.

Even as the adversarial OMB hearing unfolded at City Hall today, we watched the moving prayer, at the Governor General's closing ceremonies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission work, by William Commanda's daughter Evelyn Commanda Dewache, pointing directly to the doorway to truth and reconciliation and love, at the sacred and historical heart of the country, the Sacred Chaudiere Site, inclusive of Chaudiere, Albert and Victoria Islands. The public at large has been awakened to this hope over the decade by a man in his nineties working alone, unfunded to show us something noble was accessible by us all - the nation itself recognized this when it presented him with its highest honour when it appointed him Officer of the Order of Canada.

May we come back to you, the leadership of this nation, to animate the work of William Commanda and ensure it manifests as the *legacy* of all of us who are passionate to move to a new era in relations with First Peoples, and to ignite a legacy of hope and healing for all our children, within the heart of a *Circle of All Nations* and a *Culture of Peace* at the Sacred Chaudiere Site.

With much gratitude for your serious attention to this message, submitted on behalf of and in honour the life time of peace building and reconciliation work undertaken single handedly by Algonquin Elder William Commanda and his informal Circle of All Nations.

I attach some documents for your better understanding of this file.

With deep appreciation of your personal review of this request.

Sincerely,

Romola V. Trebilcock

Coordinator, Circle of All Nations
Legacy of William Commanda

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