



**BONAPARTE INDIAN
BAND**



**UNION OF BC INDIAN
CHIEFS**



**INDIGENOUS NETWORK ON
ECONOMIES + TRADE**

P R E S S R E L E A S E

INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL INTERIOR COMMUNITIES REJECT PREMIER'S PLAN TO TRANSPORT INFECTED CHICKENS

(Stuctwesemc; Interior Salish Territory, April 15, 2004) For the last 3 days and nights the local and indigenous communities around Cache Creek have maintained a presence to ensure that trucks entering the landfill do not transport chicken and materials potentially infected with avian influenza.

Chief Mike Retasket of the Bonaparte Indian Band stated: "Transporting the potentially infected chicken to the Cache Creek landfill site is a health hazard that our communities are not ready to take. The virus could be passed on through to the wild food chain and transported to wild birds, other wildlife and ultimately humans."

The Mayor of Cache Creek John Ranta stood at the check point and said "I stand in solidarity with all the people of the local communities of Cache Creek, Ashcroft and local First Nations who oppose the transport of infected chicken."

Chief Len Quiring, Ashcroft Indian Band, maintained: "No carcasses on this dump. We would not even have to worry about chicken or anything else being dumped here if the mayors of Cache Creek and Ashcroft did not hold the positions they stand for on the dumps. That is why the government is proceeding the way they do – without any consultation with the local and indigenous communities. Our chiefs and people stand strong in their opposition of the Cache Creek and future Ashcroft dumps."

Chief Robert Shintah of the St'at'imc Nation who along with Chief Mike Retasket, is a member of the Executive of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, stressed: "They should burn the chickens where the disease started and bury them there and not transport them up to the Interior and spread the disease to all of BC and Canada."

Chief Stewart Phillip, Penticton Indian Band and President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, "The UBCIC stand by our First Nations brothers and sisters and the concerned residents of Cache Creek and Ashcroft. We shall hold the line in solidarity to not allow a

single truckload of contaminated and toxic chicken waste into the Cache Creek dumpsite.”

Zorana Edwards, a youth at the check point who lives on the Bonaparte Indian Reserve, reiterated: “They should not dump the dead chicken in the landfill because bears, cougars, coyotes, wolves, rats, mice, eagles, magpies and crows will go and eat up there and then spread the disease everywhere else.”

Arthur Manuel of the Indigenous Network on Economies and Trade added: “Our Secwepemc people believe in the circle of life – where humans stand together with all animals and plants as equals and we have to protect them. I have recently been to Asia and seen the outbreak of avian influenza there and how it affected the entire nations and economies. I saw chickens burnt in indigenous villages in Borneo and the people starving.”

The message to Stop the Transport of Chicken to the Interior from the Bonaparte Indian Band, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and other supportive nations will be shared at a workshop to be held over the next two days at Neskonlith Indian Band, where Interior Nations will meet to discuss strategies to protect their Title and Rights. Chief Stewart Phillip and Guujaaw, the president of the Haida Nation will also be in attendance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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