

April 22, 2008

Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier - PREMIER AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL
Legislative Bldg
Rm 281
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A1A1
Fax 416-325-9895

Dear Premier Dalton McGuinty,

RE: This Earth Day Free Bob Lovelace and the KI Six

We support the right of a community to say NO to mineral exploration and mining projects that threaten the health of people and ecosystems in Ontario. In particular we support the rights of Aboriginal Peoples to protect their lands, as confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Recently, retired Algonquin chief and university professor Bob Lovelace was sentenced to six months in jail and given a \$25,000 fine for peacefully opposing a uranium exploration project in the Ottawa River Watershed. Co-chief Paula Sherman was fined \$15,000, while the community as a whole was fined \$10,000.

Six leaders from the community of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, known as the KI Six, were also recently thrown in jail for peacefully opposing mineral exploration on their lands in the Boreal Forest (located 600km north of Thunder Bay). Cecilia Begg, Head Councillor from KI, is a grandmother and will be spending her 60th birthday in jail.

These are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, grandfathers and grandmothers. We do not believe that mining should supersede the rights of people to protect their homes and their health.

It is vital that Ontario replaces the antiquated 'free entry' system of mining and exploration with a modern, regulated process of granting exploration permits. Such permits should only be granted after conservation planning, good faith consultation and genuine accommodation of affected Aboriginal Peoples as per Supreme Court decisions.

The province of Ontario has a number of options to secure the release of the detained leaders, including halting the exploration activities and entering into good faith negotiations, thereby removing any basis for the contempt charges.

We call on you to:

1. Secure the immediate release of Bob Lovelace and the KI Six.
2. Stop mineral exploration on the lands of KI and the Ardoch Algonquins. This can easily be achieved by issuing a 'stop work' order, and withdrawing the lands from staking.
3. Comprehensively reform Ontario's mining regime and the *Mining Act* (including the free entry system) so that the health of the people of Ontario and its vital ecosystems will be protected.

4. Establish a joint panel with the Ardoch Algonquins and KI (as they have requested) to deal with the issue of mineral development on their traditional lands.

Sincerely,

Margaret Atwood A.M., LL.D., CC, O.Ont, F.R.C.G.S. (Hon)

Dave Coles, National President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada

Gerry Antoine, Grand Chief Deh Cho First Nations

George Erasmus, former Assembly of First Nations National Chief

Graeme Gibson C.M., F.R.C.G.S. (Hon)

Sarah Harmer, Musician

Bob Huget, Ontario Region VP of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada

Cathy Jones, Comedian, Actor, Writer

Alice Klein, Editor/CEO NOW Magazine

Michele Landsberg, Author and Activist

Stephen Lewis, Professor in Global Health, Faculty of Social Sciences, McMaster University

Michael Hollett, Editor/Publisher NOW Magazine

Monte Hummel, O.C.

Hugh McCallum, Journalist, Author of the Dene Nation publication "This Land is Not for Sale"

Craig Norris, Musician and CBC Radio 3 Host

James Raffan, Geographer and Writer

Judy Rebick, CAW Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, Ryerson University

Ian Tamblyn, Singer, Songwriter

Jenny Whitley, Juno-award winning musician

Joey Wright, Musician