



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Premier once again shows complete insensitivity to Indigenous peoples

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 24, Ohiarí:ha/June 2021) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, on behalf of our community, is extremely disappointed in Premier Legault's position on declaring Indigenous Day a Provincial statutory holiday. The words respect, reconciliation, and renewal of relationship are consistently used when Quebec refers to Indigenous people. Yet, when it's time to put words into action, the result is often disappointing...or worse.

To say that Quebec "isn't interested" in adding a statutory holiday in the province to recognize Indigenous people is not only insensitive, it is downright insulting. As the premier of Canada's second-largest province, he knows that words matter. And, sadly, his words are crystal clear: Indigenous relations are simply not that important to him.

Even if there are no plans to declare a statutory holiday, a man of his stature knows damn well that "not interested" is meant to sting. This is not the first time that Mr. Legault has made ill-advised comments regarding Indigenous matters. His continuing refusal to admit that systemic racism exists in Quebec, despite clear evidence, has become a cruel joke. And, of course, many of us in Kahnawà:ke remember his false accusation, "There are AK47s" at last year's peaceful protest – which was clearly meant to be inflammatory. While the protest was a difficult situation, it was actually resolved by old-fashioned face-to-face meetings between willing partners. He was not one of those partners.

We expect, no demand, that this issue be revisited by the Quebec government if it truly wants to build a respectful relationship with the First Peoples of this land. Again, actions of respect speak volumes instead of random excuses to not do the right thing.