

Musqueam Burial Ground Win Makes the Developer Look Brutally Ignorant

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Saturday, September 29, 2012

<https://politicsrespun.org/2012/09/musqueam-burial-ground-win-makes-the-developer-look-brutally-ignorant/>



The provincial government has finally relented in its dignity-crushing stance of continuing to allow a developer to pursue building condos on top of a Musqueam burial ground. And while this change of provincial policy does not extend to a solution of land ownership, this is a critical first step to see the provincial government is not blatantly racist. I guess that's a kind of win for them too. Though, a sad one.

News of this change of heart came out [around 4pm today](#). A Friday. And any Aaron Sorkin devotee knows that's when the government takes out the trash: releases news they don't want the media to run with since few people follow the news leading into the weekend, all because it's bad news, or embarrassing or otherwise something they'd rather hide, but can't.

There's no way we've missed the idea that instead of Friday afternoon, they could have released this news, say, on Monday morning at 9am to capitalize on all the press it would receive, except they'd look like people who have just learned that they are being racist when they keep saying, "I'm not a racist, but..."

But even more stunning is the "outrage" that the developer feels about being shafted by the provincial government because they are no longer free to develop their private [sic] property. Now, before you read

this hilarious, irony-free quote, please remember that around 95% of BC is unceded traditional First Nations land, covered by no treaty and not gained through conquest:

"In effect they have expropriated the property without compensation and basically said you can't do anything with that property and we are not doing anything to compensate you for that and I think every **owner of private property in BC** should be very concerned about that."

<http://www.cknw.com/news/vancouver/story.aspx?ID=1782485>

The phrase in bold is my emphasis. I want you to now re-read that sentence, but replace the words in bold with **First Nation in this land**. Because that is exactly what has happened in this majestic province of the Queen of Canada for centuries. Ten bonus points to [Shane Woodford](#) for noting this fantastic quote which epitomizes the systemic racism or ignorance that so often surrounds "Canada's" relationship with the first peoples.

So I ask this in all seriousness: do the owners [sic] of this property honestly not understand the colonial history of BC?

Their punishing ignorance should be an embarrassment. But I fear they are beyond shame.

Now we move forward to address why the Musqueam were legally barred from purchasing their burial site decades ago [hint: racism] so that we can seek a solution which restores dignity to those buried there, and to our settler society that has been a party to this shameful abuse of a burial ground.