

## Olympic Native Bribe

by No Games 2010 Coalition • Friday November 22, 2002 at 01:30 PM

Natives May Get \$20Million for Games

<http://www.canada.com/vancouver/theprovince/archives/story.asp?id=B0201EA6-EF49-4EE6-AF34-49B234EDB04C>

Damian Inwood

The Province

Wednesday, November 20, 2002

Chris Shaw, of the No Games 2010 Coalition, said the B.C. government's native strategy for the Olympics looks like a bribe.

A proposal to make an Olympic bid payout of up to \$20 million to two Indian bands in return for their support "looks like a bribe," says the spokesman for an anti-Olympic group.

A confidential draft document, obtained by The Province, lists a B.C. government objective as "implementing pro-active strategies to address First Nations disputes and gain their publicly-stated support for the Games."

It continues: "The Bid Corporation is prepared to set aside between \$5-10 million, to be matched by Canada, to deal with Squamish and Lil'wat issues."

Chris Shaw, a Vancouver-based spokesman for the No Games 2010 Coalition, said yesterday that the proposal smacks of a pay-off.

"My first reaction was, 'I can't believe I just read that. It looks like a bribe.' It looks like someone's being paid to do something."

But native leaders argue that bands should share in the opportunities created by the Olympic bid.

Darrell Mounsey, executive director of the 2010 Bid's Squamish Lil'wat aboriginal secretariat, said he hadn't seen the document.

"I know that's where we're headed," he said. "We're looking to share the opportunity."

Shaw said the leaked document, apparently drafted by the B.C. government, came to his coalition through one of its environmental groups.

"Putting aside \$5 million to \$10 million for the bands, to me, looks like a pay-off," he added. "It looks like they are buying their acquiescence and active support."

The document, dated Oct. 23, 2002, lists benefits to the Indian bands including:

n Deputy ministers' approval for \$3 million over three years for a Squamish/Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler;

n Native involvement in operating the Callaghan Valley Nordic Centre after the Games;

n Native acquisition of Whistler athletes village housing units;

n Transfer of Crown lands, including land next to the Nordic Centre, for a native-run hotel and golf course; and

n First Nations jobs on the Sea-to-Sky Highway upgrade.

It also lists a government objective to "avoid First Nations litigation based on the possible infringement of aboriginal title and rights re: the land bank for Whistler."

John Furlong, chief operating officer for the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corp., said the bid group has been talking with First Nations on benefits and legacies from hosting the 2010 Games.

He said the draft document may already be out of date and wouldn't comment on its details.

"We're moving along," he said. "The discussions have gone extremely well. Before there's an agreement, whatever ends up in a final proposal will have to have the sign-off of the province and then it will have to be independently presented to the Squamish and Lil'wat for their own review and endorsement."

He confirmed that items listed in the draft document have been discussed, including giving up to \$10 million to the bands.

Furlong said he hopes the final deal will be in place "before Christmas."

Neither Gibby Jacob, chief of the Squamish Nation nor Lyle Leo of the Mount Currie Band, both 2010 Bid Corp. board members, could be reached for comment.

Premier Gordon Campbell met with native representatives yesterday, including Jacob, said Mike Morton, the premier's press secretary.

"But it's still a work in progress," he said.

Morton said that the \$5 million to \$10 million "could be part of the package but it's not finalized yet."

"I understand the package could well include land for economic development and funding for feasibility studies."

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Sent to the Province, Nov 20, 2002 (but not printed !!!)

To the Editor:

Please allow me to clarify a key issue in regard to your headline article in

the November 20th Province ("Natives may get \$20 m for Games"). We at NO

GAMES 2010 Coalition support First Nations aspirations for economic and

social equality and for just settlements to all land claims. In our view,

the Bands mentioned in the current article were faced with a fait

accompli,

likely stated by the government as, "Get behind the Bid, or lose out" and

were trying to accomplish the best for their people under these

circumstances. The fault is not with the Bands, rather with a climate of

secrecy and back room deals that appears to be part of the standard

operating procedure of the Olympic Bid Corporation and their government

sponsors.

Chris Shaw

No Games 2010 Coalition

[www.backtodemocracy.ca](http://www.backtodemocracy.ca)