

# DIA Minister axes Indian Commission

*by Mandy Eason*

*Continued from front page*

Aboriginal leaders, endorsed last December."

Six Nations land claim will not be affected by the closure of the ICO. Affiliation with the commission was limited to assistance on protocol development.

Phil Monture, Six Nations Land Claim research director, says the commission was in need of a stronger mandate.

"We weren't really negotiating anything through ICO. They were trying to organize a second table for discussion with Canada and the province but they were a year-and-a-half behind."

A week authoritative role and failure keep pace on current issues, is similar to the reasons given by a DIA spokesperson for the commissions closure.

Monture went on to say, "they never really had a strong enough mandate. If its going to be rebuilt I do encourage it to have a stronger mandate. It needs a stronger mandate, that's something we've been pushing for since the 1990 OKA crisis."

The independent tripartite commission was established to address Native self-government issues, land claims, treaties and grievances among the province's First Nations and the federal and provincial government.

The ICO played an intricate role in the \$23.4 million Caldwell First Nation land claim and the Grand River Notification Agreement.