



*The Honourable Pat Carney, P.C.*

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0A4

## NEWS RELEASE

November 13, 2007

For Immediate Release

### **Senator Pat Carney asks Baird to “Give the Doukhobors their Rightful Place in Canadian History”**

Ottawa, ON... B.C. Senator Pat Carney has asked the Hon. John Baird, Minister responsible for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, to support an initiative recognizing the contributions of the Doukhobor community in British Columbia’s Kootenay region.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada has considered two applications from the Doukhobor community this year: that Doukhobor leader Peter V. Verigin be designated a person of National Historic Significance; and that the movement of the Doukhobors from Saskatchewan to British Columbia in 1908 be designated an event of National Historic Significance. The Board is now forwarding their recommendations for both applications to Minister Baird for approval.

Senator Carney, a former resident of the West Kootenays, paid a recent visit to the Doukhobor Discovery Centre in Castlegar, B.C., where many of the Doukhobor community’s contributions to British Columbia are documented and displayed.

The Doukhobors first arrived in Canada in 1899, thanks to the support of the Canadian government and the famous Russian novelist Lev Tolstoy. Fleeing persecution in Russia, this group of 7,500 pacifists settled in Assiniboia, and soon thrived in 63 villages with 750,000 acres under cultivation. In 1907, the Dominion land settlement policies of the day were reversed, displacing the Doukhobors from their farms in Saskatchewan. Under the leadership of Peter Verigin, they moved to B.C. in 1908, cultivating over 14,000 acres and building nearly 90 new villages.

“A rich legacy has been left to us by these early settlers who came to escape persecution and to live in peace. I am encouraging Minister Baird to lend his support to both designations and give the Doukhobors their rightful place in Canadian history,” said Carney.

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