Volley of gunfire directed at shale gas protestor’s property fails to interest police
By DALLAS MacQUARRIE
St. Ignace - “I don’t have any expectations that the RCMP will do anything” said Dennis Beers, a man whose complaints to the RCMP about more than 20 shots being fired at his property were ignored for five days.
Dennis Beers, his wife Rahima, and their two young children, aged six and five, live in the Huron area near the junction of Highways 116 and 465. The family is staunchly opposed to shale gas development, and Beers has had a large sign explaining that he is the Aboriginal owner of land in New Brunswick.
On the night of Saturday, April 13, someone fired more than 20 bullets through the sign, and Beers notes there’s no way of knowing how many were missed. “The gunmen were firing in the direction of both us and the neighbor’s house,” he said.
On Monday, April 14, Beers and his father telephoned the RCMP and the person answering the call a message. “We didn’t hear anything that evening, we called back Wednesday, and got told they hadn’t time to send anyone out,” Beers said. “And all the while the violence – the empty shell casings – was on the ground by the side of the road, exposed to the weather.”
Beers had his second call to the RCMP returned by an officer in Moncton a few hours later who said they would send someone over. The next day, Thursday, April 17 – five days after the shooting – an RCMP officer from Richibucto came to the Beers farm to investigate.
“Beers was quite exasperated and seemed puzzled about why it had taken so long for someone to respond,” Beers said. The officer was familiar with the shell casings, but said they really needed a bullet fragment. “No such fragment was found.”
After not hearing anything for a couple of weeks, Beers called the RCMP, and was told the case had gone “cold.”
Beers is annoyed that the RCMP didn’t follow up on a report from him about the shooting, and he feels that the RCMP has not treated people in Kent County, “We’re opposed to shale gas,” he says. “Last summer during the protests near Harcourt we had...” (continued on page 2)

Hundreds rally to oppose JD Irving & NB government’s plan for the forest
By ASAF RASHID
Frederiction – Hundreds of people converged on the New Brunswick legislature on May 13 to oppose the province’s forestry plan and new timber regulation laws, which they say will benefit the province’s largest Crown land license holder but will harm the forest industry, other forest owners, other foresters and forest-dependent communities. Tree discs were placed on the lawn to create the visual effect of stumps in a clearcut. A banner read, “Jobs Don’t Grow on Stumps.”
A contract was signed in secret between JD Irving and the NB government a month before it was made public on March 12.
Many of the speakers and signs seen at the rally demanded Irving’s control over the province.
The contract with JD Irving allows clearcutting in a sparsely forested area and removes the previous standard to ensure natural regrowth, removes government monitoring and guarantees the company an increased timber supply for 25 years, according to the Conservation Council of New Brunswick. The Council is calling on the government to not sign the Forest Management Agreement, which would effectively implement the contract. The agreement is set to be signed by July 1.
“A decade ago, WBF found that our next big threat, the Acadian forest, is one of six endangered forest types in North America. Increasingly, saving our forests and conserving and restoring our forest, our governments have allowed for its further degradation in the last ten years to the point that there is no large intact areas of forest greater than 500 square kilometres and all but two of the remaining 16 ecosystems are less than ten per cent forest cover,” said Tracy Gynn, the Conservation Council’s Forest Campaigner.
Northern New Brunswick filmmaker Charles Thériault (seen here) performed a capella number called “Not with JD,” poking fun at JD Irving’s prolific “That’s Why I’m With JD” ads that are aired during hockey games and the CBC evening news. “They rule over New Brunswick like it’s their own kingdom,” sang Thériault. Photo by Joe Gere.

The increase in logging has the potential to interfere with St. Mary’s Aboriginal title, Aboriginal harvesting and treaty harvesting rights. We call on the New Brunswick government to engage with us promptly on this issue or St. Mary’s will have no choice left but to consider its legal options,” read the statement.
Tom Bockley, Forestry and Environmental Management Professor at the University of New Brunswick, told the audience that the government is not interested in the public’s opinion about how Crown Forests should be managed. Bockley and the Dean of Forestry at the University of New Brunswick are among the 136 professors from the province’s public universities and Maritime College of Forest Technology who sent an open letter to Natural Resources Minister Paul Robichaud on May 15 demanding a halt to the forest plan and the charting of new direction in forest management that uses “accumulated collective wisdom.”
“We used to have a Minister’s Advisory Committee made up of stakeholders and experts in the field, to advise the Minister (of Natural Resources). The province used to meet, consult and survey its stakeholders and citizens. But no more,” said Bockley who co-authored a 2008 public opinion survey that made the news when the government abruptly cancelled public meetings to prevent “negative results.” These meetings with New Brunswickers were not happy with the way that the government was managing the forest and they wanted to see water and biodiversity protection prioritized in forest management.
JD Irving’s (point of view), they’re saving money when they’re not making lots of people work. They make money in an industry, the pulp and paper industry, that doesn’t make a lot of people work,” said Rob Moré, a University of New Brunswick economics professor, to the rally goers. Moré pointed to New Hampshire, Vermont, Ontario and Quebec that have a secondary forestry industry that employs many more people with the amount of timber they harvest.
Taking the microphone after his father’s speech, 14-year-old Sam Moré said, “I don’t want to work in Alberta. I want to work here.” But if the deal with Irving goes through, “it will be harder for Sam to get this wish.”
Asaf Rashid is a Frederiction-based journalist and activist.