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A summons was issued Friday against Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Julian Fantino on allegations that he illegally influenced elected officials in Caledonia, Ont., the site of a long-running aboriginal occupation.

Activist Gary McHale has been pressing to have Fantino charged after the commissioner sent an email allegedly telling the mayor and councillors in Caledonia not to attend McHale's rallies. McHale led a number of rallies to protest what he called two-tier justice in the policing of the land occupation in the town south of Hamilton.

The Ministry of the Attorney General confirmed a justice of the peace "issued process" against Fantino on one count of influencing or attempting to influence municipal officials. Issuing process is a legal step required before charges can be officially laid.

"I've been advised by the Ministry of the Attorney General that a process was issued late this afternoon by a justice of the peace," Insp. Dave Ross, a provincial police spokesman, said Friday evening. "At this particular time we haven't seen the process nor has the commissioner been served with any process."

The ministry said it had sent a letter to McHale, but refused to release the contents. However, McHale sent the media copies of the letter, signed by lawyer Ken Campbell on behalf of Attorney General Chris Bentley, which said the Crown will move immediately and assume prosecution of the case.

Influencing or attempting to influence a municipal official in municipal activities is an offence under the Criminal Code and carries up to a five-year prison term if convicted.



Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Julian Fantino.

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