

Update from First Peoples Group on the Prime Ministers Path Consultation

It was with great sadness, but not surprise, to hear of the tragic news from Kamloops, British Columbia, where Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation leaders have confirmed the bodies of 215 children were recently found buried in unmarked graves at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. This news is another example of the unqualified genocide that has taken place over generations in this country - and the only genocide on the planet that specifically, purposely and methodically targeted children. This news has shaken Canadians over the weekend, and it provides but a glimpse into the profound pain that is still felt by Indigenous peoples today.

This discovery is the direct result of the destructive policies implemented by the Government of Canada that sought to “kill the Indian in the child.” The remains of these 215 children represent many, many more who did not return home across Canada. We know this because survivors of the Indian Residential School system have told these stories before. It has been 6 years since the release of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report](#) which included 6 Calls to Action related to Missing Children and burial information.

In response to this story, you might have seen that Charlottetown council voted to permanently remove its statue of Sir John A. Macdonald. A Charlottetown councillor highlighted that removing the statue does not erase history, she stated, “we’re not getting rid of history, we’re getting rid of a statue.”

The headlines over the weekend serve as an incredibly important reminder that the legacy of decisions made by individuals, regardless of whether they are still living, can have impacts generations later.

Regarding the Prime Ministers Path Consultation

We at First Peoples Group understand and accept that many Canadians simply did not know or are only now learning about some of the horrors of the Indian Residential School policy. But clearly this lack of knowledge has come to an end with the gruesome news of the 215 First Nations children who never found their way back to their loving families.

We recognize that perspectives may have shifted with the news of the confirmation of the bodies of 215 children found buried in unmarked graves at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. Important discussions such as these need to continue but discussion must also translate into action.

If you have not yet participated in the Community Voices Forum, please take a few moments to do so. We are encouraging all residents of Wilmot to have their voices heard regarding the future of the Prime Ministers Path.

If you have already participated in the Community Voices Forum, but your perspectives have changed in light of the news from this weekend we are inviting you to please re-visit the forum and share your new thoughts.

Participate in the Community Voices Forum here:

<https://questionnaire.simplesurvey.com/f/s.aspx?s=37327e43-df8a-4b15-a834-12626d72198c>

Níá:wen / Miigwech / Marci / Thank you,
First Peoples Group