

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*American Indian Education Commission*

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**Dr. Ruben Zacarias**  
Superintendent of Schools

**John L. Orendorff, Jr.**  
Director

August 6, 1997

Don Sands  
727 N. Kenmore Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90029

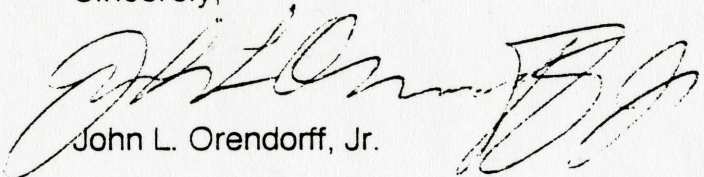
Dear Mr. Sands:

Thank you for sharing your manuscript "As Your God Is My Witness," it was powerful. Also, thank you for sharing the reunion video and "Where the Spirit Lives." The actress in "Where the Spirit Lives," Michelle St. John, just graduated in June from our Central High School (LAUSD)/ Southern California Indian Center, in June 1997. She is a fantastic actress.

I will inform all our commissioners about your manuscript and the video. Our agenda is set by our executive board, chairperson, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer. I will let you know what is on our agenda.

Thank you again, it is always nice to see you and your family.

Sincerely,

  
John L. Orendorff, Jr.

JLO:mh



August 12, 1997

Donald Sands  
727 North Kenmore Ave.  
Los Angeles, California  
U.S.A. 90029

Dear Mr. Sands:

Thank you very much for your letter and the attached rebuttal, dated July 31, 1997. Your paper is a very thoughtful and passionate rebuttal to Bernice Logan's two books. It is quite evident to me that you spent a lot of time and energy putting your experiences, feelings and thoughts on paper. I am honoured that you would share them with me.

I am very pleased that you felt that the CBC movie *Where the Spirit Lives* was an accurate portrayal of life in the Native Indian Schools. This CBC co-production movie (with Amazing Spirit Productions) received numerous National and International awards. In 1991, *Where the Spirit Lives* received the Grand Prix, Best TV Drama at the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. The movie also received a Bronze plaque at the Columbus International Film and Video Festival. In 1990, *Where the Spirit Lives* received a Special Jury Prize at the French, Festival International du Cinema Jeune Public de Lyon. At home, *Where the Spirit Lives* received top honours at the Canadian Gemini Awards, receiving 4 awards including Best TV Movie.

I agree with you when you say that movies like *Where the Spirit Lives* can educate and teach Canadians about a history that not many of us are aware of or understand. Programs like *North of 60*, and movies like *Where the Spirit Lives* are positive programming steps that the CBC is taking to accurately portray the past, present and future of the Native peoples in Canada. However, you are correct when you state that there should be more movies and programs that give Canadians an authentic image of the Native Canadian history.

Once again, I thank you for sharing your accounts and thoughts with me.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Byrd".

Jim Byrd  
Vice President, English Television Networks

Donald Sands  
727 North Kenmore Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90029

February 12, 1998

Dear Don,

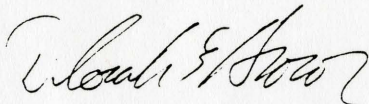
Please accept my apologies for taking so long to answer your letter. There really is no proper excuse for it, and I am deeply sorry for any feelings of neglect I might have caused. I hope you will believe me when I say it was not by design, just the path of my life in recent months.

Thank you for sharing this story with me. Although I am at a slight disadvantage here, being unfamiliar with the movie "Where the Spirit Lives" and with the work of Bernice Logan, I was still moved and saddened by your letter to her. It really does shed light on the anger I saw in you at GAP meetings. What a trauma for a child to face! I respect your very balanced desire to have the entire story told in all its facets.

It is amazing to me that any sensible person would deny that abuse of this nature could have taken place. It is a story that has been repeated around the world, wherever one people has felt the license to "reeducate" another in their image. It is tragic enough to have lived through it; how awful not to be believed.

Congratulations on your courage to turn into these memories and work so diligently on the process of healing. I do believe that the truth eventually comes out.

With warm wishes,



Deborah Edler Brown

Don Sands  
727 N. Kenmore Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90029

January 7, 1999

Dear Don,

Thank you for sharing these letters with me. They are very moving, particularly the ones to the Canadian Jewish Congress and to Jane Stewart.

I admire your determination to heal yourself and your fight to air the injustice of Shingwauk and schools like it. I can tell that healing is taking place just by the changing tone of your letters. I did note the incident you mentioned in the parking lot, and I could feel your sorrow and pain about it.

Good luck with both your journeys -- the private healing and the shedding of light on the subject. Silence is not golden when it hides the truth. Your dignity and your pride come through deeply.

Hugs to both you and Elaine. Best wishes in the New Year.



Deborah Brown

# READERS SPEAK OUT

Write to The Editor:

Catholic Register, 1155 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario M4T 1W2

FAX: (416) 934-3409

E-mail address - lettr@cathreg.on.ca

26/5/97  
p.4

## It wasn't all bad

I have just finished reading J.R. Miller's book, *Shingwauk's Vision*, which I am sure will end up in most libraries across Canada.

As a former staff member of two residential schools, I can assure the public that the schools were nothing like Miller describes.

Wherever human beings live and work there are failures and shortcomings, and so it was in the Indian residential schools. However, the malevolence with which Miller writes is just unacceptable to those of us who worked in the schools.

This book is a sad reflection of how distorted the truth can become, if one's agenda is solely to do that. Proof of this is in the introduction. I am the former missionary teacher of whom he writes. I am not racist, I do not have a superior attitude toward aboriginal people, I am not an offensive person. The former students of Shingwauk Indian residential school were very kind to me at the school reunion in 1991 and, last but not least, I did not say to the gathering, "I will take on anyone in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Miller did not interview any former staff members, or any former students who are grateful for the help they received. Two former students who will deny that the staff were racist, stupid, unintelligible, brazen, abusive, uneducated, unkempt, filthy, cruel, oppres-

sive, mean, rude, hateful, self-professed martyrs or anti-social (all terms suggested in Miller's book) are Millie Cremona of Wollaston, Mass., and Irene Hoff of Odonak, Que.

Miller stated that only a few students were successful graduates. These two students were very successful, and they are two of the many, many students who were, but whose inclusion in the book would have upset Miller's agenda.

Hopefully some day Canadians will read information which will give a more balanced picture of what really happened in the schools.

**Bernice Logan  
Tangier, N.S.**

## Passing on advice

I just finished reading the March 24 article on Generation X. This reminded me of when I was young and the questions I had about understanding the church, God and Jesus.

I was born in 1950 so I am a little older than Generation X. But I don't feel I grew up any different — maybe poorer, but not different. We all go through the Generation X stage in some way. Only now people are questioning more than we did and our parents before us.

We are all born from God. We are born to parents who do God's will for us as best they can and as long as they can. As we mature we become more aware of our own thoughts and questions as to

no other objective than to arrive at love," and, "the love between God and human beings, and the love we human beings have for each other."

Many are saying her network is an "electronic miracle," that was built primarily by prayer and secondly by faith, courage and hard work. This powerful instrument for good and for the church challenges unbelievers and helps Catholics grow in the knowledge and love of God and their fellow man. Many converts share their story as to why they left their church to embrace the Roman Catholic Church.

Mother Angelica teaches us to renew our faith in the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, and this should be universal teaching in all our churches in each country.

**Micaela Bissell  
Gloucester, Ont.**

**Editor's note: *The Register* welcomes our readers' opinions. Your letters should be under 250 words long and be signed. Include your address and telephone number. Send your opinions to the address at the beginning of this column.**

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We were not ~~to~~ kind to her we were polite to her.