

**Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada
Media Clips**



**Résolution des questions des pensionnats indiens Canada
Actualité**

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Source: National Post

Date: 2005.11.26

Byline: Editorial

Buying off Canadians

Governments go on pre-election spending sprees. It is a fact of political life and is often an advantage for incumbents who have their hands on, and in, the public purse. But at more than \$20-billion, the Liberals' current three-week orgy of announcements establishes an unfortunate record. According to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF), it is "the largest pre-election spending binge in Canadian history." It is indeed so large as to threaten Prime Minister Paul Martin's reputation for fiscal rectitude, earned when he was finance minister in the Chretien government.

Some of the announcements are welcome, such as the promise to cut federal taxes on investment dividends and the pledge not to implement any new taxes on income trusts. Some have been necessary, such as the \$2-billion promised for settlements with the victims -- real and alleged -- of **residential schools** who have been suing Ottawa for more than a decade, and the \$4.6-billion committed for new military transport planes. But most of the promises have been nothing more than sops to Liberal-friendly voting blocks. Many aboriginal-sympathetic urban voters may cheer the \$4-billion earmarked to fight native poverty over the next decade, but given that Ottawa already spends about \$18,000 per aboriginal for native social programs -- with no improvement in First Nations conditions -- it is hard to see how another half-a-billion a year is going to do the trick.

There has also been a near-quintupling of money sent to Ontario for immigrant job-skills and language training, and billions more in subsidies for softwood lumber companies, grain farmers, arts organizations, fisheries workers and P.E.I communities. There has been \$2.5-million to highlight the contributions Italian immigrants have made to Canada, \$276,000 for Toronto's Bata Shoe museum, \$150,000 for an agricultural trade show and millions more for mad cow research and soccer field roofs in Quebec, plus \$690,000 for community projects in Edmonton, where one of two Liberals MPs resigned the caucus in disgust last spring and the other -- Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan -- is always in electoral jeopardy in her riding.

Indeed, the money has been pouring forth at such a furious rate that the government has not even bothered to issue the customary press releases for more than a third of its announcements, either because the deluge has been so intense there has not been time, or perhaps because it does not want to attract media or voter attention to the full extent of this fiscal bender.

The CTF estimates that in just the past three and a half weeks, Mr. Martin's government has pledged more than \$20-billion in new spending -- nearly a billion a day. That is a rate more than five times that of the pre-election announcements made before the 2004 race. And, as the CTF further points out, this is the third spending spree in the past 18 months. In addition to the two pre-writ splurges, the government rolled out 250 spending announcements worth \$17-billion in April, in an apparent attempt to divert public attention from the most damaging weeks of

Gomery testimony. In all, the Liberals have committed themselves (and taxpayers) to \$44-billion in unbudgeted spending just since the spring of 2004.

While some of this is spread over five or even 10 years, more than two-thirds of it is immediate. The spending from the first two sprees ballooned the federal budget by over 15% in a single year, five times the 3.1% increase the Martin government had budgeted for. The most recent round of giveaways could add another 10%, perhaps more. This level of spending cannot be sustained over the long term without causing serious damage to the treasury. With the slightest economic downturn, Canada could be catapulted back into enormous deficits -- the situation Mr. Martin is credited with helping to end. There is a message here for voters: They should not allow themselves to be bought off with their own money.

Source: Kamloops this Week

Date: 2005.11.25

Byline: Dale Bass

Residential school survivor: Give heirs cash

As the First Nations community celebrated a settlement package announced by the federal government for residential school survivors, Evelyn Camille wasn't feeling very satisfied. The survivor of the Kamloops Residential School said she is unhappy the agreement-in-principle doesn't help the families of survivors who have died.

"They still matter," she said of those who are ineligible because of death

"Their children should continue to fight for their rights because what happened affected everyone in the family. They've also had to live with what happened to their parents." Camille lived at the Kamloops school run by the Roman Catholic Church from 1945 to 1955 and said she endured many indignities.

Her braids were cut and she was doused in a chemical "to supposedly kill bugs." She was beaten and sexually assaulted. The insistence by school staff that the children only speak English and adhere to non-First Nations customs, she said, "took our language and our culture."

The \$1.9-billion government package includes a \$10,000 common experience payment for all survivors still alive as of the end of May 2005, another \$3,000 for each year they spent in the schools and \$195 million to be used in a truth and reconciliation process, commemoration program and other projects to promote healing in First Nations.

Claimants 65 and older should receive an initial \$8,000 through an expedited process. The package specifies people accepting payment must end other lawsuits against the churches that ran the schools or the government.

It also includes a process to deal with claims of sexual or severe physical abuse. Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine said the announcement was a major victory and vindication for the survivors and their families.

"Today marks the first step towards closure on a terrible, tragic legacy for the thousands of First Nations individuals who suffered physical, sexual or psychological abuse." Jann Derrick, a local psychologist who works with the families of school survivors, agreed that the trauma is passed on through generations.

She said the reality is common not only in aboriginal peoples, but in Jewish families with relatives who survived the Holocaust.

Derrick said studies have documented this "historical trauma" through three generations.

"When you take the child out of the residence and harm them, how can it not affect the family?"

How can they have close attachment with their own children? . . . You live with it the rest of your life and so do your children and your grandchildren."

Derrick said the trauma of survivors would affect their children, often leaving them with poor parenting skills.

Although not a survivor herself, Derrick, a Metis with Mohawk background, said the residential schools left an impact on all aboriginal people because of the damage they did to their peoples.

She said she often has to go into the former Kamloops school, now an administration building for the Kamloops Indian Band, "and it's creepy. You are ghosted. I sure feel it when I'm there.

"You know, I look at my grandchildren and I think, this could have been you. It makes you think."

Marchand: 'Historic moment'

By DALE BASS

Staff reporter Kamloops This Week

Nov 25 2005

On Sunday night, Len Marchand Jr. took part in what he calls an historic moment in Canadian history.

The Kamloops lawyer and son of former MP and senator Len Marchand was one of 19 people to sign an agreement-in-principle that will bring financial compensation to First Nations, Inuit, Metis, Inuit and Inuvialuit survivors of the nation's residential school system.

Marchand had been acting for many local survivors and was part of the negotiations that led to the document that was approved by the federal cabinet on Monday and announced publicly Wednesday "A lot of effort and a lot of work went into this," he said. "And there is still a lot of work to be done, but I am confident it will be implemented."

The agreement-in-principle must undergo a final draft, be approved by courts in all provinces and territories now dealing with lawsuits from survivors and be returned to the federal cabinet for approval a second time.

But for Marchand, the fact the federal government, churches, Assembly of First Nations (AFN), other aboriginal groups and a multitude of lawyers representing clients came to a compromise "is quite an achievement."

He points to an agreement between the AFN and federal government on May 30 as the "momentous occasion" that made the new package obtainable.

Having the government acknowledge a process was needed to resolve the issue and the AFN agree to work with the government "got the ball rolling," with meetings beginning in July and continuing to last Sunday, Marchand said.

He was mainly involved in the areas of resolution for victims of sexual or serious physical injury and, while he acknowledges it is hard to make amends for these indignities, "we were trying to improve the process and make it not adversarial.

"We're not going to make people feel better tomorrow but this is still an historic moment in our history."

Nunatsiaq News
2005.11.25
Jim Bell

Inuit orgs praise residential school deal

Three of Canada's regional Inuit organizations are praising a \$2 billion comprehensive settlement deal for aboriginal residential school survivors that Anne McLellan, the deputy prime minister, announced at a press conference in Ottawa this past Wednesday.

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Inuvialuit Regional Council, and the Makivik Corp. all said this week that they support the agreement, which offers compensation to all Inuit, Métis and First Nations survivors of residential schools associated with the federal government.

The deal is partly based on a report done by the Assembly of First Nations in the fall of 2004, which sought to find ways of fixing the federal government's ailing dispute resolution plan for residential school survivors.

Many of the provisions contained in this week's deal, including the shape of the monetary package, are similar to recommendations first made by the AFN in 2004.

The deal includes the following elements:

- every eligible residential school survivor who applies will get a payment of \$10,000, plus \$3,000 for each year spent at a residential school;
- a fast-track process for former students over age 65, who may apply for an immediate payment of \$8,000;
- a \$60-million "truth and reconciliation" process;
- \$10 million for a commemoration program;
- another five years of funding, totalling \$125 million, for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.
- survivors already involved in class action claims will qualify for compensation;
- those who take compensation under the agreement — except for those who suffered sexual abuse or serious physical abuse — release the government from all further liability.

The deal benefits about 86,000 aboriginal people in Canada, including at least 3,000 Inuit.

Many of Canada's residential schools for aboriginal people were run on behalf of the federal government by churches, but the deal also benefits those who attended schools run directly by the federal government. That includes federal schools in the Arctic, and their attached hostels and residences.

Source: The B.C. Catholic

Date: 2005.11.28

Byline: Deborah Gyapong

Residential schools settlement reached

OTTAWA (CCN) – An offer by 41 Catholic religious orders and dioceses is included in a historic Nov. 23 agreement-in-principle to settle Indian residential schools abuse claims.

“This is a total, complete, comprehensive settlement of everything involved with residential schools,” said Saskatoon lawyer Rod Donlevy, who represented the 41 Catholic entities in the negotiations. “This is a good thing for everybody.”

“Residential schools is an issue that’s been tearing up people for years,” he told CCN in a telephone interview from his office after the announcement.

Described as an “historic milestone” by Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine, the estimated \$2 billion package addresses the “longstanding tragedy of Indian residential schools,” according to Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan.

“This is the largest and most comprehensive settlement package in Canadian history,” said Fontaine.

Negotiated by former Supreme Court Justice Frank Iacobucci, the agreement will give \$10,000 to each of 86,000 residential school survivors, plus \$3,000 for each year spent at a school.

An advance payment of \$8,000 will go to survivors 65 and over. The average age of former students is 60.

The agreement also includes an alternative dispute resolution mechanism to expedite additional compensation for those who suffered sexual or physical abuse, five-year funding of the Aboriginal Health Foundation, a process for truth-telling and reconciliation, and a method for memorializing the schools’ legacy.

Attorney General Irwin Cotler described the residential schools as the “single most disgraceful, harmful, and racist act in our history.”

“Money can never compensative for the harm and damage,” said Iacobucci, who rejected any charges the announcement was made to enhance Liberal fortunes in the upcoming federal election.

Donlevy said the October news release by the 41 Catholic groups demanding a response from McLellan to their settlement offer and the ensuing media coverage prompted McLellan’s deputy minister to bring them into the process.

Their original offer has been accepted, and they will not be on the hook to pay a portion of the \$10,000 compensation to every surviving residential school student.

“The 41 entities’ position was if there was compensation to be paid for former students it was the responsibility of the federal government,” Donlevy said. “Our proposal was dedicate funds for healing and reconciliation.”

The proposal of the 41 groups was accepted. They will contribute \$29 million in cash and real property, \$25 million in “in kind” contributions for programs such as Returning to Spirit, programs on self-esteem, programs for healthy mums and healthy babies, and other works the groups do in aboriginal communities.

The agreement settles the liability of the 41 groups in various class-action suits, though Donlevy expects more to be filed, because the agreement to settle with surviving school students will be monitored by the courts to ensure accountability and consistency.

“It’s a national tragedy if you were 6 years old and coming from a community that was so different, into a structured school and you didn’t understand English,” said Donlevy. “It’s a transformation, a time warp, a different planet.”

However, Donlevy said characterizing everything about residential schools as bad was hurtful to the men and women who ran the schools.

“When you spend 40 or 50 years taking care of kids and the accusations and the premise that everything was bad about it, it’s pretty hurtful to some of the 70-, 80-, and 90-year-old sisters, priests, and brothers,” he said.

“I think the sisters and the priests did the best that they could with what they had and in the understanding of the times,” he said. “There was no malice in the hearts of the religious. They thought they were doing what was best for the former students.”

“A lot of them have really close relations with former students today,” he said.