

**Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada
Media Clips**



**Résolution des questions des pensionnats indiens Canada
Manchettes**

Friday, March 17, 2006 ♦ vendredi, 17 mars 2006

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Source: New Zealand Newswire
Date: March 17, 2006
By-line: N/A

No Need For Inquiry: Catholic Education Office

The body that oversees Catholic schools says it sees no need for a government inquiry into historical institutional abuse.

Following the conviction yesterday of former Catholic brother Bernard McGrath for sexually abusing boys at a residential school in the 1970s, the Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust called for a wider government inquiry into institutional abuse.

But Pat Lynch, the chief executive of the Catholic Education Office, says the issue is being addressed and little more would be achieved by a government inquiry.

He says Catholic schools have integrated into the state system, and are having to follow standard guidelines and compliances.

Source: Grassroots News

Date: March 14, 2006

By-line: N/A

Elijah's plea for forgiveness also a challenge to other Canadians

When Elijah Harper told First Nations participants at a healing and recovery conference held in Winnipeg last week that they must "forgive the White Man" in order to truly undertake their personal and collective healing process, he pinpointed one of the major reasons many of his people have been unable to put the past behind them and regain control of their lives and re-establish their rightful place in Canadian society.

Mr. Harper has seen both the best and worst of his people, as chief of his own community, a provincial and political leader and now as a nearly iconic national First Nations spiritual leader, and understands the enslavement anger, resentment and sorrow has created.

While some were surprised by his plea that they forgive the historical legacy of oppression and attempts at forced assimilation, that initial shock gave way to widespread acceptance that such a profoundly difficult proposition is essential for First Nations people to break free of the cycle of abuse, despair, poverty and addictions that grip too many of them and in some cases, entire communities.

While many individuals, leaders and communities have embarked on this process and are showing remarkable progress in re-establishing their cultural, linguistic, traditional and political identity and pride, Mr. Harper is hoping to encourage the emergence of spiritual energy and hope in the lives of ordinary First Nations families by acknowledging it is time to move beyond the culture of blame, incapacitating emotional pain and a culture of angry grievance—as understandable as they might be given the experiences of his people—and replace them with self-dignity, pride and personal self-determination.

The Oji-Cree leader's plea, however, was not simply directed at his own people, but equally at non-aboriginal Canadian society which he called upon to apologize fully, completely and without reservation for the hurt inflicted upon aboriginal people.

Mr. Harper understands that without such an admission from Canadians, the ability and willingness of aboriginal people to finally move on and begin their recovery and implement transformational change for their communities cannot occur.

And that is the key for such broader healing to begin and sustain itself and create an atmosphere where mainstream society finally begins to view the financial and social support of aboriginal people in their individual and collective healing process as providing a hand-up and not a hand-out.

The evidence of colonizing peoples undermining and overwhelming the position of an indigenous population requires the societal courage and honesty to face the difficult truth that this nation has horribly abused the people, whose ancestors first welcomed and ensured the survival of generation after generation of their eventual oppressors.

Aboriginal people must see the complete and absolute contrition for that shameful history in the eyes of those who, either through direct action, silence or indifference, allowed the effects of residential schools, child scoops and governmental policies meant to eradicate their languages, culture and traditions, to continue to plague their souls and their lives.

It is time for Canada to come clean and finally allow aboriginal people the opportunity to heal.

Source: Grassroots News

Date: March 14, 2006

By-line: Len Kruzenga

Lost Boys to launch legal action home residents in a formal legal challenge.

The Merchant Law Group has agreed to represent survivors of the Cathedral Valley Home for Boys in a proposed class-action lawsuit against the provincial and federal government for compensation for survivors.

Sam McGillivray, Dean Powderhorn, Larry Bone and Brian Richards made the announcement late last week, saying they sought legal counsel to advise them on potential avenues of redress.

“As we spoke to each other on what happened to us and have been contacted by other Lost Boys and other men and women who also were forced to spend their entire childhoods in group homes we saw that like Residential School survivors what the system did to us and our families was wrong.”

Those sentiments are shared by Max Simpson, a fifth survivor who has now come forward to relate his experiences at the group foster home operated for over two decades just outside the town of Grandview.

However, the 42-year-old Brandon resident says he's not emotionally ready to join his former fellow group

“Things happened after I got out of there (Cathedral Valley) that I am dealing with first,” said Mr. Simpson, who has spent numerous stints in jail as an adult for various property offenses over the last three decades. “I am behind the guys 100 percent and can back up everything they have said, but I can't go through the whole court thing right now.

Yet the soft-spoken Cree man says he'll travel with his former mates next week when they return to the site of the former group home. “I know we have to go together to support each other and put some of the pieces of our lives back together again.

“I think a lot of other memories will come back that we've kept down and hidden. There's so much stuff because we spent so long there as kids. But you move on and life just keeps burying those old problems with new ones, but I know where we are today and what we were never able to achieve has lots to do with what the system did to us and our families then.”

For Simpson the memories of the day Sheldon Perepelkin shot and killed Phyllis Blake are still fairly vivid.

“He Sheldon, woke me up two time during the night to try and get me to run away with him, I didn't know what he had done but because I had run away before too he kept at me to go with him.”

The discovery by the boys the next morning of Mrs. Blake's lifeless body, says Simpson, stunned the young men and when Henry Blake returned from his trip to Winnipeg and sat the boys down to ask if any of them wanted to leave the home, not one of the boys accepted the offer.

“I didn't want to go because I was afraid the police were thinking some of us were involved in her death and I thought if I said I wanted to leave that they would automatically pick on me as, I don't know, but guilty of something,” said Mr. Simpson.

While some of the details in Mr. Simpson's accounts seem to conflict with previous accounts made by some of his former co-residents—McGillivray has said police removed some boys from the home after the shooting and placed them in other group homes—Simpson cautions that the incident was so traumatic for the young boys that only now can some of the survivors actively probe the memories of that particular period.

“It’s like the others have said too. No one explained anything to us or even asked if we were ok after the shooting. We stuck together and guess somehow knew that we could make it through all of this if we kept close to each other. We were the only kind of family we had. None of it was spoken or said it just was what it was.”

The upcoming trip to the Blake farm and the rolling countryside outside Dauphin are causing some trepidation for men like McGillivray and Simpson. McGillivray is both insistent and urgent in his belief that he and the others will be able to piece together the fragments of their broken childhood and find the focus necessary to sustain what is expected to be a long and difficult legal process.

“It’s there on that farm. I know it. When we walk on that property and see everything again we’ll know what we have to do, and where we have to take this whole thing exactly,” said Mc- Gillivray. (To be continued next week)