

**Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada  
Media Clips**



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

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**Source: Red Deer Advocate**  
**Date: March 17, 2006**  
**By-line: Tanis Fiss**

## **New native policy just common sense**

The Canadian Taxpayers' Federation (CTF) applauds the federal Conservatives' plan to abolish the Indian Act. Good governance, accountability and transparency cannot be built on a foundation of faulty legislation.

Consequently, for native communities to compete successfully within the Canadian economic mainstream, the Indian Act must be phased out. The CTF also applauds the Conservatives plan to incorporate the Human Rights Act. This act does not apply to status Indians who live on native reserve. As unbelievable as this may seem, section 67 of the Human Rights Act states, "nothing in this act affects any provisions of the Indian Act or any provision made under or pursuant to that act."

The Indian Act is the ultimate law that governs native reserves. Regrettably, the Indian Act is mute on the subject of human rights. Abolishing the Indian Act and including aboriginal communities under the Charter of Rights and Freedom, will advance aboriginal Canadians to become Canadians of full-status.

**Listening to some media reports, one might conclude that every native Canadian attended residential school.**

**In fact, less than one in six natives attended a residential school - about 150,000.**

**In 1960 there were 40,637 natives enrolled in government schools across Canada. Only 9,109 were in residential schools compared with 22,049 in federal day schools and another 9,479 in regular, provincial public schools.**

**In 1998, the federal government delivered a statement of reconciliation and apology to those people who experienced sexual or physical abuse while attending residential schools. This apology paved the way for an industry funded by taxpayers and fuelled by guilt.**

**Were Indian residential schools perfect? Of course not. But what was the alternative? Should the federal government not have provided education for aboriginal children?**

**If crimes were committed in the schools - and some were - the victims of the crimes have the same right as any other citizen to seek redress through the courts.**

**The Conservatives should take steps to ensure compensation is only paid for legitimate claims, not out of guilt.**

The Conservative platform, if implemented, will go a long way to eradicate poverty and increase prosperity within Canada's native communities. The new federal government has an opportunity to reform the system of aboriginal affairs. It is only through major reform that aboriginal poverty on reserves will truly be eradicated. To do otherwise is insane.

**Source: Winnipeg Free Press**  
**Date: March 20, 2006**  
**By-line: Colleen Simard**

## **Am I an Indian, Metis, or what?**

A Cree friend asked me about Bill C-31 the other day. You see, his daughter's going to have a baby soon. She's been wondering if her baby will have treaty status like her.

Her partner -- the baby's dad -- is not aboriginal, so it gets complicated.

Welcome to the world of Bill C-31.

Bill C-31 is that deceitful little piece of legislation drawn up to change part of the Indian Act in 1985. It was supposed to be a blessing, allowing First Nations women who married non-Indians to get their treaty status back. But over the years it's been pretty clear Bill C-31 is becoming more of a disaster in the long run. Let me explain.

The Indian Act drawn up by the Canadian government is the governing law in Indian Country. It has been for about 130 years. In the past, many Indians gave up their treaty rights because the Indian Act was all about forcing them to assimilate into society and become "Canadian."

**First we sign a deal to share the land and resources, and then we're put on postage stamps of land. For a while we're not allowed to leave the reserve without permission, and must give up our status if we choose to get an education. Then there was the residential school experience. It sounds like a crazy way to assimilate a people, but it was true.**

Bill C-31's biggest winners seemed to be aboriginal women. Feminists may have had bra burnings in the 1960s and '70s, but we native women had Bill C-31 rallies in the '80s. We were proud of it too, dammit.

Before Bill C-31, the Indian Act discriminated against women. When a status Indian woman married a non-aboriginal man she lost her treaty status. Her children were not given Indian status either. She wasn't even allowed to live on her home reserve anymore.

But when a status Indian man married a non-aboriginal woman, she became treaty, and so did the children. Well, Bill C-31 changed everything -- we were given 13 new rules as to who could regain their Indian Status.

Aboriginal women who'd lost their Indian status were reinstated and given a special number along with their treaty number : 6(1)(a), 6(1)(b), 6(1)(c), 6(1)(d), 6(1)(e)(i), 6(1)(e)(ii), or 6(2). That number was designated by how they lost their Indian status in the first place.

Their children were given treaty status too, but that's as far as it went. The feds imposed a "second generation cut off rule" when it came to reinstating Indian status.

After a couple of questions and a little diagram, we figured it out. My friend's future grandchild would have treaty status like his mom. But that grandchild would have to marry another treaty Indian to pass it on to any children.

Thanks to this cut off rule, eventually there won't be any status Indians left to uphold those treaty rights. Assimilation, you sneaky bugger you.

Later, I wondered to myself if my friend's future grandchild would identify as a treaty Indian or a Metis. Could they be both? Labels, labels.

Having bureaucracy try to determine your ethnicity can get as complicated as a fun-house maze. But that's why the right to self-governance should also mean the right to self-determination of our own people.

It's really a legal definition, but shouldn't we decide who is and who isn't an Indian?

One of my Ontario readers said I haven't had a contest in a while. Well, here it is my neechies, the C-31 contest. It's a trivia question.

According to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) website they've only had four national chiefs since the creation of Bill C-31. Which one of those AFN national chiefs is also a "C-31 Indian?"

E-mail me no sooner than noon today with the correct answer. The winner will get a copy of the recently released Me Funny. It's an anthology about aboriginal humour, edited by Drew Hayden Taylor.

**Source: Calgary Herald**  
**Date: March 18, 2006**  
**By-line: Graeme Morton**

## School believed it could change

Editor's note: In the recent Fraser Institute report card on Alberta's elementary schools, Peter Cowley, the institute's director of school performance studies, said that bottom-ranked schools should have their stories told as well as those who perennially finish atop the tables. This is one of those stories.

EXSHAW - The school that's on the bottom of the Fraser Institute's list is on the top of Chris VanMulligan's.

"I'm proud to have my child going to this school," says VanMulligan, whose daughter Kally is in Grade 2.

"She's in great hands here."

That may seem like strange praise for Exshaw School, which tied for 726th, dead last, in the 2006 Fraser Institute's Report Card on Alberta's elementary schools.

But when you get past the raw statistics, the provincial achievement test scores on which Fraser bases its marks, and get inside the school's doors, you find hope, not despair.

"Sure, it hurts to see your school rated at the bottom in the province," says Exshaw principal Debra Anstey.

"It knocks you down. It affects morale. You take it personally. But we decided that we had to find ways to change this school."

Anstey, who's been at Exshaw School for 12 years, the last five as principal, knows this turnaround won't come overnight.

"I don't think we'll see a significant rise in an indicator like the achievement tests for perhaps five years," Anstey says. "But we're already seeing positive signs this year that make us believe we're on the right track."

Nestled in the shadows of the giant Lafarge cement plant 95 kilometres west of Calgary, Exshaw School has about 170 students in classes from kindergarten to Grade 8.

Of those, all but six come from the sprawling Stoney Reserve to the east. Some kids board their school bus before 7 a.m. for the 90-minute ride every morning to Exshaw.

"Before we could do anything else, we needed to make sure students knew they were coming to a safe and caring environment," says Anstey.

A concerted effort to tackle discipline and attendance problems began three years ago by stressing character development and trying new strategies to get youngsters through the school doors.

"For some of our kids, by the time they're in Grade 8, they've missed the equivalent of two years of school because of attendance problems," said Anstey.

With Lafarge's support, a hot breakfast program was launched as a reward for that long bus trip.

There's an "on-time club," stickers, pencils and other prizes from a treasure chest and a T-shirt for students who read 100 books in a year.

"We continue to work on issues like proper nutrition and the kids getting enough sleep," said Anstey.

"It's hard to learn when you're hungry or falling asleep in your desk."

In the 2002-03 school year, Exshaw School reported 1,228 discipline incidents, including bullying, defiance of staff and vandalism, on its books.

By last year, that number fell to 566.

In September, Exshaw, with the support of the parent Canadian Rockies school division, launched the second major plank in its improvement plan.

Additional staff were hired to begin a concerted drive to boost literacy. Between 10:30 a.m. and noon, it's the sole focus in every classroom.

Learning support teacher Rebekah Graham works with students in Grades 5 to 8.

"At the start of the year, I don't think we had a single student among the older children who was reading at their grade level," recalls Graham.

"Some were many grades below their level."

Students were grouped by their reading levels, not rigid age or grade designations.

A Grade 5 student who's still reading at a Grade 2 level can find himself learning in the same group as his younger sister.

"We stress listening skills, vocabulary, comprehension, phonics, spelling and a writing component -- anything we can do to boost their literacy capacity," said reading specialist Sheila Klein.

Students are evaluated regularly to see when they are ready to advance a level. Many reading groups are gender specific to let boys and girls dig into books that appeal to their particular interests. Players from the Canmore Eagles, the area's junior hockey team, come to Exshaw School weekly to read with children and then play a little hockey during the lunch hour.

Seven months into this school year, Graham and Klein can produce charts which show many students have already climbed one or two grade levels in their reading abilities.

J.R. Twoyoungmen and his wife Pauline Wesley, Stoney elders with three grandchildren attending Exshaw School, can see progress.

"The expectations for the children are higher now, both to come to school and to do well," said Wesley. "They are getting to know what's important and their self-esteem is growing."

Twoyoungmen, who taught at Exshaw School 30 years ago, said the Stoney band is putting more emphasis on the importance of education.

"I keep trying to tell the kids that this is one step up the ladder; that education is not just given to them, they have to earn it," Twoyoungmen said.

Anstey said slow but steady progress is also being seen in attendance at parent-teacher interviews.

**Two young men, who spent 11 years in the controversial residential school system as a child, said many native people are still wary of schools off the reserve.**

"Parents can be fearful that when they get a call to come to school, they or their kids are in trouble," said Two young men. "It's this coming generation of kids that are going to be the ones to change that."

Kim Bater, chairman of the Canadian Rockies school board, said trustees are committed to giving Exshaw the resources it needs to turn the corner.

"We sat down with the staff and said 'How can we collectively do a better job for these children?' " said Bater.

"We think the lessons that are being learned at Exshaw can be transferred to other schools, both in Canadian Rockies and well beyond," he added.

The Fraser Institute's Cowley lauded the efforts at Exshaw.

"They've already decided there that improvement is possible and they're going to try and make it happen," said Cowley.

"That should give other schools in Exshaw's position pause to think, 'If they believe they can do it, why can't we?' "

While improved provincial achievement test results is a long-term goal, the Exshaw staff are savouring the small steps taken forward every day.

Two Grade 2 students knock on Anstey's door to read the stories they've written in class and earn a glossy sticker that proclaims to the world My Principal Says I'm Terrific.

"A couple of years ago, I'd be interrupted by a discipline issue every 10 minutes or so," she said.

Anstey says the real payoff will be felt in years to come when more Exshaw students graduate from high school.

"We're accountable for what we do. We had to believe we could make a change here, to make a difference for these kids," Anstey said.

"And I think we're doing it."



**Source: The Kingston Whig-Standard (Similar appeared in The National Post, The Ottawa Citizen and The Edmonton Journal**

**Date: March 18, 2006**

**By-line: Juliet O'Neill**

## **And the contenders are ...**

**With no clear front-runner for the Liberal leadership, the race promises to be interesting**

OTTAWA - Still reeling from electoral defeat, the Liberal party is about to embark on a leadership race in which there is no heir apparent, no certain front-runner, and a top rung of potential candidates dominated by newcomers, outsiders and people famed more for wealth and hockey than political record.

The party's 51-member national executive is scheduled to announce tomorrow afternoon a convention date and location, and a candidate entry fee. They may also establish an Internet-based membership and campaign contribution system in hopes of attracting new members and adapting to a new ban on corporate campaign contributions.

The system would provide tax credits and the party would take a cut of contributions to candidates, all amid intense debate over whether the party needs and has time for major reform or can get away with a fresh leader's face and a display of unity to defeat Stephen Harper's minority Conservative government as early as next spring.

Interviews with a dozen potential candidates or their campaign advisers show the Liberals seek to put behind them the dozen years of factionalism spawned by loyalties divided between former prime ministers Jean Chretien and Paul Martin; to dilute some of the power that long concentrated around those men; and to regain public trust lost during the sponsorship scandal and RCMP income trust leak investigation.

Senator David Smith, an easygoing veteran of every Liberal leadership campaign since 1968 when Pierre Trudeau won on the fourth ballot, has dubbed the upcoming contest "Operation Fresh Start."

Smith is one of many Liberals who had supported an expected leadership bid by Frank McKenna, the former New Brunswick premier and Canadian ambassador to Washington. But McKenna bowed out, as did 2003 leadership hopefuls John Manley, Brian Tobin and Allan Rock.

These are the men and women considering a Liberal leadership bid, in alphabetical order:

Carolyn Bennett

Toronto MP since 1997. Family physician, 55. Minister of state for public health under Martin. Now opposition social development critic.

Strength: Energetic. Commitment to feminism, gay rights and national child care. Standard bearer for those who want a female candidate in the race, but regard Belinda Stronach as a lightweight.

Weakness: May be seen as a single-issue candidate. Not fluently bilingual.

Maurizio Bevilacqua

MP for Vaughan, Ont., since 1988. Chaired the Commons finance committee for five years, 45. Junior finance minister under Chretien, but dumped by Martin. Critic on competitiveness and the new economy.

Strength: Polished, methodical. Campaign theme is "economic growth for a just society." Regards himself as part of a new generation of Liberals whose time may have come.

Weakness: "I'm well known in the Liberal party, but I'm not a household name." Bilingual Italian, not French.

Scott Brison

Nova Scotia MP since 1997. Former investment banker, 38. First openly gay Progressive Conservative MP. Came fourth in the 2003 PC leadership race won by Peter MacKay. Crossed the floor to the Liberals. Appointed public works minister. Environment critic.

Strength: Energy and stamina match his ambition. Confident in the media.

Weakness: Shallow Liberal party roots. While he says he was not leaking inside information, a recently revealed e-mail to an investment banker about pending income trust taxation policy cast doubt on his judgment. French: Working on it.

Martin Cauchon

Montreal lawyer and former MP for Outremont, 43. Revenue and justice portfolios in Chretien cabinet. Bowed out for the 2004 election after 10 years in Parliament.

Strength: Young, modern Quebec federalist. Bilingual.

Weakness: Not widely known outside Quebec. Dropped out of politics.

Denis Coderre

**Montreal MP since 1997, 42. Immigration minister under Chretien and responsibility for La Francophonie and the Office of Indian Residential Schools Resolution under Martin. Critic on Quebec regional development.**

Strength: Young. Government experience.

Weakness: Cockiness.

Ruby Dhalla

Brampton MP since 2004. Actress and chiropractor, 32.

Strength: Young. As the daughter of Sikh immigrants from the Punjab province of India, would inject ethnic diversity in the race.

Weakness: Inexperience.

Stephane Dion

Quebec MP for a decade, 50. Former political science professor, author. Intergovernmental affairs minister under Chretien. Environment minister under Martin. Headed United Nations conference on climate change. Foreign affairs critic.

Strength: Outspoken federalist. No-nonsense determination. Clear focus on the next election. Expert on federal-provincial relations.

Weakness: Professorial media image. Sometimes garbles English.

Ken Dryden

Toronto MP since 2004. Author, 58. Social development minister under Martin. Montreal Canadiens goaltender in 1970s. Now health critic.

Strength: Name recognition. Forged agreements with the provinces for a national day-care program.

Weakness: Exceptionally earnest, politically naive. Lacks media spark. Little French.

Joe Fontana

London MP since 1988, 56. Labour and housing minister under Martin. Now opposition science and research critic.

Strength: May attract newcomers to the party from the labour movement.

Weakness: Low profile. Limited French abilities.

Martha Hall Findlay

Toronto lawyer, 45. Belinda Stronach beat her in the 2004 election, her first electoral bid, by only 689 votes. When Stronach crossed the floor, she bowed out of the nomination.

Strength: First out of the starting gate, she announced her candidacy in February.

Weakness: Never elected. Little known. Fringe candidacy.

John Godfrey

Toronto MP since 1993. Former historian, author, Financial Post editor and university president, 65. Parliamentary secretary to Chretien. Martin's junior minister for infrastructure and communities. Responsible for the "new deal for cities." Opposition intergovernmental affairs critic.

Strength: Zeal for policy development and debate. Well-honed ideas about the future of Canada's cities, sustainable development and social policy. Fluently bilingual.

Weakness: Professorial image.

Ralph Goodale

Ralph Goodale, a lawyer, was minister of finance from 2003 to 2006 and continues to be a Liberal Member of Parliament. He was named Opposition House Leader by Bill Graham. He was first elected to Parliament in the 1974 election at the age of 24.

Strength: Name recognition, long political career.

Weakness: Income trust investigation.

Michael Ignatieff

Newly elected Toronto MP, 58. Author, journalist and scholar. International reputation for insight into war, terrorism and human rights issues. Resigned directorship of the Carr Centre for Human Rights at Harvard to return to Canada and run for election.

Strength: Fresh face. Intellectual depth. Multilingual. Outspoken. Comfortable on world stage.

Weakness: Has not lived permanently in Canada for nearly 30 years, living mostly in the U.K. and the U.S.

Tony Ianno

Former Toronto MP, 49. Elected in 1993, defeated in January 2006. Minister of state for families and caregivers under Martin.

Strength: Organizing and fundraising ability. Good at explaining complex ideas in simple terms.

Weakness: Low profile. French: "I can manage."

Gerard Kennedy

Ontario education minister, 45. Ontario 1996 Liberal leadership candidate. Came first on four ballots, defeated on the fifth by Dalton McGuinty. Acclaimed former executive director of the Daily Bread Food Bank in Toronto.

Strength: Progressive. Support from western Liberals. Fresh face. Fluently bilingual.

Weakness: Darkhorse candidate.

Dominic LeBlanc

New Brunswick MP since 2000, 38. Son of former Liberal cabinet minister and governor general Romeo LeBlanc. Lawyer. Former special assistant to Chretien. International trade critic.

Strength: Youth. Atlantic candidate if Brison doesn't run.

Weakness: Inexperience. Low profile.

David McGuinty

MP for Ottawa South, 46. Elected in 2004. Younger brother of Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. Natural resources lawyer with global career experience.

Strength: Fluently bilingual. Plugged into leading-edge issues of globalization and environment.

Weakness: Lack of political experience. Do Liberals want the McGuinty brothers running the federal and Ontario Liberal parties ?

Bob Rae

Toronto lawyer, 57. NDP MP 1978-82. Premier of Ontario 1990-95. Served on Security Intelligence Review Committee. Conducted inquiry into Ontario education. Go-between in the conflict in Sri Lanka. Author of government report recommending judicial inquiry into the 1985 Air India disaster.

Strength: Mature public figure. Confident. Fluent in French. Wide-ranging policy knowledge. Backing of Chretien's chief organizer, his brother.

Weakness: Latecomer to the Liberal party. Possible electoral liability in Ontario where voters may remember how his government, saddled with a mounting deficit during a recession, alienated business and labour.

Belinda Stronach

Aurora MP, 39. Former president and CEO of Magna International. Runner-up to Stephen Harper for the Conservative party leadership in March 2004. Crossed the floor to the Liberals in May 2005. Minister of human resources and skills development. Caucus transport critic.

Strength: Glamour, star quality and name recognition. May stir excitement and attract interest.

Weakness: Party switcher. Inexperience. Speaks little French. Uncomfortable in media spotlight.

Joe Volpe

MP for Eglington-Lawrence since 1988. Minister of human resources and skills development; and citizenship and immigration, both under Martin. Treasury board critic.

Strength: Support networks dating back two decades.

Weakness: The Italian-born politician asks if Liberals are ready to elect a leader who was not born in Canada. Bilingual but in Italian, not French.

**Source: The New Zealand Press**

**Date: March 18, 2006**

**By-line: John Henzell**

## **Sex-abuse inquiry demanded**

**Child-welfare groups are demanding a full government investigation into institutional care in New Zealand to prevent a repeat of rampant sexual abuse by Catholic clergy and brethren at a Christchurch home for troubled boys.**

Disgraced former Catholic brother Bernard Kevin McGrath, 58, was found guilty by a High Court jury in Christchurch on Thursday of 21 child-sex charges dating back to the 1970s. Three other former Catholic brothers at Marylands school are also accused of being part of sexual abuse there spanning 30 years.

Children's Commissioner Cindy Kiro yesterday added her voice to calls for a full inquiry similar to that done by the Australian Senate, which produced a damning report in 2004 about the standards of care in church and state institutions.

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust manager Ken Clearwater, who represents about 40 men who claim they were sexually abused at Marylands, said similar sexual abuse was still happening in institutions in New Zealand and needed to be uncovered by a formal inquiry.

So far, his calls have failed to sway the Government to act.

"This is important. I'm seeing kids in care now who are saying things are happening to them – the same things that happened with St John of God," he said, referring to the Catholic order that ran Marylands.

The St John of God order now accepts that several Catholic clergy and brethren were sexually abusing boys at Marylands but Clearwater said the verdicts on McGrath were not the end of the issue.

"It's only the beginning. We have to look at why this was allowed to happen and why it was allowed to continue for 30 years," he said.

Kiro said it was the right time to look into how children are cared for in institutions in New Zealand and in particular ensure they are able to complain about physical or sexual abuse.

McGrath's trial had been told that a senior Catholic brother to whom children tried to complain about sexual abuse was also a child molester, protecting the network of child molesters and allowing the abuse to continue for years.

Kiro expected that a full inquiry in New Zealand would produce similar results to the one by the Australian Senate, which found some offenders were protected by the system and not brought to account.

"I think what would come up would be confirmation of the need to actually create some mechanisms that children feel safe enough to disclose at the time that abuse is happening," she said.

"This is about abuse of power between adults and children, in institutional settings especially. One of the things that happens in historical cases particularly is children aren't believed when they make allegations.

"We know that most sex offenders who offend against children have been sexually offended against as children too. It creates a cycle that damages so many people's lives and it has to be stopped."

Ruth Dyson, the minister responsible for Child Youth and Family, was not able to be contacted for comment yesterday.

Chris McIsaac, spokesman for Australian lobby group Broken Rites, said it had had to lobby to get the Australian Senate to probe institutional care in that country but had been vindicated by the results.