

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Kúkpí7/Chief Rosanne Casimir has announced the discovery of the remains of 215 Indigenous children buried at the site of the former 'Kamloops Indian Residential School', which operated on occupied Secwépemc territory until 1969. Although this horrific loss was specifically confirmed only recently, the knowledge of it was long held by the community. This revelation occurs during the ongoing investigation into the preventable death of Joyce Echaquan, an Atikamekw woman who was killed by abuse and neglect in the healthcare system in Saint-Charles-Borromée, Quebec.

On behalf of 2,000+ members, PSAC 901 stands with the Secwépemc people, and with all Indigenous nations across Turtle Island, in remembrance and mourning of those thousands of lives lost to the genocidal policies of the Canadian government and its residential school system. We recognize that the loss of these children occurred within colonial institutions in which violence, pain, and erasure were not only the consequences, but were the core mission. Furthermore, we recognize that despite the genocidal policies of the Canadian state, the Catholic Church, and other residential school administrators, Indigenous nations have refused to surrender their rights and have fought to retain their lands and ways of life in the face of relentless attacks by the settler colonial social order. Although this tragedy occurred in a specific area, at a specific time, there is no corner of the land now claimed by Canada, and no moment of this country's existence, which is not imbued with the same history of colonial violence and Indigenous resistance.

The executive of PSAC Local 901 condemns the ongoing project of settler colonial dispossession and assimilation, whether carried on through residential schools or the contemporary foster care or medical systems. We condemn the institutions who have supported these practices by policing and surveilling Indigenous communities, including the RCMP and other police forces. We condemn the colonial businesses who have enriched themselves by exploiting stolen lands, and the governments which have enabled and supported them.

We echo the calls of Indigenous organizers across the continent for Land Back, Decolonization, and Abolition. Below are some resources which explain these points further, and which identify some ways to offer support.

With June being National Indigenous History month, the gestures of the Canadian government ring especially hollow in the face of the overwhelming violence and injustice on which it rests. The Social Justice Committee will be liaising with Indigenous groups and leaders on campus and looking for how we can contribute to efforts at meaningful decolonization within our community. We reiterate our commitment to serving Indigenous members of the Local, and will make every effort to assist and support however possible. If there is action you would like us to

take, awareness you would like us to spread, or other help we can offer, your union stands with you.

For anyone who is a residential school survivor, or who is dealing with intergenerational or family trauma, the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS) Emergency Crisis Line is available 24/7 for counselling and support.

IRSSS Crisis Line: 1-866-925-4419

IRSSS Toll Free: 1-800-721-0066

IRSSS Main: 604-985-4464

Email: reception@irsss.ca

In solidarity,

PSAC Local 901 Executive

Resources

Support

Indigenous Crisis Responder for youth

24 hours/ 7 days per week

1-880-668-6868, text 686868

KUU-US Crisis Line

24/7 First Nation and Indigenous crisis line in BC

Adult: 1-800-588-8717

Youth: 250-723-2040

Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre

613-533-6970 4direct@queensu.ca

Enyonkwa'nikonhriyo:hake (Good Minds)

Counselling services, youth programming, circles, grief recovery, ceremonies, elder support, addiction counselling, and other programming for Tyendinaga Mohawk Community members on or off the territory. Call 613-967-0122 to access the program.

Kingston Aboriginal Community Information Network

Network of Aboriginal Providers in Kingston

[KACINKingstonAboriginal@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/KACINKingstonAboriginal/)

Education

Canada's Residential Schools: the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada - <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.807830/publication.html>

- Detailed report from the TRC on the residential school system

Genocide In The Indian Residential Schools - David B MacDonald - <https://cpb-ca-c1.wpmucdn.com/sites.uoguelph.ca/dist/0/141/files/2020/01/Genocide-in-the-Indian-Residential-Schools.pdf>

- Chapter outlining how the residential school system meets the criteria of genocide

Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper - <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>

- Policy paper explaining the dispossession of Indigenous communities and actions being taken now to re-assert Indigenous jurisdiction

Yellowhead Institute Community Resource Library - <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/community-resource-library/>

- Library of downloadable educational resources on the ongoing struggles for nationhood, sovereignty, and liberation

Native Liberation: The Way Forward - The Red Nation <http://therednation.org/native-liberation-the-way-forward/>

- Transcript of speech by Nick Estes, offering an overview of settler colonialism and Indigenous resistance

Land Reparations & Indigenous Solidarity Toolkit - <https://resourcegeneration.org/land-reparations-indigenous-solidarity-action-guide/>

- Resources for folks with access to land to educate about colonialism and how Land Back can begin to be enacted now

Donation

Indian Residential School Survivors Society - <https://www.irsss.ca/donate>

- Donation to an organization focused on holistic healing for survivors of residential schools and those dealing with the intergenerational impacts

Legal Support - Secwepemc Say No to TMX - <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/secwepemc-say-no-to-tmx-trial-support>

- Fundraising for land defenders arrested at TMX drill sites in Secwepemcul'ecw, asserting Secwepemc rights and title

Stand with the Secwepemc - <https://raventrust.com/campaigns/secwepemc-2/>

- Fundraising to support efforts to assert Secwepemc title and rights before the Supreme Court of British Columbia

1492 Land Back Lane - Legal Fund - <https://www.gofundme.com/f/legal-fund-1492-land-back-lane>

- Legal fund for ongoing reclamation effort by Six Nations land defenders on the Haldimand Tract