



The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
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The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, P.C., M.P.
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House of Commons *
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The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., M.P.
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Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Bennett, and Minister Miller,

It is with great horror that the people of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation learned of the discovery of at least 215 bodies of Indigenous students buried on the grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School in Kamloops, British Columbia. Our community's history also includes the trauma of residential schools, carried by many survivors and their families to this day. We live daily with the mental scars of mistreatment and abuse that our members suffered in the schools.

How much worse, as a parent, a grandparent, a sibling, an aunt or an uncle, to wait in vain for your loved one to return from a Crown-sanctioned residential school. How much more emotionally destructive to never again hear your child's voice, but instead face only terrible silence when they never come home.. These are agonies that no parent should ever have to face, and yet it is exactly this crime that innumerable Indigenous families across Canada have had to endure. The loss of our children is a tragedy that affects all Indigenous people and communities. None of us are untouched.

How is it possible that so many children could die without appropriate investigations? How is it possible that the Kamloops school did not keep records of their passings? How is it possible that the families were not notified? How is it possible - in a nation as advanced as Canada - that the bodies of children could be simply dumped in unmarked graves? Such callousness and disregard for the dignity of the children who passed and their families, is simply unconscionable.

In the TRC Calls to Action, Missing Children and Burial Information, ss. 71-76, Canada pledged to identify children who died in residential schools, to locate their burial places, to notify their relations, allow for ceremonies and memorials, and maintain those places in a manner befitting the graves of beloved children. It is well past time that Canada answered these outstanding questions and implemented

the Calls to Action. We demand action now, before all those who might remember our lost children have also passed.

The highest priority is finding all children that have died and been buried at a residential school or First Nations orphanage, and returning them to their families and communities.

In every instance, the manner and circumstances of their deaths must be investigated. The persons, institutions, agencies, officials, and levels of government responsible for their deaths must be held responsible. The anonymous interment of children must be recognized as a crime, whatever the circumstances of their deaths.

Specifically:

- We call upon Canada to immediately and substantially increase funding to create and populate a national residential school student death register, along with the creation of a dedicated Agency to investigate every residential school site and First Nation orphanage (the Institutions) in Canada.
- The ground-penetrating radar technology used to find the children buried at the Kamloops Indian School is relatively inexpensive, non-intrusive, and returns results quickly. The technology must be used at all Institution sites in Canada, as soon as possible.
- Every child found must be identified using the most up-to-date forensic techniques, including genetic analysis.
- In order to identify every death of a child, the Agency must be empowered to view the records of any organization, body, church, or branch or level of government that operated or assisted in the operation of an Institution.
- Every death must be investigated to determine if there were criminal circumstances in the death, including withholding the necessities of life.
- If criminal circumstances are discovered or suspected in a death, we demand that a full and separate criminal investigation be launched into that individual death.
- The investigative process must be transparent, observable and well-documented.
- All non-personal information uncovered in the course of the investigations, such as the location of burial areas and numbers interred, should be made available online.
- All personal information must be shared immediately and fully with surviving family members.
- Indigenous representatives, including Elders and knowledge keepers, must be part of all investigation teams.
- We demand that representatives of the United Nations be invited to participate in all investigation teams.

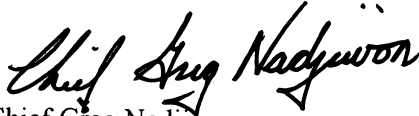
We are tired of waiting for a full recognition of the crimes committed upon our defenseless children in residential schools. The finding at Kamloops Indian Residential School requires greater action today. We know that, as parents, you understand our pain at this horrific discovery. We ask that you do what any bereft parent would do in the same circumstances as us. Spare no expense, suffer no excuse, leave no stone unturned in the search for answers and justice. The spirits of all our beautiful children, lost too soon, ask this of you as well.

Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation is based on beautiful Neyaashiinigmiing (Cape Croker) on the Georgian Bay side of the Bruce Peninsula. Chippewas of Nawash is part of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, whose traditional territory occupies much of southern Ontario, from the tip of the Bruce

Peninsula, south to Goderich, from Lake Huron to Collingwood. The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation people are known for their hospitality, protection of the environment within their Traditional Territory, and vigorous defense of their long tradition of Indigenous commercial fishing.

We anticipate your commitment to helping us bring our children, and the missing children of all Indigenous people in Canada, home to their families and communities.

Yours very sincerely,



Chief Greg Nadjiwon,

For the Council and Members of

The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation