



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 21-181**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Jennifer Campbell, Director, Heritage Services
Date of Meeting: June 16, 2021
Subject: Considerations related to the Statue of John A. Macdonald in City Park

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Corporate business

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

In July of 2020 Council approved four actions in relation to the History and Legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald in Kingston and staff have been advancing these actions with support from First Peoples Group in the time since. With the announcement on May 27, 2021 that 215 children had been found buried in unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School, voices are coalescing across Canada to demand action from all levels of government to uphold past commitments to reconciliation. Over the last several weeks in Kingston, calls from Indigenous community members and non-Indigenous allies have renewed in asking that Council take clear action and remove the Sir John A. Macdonald statue from City Park. Other residents have called for the statue to remain in place and for Council to recommit to the addition of interpretive plaques/text to expand the historic narrative shared in relationship to the statue.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with additional information about the evolving discussions around Sir John A. Macdonald, his history and legacy and specifically in relation to the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park. Included in this report are two (2) options for Council's consideration in regard to the Sir John A. Macdonald statue located in City Park. One of the options for consideration originated from the June 14th meeting of the History and Legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald Working Group. Through a talking circle format, the working group

June 16, 2021

Page 2 of 11

developed and confirmed core considerations for Council. This was a consensus building process. This report also includes correspondence received from Kingston residents in relation to this highly complex and political discussion.

Staff are seeking direction from Council on how to move forward.

Recommendation:

That Council consider the following options in relation to the Sir. John A Macdonald statue in City Park:

Option 1:

That the statue in City Park remain in place, and the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group continue to develop interpretive plaques/panels to be placed near the statue that share a more complete history of Macdonald and his legacy.

Or

Option 2:

That the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park be removed within a week being understood that:

- a. the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald be placed into temporary storage at an existing City storage site; and
- b. staff be directed to develop a multifaceted engagement and consultation plan that includes consideration of potential sites for the Sir John A. Macdonald statue to be moved to, consideration of new interpretive intentions for its previous location at City Park and a timeline for the completion of this consultation, to be provided to Council for consideration at the August 10, 2021 Council meeting; and

That staff be directed to develop amendments to the terms of reference for the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group as appropriate in relation to the direction approved by Council at the June 16, 2021 Special Council meeting.

June 16, 2021

Page 3 of 11

Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Paige Agnew, Commissioner,
Community Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required
Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works	Not required

June 16, 2021

Page 4 of 11

Options/Discussion:**Background**

Over the past four years and with direction from Council, staff have been working with Kingston residents on a number of initiatives focused on expanding, recontextualizing and rebalancing the stories and histories shared across the City of Kingston. These initiatives have many drivers; accountability, commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, reconciliation, social justice and making Kingston an inclusive space where community are invited to learn and engage through commemorations, monuments, public art, museums, community programming and educational programming. These Council-approved initiatives are unfolding through projects and programs like Engage for Change, 'Your Stories, Our Histories', the City Commemorations Policy, the City of Kingston Heritage Fund, the City of Kingston Public Art Program, and actions and initiatives increasingly pursued through the work of various City Departments.

Starting in 2019, the 'Your Stories, Our Histories' project was expanded to include focused opportunities for community members to offer input and direction on the history and legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald in the Kingston context. At that time, the core focus of the consultation was to identify where and through what opportunities the City of Kingston could build and share a more inclusive presentation of Sir. John A. Macdonald, his specific relationship to Kingston, his role as the first Prime Minister of Canada and the legacy around him as a figure today, all of which requires a truth-based critical examination of his and his governments policies, with a specific focus on Indigenous peoples, reservations and land dispossession and residential schools.

The work concluded with a series of actions presented to City Council in July of 2020. The actions Council approved at that time were understood to be a series of next steps in a continuing process of community learning as well as a real demonstration of Council's continued commitment to a shared path of reconciliation.

The actions Council approved were also framed in coordination with a number of initiatives underway through the Engage for Change Project. In its third and final phase, Engage for Change remains focused on responding to priority needs that have been identified by members of the local Indigenous community. Engage for Change also expands on the commitment of the City of Kingston to continue a shared path of reconciliation which includes continuing to build on the strong relationships with Nations and to honour and support Indigenous ways of knowing and governing in the business processes of the Corporation of the City of Kingston. When taken as a whole, the initiatives underway with Indigenous community members and partner organizations are an intersecting and systems-based response to the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the shared commitment with community to collaborate on what reconciliation means for the City and for the many communities who live here today and have lived here since time immemorial.

June 16, 2021

Page 5 of 11

Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic Actions

Previous recommendations approved by Council in relation to Engage for Change as well as specific actions around the history and legacy of Macdonald through 'Your Stories, Our Histories' were organized into three categories of action – changes that are (1) symbolic, (2) substantive and (3) systemic. On one end of the continuum symbolic actions are those that can often be taken quickly and that demonstrate a commitment to meaningful change and to amplifying the voices that have been marginalized through colonial systems. These actions show that the City of Kingston is willing to change the current conversation and influence how people perceive the city and all facets of our shared history. Moving along the continuum is a deeper commitment on the part of the City of Kingston to making changes that are substantive, both internally and externally; these changes can include for example investments in community space(s)/places. At the other end of the continuum exists the commitment to more significant, longer-term and labour-intensive systemic changes that require the City of Kingston to evolve how it does business to ensure that greater equity, diversity and inclusion are achieved through its policies and practices. It is important to keep the continuum of change in mind when considering actions related to the history and legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald. Symbolic actions reference and reinforce commitments to substantive and systemic actions and changes.

Updates on Actions Relating to Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy

Kingston remains widely recognized as Sir John A. Macdonald's hometown and is uniquely positioned to engage with his history and legacy from a local perspective and in ways that resonate nationally as well. It is in that context that four actions were supported by Council on July 8, 2020 ([Report Number 20-159](#)).

Actions approved by Council at that time included: replacing the book plaques adjacent to the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park and the Engine 1095 in Confederation Park with interim notices that indicate new text is under development to tell a more complete and inclusive account of their histories in a Kingston context (**Complete**), confirming the City's support to name The Third Crossing in a way that reflects and celebrates the stories and contributions of Indigenous communities in this region, both past and present (**Underway**), adding a land recognition statement to the City of Kingston website (**Complete**) and to all City of Kingston e-mail signatures (**Underway**).

Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group

The fourth Council-approved action was to form a Working Group, led by First Peoples Group and supported by City staff, that includes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members, representing a diversity of perspectives, to develop text and interpretive installation plaques/panels that address issues specific to the history and legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald in Kingston. The content of these interpretive installations would then be shared online and in relation to local landmarks managed by the City of Kingston (**Underway**).

June 16, 2021

Page 6 of 11

The Working Group terms of reference were approved by Council in October of 2020 ([Report Number 20-227](#)) and membership was confirmed by Council on February 2, 2021 through a report from the Nominations Advisory Committee.

Working Group Members Include

- Chief Dave Mowat, Alderville First Nation
- Chief R. Donald Maracle, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte
- Ann Stevens
- Candace Lloyd
- Dionne Nolan
- Laurel Claus-Johnson
- Mary Farrar
- Tanya Grodinski

The working group held its first meeting on March 5 and has continued to meet monthly since. Discussions at the working group over the first 3 meetings focused on the various aspects of Macdonald's history and his legacy that need to be updated or expanded on as part of increased community education. In addition, the working group had begun to identify the additional technical and advisory supports that were needed to complete the mandated work. The working group had also established a metaphorical "parking lot" where ideas out of scope to the group's terms of reference would be placed for the time being. The intent was that these ideas would be reviewed after the core work was completed and presented to Council as a series of considerations for next steps.

Recent events

On May 27, 2021 as news was released by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation that 215 children had been found buried in unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School vigils began across the Country. The locating of unmarked and unrecorded burials has only begun – for some this discovery has been an education about the genocide enacted on Indigenous peoples, for Indigenous peoples it is part of what has always been known and is part of the continued trauma and legacy violence of residential schools and the colonial system. In the days since this news was released, more graves have been found and across Canada more voices are coming forward to demand action at all levels of government to uphold commitments to reconciliation.

Locally, and in the year since Council first approved the actions related to the History and Legacy of Macdonald, community discussions and learning have continued. The discussions evolving now nationally amplify one of the key ideas that was brought forward through the previous consultation; that the City needs to support community education that shares an inclusive history of Macdonald and his legacy. This education needs to honour Indigenous experience and authority and offer truth as a foundation of reconciliation.

June 16, 2021

Page 7 of 11

A key question before Council this evening emerges from a complex discussion - how do we collectively understand historic figures and the legacy of decisions made by them and by others of their time? What is the role or necessity of a statue in educating and understanding the history of Canada – the birth of a Nation, its colonial systems and the legacy of trauma enacted on Indigenous peoples and other ethnic and cultural communities? These questions are anchored to the calls for immediate action in relation to the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald located in City Park. There is no consensus about the path forward.

Working Group Meeting June 14, 2021

On Monday, June 14, the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group held a special meeting to discuss possible next steps for the Sir John A. Macdonald statue in City Park and to develop through a consensus process considerations to be shared with City Council. All members of the working group were present at the meeting. The meeting was facilitated by First Peoples Group with staff support. There were 39 public attendees. Members of the public were able to watch the working group meeting and were also invited to submit correspondence to the working group ahead of the meeting. Over 150 items of correspondence were shared with the working group members ahead of the meeting and are attached as Exhibit A to this report.

Over the course of an approximately three-hour meeting, the working group offered their ideas for what City Council should consider as a next step regarding the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park.

Common points of discussion at the Working Group meeting are bulleted below. It is important to note that these are summary points shared by multiple working group members and offered here for the benefit of Council. These bullets do not represent consensus agreement by the working group – the consensus consideration proposed by the working group is offered in the next section of this report.

- Education is key to the path forward – more education is needed for people to understand how a statue can cause harm and how Macdonald is one of many responsible for the systems and policies of his time.
- The decision around keeping or removing the statue is a call to leadership and an assertion of community values.
- Action around the statue is symbolic of Council's intent and its commitment to reconciliation and to honouring the voices of Indigenous community members.
- There is a force and a wave of emotion and awareness rising and this force is unlikely to be stopped. If Council chooses not to remove the statue, it is likely that the peaceful actions and ceremony that are underway at the statue will be disrupted and displaced by others who will likely forcefully remove the statue.
- The forceful removal, "the tearing down" of the statue, will divide the community and drive us apart.
- Choosing to remove the statue, even as an interim measure, commits Council and the City to being part of history as agents of change.

June 16, 2021

Page 8 of 11

- At minimum, the statue needs to be removed from his pedestal and brought to ground level.
- Create a space for community to reflect and learn – Indigenous led art installations, community programming about Macdonald and his legacy. Education about those who were impacted.
- Non-Indigenous people need to act, to keep the discussion going.
- The site and statue prompt dialogue – this can be continued even if the statue is removed and located elsewhere.
- Is removal a hollow gesture? Things put into storage are forgotten about, need to commit to continuing to educate and to not simply “forgetting”.
- More discussion with community, especially Indigenous community is needed, specifically about the statue.
- The space in City Park can have new meaning and new purpose.
- Consider moving the statue to a location where it can be more fully contextualized and understood – several working group members suggested the statue be moved to Bellevue House.
- Removal is an act of respect to Indigenous community members and creates a safe space to have further discussions about the path forward.
- Action is needed as soon as possible, and Council needs to lead action. This decision can not be pushed out to others.
- Take the statue down with dignity and intent, to place it in storage while next steps are determined with more community input.

The Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group Considerations for Council

Through a talking circle format, the working group developed and confirmed the following set of considerations for Council. This was a consensus building process. The working group requests that Council consider the following.

1. Remove the statue at City Park.
2. Place the statue into storage with a confirmed timeline for determining next steps.
3. Undertake additional community engagement/consultation.

The considerations brought forward by the working group have been incorporated into the considerations presented to Council through this report. In addition, the considerations before Council include additional detail for how these actions could be moved forward by staff.

Recent and Additional Public Input

Starting early evening on June 10, 2021, a group called Revolution of the Heart: A Ceremonial Action began holding a sacred fire and land-based ceremony at and around the statue in City Park. The organizers have stated that the peaceful action will continue in City Park until the statue is removed with a commitment to it being replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims. A media advisory that outlines the group's purpose and request is

June 16, 2021

Page 9 of 11

included as Exhibit B of this report. It is understood that a petition from Revolution of the Heart: A Ceremonial Action has been submitted to Council ahead of the June 16, 2021 Special Council Meeting.

Many members of the public have also reached out to share their ideas and considerations with Council. Correspondence received before 12 p.m. on Monday, June 14 was shared with working group members ahead of the special working group meeting and are included in this report as Exhibit A. Those that were received after 12 p.m. on Monday, June 14 and before 12 p.m. on Tuesday, June 15 are included in this report as Exhibit C. These items of correspondence echo many of the discussion points covered by the working group. There are letters written in support of Revolution of the Heart: A Ceremonial action, letters that call for the immediate removal of the statue and letters that call for the statue to remain and for plaque text and panel development to continue. These items of correspondence are included as exhibits to this report to provide Council the opportunity to review and consider the community input that they offer.

Furthermore, staff have included correspondence from members of the community that do not support the removal of the Sir John A. Macdonald statue. Some of the concerns expressed by those members of the public are that the City would be taking actions to cancel history by removing the statue. Those members of the public are encouraging Council to consider alternatives to the removal of statue and for the City to provide the full historical context by adding plaques or monuments. This feedback is generally in line with feedback that the City received through its Engage for Change process which resulted in the Council approval of recommendations included in [Report Number 20-159](#) in July 2020. One of the options provided in this report is for Council to leave the statue in its current location and continue its work with the community and with advice from the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group, to add historical context through plaques or other monuments. It is important to note that this option could require the City to redefine the terms and membership of the Working Group in light of the Working Group's recommendation included in this report.

City of Kingston Indigenous Initiatives

Council provides strategic leadership to the City of Kingston and has directed staff to work in partnership with and across the community to strengthen relations with Indigenous peoples and to ensure Indigenous experiences, knowledge and ways of being are acknowledged and honoured as a vital part of Kingston's history, identity and incorporated as part of City business.

The table below highlights several initiatives/programs that are underway with Council's direction that contribute to fostering a stronger, respectful and more inclusive city. The consideration of what to do with the statue in City Park is connected to these Indigenous initiatives. As was raised by the working group as well as by community through submitted correspondence, the decision of Council on keeping or removing the statue is an action, a symbolic action that will impact for better or worse the efforts already underway and the next steps on the shared path of reconciliation.

June 16, 2021

Page 10 of 11

Initiative	Project/Department Lead	Status
Recognition Statement	City Business	In place
Recognition statement and welcome at front entrance of City Hall	City Business	In place
Resources website and Indigenous community events calendar	Engage for Change – all phases	In place
Grandmother-in-Residence at the Grand Theatre	Arts and Culture Services	In place
Inclusion of Indigenous cultural teachings along waterfront pathway on directional signage	Waterfront Master Plan	In place
Annual Proclamation of June as National Indigenous Peoples Month	City Business	Annually
Funding in support of National Indigenous Peoples Day and other community-led events	Heritage Services	Annually
Cultural inclusion at City-led community events – Canada Day Celebrations, First Capital Day	City Business	Annually
Alderville Commemoration Project, Public Art Project in Lake Ontario Park	Public Art Program and Commemorations Strategy	Completion June 2021
Partnership with Tipi Moza - Indigenous Housing	Housing and Social Services	In place
Cultural awareness training, City of Kingston Council and staff	Engage for Change, all phases	Ongoing
City of Kingston Indigenous Liaisons and Interdepartmental Working Group	Engage for Change, Phase III	Ongoing
Market Wing Renovation to include an installation on local Indigenous Culture and Indigenous history led by an Indigenous Curator	Engage for Change, Phase III	Ongoing
Use of Traditional Medicines on City-owned Property Policy	Engage for Change Phase III	Ongoing
City Hall meeting space to be renamed and appropriately decorated in consultation with the local Indigenous community	Engage for Change Phase III	Ongoing
Support for an Indigenous Community Centre/Gathering Space(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for large gatherings at community centres • Cultural Programming partnerships • Interim community gathering/cultural space(s) 	Engage for Change Phase III	Ongoing

June 16, 2021

Page 11 of 11

Initiative	Project/Department Lead	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land based ceremony support 		
Support for the formation of an Indigenous-led Community Council/Advisory Committee	Engage for Change Phase III	Ongoing
Relationship Protocol between Host Nations and City of Kingston	Engage for Change Phase III	Ongoing

Existing Policy/By-Law:

None

Notice Provisions:

None

Accessibility Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

None

Contacts:

Jennifer Campbell, Director Heritage Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1377

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A Correspondence received by the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group

Exhibit B Media Advisory, Revolution of the Heart: A Ceremonial Action

Exhibit C Correspondence received after the meeting of the Sir John A. Macdonald History and Legacy Working Group

From: [Eric Ashton-Becker](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: 16th of June Meeting
Date: June 13, 2021 2:55:52 PM

Good Day,

I implore you to reconsider the removal of a historically statue. The erasure of history, of our first Prime Minister no less, is a act of both ignorance and weakness. A people without history are lost. This is a death knell which may not be unrung.

From: [Matt Rogalsky](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: cc of letter to Mayor and Councillors
Date: June 13, 2021 3:56:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear OurHistories,

I am copying to you a message I sent the other day to to Mayor and Councillors.

Although I can imagine the statue being kept and contextualized, I am very sympathetic to the current encampment which demands its removal. I also think they have beautifully veiled the offending statue in the meantime, not only keep it from sight but to 'protect' it.

Kingston does not need to lean on this old "man of his time" for its tourism dollars. We can remove his image and name from all our public places of honour without interfering with remembrance of his history.

Many thanks for your work on this,
M Rogalsky
[REDACTED] Kingston [REDACTED]

> Dear Mayor and Councillors

>

> I would like to register my current opinion on the statue in City Park, as input to your meeting called for June 16.

>

> I have listened to arguments for it to remain in place, but be contextualized by addition of information panels or adjacent artworks. I have heard rumour that Kent Monkman is an artist whose work has been discussed which could contextualize it, and I have the impression there has been consideration of a commissioning project from Monkman. I believe that Monkman's unflinching and forceful work, if it surrounded the current statue and if the statue was placed in a diminutive position (removing it from its lofty pedestal), would indeed be an excellent way of keeping the statue but forcing all of us to remember the racist beliefs which Macdonald put into murderous action.

>

> If a challenging Indigenous artist like Monkman is not commissioned, if appropriately horrific art cannot be placed beside the statue to remind us of these things, then I believe the statue should disappear. Ideally, perhaps, to be melted down to create a new monument which might commemorate the many dead children who suffered in the "schools" he played a major role in starting.

>

> Sincerely

> Matt Rogalsky

> (Mayor's Arts Award, Creator category, 2017)

From: [Nathan Deg](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Comment on Sir John A Macdonald History & Legacy working group
Date: June 13, 2021 2:30:50 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I understand that there is a working group meeting occurring in the near future relating to the legacy of Sir John A Macdonald in Kingston, and in particular, to the statue located in City Park. I strongly feel that this monument to the first Prime Minister of Canada should be removed from the park and placed in a museum.

I certainly respect the fact that he was the one of the founders of Canada and the first Prime Minister, which is a very important legacy. Equally important is his legacy of racism and genocide against the First Nations in Canada. And the two are completely intertwined with each other and cannot be separated.

Sir John A Macdonald is an important figure in Canadian history and deserves to be remembered for both his good and his evil. But this sort of remembrance is best taught in schools and museums. Public statues are not and have never been about history. Rather, they glorify and memorialize an individual.

I recently spent a number of years living and working in Cape Town, South Africa. I was employed at the University of Cape Town (UCT), which was founded by Cecil Rhodes. When I arrived there, a statue of Rhodes was placed in a prominent position overlooking the University campus. During my stay, the statue was removed after a great deal of protest during the '#RhodesMustFall' campaign. Many of the black students and staff talked about the pain they felt walking by and working under a statue of a person that didn't think they were human and equal to white people. Moreover, they felt that the fact that management at UCT fought to keep the statue up as a memorial to the founder of the University indicated that UCT still didn't value them equally.

I bring up this story as I feel that there is an analogue between the legacies of Rhodes and Sir John A Macdonald. But more than that, there are now analogues between the City of Kingston and UCT. By keeping up the statue to Rhodes as a memorial to its founder, UCT was continuing to black South Africans. And by keeping up the statue to Sir John A Macdonald, the City of Kingston is hurting First Nations peoples. Each time they walk by the statue, they are implicitly being told that his part in the genocide of their people is worth glorifying. As I said earlier, a statue glorifies and memorializes a person. And it is the entire person, not just a part of a person.

As the home of Sir John A Macdonald, Kingston is uniquely suited to address his legacy as well as our relationship with the Indigenous peoples who live in Canada. While removing his statue does not address the full spectrum of things needed for true reconciliation, it is a meaningful step. I employ this working group to please remove this statue and this source of pain from City Park to a museum where it can be properly contextualized and the full legacy

of Sir John A Macdonald, both good and bad, can be taught. Thank you for your time,
Dr. Nathan Deg
[REDACTED]
Kingston, Ontario

From: [Stephen Delve](#)
To: [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Conrad Black: Canada's treatment of aboriginals was shameful, but it was not genocide | National Post
Date: June 11, 2021 6:39:01 PM

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Dear Jennifer:

I trust you may take a moment to read this article published several years ago, link seen below.

Respectfully submitted -S. Delve

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-canadas-treatment-of-aboriginals-was-shameful-but-it-was-not-genocide>

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ken Cuthbertson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Fate of the Macdonald statue
Date: June 13, 2021 11:36:19 AM

I am opposed to the idea of removing the Macdonald statue from City Park.

Rewriting and obscuring history is the kind of thing that despotic governments do.

Far better to use this as a teaching moment and to erect ancillary statues/plaques/art installations that put Macdonald's life and political career into the broader context and that outline the realities of residential schools and other reprehensible government initiatives. People are smart enough to judge events and personalities for themselves if you present them with the facts.

Educate, don't eradicate.

-- Ken Cuthbertson, Kingston, ON

From: [Colin B](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Feedback on Statue
Date: June 13, 2021 4:42:46 PM

Hello,

I wanted to provide some feedback with regards to the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in advance of the council meeting this week.

First, the most common reason I hear to leave the statue is not to "erase history". Monuments are celebrations or commemorations. Most of history does not get monuments, they are about signaling attitudes towards historic events not preserving or communicating history. An argument could be made that the statue itself has historic value (though I have not heard anyone make that argument) which is why it would be best moved to a museum collection, possibly Bellevue House.

Second, regardless of what one's opinion is on this statue it is hard to claim that Sir John A. Macdonald is not over-commemorated. He takes up far too much public space while many other important historic personalities and events have little or no public commemoration. In Kingston we have a museum and several marked sites connected with him which are an ample and appropriate level of commemoration, more so sends a clear public signal that he is worth celebrating.

Personally, I do not think he is a figure worth celebrating. His good achievements are mostly not good at all. The existence of the country (which he did not think of as an independent country) is not what should be celebrated; it is the things that have made the country it is today, most of which he would have vehemently opposed.

Thank you for your time.

Colin Burt

From: [Adam Davidson-Harden](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: follow-up: submission for consideration for the special meeting of Kingston City Council on the SJAM statue
Date: June 11, 2021 8:28:55 PM

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Greetings, I write this as a follow-up note to my previous request to attend the SJAM working group meeting this coming Monday. I am a Kingston resident, and someone who as a cisgender, white male with a settler background, lives with an inherited and disproportionate amount of privilege, living as we do in a culture of white supremacy, where our institutions of policing and prisons, and the malign neglect of our governments continue a policy of colonization that continues to do disproportionate violence to indigenous peoples to this day. I gladly and gratefully reproduce the words of a [Queen's University website](#) in relation to making a land acknowledgement of my own:

"It is my understanding that this territory is included in the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Ojibwe and Allied Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. The Kingston Indigenous community continues to reflect the area's Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee roots. There is also a significant Métis community as well as First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island present here today."

I am in full accord with the spirit of a campaign currently underway in Ottawa to rename a SJAM parkway/roadway there:

<http://renametheparkway.ca>

I am also of the opinion, given what we know about our first Prime Minister's role in the establishment of residential schools, colonization and racist ideas and policies in this part of Turtle Island, that here in Kingston we ought to enter into a process of considering how to best rename our own SJAM boulevard and elementary school.

Further, I believe that the SJAM statue currently in City Park should be removed until such time as it can be placed in a museum of cultural genocide and reconciliation. The establishment of such a cultural institution could itself be a project of healing and reconciliation, hopefully led by indigenous cultural practitioners. The current site of the Corrections Museum or the former Prison for Women might make a fitting repurposing for such an institution.

I speak for myself only, but stand in solidarity with others, including indigenous peoples, who wish to take strong symbolic actions like this, in order to point the way to more substantive reconciliation efforts that our provincial and federal governments should help to lead. Instead, today, we see a chronic lack of action on the calls to action of the 2015 TRC, and the 2019 final report on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. We see our federal government taking indigenous children to court, and withholding documents and records that could help us come to terms with the full scope of horrific violence of colonization, so

painfully obvious in the recent terrible discovery near Kamloops. We see our governments imposing on indigenous lands to continue extractive economic activities that endanger local and global environments. These harms, combined with a lack of action for equity and reconciliation, resulting as it does in continued violence toward indigenous peoples, is a national shame. Here in Kingston we have a role to play in questioning the legacy of our settler nation, imposed as it was over top of existing cultural and national systems of indigenous peoples through violence, including that of the horribly genocidal program of residential schools, which the first Prime Minister of this country played a large hand in establishing, along with fellow government architects like Duncan Campbell Scott.

These figures should not be blandly celebrated and remembered passively through street names and statuary in public parks. Their names should be remembered, yes, but in the context of a history that acknowledges and interrogates their role in colonization, cultural genocide, and the violence that impacts and continues to unfold in this part of Turtle Island to this day. The 'rename the parkway' site contains more background that outlines this violence, and one of our first priorities as citizens of Canada should be to continue to struggle for justice for first nations and indigenous peoples, whether through symbolic acts such as this, or in material policies of antiracism and equity, that confront horrible infrastructure of socioeconomic, health, educational, as well as gendered inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, as well as between white Canadians and black Canadians and other people of colour.

Sincerely,

Adam Davidson-Harden, Ph.D (Education), OCT
Kingston

From: [Amanda Gebara](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Fwd: Statue
Date: June 12, 2021 1:14:35 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Amanda Gebara [REDACTED]
Subject: Statue
Date: June 12, 2021 at 9:59:20 AM EDT
To: mayor@cityofkingston.ca

Dear Mayor,

As you know, Sir John A. was a champion of inflicting genocide of indigenous people. It's appalling that we still have not taken down the statue at city park. I know some of the old colonialists will be upset with you if you do this, but please remember that these old colonialists are old, and will be dead in the coming years. Think of the harm this statue causes for so many Kingstonians. We must not celebrate a racist. We must not. Please please take the statue down. You will be celebrated for this by the majority of Kingstonians who are in with the times. Be a man of 2021. Be a mayor that is respected. Be a mayor for change.

Thank you,

Amanda Gebara

From: [Douglas Perkins](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A MacDonald Statute
Date: June 11, 2021 5:23:32 PM
Importance: High

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To the Mayor and Council: I think it is important for Council to consider that the current flavour of the month (or WOKE movement) is not necessarily the best thing for Kingston. The Residential Schools may have started during the term of MacDonald however no Prime Minister ever corrected the wrong until 1996 when the last Residential School was closed during the time Jean Chrétien was Prime Minister. So, in fact, I believe that each Prime Minister up to Chretien was equally responsible as MacDonald as they did nothing to correct the situation when they knew very well what was happening in these schools. So if we blame and punish the legacy of MacDonald we need to do the same with every Prime Minister until 1996. It does not make sense for The City of Kingston to remove the Statute of our first Prime Minister who did so much to create Canada and in fact, thought he was doing the right thing at the time with the schools. We need to educate going forward instead of punishing and going backwards. We need to interpret the issues not destroy them.

Yours truly

Douglas Perkins

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [David Casarsa](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A Macdonald Working Group
Date: June 12, 2021 3:40:01 PM

While I understand the need for a working group to determine the facts and make a recommendation, what I do not understand is the way ahead. I assume the working group will report to City Council, but on an issue as contentious and emotional as this, I doubt that neither the working group nor Council will display the impartiality on a subject clouded in political correctness and claims of "systemic racism".

To take the burden of this decision away from both the Working Group and City Council, why do you not take this to a vote (referendum) by the citizens of Kingston? In this manner, democracy can be seen to be taking place. It is hard to argue with an informed public, allowed to decide the fate of our First Prime Minister, though judged by the standards of today. What could be more fair? Let the people of Kingston decide who should or should not be honoured in our public places.

David P. Casarsa



From: [Hal Holt](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Keep The Sir John A Statute Up BUT
Date: June 13, 2021 1:47:27 PM

Greetings,

As an 81-year old, you might automatically toss me off as 'my voice really does not count,' or worse still assume that I'm somehow part of the history that has led to the factors involved in considering the removal of this statute. Let me tell you that I feel ashamed as anyone about some of the socio-political things done in our past. Let me also tell you that I have spent a lifetime, in both my career and volunteer life, doing what I can to combat racism.

Here are some thoughts about tearing down this statute:

- 'don't throw out the baby with the bath water'
- you cannot erase history (and we need to understand 'all' of our history; to learn from it and appreciate the 'good' and the 'bad' in it)
- even though we need to identify the 'bad' in our history and learn from it to be able to chart a more just future, if we cancel history for those who have grievances with it **now**, it would create a **vicious circle** damaging to the good things we have created. No one is perfect and there will be more mistakes in the future which present grievors could even contribute to. To try to re-write history is ridiculous. We do not want to create a **vicious circle** whereby we try to re-write history every time mistakes are made; effectively that would erase who we are.
- although we have made many mistakes which we need to correct (and which BTW many are trying hard to correct), that should not be an excuse to erase our history
- arguably our biggest mistake is how we dealt with Indigenous people, but there are many more mistakes involving more recent Canadians; if we tried to focus on erasing one element of our history what happens to all the others? Grievors of these other mistakes would become participants in the **vicious circle**.
- Bottom line, we are all in this together and we need to start treating history and 'today' this way.

Having said all that **why don't we build statutes depicting a famous/relevant Indigenous person, a famous/relevant black person, a famous/relevant Muslim person, and a famous/relevant Asiatic person; cluster them with the exiting Sir John A statute , and rename the park ' Inclusive Park?'** This would also go a long way to remove the racist "WASP image' which regretfully is the image many Canadians have of us.

Sincerely, Hal Holt

From: [Rod](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: KINGSTON'S SIR JOHN A MACDONALD STATUE AND ITS FUTURE
Date: June 12, 2021 12:44:57 PM

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Please don't remove the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald from City Park!

By way of a quick introduction, my name is Rod Babiuk. I am a husband, a father and a veteran with over 30 service in the Canadian Forces. Kingston has been my home since 1996; my family joined me here in 1997 when our house finally sold in Ottawa. I support my community and once served on Kingston's Advisory Council on Environmental Issues (KEAF). We love Kingston, its people, its geography, its weather and its history and that is why we chose to remain here after my retirement instead of returning to our home province of Alberta. We love it here!

During my service in the Forces, I was deployed to "hot spots" around the world and saw, first hand, the sorrow and devastation brought on by civil war and natural disasters. In dealing with the carnage and loss of life, we, as Canadian soldiers, were constantly reminded of how fortunate we were to come from a country like Canada.

This brings me to the point of my email to you. In spite of its many advantages, Canada is not a perfect country; Its leaders have not been perfect and its peoples have not been perfect. Mistakes were made throughout our history and they continue to be made to this day. As a people, all we can do is learn from our mistakes, and move on with an increased resolve to do better. But how do we do that, especially as we try to come to grips with the tragedy of the Residential School System?

It is my belief that many Canadians, perhaps even the majority of Canadians, do not wish to see statues torn down, buildings renamed in response to the Residential School tragedy. I feel strongly that we want something done, but not that. I don't know that for certain, but what I do believe is that this "silent segment" of our society that has no voice in the current debate, if you can call it a debate.

What we see, on main stream media and social media (which are pursuing their own agendas), are demonstrators vandalizing public and private property and, in some cases, destroying that property as was recently seen on Toronto's Ryerson University campus. There is no reasoned debate taking place as to what we, as a society, should do to correct the injustices of the Residential School System. Our TV and Smart Phone screens continue to show us what amounts to "mob rule" and I don't use that term lightly. No one is going to weigh in to a situation like that and appeal for calm and collective thought and action as to what we should do next. I've come believe that anyone attempting to do so will be immediately branded a racist and threatened. I am not making this up and will give you a case in point, as follows:

- I used to be a member of a Kingston-based Facebook group dedicated to featuring photos, articles and other stories of vintage Kingston. Over time I contributed to the group and learned a lot about our city's history. After watching the destruction of the Ryerson statue in Toronto, it was my belief that this violence would soon be directed at Kingston's statue in City Park. On Monday morning of 7 June 2021, I drove to City Park and took numerous pictures of Sir John A's statue as well as the other monuments found in the park. Back home I posted 3 photos of Sir John A to the FB group with the comment that given what happened in Toronto, if people wished to have their own photos of this statue before it was forcibly removed, they might want to think about doing so sooner rather than later. There was no rant, no political or cultural comments by me.
- Literally, within seconds I received dozens and dozens of "likes" and many other positive comments. Then, what I call the "haters" took over. My posting was denounced as insensitive and racist. I was insulted personally. I was told in coarse language that our first PM didn't deserve a statue and that this one should be torn down! Then people started arguing with each other in their respective posts and some of it was nasty. Someone even posted that Bellevue House should be burned down. These terrible and hateful comments just seemed to pile on one after another. I was appalled at the "firestorm" I seemed to have let loose. Someone declared they were going to "report" me to the group's administrator. I actually didn't think I had much to worry about as I sincerely felt that, timing aside, my posting was non-controversial; just pictures of the statue while it still stood. Well, I was wrong! My post was removed and I was banned from the group for a month. No discussion, no attempt by the administrator to reach out to me. I was found guilty and the penalty imposed. This is the environment we are in!

And this is my point! There is no discussion happening, there is no balance, no sober second thought, no meeting of equals trying to determine a path forward. Statues are coming down; some peacefully like Picton and Charlettetown, some forcefully like Montreal and Toronto and maybe Kingston. Perhaps it is fair to say that the peaceful removal of statues had as much to do with a community trying to avoid mob vandalism as it did out of recognition of the tragedy of the Residential Schools.

I would like the statue to stay. I think there are thousands of Kingstonians who would like the statue to stay and I hope many are reaching out to their city councillors and the committee. My fear is that they are not because they believe it is already too late, that emotions are too high. We know that, in spite of his faults, Macdonald was the first in a long line of imperfect prime ministers. It can be argued that if it wasn't for him there would be no Canada and we would likely be part of the United States! But he was a man worthy of study; the good and the bad. Let's install educational plaques, let's install another monument honouring the indigenous peoples who were here first and who were affected by policies of the Macdonald and subsequent federal governments.

My fear is that Kingston City Council will not get the chance to move forward. My fear is that the demonstrators will take the law into their own hands and pull down our statue and destroy it as the cameras roll. There is protection in the anonymity of a mob. They will get away with the damage and

the police and the fire department will be left to clean up the pieces and we, citizens of Kingston, will be left shaken and disappointed that folks, not even from around here, could come and do such a thing in our city with us having no say in the matter. Perhaps rather than a vote by City Council the future of Sir John's statue could be decided in a city-wide referendum. Then the silent segment of our society could get a chance to weigh in. I believe however that it is too late for that. There are too many people yelling with self-righteous fury right now and no one can hear for all the noise.

I wish Council and Committee members all the best as they grapple with what seems to be an unavoidable situation. I sincerely hope I am wrong.

Rod Babiuk

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Opinion

Sir John A. Macdonald Saved More Native Lives Than Any Other Prime Minister

Greg Piassetzki is a Toronto-based intellectual property lawyer with an interest in Canadian history.

<https://c2cjournal.ca/2020/11/sir-john-a-macdonald-saved-more-native-lives-than-any-other-prime-minister/>



Reversal of fortune: Sir John A. Macdonald’s legacy as a nation-builder has lately come under fire; Canada’s first prime minister at Earncliffe, his Ottawa residence, in 1888 (left) and his statue in Montreal after being decapitated by a mob in August 2020 (right). (Image credits: John Mahoney/Montreal Gazette, left, and Library and Archives Canada, right.)

Given that he died in 1891, the facts of Sir John A. Macdonald’s life are unchangeable. The story of his life, however, has changed dramatically in recent years. During his life and for well over a century after his death, he was regarded as Canada’s foremost founding father and one of this country’s most colourful characters. Confederation was very much Macdonald’s singular achievement – the product of his masterful skill at negotiation, plus plenty of patience and resolve. He was also noted for his sunny disposition and lively sense of humour. A fondness for the bottle and being caught in a serious political scandal may have tempered history’s judgement, but only to the degree that such flaws revealed his humanity.

Lately, however, Macdonald has come to be defined by a completely different story. As a result of his participation in the Indian residential school system as well as the white settlement of the Prairies, it is now common to hear Macdonald’s legacy described as a black stain on Canada’s past. In 2018 Victoria, B.C. removed a statue of him from in front of City Hall following an official statement that identified Canada’s first prime minister as “the leader of violence against Indigenous peoples.” With similar motivation but somewhat less formality, last summer an angry mob tore down and decapitated a statue of Macdonald in Montreal, scrawling a profane slogan on his plinth.

For a factual exploration of this situation see the article in the C2CJournal at the web address above.

From: [Lynn Nolan](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: MacDonald statue
Date: June 13, 2021 1:36:07 PM

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I am not sure if individual opinions are being sought or considered but mine is :

Sir John A MacDonald was a nation builder and as such deserves that his statue remains. That he, and many other politicians contributed to the Indigenous residential system is appalling and should go down in history and be used as a teaching experience of what went wrong and what should not be repeated.

The expression “ he who has no sin can throw the first stone . . .” Is pertinent. Have any of those defacers of statues ever considered what sins they may have committed or wrongful deeds they may have indulged in? Are they as individuals “perfect” enough to be allowed to judge others?

I wish all Indigenous endeavours success and I hope for a better future for them in our community however I do not think city of Kingston should not let an unruly crowd decide what is appropriate.

Lynn Nolan [REDACTED].

Sent from my iPad

From: [Rob Matheson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Date: June 13, 2021 11:53:23 AM

Thank you to Mary Farrar for bringing this opportunity to provide feedback on the future of the statue of Sir John A to my attention.

I would like to commend Mary specifically for being actively engaged through social media, hearing and listening to the various comments, and asking questions.

I would like to thank this committee for all of your collective hard work and diligence, thank you for all that you do.

I truly hope Kingston does the right thing and brings down this statue and replace it with something worthy of celebration and or memorial.

As a former city Councillor I was originally responsible for the signage celebrating our links to Sir John A, posting signage to that effect on the 401.

During and especially after that motion passed, I was approached by indigenous members of our community and taught the real history of our country and its foundation on the genocide of our first nations.

I have long since lost any love of celebrating our First Prime Minister, and would encourage you to take him down from the pedestal we have all placed him on, figuratively and literally, and relegate him to the history books where he belongs.

We must take the first real step of truth and reconciliation with our past, so that we can together take steps toward a better, more just future for us all, based on our real history and better aspirations.

Hope love and courage to you in making this hard decision, to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Rob Matheson
Former City Councilor
Mayoral Candidate



From: [Bob Story](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: note to the Sir John A Macdonald History and Legacy WG
Date: June 13, 2021 10:03:57 AM

I have been concerned that recent events would drive up emotions and reasonableness would go out the window. Sadly that has come to pass.

An extremist Indigenous group has cloaked the Sir John A statue in City Park and pledges to remain until it is taken down. I do not begrudge them their protest. However, I have heard that the City is now seriously considering giving into their demand.

The Sir John A Statue Committee has done some really good work on moving through the differing sides and seemed well on its way to consensus from both sides. Instead this group is recklessly spending the Indigenous political capital on removing symbols rather than working to make Indigenous lives better in the future. I worry that the action of taking the statue down will be a move too far and further alienate the Indigenous plight from much of the rest of the population.

The City needs to continue on the road of compromise for the sake of all sides. Let the protest continue but do not give in to the demand to take the statue down.

-Bob Story.

--

[REDACTED]
Kingston ON
[REDACTED]

From: [Erin Rose](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Public input: Kingston Special Council Meeting MacDonald statue removal
Date: June 13, 2021 12:23:40 PM

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Hello,

I recently learned that there will be a special council meeting to discuss the fate of the Sir John A. MacDonald statue in City Park and that you are accepting feedback from the public.

I have been a resident of Kingston for the last thirteen years. Over those years, I have noticed many tributes to Sir John A. MacDonald throughout the city, from street names to school names to statues. Throughout these years, I have also learned more about MacDonald's actions and how they have negatively impacted the lives of Indigenous Canadians. I work in one of Kingston's federal penitentiaries and see every day the effects of generational trauma from residential schools. I have heard horrific stories of children literally being ripped from their parents' arms and never seen again.

This past year, I have heard some say that you can't erase history and that we shouldn't remove statues and monuments because it would be an attempt to erase our history. I vehemently disagree with this. No, we cannot erase history. But statues are not history. In my viewpoint, statues are erected to honour people. We should continue to teach the history of our country and both the good and bad impact that MacDonald had on Canada. However, we do not need to continue honouring him with statues. It is a visual reminder to Indigenous Canadians of what was done to their families and a vehicle of re-traumatization for many community members.

I ask the city to please consider removing the statue in City Park and then work with Indigenous community members on a suitable monument to replace it. I love living in Kingston and want to be proud to live somewhere that is actively working towards reconciliation with the Indigenous community.

Thank you for your time.

Erin Rose
Resident, City of Kingston

From: [Erin Goodman](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Subject: Public input: Kingston Special Council Meeting MacDonald statue removal
Date: June 13, 2021 11:35:38 AM

Hello,

I understand that there will be a special council meeting to discuss the fate of the John A MacDonald statue in downtown Kingston next week and that you are accepting feedback from the public.

I recently accompanied a family member to Kingston for specialized health care. I was unable to wait inside due to Covid safety protocols, so I spent time in the park downtown. It was then that I noticed the very prominent statue honouring John a MacDonald, seemingly celebrating a person who devised and implemented a decades-long plan to wipe out Indigenous people in Canada.

As a descendant of colonizers, I can't change the past but I am committed to doing better in the present to help with the work of Indigenous reconciliation. When these kinds of monuments are featured in your public spaces, it gives visitors the impression that you are proud of our history of genocide, oppression of Indigenous culture, and hundreds of dead innocent children due to torture and neglect in residential schools. Letting this statue stand is not only harmful to those whose family members were victims to the residential school system, but it advances a false, racist narrative about what it means to be Canadian.

How many people visiting your city are made uncomfortable, or even traumatized, just exploring your public spaces? I support the removal of this statue and others like it as a concrete action towards Indigenous reconciliation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Erin Goodman

From: [Brad O'Neill](#)
To: [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Re: acknowledgement of a fine job
Date: June 13, 2021 3:08:41 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

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Wanted to make sure the comments from the mayor i mentioned in my previous email was from last year thanks Brad

On Sun., Jun. 13, 2021, 14:56 Campbell, Jennifer, <jlcampbell@cityofkingston.ca> wrote:

Hello Brad,

We acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your communication to the Sir John A. History and Legacy Working Group. The City of Kingston welcomes and appreciates feedback from the community.

Your correspondence will be distributed to the working group members ahead of the Monday meeting for their review. To ensure that these comments are also received by Council they will be added to the report that City Council will review ahead of the emergency meeting the Mayor has called on Wednesday evening.

Please be advised that any personal information in the email you submitted (including but not limited to, your name, contact information, opinions and views, etc.) may form part of the public agendas and minutes, and therefore will be made available to members of the public at the meetings, through requests, and through the website of the Corporation of the City of Kingston.

Please do not hesitate to contact the City Clerk, John Bolognone, jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca directly if you have any questions regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of your personal information.

Thank you again for your input into this important discussion,

Jennifer



Jennifer Campbell, PhD

Director

Heritage Services

City of Kingston

Kingston City Hall,



216 Ontario Street Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

613-546-4291 ext 1377

jlcampbell@cityofkingston.ca

From: Brad O'Neill [REDACTED]
Sent: June 10, 2021 7:20 PM
To: ourhistories <ourhistories@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: acknowledgement of a fine job

Hi

I usually don't write such emails but felt I needed to.

I just wanted to commend your organization for its ideas to bring to people the knowledge that Sir John A. was a man of his times and those times views were a lot different than today. I believe your organization and the Mayor's stance along with his wonderful reasoning of why Sir John A. does have a place in Kingston. My view is that removing a statue or renaming something, is removing the conversation, the questions, and the history for future generations to make their own judgment on what happened good and bad. I wanted to end this email with the comment that we as Canadians must remember there might never have been a Canada without this man.

Thank you for reading this

Brad O'Neill

From: [B Mouldey](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [HElen Ericson](#); [Matt](#)
Subject: Re: Sir John A Macdonald in 2021
Date: June 12, 2021 10:35:36 AM

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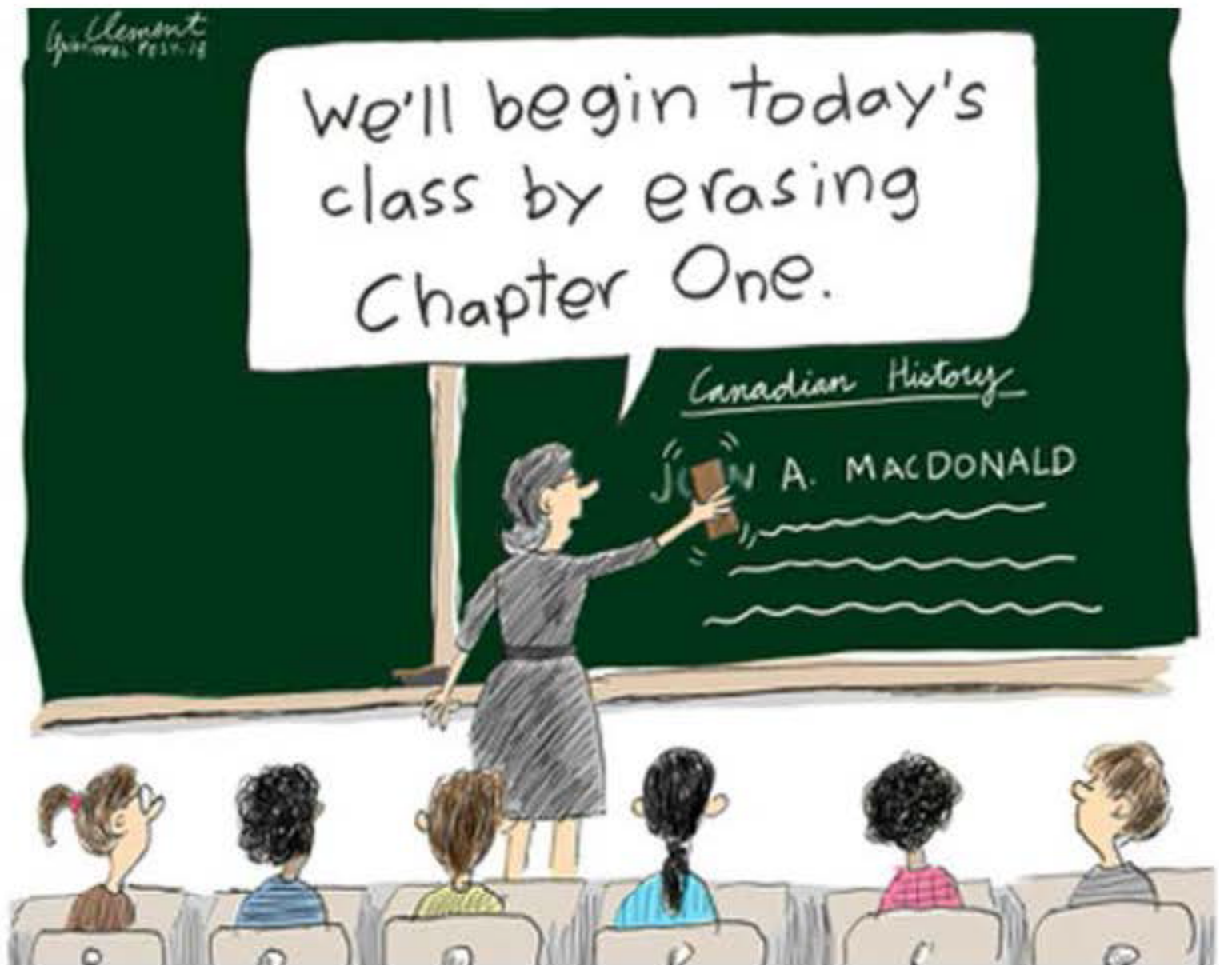
“WHEN HISTORY IS ERASED, PEOPLES MORAL VALUES ARE ALSO ERASED”

Erasing the memory & culture of the man that was trying to erase the memory & culture of someone else makes no sense to me.. A suggestion may be : putting an exhibit to illustrate the culture & oppressions of the Indigenous People on his property might be, after all they were on the property thousands of years before he immigrated to Canada..

I would like to thank **“the History and Legacy of Sir John A Macdonald Working Group”** of Kingston for stepping up and trying to make sense of this delicate matter in Kingston's & Canada's history, your efforts are appreciated in this difficult time..you are faced with a unique opportunity to show Canadians and the world how to delicately & properly address the dark secrets that are a part of our history, I truly wish you the best of luck moving forward..

Thank you for your time & consideration..

Regards,
Brian Mouldey
A proud Kingstonian



From: [Jackson Pind](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Re: Sir John A. Macdonald Comments
Date: June 12, 2021 7:49:58 AM
Attachments: [moses marsden - wild rice.png](#)

Removal of wild rice lands after forced removal from Kingston, 1905:

Thackery, J. (March 28th, 1905). [Letter from Indian Agent J. Thackery to the Department of Indian Affairs]. RG10, Alnwick Agency - Correspondence, Reports And Memoranda Regarding The Dispute Between The Indians Of Rice And Mud Lakes And The Alnwick And Alderville Bands Relating To The Wild Rice On Rice Lake, 1897-1933, p. 16. Volume: 2898, Microfilm: C-11294, File number: 183, 727.

Jackson Pind (he/him)
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education | Queen's University



From: Jackson Pind [Redacted]
Date: Saturday, June 12, 2021 at 7:46 AM
To: ourhistories@cityofkingston.ca <ourhistories@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald Comments

Hello,

I am PhD Candidate of Indigenous education at Queen's University who has studied the history of Indian Day Schools in Ontario for the last 4 years. I am well versed on the historical arguments that Sir John A. perpetuated as system of genocide against Indigenous people in pursuit of the creation of Canada. For this reason alone, the statue must come down but many people don't know he also orchestrated a system of Indian Day Schools, please see this site I developed: www.indiandayschools.org to show the true extent of this damage. Currently, these survivors are applying for compensation under the largest class action in Canada history for the crimes that occurred there. <https://theconversation.com/indian-day-school-survivors-are-seeking-truth-and-justice-146655>

My own family was significantly impacted by his actions as I am descendant of Chief Moses Marsden from Alderville. In 1838 our family was forcibly removed from this region of Kingston to a reserve and forced to attend the first Residential School in Canada as a method for Macdonald and Ryerson to test out the system before spreading it throughout the country. As a result, Moses enfranchised, giving up his right to be an Indigenous person under the Indian Act which allowed him to not send his 13 children to residential school. This disconnected my entire family from our culture and assimilated us quickly into Canadian society but thankfully my mother did not have to grow up in a residential school. The statue must come down as it is a painful reminder every time I see it. Even worse, is that after he arrived in Alderville the government forbade all wild rice harvesting and sold the land to

settlers (see evidence attached).

Through my work at Queen's I have been able to work with Residential/day school survivor and activist Raymond Mason. He visited Kingston in 2019 in an effort to help record his story and publish his book which came out last fall: <https://www.mqup.ca/spirit-of-the-grassroots-people-products-9780228003519.php>. When I drove him downtown he became visibly upset and was angry that the city was still honouring the person who ultimately killed multiple members of his family and forced in him into abusive conditions between the age of 6-18. Here is one statement from his book that shows this trauma:

“I cannot remember whether it was one or two years that I lasted in Birtle Residential School, but the weirdest thing of all took place in this institution. The whole time that I was there, I didn't know that my two oldest sisters, Edith and Nora, were in the same building as I was. A wall divided us so that we could not see or speak to each other. When I did see my sister Nora, at a Sunday church service, I spotted her on the “female side” of the aisle and I ran over to her, crying. I tried to hug her. I grabbed her and wouldn't let her go. She could not respond to me, because I was breaking a rule. We were not allowed to do what I was doing, trying to see and hug my sister. “

If you have a sibling reading this message, what would you want to do with the statue? It is time to fully remove this monument to colonial violence and replace it with something for our survivors of education that was designed to kill the Indian in them.

This fall Queen's will be awarding Raymond Mason an honorary Doctorate for his work in obtaining the Residential School and Day School settlement agreements for thousands of fellow survivors. I surely hope he will not have to drive by this statue again during that important day.

If you have questions about these comments, I would be happy to speak with you.

Chi-Miigwetch.

Jackson Pind (he/him)
PhD Candidate
Faculty of Education | Queen's University



From: [Heather Miceli](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Re: Sir John A. MacDonald
Date: June 13, 2021 5:32:34 PM

On Sun, Jun 13, 2021 at 5:24 PM Heather Miceli [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Mayor Paterson and Council:

I object to the removal of the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald. Sir John A. MacDonald did not create the residential school system but he enabled the establishment of the system in order to assimilate the indigenous people of Canada into the mainstream Canadian culture. This was not a novel idea on his part but the prevailing philosophy of the time. As a founding father of Canada he was and is much more than an enabler of the residential school system. There can be no reconciliation between the indigenous people and the rest of Canadian citizens if interest groups are allowed to tear down our history. One cannot know how to move forward and make Canada a better place to live if we destroy our past because it does not suit our sensibilities of the time.

Sincerely

Heather L. Miceli

From: [AM](#)
To: [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Re: statue of Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 12, 2021 9:19:26 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Please accept my suggestion for the Monday's emergency meeting re: Sir John A. MacDonald statue.

I propose that since it was Sir John A MacDonald who decided what to do with indigenous peoples, it would be symbolical and appropriate to let indigenous people decide what to do with MacDonald.

I'm confident that the outcome would be positive. Whatever decision they would make would be more "civilized" compared to MacDonald's decision.

Sincerely,

Adam Malus

From: [Jess Pelow](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A Macdonald's statue from City Park
Date: June 12, 2021 4:43:57 PM

Dear City Council,

I stand by the Indigenous communities who have asked for the removal of Sir John A Macdonald's statue from City Park. I urge you to honour this request and make meaningful strides toward healing in our community.

With thanks,
Jess Pelow

From: [Shane Goudreau](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Shane Goudreau
Date: June 12, 2021 1:26:11 PM

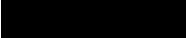
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Good afternoon . I wasn't sure where to send this too exactly so If I have the wrong email please direct me to the proper one .

As a local professional visual artist I wanted to offer a different solution to the Sir John A McDonald statue perhaps something more interactive . If taken down maybe setting it up as an exhibit somewhere while surrounded or overshadowed so to speak by paintings or murals depicting his true history from all perspectives including his dark past

If part of a tourist attraction it not only keeps the conversation alive but also 100 percent of any proceeds can go to helping residential school survivors .

I have many ideas myself for the artwork as I've worked closely with many first nations in past works aswell . However certainly any artist or artists who wish to contribute would be I think a great idea .

As for myself it would be an honour to expand the conversation and be apart of a new path of growth with our first nations brothers and sisters for reference to my most up to date works visit Instagram 

From: [Peter and Alison Ginn](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A Legacy
Date: June 13, 2021 4:09:11 PM
Attachments: [macdonald Piasetzki.pdf](#)

To the Mayor and Council

My thoughts:

As an avid amateur historian, I take a keen interest all the details of our history and am always looking for more perspectives of the past. It distresses me that the proposal to remove the Sir John A statue has become so emotionally charged. While there may be some negative aspects of the policies pursued by the government of the day, there are many positive aspects as well. The attached introduction to an article by Greg Piasetzki and the full article referenced are most enlightening.

We need to understand the history and build on it not remove aspects of the story because we don't like one part. You can see where I stand. I hope actions taken will be considerate, unforced and recognize the whole story.

Peter Ginn

From: [Vincent Durant](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A Macdonald statue in City Park
Date: June 13, 2021 12:04:28 PM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Kingston Historical Society Founded 1893
P.O. Box 54, KINGSTON, ON CANADA K7L 4V6
WWW.KINGSTONHISTORICALSOCIETY.CA



June 13, 2021

Mayor Bryan Paterson and members of City Council

Kingston, Ontario

Dear Mayor Paterson and Council,

The Kingston Historical Society wishes to convey its objection to removal of the statue of Sir John A Macdonald in City Park.

Several months ago the KHS Council held a wide-ranging debate on the issue, and voted overwhelmingly to leave the statue in its current location. That decision was affirmed by the general membership at our annual general meeting this past February.

Established in 1893, two years before erection of the Macdonald statue, our Society remains a leading heritage organization, dedicated to critical thought, research, and presentations about Kingston's past. We recognize that there are often multiple opinions, perspectives and understandings about historical events and people.

Your sincerely,

Vincent Durant

Vincent Durant, President

[Kingston Historical Society](#)

From: [Cogeco](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A Macdonald
Date: June 12, 2021 2:31:26 PM

For better or worse he was the first PM of Canada, and will always be historically significant. You can't erase the past, only learn from it and move forward. Kingston's historical significance is very much tied to the first PM and first capital designation.

The past was lived under very different ideology and laws than today. Under today's beliefs, many events of the past are shocking and horrific. I assume such will be the truth in 200 years when they look back at our current society. It is right to look back at those events with distaste and contempt, but in many cases it is wrong, and unfair, to hold the people of that time accountable. They were behaving according to the views and mores of the time. Today we should include the unpleasant aspects in our history and use it as a teaching moment. Do not remove the statue. Perhaps add something to the area that speaks to his significance, both the good and the bad. A chance to educate.

On that note I have wondered for years why we continue to name public institutions etc after people. We need to move away from this practice as no one is infallible; plus it will always offend someone

Nicole

Kingston, Ont
June 13, 2021

Ms. Jenn Campbell,
Director of Heritage,
City of Kingston

Dear Ms Campbell,

I am writing at the suggestion of my good friend Mary Farrer to express my opinion on the appropriate way forward regarding the Sir John A statue in City Park, and the plaques both at that site and at the train on Ontario St.

A summary of my position would be that I am in favour of leaving the statue in place in City Park but substantially reworking the plaques there and at the train. Further I am in favour of erecting statues in City Park of former indigenous leaders who have made a substantial contribution to Canadian history such as, for example, Joseph Brant among others. Finally I am in favour of the construction within city confines of a memorial park to honour all indigenous children who died in the residential schools particularly any from the local area whose names would be on individual display on a wall of remembrance. Let me briefly elaborate.

To the first point, MacDonald's statue is there to recognize, for the large majority of Canadians, his contributions to Canada but particularly also to Kingston and the area. In regards the latter, be it military bases, colleges and universities, hospitals, prisons, Macdonald's hand can be found in all of them. Kingston would not be what it is today without Macdonald, pure and simple. And if one adds in his national contributions such as Confederation, the railroad, and several others, the case for recognition is unassailable. To 'negate', 'diminish', or indeed 'trash' – choose your terms – all this, and 'tear down his statue' because of his support of the residential schools' programme for indigenous children which he did not start and which was continued under every other prime minister arguably up to the 1990s if not beyond, is in my opinion a highly inappropriate and misdirected response even in light of the recent Kamloops discoveries and the many others likely yet to come. It would be analogous in my view to tearing down the statue of George Washington in Mt Vernon because he was a slave owner. There are better and wiser remedies.


2

The first would be to do what another good friend, Hugh Segal, has recently suggested and erect statues in our parks and public places to honour the contributions to Canada of indigenous leaders such as Brant and others. All plaques and explanatory material associated with these statues should, like those to be revised associated with the existing ones, reflected a balanced view, warts and all, of the figures being celebrated.

Finally let me make one thing clear. Like many 'older white guy Canadians' I have talked with, I am deeply offended by the Kamloops discovery and do not look forward to the inevitable ones to follow with anything other than shame. Those kids might well have died of TB or the many other diseases at the time but what is abundantly clear from the T&R report and other oral histories is that there 'was also a lot of bad stuff going down' there as well. And for them to be buried without ceremony, or remembrance, whether in ways commensurate with their traditions or even through the marking of their grave by a name plaque or something, is unconscionable and needs to be addressed directly. But it is not by tearing down some statue of MacDonald in a park. That is wholly inadequate (and inappropriate as I argue above). The situation demands more. Better the development of a memorial garden or park within the city's confines to recognize all those kids especially any from the local area who might have died whose names are known or will be discovered but also including some mention of the national injustice as well. An eternal flame kept burning would not be inappropriate.

I trust this communication will be made known to the committee reviewing the plaques and to the mayor and council as they deliberate. It is not an easy situation and requires leadership of the highest order. I thank you and them for the opportunity to register my views.

Sincerely,

Merv Daub,
Emeritus Professor, Queen's
 Kingston

From: [Mona Warner](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A statue
Date: June 13, 2021 11:02:30 AM

Hello,

I was forwarded an email that said that the city is looking for feedback around the Sir John A statue.

It has most definitely been the topic of many conversations. The idea I've heard that I thought made the most sense to honour many of the moving pieces of this situation, was to move the Sir John A statue to Bellevue House. Then, not only is the statue preserved, but it is located with more of its matching history, and where a full context of that history is being shared.

I hope this contributes to the conversation in a useful way.

Take care.

peace,
m :O)

[REDACTED]

"Be Yourself. Everyone else is taken."
Oscar Wilde

[REDACTED]

From: [Jessica Amey](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A statue
Date: June 11, 2021 10:46:09 PM

Hi there,

I am providing input on what should be done with the Sir John A statue.

We should ask ourselves what purpose is this statue serving? Frankly it is only a reminder that this country still glorifies white men and white supremacy. How are we ever supposed to build a future of equality when we monumentalize leaders who supported and encouraged such horrendous acts such as the development of residential schools.

It's embarrassing that this country is shocked by the uncovering of a grave of 215 dead Indigenous children when Indigenous Peoples have been telling EVERYONE about this for years.

Now the Indigenous population is asking for ONE monument to be removed, and the city of Kingston council (who might I add is a comprised of predominantly white men) has to develop a working group and contemplate what they should do.

This is embarrassing. The answer is simple. Remove the statue, and instead of consulting white people with white privilege, we need go to back to the leaders within the Indigenous communities and provide them the opportunity to make the decision for once.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jessica Amey

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Adam K](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A Statue
Date: June 12, 2021 6:10:48 PM

Hello,

Thank you for taking feedback about this controversial piece.

I am in favour of the city's current plan to update the information surrounding the statue to include both the bad and the good that Sir John A and other national leaders have done. It is important to remind future generations of our successes and gross failures as a nation and human beings. Looking back at our history can ensure that the treatment of indigenous peoples in Canada is improved upon and the tragedies of the past not repeated. To tear everything down and pretend it did not happen would put future generations at risk.

I would also be open and happy to see an indigenous statue placed in close proximity to honour the victims of residential schools and colonization, and acknowledge the lands of the Anishnawbe and Haudenosaunee.

It is a tough topic, because he was our Nation's founder and first Prime Minister and he did do great things for our country.

Thank you again.

From: [JoEllen MacMaster](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald Statue
Date: June 11, 2021 5:34:59 PM

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As a citizen of Kingston I ask that the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald be removed.
Honouring someone that led a government responsible for rape, murder and cultural genocide against the First Nations is not ok. Saying it was a different time is not ok.

Please move it to Bellevue House if you must, along with any other symbols honouring him and his legacy.

JoEllen MacMaster

From: [Maxine Cupido](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. statue
Date: June 12, 2021 9:30:52 AM

I've given this issue a lot of thought over the past year or two. Initially, I would have said the statue has to remain. He is our 1st Prime Minister and, as such, he has a prominent place in history - you can't just erase that.

But more information has come to light about his true legacy with regard to indigenous peoples. We can no longer claim ignorance. That old saying is true, the truth will out.

I think now there has to be some sort of context around these monuments and statues. I want the statue to remain remain intact, not be destroyed or mutilated.

Should it remain outdoors in MacDonald Park, or should it be placed inside some building somewhere? I'm not sure. On one hand, perhaps it is too painful a reminder of the horrific consequences of his racist policies to remain in a place where it is. Maybe it should be put a room somewhere with room for information plaques and photos of his legacy, both positive and negative.

On the other hand, there are so many reminders of the residential school problem and oppression of indigenous peoples by the state and the church. Are we going to cover up every Catholic Church, every cross, every reference to a nun or a priest, even if they were not directly involved? Are we going to rename every school, street, highway, building? Where do we stop?

This is hard, not only for the indigenous peoples who are directly affected, either through their ancestors, or today. It is also hard for those of us who had an image of what the historical Canada stood for in our heads, put there by years of deliberate misinformation in our education system and in our society in general. I, too, I'm grieving, for the loss of what I thought was my country, and what it stood for. I've always thought of Canada as an open, welcoming, fair, just, equal - moral - society. The bodies of the children in Kamloops and deliberate murders of the London family last Sunday demonstrate that it wasn't, and isn't.

Tough decisions...

Maxine Cupido

[REDACTED]

Kingston, ON

[REDACTED]

Sent via [BlackBerry Hub+ Inbox for Android](#)

From: [PETER MILLIKEN](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Statue
Date: June 13, 2021 5:26:48 PM

This statue should be preserved in its current location. Sir John was a major founder of our country. Despite his mistakes on some issues, he was our MP for many years and he was not personally doing all the damage that was done to indigenous people at the time but was doing it with the support and/or direction of others in the government. Despite the errors committed, he deserves recognition on a big scale in Kingston and indeed in all the country.

Peter Milliken

From: [don richardson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A
Date: June 13, 2021 3:07:13 PM

To whom it may concern

I would respectfully request that each member of the Working Group read the article which can be accessed at the following link:

<https://c2cjournal.ca/2020/11/sir-john-a-macdonald-saved-more-native-lives-than-any-oyher-prime-minister/>

This entire issue is fraught with strong emotions, truths, myths and indeed some half-truths. If we are to have a full, open and honest dialogue we must respect and consider all sides of Sir John's legacy, the bad and also the good. My personal feeling is that the good is being drowned by an extremely vocal group, a minority, at the detriment of this much-needed discussion. I implore the Group to read this article with an open mind just as those who have seen only the accomplishments of Macdonald in the past but who now are willing to acknowledge his failings are currently doing.

If history is to teach us anything, it is indeed to learn from past mistakes. Attempts to erase a negative past, to tear down and/or vandalize statues, to remove names from all public establishments, however well intentioned, however sincere and however passionately articulated will never, cannot ever, achieve this laudable goal. When you erase history, you run the risk of repeating history. Such attempts as stated above open a Pandora's box with no clear end in sight. This cannot be what either Council or the residents of Kingston want.

I humbly implore the Working Group to consider arriving at a solution which can retain that which must be retained while, at the same time, accommodating the legitimate requests of those who are seeking a more balanced view and perspective regarding the issue of our first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald.

Respectfully submitted by

Don Richardson

From: [W Kells](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: SJA statue
Date: June 12, 2021 11:56:49 AM

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City,

With respect, it would be wrong to deny the darkest parts of history existed, by pretending they didn't happen.

There's a distinct line between learning from the past, and idolizing it.

Perhaps remove the statue, but leave the plaque, and opposing it, add a plaque stating "Here once stood the statue of Sir. John A MacDonald, whom in light of human rights violations..." State the reasons for its removal, such that people new to the conversation are adequately informed and sidestepping all the BS that will result through straight removal.

We could even farm the blurb out to some of Kingston's writing circles or pitch it as a school writing contest. (immortalizing the words for a few generations, at least, is pretty cool)

We aren't trying to rewrite history. Merely update to reflect our current understanding. The far right nor the far left have a say here. History is fact. How we react to it, is up to us.

My \$0.02.

Thanks for listening,

Wes.

From: [Dan Patterson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: SJAM statue
Date: June 12, 2021 8:47:21 AM

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Move the statue to Bellevue house has been floated as an idea on social media. It may be a acceptable compromise between the take it down and don't take it down sides.

However, the most democratic thing to do would be put it on the next election ballot, so the people who actually live here all have a say in it rather than pandering to angry mob demands.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Terry Bridges](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: SJAM Statue
Date: June 13, 2021 12:22:10 PM

Hi, I am a past resident of Kingston, but I still own a house there, and I plan to retire in Kingston. Thus, I am still very invested in the city and in particular about the issue of the SJAM statue in City Park. I urge you to remove the statue—you could place it in a museum if you like, but the important thing is to stop it from being so publicly visible. The presence of this statue is insulting to many Indigenous people, and white settlers such as myself, who are disgusted by SJAM's racist past and his role in trying to assimilate Indigenous people, including being an architect of the residential schools system—of which we have been hearing such distressing things about recently. You should not think that removing the statue of SJAM will mean that people will not be able to know the history of SJAM, but instead it will be a step on the road to reconciliation.

Sincerely

Terry Bridges
Kelowna, BC

From: [Michele Stapleton](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue
Date: June 11, 2021 6:12:37 PM

As a long time resident of Kingston I believe that the statue of Macdonald should be removed. Kingston needs better representatives of what we were and what we can become.

Sincerely,

Michele Stapleton



Kingston

From: [Patricia Smithen](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue of Sir John A MacDonald in Kingston
Date: June 12, 2021 3:44:16 PM

Hello:

I saw the story in the news regarding the special Council meeting to address the statue in City Park. I am of settler descent, born in Kingston and living here now.

I am writing to support the local efforts by many groups to remove this statue from open public view. I have been following the proposals to address the complex heritage of public figures but disagree that signage can make a significant difference in this case. Before anyone even gets close to a sign, they could be affected by the statue- it is a dominant, visible intervention signalling reverence. Signage cannot counteract this.

This sculpture doesn't reflect widespread contemporary values and it may well cause trauma. How can it be worthwhile to retain it? History won't be lost and, in fact, part of that history is now the inaction of the council to address the real impact of this statue on Kingston inhabitants.

It is time to remove it. Quickly, humbly and permanently.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Patricia Smithen
Kingston resident

From: [Stephanie Switzer](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue of Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 11, 2021 6:10:08 PM

I propose that the Statue be moved to the Bellevue House, and believe it would be a fair compromise between the wishes of our First Nations and supporters of Sir John A MacDonald. Also the move could be made quickly.

Kind regards.

Stephanie P Switzer

From: [Richard Keenan](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue Removal
Date: June 12, 2021 4:34:57 AM

History will always be seen and told through the eyes of the beholder. To me, Sir John A. McDonald played an important role in the founding of this country and therefore deserves a place of recognition in our community.

Values change through time and rightly so. However, it is arrogant of us today to judge those who lived with the values of their time and suggest that they were not decent caring members of their communities.

From: [Tammy Wallwork](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue, City Park
Date: June 11, 2021 8:58:15 PM

I was happy to hear of the special council meeting and willingness to hear from citizens with regard to the Sir John A MacDonald statue at City Park.

I'm non-indigenous. I'm Caucasian. I've always felt that a statue is made of someone of great honour, but I don't wish to give reverence to Sir John A MacDonald. It will never erase history to remove a statue. But it will make history to remove it. And it will be a fabulous show of good faith in first steps of reconciling.

Imagine being beaten or raped and then for many years afterward having to walk past a statue of the man who did it, or who watched and did nothing to help.

I'll leave it there and hope that you make the decision to have the statue removed.

Tammy Wallwork
Kingston resident

From: [Eric Gagnon](#)
To: [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Statues and Issues
Date: June 12, 2021 8:24:53 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I noticed on Facebook that comments are being received via this email address for the emergency council meeting.

When someone asks you do sign something in a hurry, it's probably not wise. The same urgency to the statue issue, in light of the Kamloops discovery, really link two tangentially related topics. If the statue issue is being discussed by the committee, hasty action at this point is probably not wise.

There can be no doubt that there is a need for federal government action on several issues concerning indigenous communities in Canada: disappearing women, residential school aftermath, housing and clean water. If only time could be spent, and energy focussed, on holding federal politicians accountable instead of the easy targets of inanimate statues.

I support such discussions. I do not support destruction of statues.

Let's have action, not destruction.

Eric Gagnon
Kingston, ON

From: [Jane Rodgers](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: support for moving the Sir John A Macdonald statue
Date: June 12, 2021 8:08:33 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Attention Mayor and Councillors,

I've lived in Kingston since 1959 and have always been proud of this city. I will be really proud of it if City Council will immediately and honourably solve the long-simmering issue of the City Park statue of Sir J A Macdonald by voting to move it.

I support moving the statue to Bellevue House and setting it in a contextualized site there--and not on that ridiculously high and deliberately imposing pedestal. I showed my support for the First Nations activists at City Park this afternoon, and--even after living all these years in the city--it was only while standing at the base of that statue that I realized how high it is. I admire the way the activists have not desecrated it but rather covered it with red cloth in a symbolically meaningful way.

While there, I was so sad to hear from an Indigenous woman activist that she had been verbally attacked by a "rich white woman" who called her "a savage" and "a squaw," and told her that she was ruining 'our' land. The ignorant woman would not have been open to hearing that Indigenous historians know that the area of the current park was originally the natives' marketplace.

Obviously tensions will run high at the Council meeting, but I hope you all can show leadership that will begin healing this deep historical rift in town. Please vote for moving the statue--and soon.

B. J. Rodgers



From: [Meghan North](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: The Sir John A statue
Date: June 13, 2021 5:19:36 PM

Hello,

I am writing today to share that I strongly feel that the Sir John A statue should be removed, and that a memorial/monument to residential school victims and survivors should be put in its place. The Kingston and surrounding areas Indigenous communities should be consulted in all decisions regarding the statue and monument. The fact that the Sir John A statue continues to stand with no mention of his colonial and genocidal legacy shows that Kingston prioritizes being a “historical city” with a romanticized version of the past over the former and current realities of our area’s indigenous communities. Kingston has a lot of work to do to regarding reconciliation and removing a statue of an architect of past atrocities should be an extremely basic first step. The statue should remain covered until it is removed. The sacred fire going on should be allowed to continue unimpeded for as long as the participants would like to stay. I love spending time in City Park, as I am sure many Kingston residents do, but Canada and Kingston are built on stolen land - the very least the city can do is acknowledge this by removing the statue.

Thank you!

Meghan North

From: [Patrick Vollenwyder](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Thought on the legacy of Sir John A Macdonald
Date: June 12, 2021 12:31:55 PM

I hope that in reviewing the legacy of Sir John A Macdonald care is taken not to fixate on some points of his actions that have risen to prominence in recent media coverage, both social and main stream, while overlooking the larger scope of his life. Any decisions to change how places are named after him or to change historical monuments should be taken with time for reflection on if it is the right thing to do for the long term, and not a snap decision based on heated emotions or political expediency.

Also to ensure that any lasting decisions have a broad base of support from the community a public referendum or vote on a plan to handle Sir John's legacy could be included with the next municipal elections in 2022.

From: [Bren Melles](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: thoughts on Sir John A Macdonald and Kingston
Date: June 12, 2021 11:01:59 AM

Dear Council members,

Let's follow the lead of other cities in Canada, and immediately take down the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park.

Not only that, let's remove his name from the other places we honour him in Kingston, including an elementary school built in 2013 and a major roadway. Unlike a museum or a classroom, these are all examples of spaces in which we cannot possibly approach and understand Sir John A's legacy in a proper context.

Why take down the statue? Not to "erase" or "cancel" our history. Not to deny Macdonald's impact in Kingston and in Canada. But **to recognize and reverse the intent that underlies why the statue was built, and to respect and respond to the pain of indigenous folks in our community.**

What is the intent of this statue, and of naming buildings, schools and roadways after Sir John A? This primary intent is to honour, not to educate. These artifacts reflect power, vividly displayed by the way the statue towers over walkers on the ground. We know this instinctively as children when we walk past any statue and its small (often unread) plaque: this person was important, this person was good, this person is to be celebrated. Of course, we now better understand and recognize what we so chillingly refer to as Sir John A's "complex" legacy. But with this historical intent of the statue, and with its present form, the statue can never overcome its primary message of elevated honour, no matter how many additions are added to a plaque or information materials. We should recognize this intent, and reverse it by removing the statue.

I have heard one of my indigenous colleagues at Queen's University say that he never walks through City Park, because it's too painful to walk past the Sir John A Macdonald statue. For him, it's a stinging reminder of death, abuse, inequity, residential schools, and injustice for indigenous people in Canada both past and present. That most people walk effortlessly by the statue is a stark illustration of how for so many of us in Canada, these painful narratives and Sir John A's role continue to be hidden, denied or ignored. Why would we tolerate the pain that this statue brings to the indigenous folks in our community, on whose lands we live, work and play? We should respect and respond to this pain from indigenous people by removing the statue.

What now, if the statue is gone? There are so many beautiful possibilities the City could explore - a memorial to indigenous children, a piece of art commissioned from an indigenous artist, a contest of ideas. There are so many ways to truly educate children, adults, visitors and Canadians about our history, and to do the work of truth and reconciliation. But that education can never happen with a statue, built to honour, but now a reminder of power and pain.

Thank you for considering, and inviting the thoughts of people in our community.

Sincerely,

Bren Melles
Kingston resident

From: [Thomas Sears](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Hill, Wayne](#)
Subject: Vote to remove the Sir John A. Macdonald statue in City Park
Date: June 12, 2021 4:59:54 PM

Dear Council,

I stand in support of Indigenous communities asking for the removal of the John A MacDonald statue in City Park.

Personally, I believe that statues present one-sided stories that no manner of plaques could ever remedy. We will not erase or lose history by removing a statue, but perhaps it can be a step towards better educating Canadians about our past and present relationship with Indigenous people.

Thank you for your time.
Thomas Sears

Cc'd Wayne Hill, my city councillor.

From: [Jennifer McKendry](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: retaining the Macdonald statue
Date: June 13, 2021 6:33:04 PM

The Macdonald stature is a historical artifact positioned 126 years ago in City Park. The creation of George E. Wade (1853-1933), a well-respected British sculptor, is a technical feat in its bronze casting from a model carved in London, England, and the workmanship of the stone pedestal by E.R. Welch & Son of Kingston from granite quarried in St George, New Brunswick. Wade's oeuvre in found internationally. It is a handsome sculpture, which should be considered as such and in that sense considered neutral. Interpretations of 19th-century hurtful policies under Macdonald can be addressed in the wording of new plaques.

Jennifer McKendry

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Kingston ON
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



From: [Henrik Wevers](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Boehme, Ryan N.](#); [Holland, Mary Rita](#); [Neill, Jim](#); [Laura Murray](#); [McLaren, Jeff](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hutchison, Rob](#); [Stroud, Peter](#); [Turner, Laura](#)
Subject: indigenous protest Sir John A
Date: June 13, 2021 7:14:43 PM

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To whom it may concern,

We support the aim of the indigenous people of Kingston to remove the statue of Sir John A MacDonald from its place in City Park.

With the discovery of the mass grave of children from the Kamloops Residential School, and considering the many abuses and detrimental policies accepted by the Canadian government towards the indigenous peoples, it is now the time for bronze figure of Sir John A to go into storage, or into a museum like setting where it can serve as a vehicle for the true depiction of Canada's history before and after the colonization. By removing the statue and by erecting a bronze diorama of the true and unvarnished history in its place, Kingston's citizens and the many visitors and tourists would be able to get a better and more balanced vision of our past and present.

We hope that Council will come to a fair and generous decision regarding the indigenous request.

Regards,

Ineke and Henk Wevers, [REDACTED] Kingston, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
To: [Woodland, Heather](#)
Subject: FW: Sir John A. Macdonald meeting tonight
Date: June 14, 2021 11:54:19 AM

See request below – hope we can accommodate this request.

Jenn

From: Rick Lamoureux [REDACTED]
Sent: June 14, 2021 11:52 AM
To: Campbell, Jennifer <jlcampbell@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald meeting tonight

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Good Morning Ms. Jennifer Campbell,
Thank you for acknowledging the letter I send yesterday in advance of the Sir. John A. Macdonald statue issue. I must confess that I had composed the letter quickly and didn't have time to correct any spelling and grammar mistakes. So that was my draft. Below is the final version. If you could exchange the old version which the new one below, I would appreciate that very much.
Thank you
Rick Lamoureux.

My name is Rick Lamoureux and reside in Kingston Ontario. It is my hope that my views on the removal of the Sir. John A. Macdonald statue will be read at the council meeting. Sir. John A. Macdonald, a founding Father of our great nation and our first Prime Minister who achieved a great deal of successes for Canada. The one project he is often accused of creating is the Indian residential school system. He envisioned a day where a Canadians from all backgrounds would be placed on an even playing field in education and opportunity. Sir John A Macdonald was attempting unity for Canadians. He dispatched Nicholas Flood to the United State to observe and report on the Indigenous school system that was already established. The study was accepted and funds were approved by our Prime Minister.

We tend to view these measures through the eyes of our century and not of people from the 19th century. The sins of the Father is never right to place on future generations. Furthermore, the Indigenous schools in Canada are always shown in the worst light possible throughout the institution's history. Yes, many terrible occurrences did happen, but if the schools were as horrible as we are led to believe then why did the last school only close in 1996, a mere 25 years ago. Should we topple all the statues and namesakes of every Prime Minister under which the schools continued? No of course not, just like Sir. John A

MacDonald.

I want to demonstrate an example of a modern double standard. Please have a look at another great Canadian historical figure for comparison. Joseph Brant. A loyalist, Oxford educated, met with King George II and even George Washington. His achievements are too numerous to list. You can find a huge statue of his likeness in Brantford and life sized one in Ottawa. One of Canada's top hospitals is named after him, this is located in Burlington. Of course, I must mention that Joseph Brant was born a proud full-blooded Mohawk Indian. One last thing should be noted: This historical figure owned more black slaves, 40 in total.

Similar to other historic figures, Joseph Brant's story contains "the good, the bad, and the ugly." We must remember and preserve the full story and all that it entails.

I ask why is no one concerned with cancelling Joseph Brant, but is passionately ready to delete Sir. John A. Macdonald and so many others.

Thank You

Rick Lamoureux

From: [Laura Murray](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Neill,Jim](#); [Hutchison,Rob](#); [Holland,Mary Rita](#); [Boehme, Ryan N.](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Stroud,Peter](#); [Osanic,Lisa](#); [Oosterhof,Gary](#); [Chapelle,Simon](#); [Hill,Wayne](#); [Doherty,Bridget](#); [Kiley,Robert](#); [McLaren,Jeff](#); [Campbell,Jennifer](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: comments for City Council re Macdonald statue
Date: June 13, 2021 9:08:55 PM

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

I understand that City Council is having a special meeting this Wednesday evening to consider the future of the Sir John A. Macdonald statue.

I urge you to immediately remove the statue, put it in storage, and let it stay there until the right resolution becomes clear. Do not delay. Do not wait until a substitute or another location has been found. I do not believe that a decision on alternative commemorations or alternative locations can be properly made while Macdonald is looking down upon us all. For people of all opinions, the statue is causing too much stress and sucking up too much air. Put it away for a while and see what we can do as a community to think about our histories and futures together.

Please do not stop to fret about whether removing the statue denies respect to Macdonald. As James Daschuk has put it, Macdonald built the country, but he did it on the backs of Indigenous people. Furthermore, whatever historical points one may want to argue, one fact is indisputable about Macdonald: he is dead. We can't hurt him. The Indigenous people in Kingston today are alive; they are our neighbours; and, as we saw and felt powerfully in the past couple of weeks, they are truly hurting from the violence that has continued since Macdonald's day. The TRC has come and, by now, quite long gone. Why would the City of Kingston CHOOSE to put the status of a dead man above the wishes of thousands of residents of our city? That would be malicious and, I plead, entirely immoral.

Those who have shrouded the statue have asked the City to remove it. This request is a rare and precious opportunity. By removing the statue, the City will demonstrate care, respect, and acknowledgment of the ongoing harms of colonialism. Those are essential foundational practices for strong community going forward.

I trust you will do the right thing.

Most sincerely,

Laura J. Murray, Queen's University (she/her)
Professor, Department of English
Co-Director, Graduate Program in Cultural Studies
Coinvestigator, "A Totem Pole on a Pile of Garbage: Contending with Colonial and Environmental Violence in Kingston, Ontario" (SSHRC Insight Grant)

Director, Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour History Project (SWIHHP): <http://www.swampwardhistory.com>
Queen's University is located in Ka'tarohkwi on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory.

Cc: Jennifer Campbell, Director of Heritage Services

From: [Ellen](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FWD: Remove sir John McDonald statue from city part
Date: June 14, 2021 8:46:24 AM

The following request has been submitted to the City of Kingston.

Please respond directly to the customer with a BCC to cssrteam@cityofkingston.ca within 3 business days. Remember to include the SR reference number in the body of the email.

Service Request Reference #: 210611-000458

Service Request Type: City general

Date Created: 06/11/2021 04:57 PM

Disposition:

Severity: No Value

Internal Comments:

N/A

Customer Comments:

Customer Name: Concerned Citizen

Customer Contact: concernedcitizen@cityofkingston.ca

Customer Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario,

Mobile Phone: No Value

Home Phone: No Value

Office Phone: No Value - Ext.

Subject:

Remove sir John McDonald statue from city part

Customer By Service Web (Concerned Citizen) (06/11/2021 04:57 PM)

I am adding my voice to those requesting removal of this site to a different location like the pm home

Incident Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario

Escalated: No

From: [Zedrick Serson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: In regards to the statue of Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 14, 2021 9:26:51 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my concerns about the public debate surrounding the statue of Sir John A MacDonald in City Park.

For many years, society has been grappling with the nature of Canada's oppression of First Nations peoples, and has taken numerous actions in the name of reconciliation. However, as presently constituted, I believe that our current hyperfocus on statues is not an act of reconciliation, but instead proof that it is dead. Before I begin however, I will acknowledge one thing: Sir John A MacDonald was not a saint. He is one of the architects of the residential school system. Even if removing statues could erase history, we are not Rome; we cannot declare MacDonald **damnatio memoriae** no matter how hard we try. But neither is he an infinitely terrible man, motivated purely by his own hatred of the Indian.

From my experience, the voices that advocate for removing statues are primarily those of privileged white people. They may have learned about the 215 from Instagram, or perhaps from Facebook. As a function of their privilege, they can choose to engage with whatever First Nations issues they wish, and thus consider them all to be of equal importance. This is not the case. Canada is actively perpetrating a genocide against First Nations peoples.

Removing statues, or even talking about removing statues, does not bring First Nations clean drinking water. It does not help them beat drug addiction, or get them out of the prison system, or anything substantive. The only thing it does is embolden privileged white people who need to stop talking. I call on the City to refuse the demands of privileged activists who think they're the only authority on First Nations issues, and spend money it would spend on removing the statue toward enacting real, substantive change in our community.

It's the right thing to do.

Signed,

Zedrick Serson

From: [William Hughes](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hutchison, Rob](#)
Subject: John A MacDonald Statue Must Go
Date: June 14, 2021 8:02:16 AM

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Taking down a statue does not erase, deny or otherwise alter history. This statement misses the point.

A statue is a symbol for a community to unite around -- an idea, belief, understanding or experience. Often, statues are of people. These people are selected because the community feels they are a representative symbol.

Core to the idea of a statue is that they are costly to erect and therefore only done with important symbols. They are often based in some history but their purpose is not truly to teach history but to inform the future. They are about what we want our future to be.

The statue of John A MacDonald in City Park is not representative of what I want for the future of this Community.

The City of Kingston's stated Mission:

To enhance the quality of life for present and future generations by providing progressive, professional services and leadership that reflects the needs of all those who work, live, visit, or play in the City of Kingston.

This status is not progressive and it does not reflect the needs of all in Kingston.

John A MacDonald was an architect of the residential school system and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous peoples.

This does not symbolize or reflect the future I want for our Community.

The history of John A MacDonald's deeds will not be erased by removing the statue. The removal of the statue will symbolize a future in which we as a community value all members of our community.

The statue needs to be removed.

Bill Hughes
Settler and Resident of District 11, King's Town
Kingston

From: [Rachel](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A. MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 7:54:43 AM

Dear Mayor Patterson and Kingston City Council,

I am writing you today regarding the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald in City Park. I believe the statue should be removed immediately and replaced with either an empty pedestal or another monument to its removal.

It is not possible to erase history. We are living in it. The things that our ancestors did and had done to them shape who we are and what lives we get to live in the present day. This is so apparent when we look at the discrepancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians today when it comes to health, life expectancy, access to healthy food and clean water, education and myriad other indicators. These discrepancies are not due to random chance or some genetic or essential difference between us, they are caused by historical and ongoing racism, land theft and cultural genocide. Those things didn't simply "happen," they were done by people, and no matter how hard we try to rectify them their legacies are likely to live on for many more generations.

I am a settler and was raised to be proud of Canada. I had my first kiss under fireworks on July 1st, can sing the national anthem in both official languages, and marched in a red and white parade every year of my childhood. I now believe that those celebrations were misguided. It is not possible to separate the creation of Canada from the genocide and dispossession of the first peoples of this land. Canada is and was a resource colony built by people who had no right or valid reason to do so, the result of wealthy people in Europe's greed for resources and desire to expand their empires. That does not mean that the people who live here now are not good people, or that there are not beautiful and wonderful things that happen on the territory that we now call Canada. But it does mean that the origin of Canada should be understood as an unfortunate or perhaps even shameful event, not cause for parades. The founders of Canada knew exactly what they were doing, they needed to rid the territory of the "Indian problem" *so that* they could make Canada happen here. It is true that John A. MacDonald was particularly cruel and hateful when it came to these questions, but I think that is a bit of a distraction, as none of his peers really deserve statues either. The project of Canada should not have been allowed to happen and our first Prime Minister is not the sort of person we should be putting on a pedestal.

We are all here now and we need to decide what to do about the horrible things that were done to get some of us here. I believe that drastic and radical changes to our way of life, how we own and exchange property, who gets access to resources and many other things would need to change before we could even begin to consider ourselves on a road to reconciliation between settlers and Indigenous people here. In a context where that reconciliation was actually happening, a giant bronze statue of the first Prime Minister would be unthinkable. Settlers need to stop celebrating a mythical version of the events that led to Canada's creation so that our children and grandchildren can know the truth about how those events actually transpired and perhaps be a part of something that could be called reconciliation. If we keep arguing about something as obvious and petty as a celebratory statue of the architect of residential schools, we will never get to those conversations.

Take down the statue as a small gesture of good faith at least. On hopeful days I believe that things might get better one day, but the fact that this is even a conversation in 2021 makes me feel bad. I worry that the city I live in will be the last holdout of a severely dated and backward idea, that it will be the place people come to to have an unfortunate, racist celebration that they don't feel comfortable having anywhere else. I worry I will be ashamed

to say I live in Kingston. Please don't let this happen, follow the lead of many other municipalities across the country and take down the John A statue.

Sincerely,

Rachel Mendl

, Kingston, Ontario

From: [Giuseppe Ruffolo](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Kamloops residential school
Date: June 14, 2021 12:41:23 AM

I feel that any history good or as some people view it as not so enlightens should be saved as we learn more about what we shouldn't do by our mistakes.

Sir John A's statue should stay as our reminder of history. Giuseppe.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Ryder-Burbidge](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hill, Wayne](#)
Subject: Keep Sir John A.
Date: June 14, 2021 9:09:46 AM

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Dear Working Group

No one did more to unite Canada than that great man Sir John A. His statue and other monuments are therefore very important symbols of the history of this City and this Country.

This symbolism is again under attack by a small minority of loud, bullying woke activists who appear to despise Canada and its history.

Now they are blaming him for 215 unmarked graves recently found at a former residential school in Kamloops that wasn't even founded until the year before his death. Blaming Sir John A for deaths that occurred after he himself passed away is stupid, intellectually dishonest and downright vicious. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report makes clear, residential schools were founded long before Sir John A became prime minister and lasted until 1969. To single him out is unfair.

Further, to judge a great man of the 19th century by the nasty morality of ideologically possessed 21st century woke activists is deliberately unjust and morally bankrupt. Most citizens understand this.

Please stand up to the woke bullies and keep Sir John A, his statue and other monuments.

I am sure that your earlier idea of placing a plaque beside his statue fairly describing his dealings with indigenous peoples, both pro and con, is a concept that most will accept.

Your truly

John Ryder-Burbidge



Kingston.

From: [Lindsay Brant](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Date: June 14, 2021 8:55:58 AM

Hello Councilors/Mayor Paterson, and Jennifer Campbell,

My name is Lindsay Brant. I am from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and I work in Kingston.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

There is a difference between remembering history, and honouring a historical figure. We can remember our past so that we may learn from it without having a statue that "honours" Sir John A. MacDonald in the community where his presence is very upsetting for Indigenous peoples. Thank you for taking the time to listen and consider my request, and the requests of others who feel similarly about this issue. Removing the statue would be one huge step towards reconciliation and creating a community of care where we can all move forward together.

In peace,

Lindsay Brant

From: [Amy Solc](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [McLaren, Jeff](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Date: June 14, 2021 7:17:54 AM

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Hello Councilor McLaren, Mayor and others,

My Name is Amy Solc and I live in Meadowbrook-Strathcona district.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed. I believe the statue can be placed elsewhere to provide history and context to community members but should not be elevated as it symbolizes idolization of this person.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

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Thanks for your time,

Amy Solc

From: [Nicolai Gryphon](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: On the topic of Sir John A MacDonald and our history
Date: June 14, 2021 7:33:58 AM

It is disgraceful that we have a monument on public display to this innovator of the genocidal policies against Indigenous Canadians that led to over 4,500 children (the over 4,100 discovered at the time of the Truth and Reconciliation committee's report and the growing numbers being discovered across across country since the discovery of 215 children in an unmarked grave in Kamloops, the 104 in Brandon, the 38 in Regina, and the 35 in Lestock) loosing their lives in residential schools alone. In addition to the lives lost through the starvation policies he implemented, and the dispossession of people from their lands. And the blind defense of a monument to this murderous racist proves that this statue does nothing to educate people about the history of these things. Adding a plaque isn't going to cut it. It is time for Kingston to start to be on the right side of history. You want to know what to do with the statue? The price of scrap is high right now.

From: [Nicolai Gryphon](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: On the topic of Sir John A MacDonald and our history
Date: June 14, 2021 7:33:58 AM

It is disgraceful that we have a monument on public display to this innovator of the genocidal policies against Indigenous Canadians that led to over 4,500 children (the over 4,100 discovered at the time of the Truth and Reconciliation committee's report and the growing numbers being discovered across across country since the discovery of 215 children in an unmarked grave in Kamloops, the 104 in Brandon, the 38 in Regina, and the 35 in Lestock) loosing their lives in residential schools alone. In addition to the lives lost through the starvation policies he implemented, and the dispossession of people from their lands. And the blind defense of a monument to this murderous racist proves that this statue does nothing to educate people about the history of these things. Adding a plaque isn't going to cut it. It is time for Kingston to start to be on the right side of history. You want to know what to do with the statue? The price of scrap is high right now.

From: [Adam Clark](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Re: Sir John A.
Date: June 14, 2021 8:03:29 AM

Dear Council,

May I extend my deepest sympathies that such a conflict has come upon your doorstep. I doubt that there isn't anyone that doesn't empathize with the Indigenous communities, and can understand the frustration felt over the last few weeks. There is no debate to be had there.

The real debate of course is how to move forward. Many vehemently oppose the action to "erase history", though conversely, those calling for such actions to remove Sir John A's statues (and likely all namesakes and affiliations) are rightly able to point out that the Kamloops and other previous atrocities were simply omitted from record without reverence. Both are right, but something else isn't being discussed.

I myself am English/Irish Caucasian, and despite all of the former British Commonwealth's faults pointed out, I cannot damn them for, like it or not, it is part of who I am, and I can't say that I would exist without them. I feel that we have bettered ourselves since then, but to flagellate oneself due to transgressions of the past is psychologically unhealthy and very destructive. This goes for all of us, and the world over.

To move forward in a stable and healthy manner, we must synthesize both truths. The damage done to Aboriginals is not Sir John A's only legacy. We are blessed to live in a country like Canada, and it should be noted that for all of the "white-privilege patriarchal tyranny" that Canada is supposedly guilty of, we are still one of the most free countries in the world, and as a result residents of the world emigrate here en masse. We have plenty to thank Sir John A for.

Let it be known of what he's done to the most honest and accurate degree possible. Mix the good and the bad, for we are mixtures of both good and bad ourselves (but predominantly good). Our Native residents deserve closure, but we can't simply toss out the baby with the bath water. If there are those who simply won't meet this compromise, then we face a slippery slope, where no reasonable compromise can be made and we lose all sense of historical identity at our utmost peril.

With deepest condolences and with heartfelt duty, I leave this with you. May it assist your Council, and Godspeed.

Adam Clark
5th generation Canadian

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: "Laura Cameron"
Cc: [Barrett, Nicole](#); [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: RE: We don't need this statue -- change is not as hard as we've been made to believe
Date: June 14, 2021 8:58:26 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Hello Ms. Cameron: We acknowledge receipt of, and thank you for, your communication. The City of Kingston welcomes and appreciates feedback from the community. I note you have forwarded your email to all Members of Council. I have also forwarded the communication to appropriate staff. Please be advised that any personal information in the email you submitted (including but not limited to, your name, contact information, opinions and views, etc.) may form part of the public agendas and minutes, and therefore will be made available to members of the public at the meetings, through requests, and through the website of the Corporation of the City of Kingston. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of your personal information. Thank you.



John Bolognone
City Clerk
City Clerk's Department
City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613 546 4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca



From: Laura Cameron [REDACTED]
Sent: June 14, 2021 6:54 AM
To: Mayor & Council <Mayor&Council@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: We don't need this statue -- change is not as hard as we've been made to believe

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Dear Mayor and Council

I think one of the great lessons of this last year is that change is not as hard as we've been made to believe.

This morning I write to you in support of the community members asking for the removal of the the Sir John A. Macdonald statue and its replacement with something more appropriate to this time, in this place.

Years from now I'd like to tell my grandchildren this story, and, when they ask, I would like to tell them that it is true. It is part of a story of awakening that happened in the Spring of 20/20, when our vision changed for the better and the members of the Kingston community decided to come

together – re-member – differently, more justly, more respectfully.

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force Final Report, advises (p. 183)

"The Commission, advised by the trc Survivor Committee, identified three elements of the commemoration process that were seen as being essential to supporting long-term reconciliation. First, the projects were to be Survivor-driven; that is, their success was contingent upon the advice, recommendations, and active participation of Survivors. Second, commemoration projects would forge new connections that linked Aboriginal family and community memory to Canada's public memory and national history. Third, incorporating Indigenous oral history and memory practices into commemoration projects would ensure that the processes of remembering places, reclaiming identity, and revitalizing cultures were consistent with the principle of self-determination.

I'm happy to learn that there is a lot of support in having the commemoration redesign be "Survivor-driven". New links need to be forged and this removal of the statue is a clear, straight-forward, and peaceful first step.

Good morning!

Laura Jean

Dr. L.J. Cameron

██████████.

From: [Liam Fraser](#)
To: [Neill, Jim](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Regarding the City Park Statue Special City Council Meeting on Wed June 16
Date: June 14, 2021 6:58:58 AM

Hello Councillor Neill,

My Name is Liam Fraser. I am a resident of Kingston.

I strongly urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday.

As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history and start to show just a bit of respect for Indigenous peoples.

Regards,
Liam Fraser

Williamsville Resident

From: [Victoria Cosby](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Removal of MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:19:31 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning,

I am an upper year doctoral candidate at Queen's University in the history department. My speciality is Confederation Canadian history. I am writing to express my strong support for the removal of the statue to Sir John A. MacDonald in the city park. This statue is a symbol of commemoration versus history. The celebration of a man in a public space who was complicit in genocide is incredibly disgusting. This statue doesn't teach the viewers anything about Canadian history, but it does encourage the worship of the 'great white men' of Canadian history. This narrative is oppositional to the Truth and Reconciliation that all Canadians should be devoted to. If this statue is not removed, it sends a message that the genocide of Indigenous peoples is not only 'okay', but also celebrated by the Kingston community.

I am willing to address the council on this issue.

Thank you for your time,

Victoria Seta Cosby

Fourth Year Doctoral Candidate
Queen's University

From: [Claudia Rupnik](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); [Neill Jim](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A MacDonald statue from City Park
Date: June 13, 2021 11:11:13 PM

Hello Mayor Patterson,

My Name is Claudia Rupnik.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you,

Claudia Rupnik (Kingston resident)

From: [Jennifer Ross](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hutchison,Rob](#); [Kiley,Robert](#); [Oosterhof,Gary](#); [Chapelle,Simon](#); [Osanic,Lisa](#); [Hill,Wayne](#); [Doherty,Bridget](#); [Holland,Mary Rita](#); [McLaren,Jeff](#); [Neill,Jim](#); [Stroud,Peter](#); [Boehme, Ryan N.](#)
Subject: Remove McDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:19:41 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Councillors and Mayor Patterson:

My Name is Jennifer Ross. I am a settler living and working in Kingston on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory.

I urge you to support the removal of the John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. The time is now. There must be no delay.

I have heard from various Councillors that while they may personally support the removal of the statue, they haven't heard from the local Indigenous community.

Well, listen up. The Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members have spoken loudly and clearly. They have asked that statue be removed. Statues are celebrations. Genocide against Indigenous people occurred here in Kingston and across Turtle Island. John A. McDonald was the architect and commander of many brutal policies that displaced, starved and eradicated Indigenous nations. We must stop celebrating and literally putting him on a pedestal. We must stop honouring a person who caused so many people – generation after generation - so much harm.

I am calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue. Remove it now. This week. Take it down.

We don't need a completely mapped out next step for what replaces the statue. Maybe, in the interim, before future "momumental" decisions are made, settlers and Indigenous community members could together work on a summer healing garden? Of course, Indigenous people must inform next steps. This is only an idea. My point is that we don't need to decide on what comes next in order for the statue to come down this week.

Removing the statue is a necessary symbolic action so that our community can embrace substantive and systemic change for our Indigenous neighbours and generations to come.

Let's get to it. Remove it now.

Jennifer Ross
Settler, resident of King's Town - Kingston

Jennifer Ross




From: [Elizabeth Howes](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 7:22:24 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To whom it may concern at Our Histories,

My Name is Elizabeth and I live in Kingscourt. I am writing to strongly urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honouring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Be on the right side of it. Please.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Howes

From: [Jane Owen](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir J.A
Date: June 14, 2021 7:17:28 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Jenn Campbell

Please remove the statute as it is offensive to our dear Indigenous people. We must do what can be done to right the wrong our ancestors inflicted upon this population.

Peace,
Jane

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

To the City of Kingston and our great people,

Hello! I was born in Kingston, and I have lived in this area my entire life. I am ferociously proud to be Canadian – I buy Canadian, cheer for Canadian sports teams, and study our history as a nation. I also celebrate our Canadian values of tolerance, respect, and inclusion, and I am highly supportive of efforts of reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous people. I acknowledge that Kingston is built on the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Huron Wendat, and I strive to be a steward of this land. I also stand in remembrance of the children who lost their lives in the Canadian residential schooling system, a horrific human rights abuse.

I am aware of the controversy surrounding the statue of Sir John Alexander MacDonalld which stands in city park, and while I empathize with those who wish to see it removed, I am firmly of the view that the statue should remain standing. I believe that the solution to the problem that the statue presents for some people lies in addition, not in subtraction.

The statue of Sir John A. MacDonalld represents the history of this country. In effect, the statue that stands in city park is our history. Attempting to destroy it instead of learning from it and separating the glorious from the terrible would be a terrible shame that would punish all Canadians. Sir John A. was a flawed man, there can be no doubt, and a product of an intolerant time, but he rose above personal hardship to confederate this country. If not for Sir John A. MacDonalld, we may well be American citizens at this time. All the rights and freedoms that we enjoy uniquely as Canadian citizens we owe to Sir John A. MacDonalld.

People can look upon this statue and draw any meaning from this symbol – hope, determination, Canadian national identity. The statue itself is beautiful and awe-inspiring, and uniquely Canadian. I believe that people need to change the way that they view the statue – not as a villain, for we do not celebrate Sir JAM for his role in residential schools or racial oppression. We celebrate him as bringing our country into being.

The solution to me is obvious. Instead of violating this work of art, we need to create an inclusive atmosphere at this monument site that provides perspective. Indigenous art, a statue of an Indigenous local hero, plaques about the history of residential schools and reconciliation are all potential ideas. I believe that the concept of removing the statue is controversial, but we can create understanding and peace between all sides by tempering the perceived negative effects of statue of Sir John. A with works representing Indigenous strength (and other adjustments).

We cannot change our history, we can only learn from it, glorify the good, condemn the bad, and emerge from it with a greater understanding of ourselves. The past is done, let us change the future.

From: [Keith Orton](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A MacDonald Statue in City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 9:11:49 AM

I am very much opposed to the demands of the group of people in City Park who are demanding the immediate removal of the statue of Sir John A MacDonald

To me this is a knee-jerk reaction to the finding of the bodies of indigenous children at the residential school in Kamloops, BC.

Tearing down the statue changes nothing. Sir John A was a remarkable man who did much to bring this country together. The residential schools that were set up under his watch were no doubt done with the best of intentions and no criminal intent. Unfortunately, things do not always work out as planned.

I think the proper approach should be to let the Legacy Working Group complete its mandate and provide its recommendations to City Council.

It seems appropriate to me that the dark side of Sir John A's legacy should be reflected along with the good.

If the recommendation of the working group is to remove the statue, I propose that a referendum be held to determine if the majority of the citizens of Kingston are in agreement.

In the meantime, individuals who deface (any) monument(s) should be charged with vandalism

Respectively submitted
Keith Orton

From: [Dan McClelland](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. MacDonald Statue - Protect the statute, make new additions
Date: June 14, 2021 2:49:54 AM
Attachments: [Sir John A.docx](#)

Hello, Please accept my letter on why the statue needs to be preserved, but that new additions representing Indigenous strength. Also, I would like to listen to this meeting on the 16, please.

Thanks!

From: [David McDonald](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 8:40:30 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I am writing as a long-time resident of Kingston in regards to the Sir John A. Macdonald statue in City Park. Personally, I would like to see that large statue of him completely removed from the park. I would also like us to change the name of the road in his name, and any government facilities. I have felt this way for a long time.

I am also supportive of a community dialogue on this matter, and would hope that First Nations communities in the area are given special status in the final decisions that are made.

Regards,
David McDonald

From: [Jean](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald Statue in City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 7:05:26 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Macdonald was the lead figure in the creation of Canada and our first Prime Minister. To "remove" him is to reject the origins of our country. It behooves us to consider for ourselves what Shakespeare meant when he wrote of Julius Caesar, "The evil that men do lives after them,/The good is oft interred with their bones."

Jean Rae Baxter



Kingston

From: [Jean](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald statue in City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 6:51:48 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hon. Mayor and Councilors:

Let us work together to find the best path forward to a better future for all our peoples.
We must stop selectively demonizing the past. Two or more wrongs have never made one right

Leigh Smith



Kingston

From: [Thomas Dean](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 8:21:54 AM

I believe it is time that it be removed from its prominent location on King St. While he may have been instrumental in the formation of Canada, he was also a significant factor in both issues with Natives, and the issues with the Metis in Manitoba during the building of the Railroad.

From: [Kathleen](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:32:19 AM

To whom it may concern:

It is long past the time when the statue of John A. Macdonald must be removed. It teaches nothing of value and merely putting up information plaques to inform is still unacceptable.

Take it down!

Kathleen Ruck
Kingston

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Justin R.S.](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: The History and Legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald Working Group
Date: June 13, 2021 10:26:23 PM

Good evening,

I would like to submit my thoughts related to the special council meeting on Sir John A McDonald's legacy in our city.

As we all know, this has been a topic that has garnered growing interest over the past few years and has also been the subject of several prior inquiries involving key stakeholders in our community, as it should. I think that this approach, one of seeking meaningful discourse, is extremely important as it seeks a balanced means to address this controversial figure. This is in contrast to the angry mob that tore down Egerton Ryerson's statue in Toronto earlier last week.

Personally, I believe that, as far as the statue is concerned, it should remain in place. Nothing can detract from the fact that SJA was our first Prime Minister and remains an important figure from our city of Kingston. To erase him from our history books would only create questions about who we are as Canadians and how did we begin as a nation. Furthermore, it serves as a platform for discussion so that ongoing teaching and learning can occur.

On the other hand, SJA's role in the creation of residential schools, in addition to the other controversies that he is embroiled in, are rightly a source of anger and resentment from many within our community. While over the past few years the negative facets of SJA's history have come to light and are being better understood, I feel that something tangible does have to happen for those who are understandably very upset, as well as to prevent a mob rules situation.

One suggestion is to commission a statue that captures the horrors of the residential school that would exist in close proximity to SJAs statue. This counterpoint would require the attention and forethought of many community stakeholders who could work together to make sure the other side of history is represented.

Regardless of the outcome of these discussions, I welcome the opportunity to share my own views.

Sincerely,

Justin

From: [sue bates](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Comments
Date: June 14, 2021 9:57:24 AM

Good Morning - I understand this is the email to be used for comments regarding the 'fate' of the statue of Sir John A. in City Park. My comment is this: statues are not history. Removing the statue does not erase Sir John A's ties to Kingston. I believe all members of our community should feel comfortable and welcomed. If that statue prevents that in any way, then it must be removed or altered (I understand one of the options is that the shroud remains in place). I do not have a preference what should happen with the statue, or what necessarily goes in it's place. I do hope ALL sides of history are told, the bad along with any perceived good.

I fully support the removal / alteration of the statue - whatever option will allow for all members of our community to feel welcomed, heard and understood.

Best of luck with your deliberations.

Sue Bates
Kingston, ON

From: [Emma Langley](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Community member input on John A MacDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:21:59 AM

Hello,

I am writing to share my input as a community member and resident of Kingston regarding the MacDonald statue. I am also interested in listening in at today's meeting if possible.

My concerns related directly to the MacDonald statue

I strongly support the calls by Indigenous community members, expressed through the revolution of the heart group and sacred fire currently located at the John A Macdonald statue, to remove the statue and replace it with a monument dedicated to residential school survivors and to those who did not survive. I am a non-Indigenous person.

Kingston has made great strides to becoming a sustainable city and taking meaningful climate action. The city is proud of these accomplishments and does a significant amount of promotion to talk about the milestones and accomplishments that have been achieved in these areas.

That work is important. However, the city needs to address the fact that environmental sustainability and environmental justice cannot be achieved without Indigenous justice and reconciliation. This includes the visible markers of public history present in the city and what these represent.

There are numerous Calls to Action in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada that are directly related to the issue of the statue, for example-- the need to address racist depictions of historical interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada, such as terra nullius and the Doctrine of Discovery (see #47 below). This is not a recent call to action. It is six years old and also follows the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples released in 1996. Defending the decision to keep a monument that Indigenous community members have called to take down, as it is a representation of genocide and erasure, directly goes against this call to action.

City leaders need to humbly listen to and respect local Indigenous community members' calls for action. City leaders who are inclined to do more research need to reflect on the work that has already been done through these commissions and ask themselves why they feel it is insufficient to guide their decisions, alongside community discussions.

Thank you very much for considering my note.
Emma

TRC Call to Action #47: *We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.*

Background about me

This issue is very important to me and I approach it with humility. While studying at Trent I

had the opportunity to complete my master's thesis related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada-- one aspect of my research was working with records and documents that described the work that numerous Indigenous-led organizations did between the 1950s and early 2000s in terms of advocating for survivors.

From: [Savannah Shea](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Demanding the removal of the John A Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:27:01 AM

Hello,

My Name is Savannah, and I am a resident of Kingston.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you for your time,
Savannah

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: FW: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 11:38:06 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

For acknowledgement / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thanks.



John Bolognone

City Clerk
City Clerk's Department
City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613 546 4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

From: Danuta Sierhuis [REDACTED]
Sent: June 14, 2021 11:09 AM
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear City Clerk,

My name is Danuta Sierhuis and I am a concerned resident of the City of Kingston.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let

the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Danuta Sierhuis (she/her)

From: Fawcett.Elizabeth
To: Barrett.Nicole
Cc: Bolognone.John; Hurdle.Lanie; Agnew.Paige; Campbell.Jennifer; Jaynes.Janet
Subject: FW: Sir John A McDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:02:05 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Good morning,
Please see below correspondence for acknowledgment, tabling and distribution on the June 16th agenda.
Regards,



Elizabeth Fawcett
Committee Clerk
Clerks Department
City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613-546-4291 x 1219
efawcett@cityofkingston.ca



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From: terrygratto [REDACTED]
Sent: June 13, 2021 5:07 PM
To: Fawcett,Elizabeth <EFAWCETT@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Sir John A McDonald statue

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I was appalled and dearly concerned, that this monument is being defaced. I drove by the park Sunday June 13th to see this wonderful monument being shrouded with a red tarp and rope tied around it. People had tents set up around. This makes it impossible for the general public to take pics of this great man, it's my park too, I pay taxes and to be disallowed to view I, is unconstitutional and goes against what the city says it's trying to stop

Have your right to peaceful protest, but don't take away others in the process. The city needs to do more to stop this unjust behavior

Terry Gardener [REDACTED]

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [Woodland,Heather](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FW: Statue of Sir John A
Date: June 14, 2021 10:25:14 AM

From: Chelsea <cdthompson@cityofkingston.ca>
Sent: June 10, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Woodland,Heather <hwoodland@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: FWD: Statue of Sir John A

The following request has been submitted to the City of Kingston.

Please respond directly to the customer with a BCC to cssrteam@cityofkingston.ca within 3 business days. Remember to include the SR reference number in the body of the email.

Service Request Reference #: 210609-000517
Service Request Type: Cultural heritage
Date Created: 06/09/2021 06:26 PM
Disposition:
Severity: No Value

Internal Comments:

N/A

Customer Comments:

Customer Name: Concerned Citizen

Customer Contact: concernedcitizen@cityofkingston.ca

Customer Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario,

Mobile Phone: No Value

Home Phone: No Value

Office Phone: No Value - Ext.

Subject:

Statue of Sir John A

Customer By Service Web (Concerned Citizen) (06/09/2021 06:26 PM)

Please do not remove statues of Sir John A. He did what was acceptable in his time. We don't agree with it now but we can learn from it. He was one of our Fathers of Confederation. We must not forget the good that he did as well. This is still a good country yet we are being made to feel that we are bad!

Incident Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario

Escalated: No

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: FW: That controversial statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:48:31 AM

For acknowledgement / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thanks.

John Bolognone
City Clerk
City Clerk's Department

City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613 546 4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

-----Original Message-----

From: Pamela Cornell [REDACTED]
Sent: June 14, 2021 11:32 AM
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: That controversial statue

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Mr. Bolognone,

Nobody belongs on a pedestal, least of all, someone who was directly involved in what has been determined to have been genocide. Canada continues to reap the consequences of what was inflicted on the indigenous peoples who lived here at the time of colonization.

Cultural values evolve. It has been a very long time since we've had spittoons, and smoking in public places is no longer permitted. That's because we have come to understand that tobacco kills. Now we have indisputable evidence that the policies of Canada's first Prime Minister resulted in the deaths of innocent people — many of them children. Surely you agree that statues to this man deserve to go the way of the spittoon.

Thank you for disseminating this message to members of City Council, and for making sure it is placed on the public record.

Sincerely,
Pamela Cornell

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Fwd: Please support the removal of Sir John A.'s statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 12:20:08 PM

For acknowledgment / tabling and distribution. Thanks.

John Bolognone, City Clerk
City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613-546-4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

Begin forwarded message:

From: Clara Langley [REDACTED]
Date: June 14, 2021 at 11:53:33 AM EDT
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Please support the removal of Sir John A.'s statue from City Park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning,

My name is Clara Langley.

I am emailing you today to urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. I ask that you advocate for the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, which call for the removal of Sir John A's statue and its replacement with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

As the continuing discoveries of mass graves at Residential Schools grieves us all, Indigenous community members are imploring us to remember that the legacy of the schools and the project of settler colonialism in Canada is ongoing: that settler colonialism was not an historical event (or series of events) but the imposition of a brutal structure of racial oppression that has necessary and devastating reaches in our present. Indigenous children continue to be taken from their families and subjected to poorly regulated foster care systems; Indigenous women and girls

are continually disappeared and murdered; the rates of Indigenous peoples warehoused in our incarceration system continues to grow, despite Canada's overall prison population declining; Indigenous lands continue to be trespassed upon and exploited.

The Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action also reminds us that Canada's colonial project continues in other, more insidious ways: for example, in the ethics and politics of collective remembering and forgetting, memorialization and erasure. This is where the question of Sir John A comes in, and the City of Kingston's enduring idolization of his figure (literally, as in the case of his statue at City Park). Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies that aimed at the displacement, dispossession, starvation, and eradication of Indigenous nations. In demonstrating how Sir John A's public pedestal is incredibly harmful to Indigenous peoples in Kingston, Revolution of the Heart is challenging us to reconsider what constitutes colonial violence in our city.

I urge you to seriously consider the questions that Revolution of the Heart organizers and their action at City Park pose:

- What are the ethical implications of our continued commitment to celebrating Sir John A in Kingston?
- What does it mean for the present when we depict the historical figure of Sir John A in ways that are not true to the devastation he wrought on Indigenous lives and ways of being?
- What signals are we sending to our Indigenous peers and community members when we do not listen to their testimony about the symbolic violence that Sir John A's statue represents in our city?

I close by, once again, urging you to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the stature and honouring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories, Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by the First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive, and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katarokwi represents its history and engages with the Indigenous community.

Thank you very much for your time.

Kind regards,

Clara

From: [Veronica Stienburg](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: History and legacy of Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 14, 2021 10:23:02 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To Whom This May Concern,

The legacy of Sir John A MacDonald is a complicated one and this complex history should be acknowledged. We think the idea of adding material and context around the Sir John A MacDonald statue in City Park is a very good one, including perhaps other statues. We do not support the wholesale removal of the Sir John A MacDonald statue. By adding other elements such as textual panels and other statues the City would be contributing to the education of the public, now and in the future, on the important history of the treatment of the Indigenous in Canada as well as on contribution of Sir John A MacDonald to the foundation of Canada. The removal of the statue, while making a statement now, could potentially add to decreased awareness in the future of the poor treatment of Indigineous by our government, society and Sir John A MacDonald in particular, as this whole public debate may be overlooked or forgotten by the general public. This is an opportunity for education and a chance to portray a balanced view of the past.

Sincerely,
Gordon and Veronica Stienburg

From: [Mark O'Farrell](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hill.Wayne](#)
Subject: If not you, then who? If not now, then when?
Date: June 14, 2021 10:07:11 AM

Few moments in history define who we are, but this is one. While politicians across the country give in to the chatter of the day as politicians are known to do, you have a responsibility to show genuine leadership, and to stand up for all Kingstonians past, present and future. If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

Sir John A. Macdonald was not perfect, but he was far, far better than most, and certainly better than any of us, who piously sit in judgement.


It is true that, five years prior to his death and while he was prime minister, the Indian Act was amended to clear the path for residential schools, which he thought to be a good thing. He was not alone. In fact, the schools were kept open for 77 years after his death. Think about that for a moment. Twenty houses of parliament, Liberal and Conservative alike, sat through the operation of these schools, and yet those calling for removal are putting the entire blame on the one man who died before the effect could have even been known.

This is the same man who was revered by Indians AT THE TIME. They called the U.S. border, "The Medicine Line", above which they had justice and an opportunity to heal. Sir John A. created the RCMP specifically to wipe out the liquor trade that was devastating Indians on the prairies. Sir John A. was the first to give the indigenous the right to vote, in 1885. He was also the first to extend that right to women. And he was the first to accept the distinctiveness of French Canadians. And he was the first Prime Minister of Canada. And he built the railroad that joined Canadians from coast to coast. And one other note-worthy item worth remembering: he was the Founder of our Country. Does ANY Canadian in history have a CV that compares?

If Sir John A. Madonald is not worthy of a statue in Kingston, then no one is, anywhere in Canada. If you vote for his removal, you are voting for the removal of every statue in Canada.

Please demonstrate the leadership you were elected for. If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

Thank you,

Mark O'Farrell,

Howe Island, ON

From: [Erin Ball](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [Neill, Jim](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: In Support of Statue Removal
Date: June 14, 2021 10:19:01 AM

Hello,

My Name is Erin Ball and I was born here and currently live here, in Kingston/Katarokwi.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonalld Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Please do the right thing.
Sincerely,

Erin Ball

From: [Jane White](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:54:01 AM

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Hi

I think this is a very troubling time we are living in. We should take the statute down before it becomes damaged put in storage.

So the matter can properly discussed and decisions can be made.

We have to remember that this is our History be it good or bad We are learning about the legacy of our forefathers not always how we would handle things in 2021.

Thank you,
Jane White

Jane White

[REDACTED]

Human Resources - Sales

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Kingston, Ontario

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Lesley Jamieson](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Cc: [ourhistories](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: John A MacDonald Statue Removal
Date: June 14, 2021 10:52:39 AM

Dear Mayor Paterson,

I'm writing to you in support of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action, and ask that you support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday.

As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

All the Best,

Lesley Jamieson



WHY IS IT THAT MUCH I HAVE HELD TO BE RIGHT IS NOW SAID TO BE WRONG?

The best example is the historical inheritance of Sir John A. Macdonald. I have always believed him to be a true and worthy Canadian leader, who represented Kingston in the federal parliament, as he led the Province of Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia into a nation-founding confederation, The Dominion of Canada, on July 1, 1867.

He came at age 5 with his parents from Scotland and settled in Kingston in 1820. He became a lawyer and was elected an alderman of the city in 1843. In 1844, he became a member of the Legislative Assembly and remained a MP for 47 years until his death in 1891. During his time as Prime Minister, he brought the provinces of Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia, and the vast lands belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company into Confederation. Among his many achievements was the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway from coast to coast. Above all, he always considered Kingston his home, and so after his death in Ottawa his body was brought here to be buried in Cataraqui Cemetery.

Recently, there has been an outcry to diminish Sir John A in our minds by protest marches and media attacks on his character and his public record as prime minister of Canada. Worse, there have been acts of violence directed against his statues, even in Kingston's City Park and by the defacing of plaques at his grave-site. There have been serious attempts to influence the elected Council of the City of Kingston to remove his statue, and for the Principal of Queen's University to abolish his name from the building housing the Law Faculty. One wonders when there will be an outcry to change the name of Sir John A. Macdonald Boulevard - the main entry to the city from Highway 401, the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway.

A founder of Queen's University, the Father of Confederation, and First (and probably the greatest) Prime Minister of Canada, Macdonald remains Kingston's greatest gift to our country. It is the duty of the Principal of Queen's and its Board of Trustees and the Mayor and Council of the City of Kingston to resist all attempts to belittle Sir John

and his role in the history of Canada.

One of my mentors, Dr Ronald L. Way, the restorer of Fort Henry and the founder of the Fort Henry Guard, once explained to me how the “past is dead.” Nothing we can do now can change it, so destroying Sir John’s statue or burning him in effigy will do nothing to change his role in history. Whatever Sir John did in his life is done - we can only study whatever evidence there is of his life and try and understand his motives during his period of active ministry from 1867 to 1891. If anything he did is deemed unsuitable by today’s standards by a majority of Canadians, for instance the Indian Act of 1876 (much amended) and the establishment of the Residential Schools (since abolished), then let us correct the record now by democratic means, and not by acts of violence.

I am pleased to note that Report No. 2, “How to handle Sir John of Kingston in Canadian History” was tabled at the 7th of July 2020 meeting of the City of Kingston’s Council. This comprehensive report recommends the retention of landmarks to Sir John but at the same time makes provision for the public education of the good and the bad of his leadership in the history of Canada.

The statue of Sir John was erected by the good people of Kingston on October 23, 1895. It was the fifth city of Canada to erect a statue to him. Kingston was not a wealthy city, so in the interest of economy, it obtained a copy of the one erected in Montreal a few months earlier. The statue is now 125 years old, and part of the historic fabric of Kingston. So much of Kingston’s historic past has been lost, let us not lose another piece of our history through ill-considered judgments of the past.

A Kingstonian I was born, and a Kingstonian I will die

An Addendum

I wrote the above on July 26, 2020 as a Letter to the Editor of the Kingston Whig-Standard. Events since that date have made some of my comments redundant, but some of them more relevant.

The tearing down of the statue of Macdonald in Montreal has made the Kingston statue, a direct copy of the one in Montreal, all the more

valuable. Although I did not read of this factor being a reason, the City of Kingston recently announced that surveillance cameras would be erected around the Kingston statue to deter any attempts to vandalize it. So far so good.

The recent decision of the Board of Governors to accept the recommendation of the Principal of Queen's University to remove the name of Macdonald from the building housing the Faculty of Law was a blow. As requested by the university, I, as a graduate of Queen's, had submitted the Letter to the Editor as my reason for opposing such a move. Probably nothing can be done now, except to do as I have done - withdraw my financial support to the university, which I have faithfully given since 1953.

Brigadier-General William J. Patterson, OMM, CD, UE, MA, FAPT,
Retired

To History & Legacy of Sir John A Macdonald Working Group
City of Kingston City Council

From Kevin Reed
[REDACTED], Kingston
Member of the Na-Cho Nyak Dun First Nation

Purpose

I am providing this letter to recommend that the statue to Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park be removed.

The historical record

1. The statue was created by George Wade and is a copy of the statue unveiled in Montreal on June 6, 1895. Wade was a respected sculptor who created many sculptures of famous Victorians including a bust of Macdonald that was installed in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England, in 1891. The Montreal statue was torn down by protesters in August 2020.
2. The Kingston statue was erected on October 23, 1895, four years after the death of Macdonald. The mayor of Kingston called for a half day holiday on the day and additional trains were put into service to bring people from neighbouring towns. An estimated 8000 people showed up for the unveiling (at the time, the population of Kingston was about 20000 people). A report in the *Daily British Whig* on the 24th spoke about the diversity of the crowd: "men and women, grits and tories, Catholics and Protestants."
3. No one can deny Sir John A. Macdonald's achievements. He had a phenomenal parliamentary career, led the nation for nearly two decades, and played a key role in establishing the nation of Canada through peaceful means
4. Likewise, no one can deny that Sir John A. Macdonald played a crucial role, as both prime minister and Minister of Indian Affairs, in the creation and implementation of policies that sought to control and corral Indigenous people. He was responsible for promoting and enforcing application of the Indian Act, the Residential School system, and reserves—policies and laws that had terrible effects on Indigenous nations, cultures, peoples and individuals. These actions and their impact have been well documented and acknowledged as "cultural genocide" by the Government of Canada. The disastrous impact of the policies continues to this day.
5. As well, Sir John A. Macdonald was instrumental in imposing a head tax to limit and even bar Chinese immigrants. This policy was adopted for racist reasons.
6. So, on balance, Macdonald's legacy is mixed: enormous achievements about which many Canadians are rightly proud, as well as terrible policies which devastated Indigenous and Chinese communities for decades. For many Indigenous people, Macdonald and Canada represent over 150 years of oppression, violation of human rights, genocide and pain.

The problem

1. How do we balance the good that Macdonald did with the bad that he did? Should we accept the judgement of a group of individuals who erected the statue over 100 years ago as an unchangeable, eternal act? Should the actions of today's protestors and vandals be rewarded? Should Macdonald's actions be judged by today's standards? What would the removal of the statue imply for other things in Kingston named for Macdonald or other controversial figures? Should the statue be removed, moved to a less visible place, or have additional information placed near it to contextualize Macdonald more accurately? Do Macdonald's actions towards Indigenous people, undermine his credibility enough that posthumous honours should be revoked?
2. These questions are difficult, but I am going to argue that Macdonald's record is so compromised by his actions towards Chinese and Indigenous people that his statue must be removed. His actions towards these two groups of people represent serious human rights abuses that mean he should not be publicly lionized and esteemed. His image and name cause pain to many people because his actions, carried out over one hundred years ago, continue to play out in their lives today.

The argument for removal

1. The existence of the statue implies admiration of Macdonald. No amount of signage near the statue can compete with the sheer size and grandiosity of the statue. Therefore, no contextualizing information about Macdonald's complicated legacy can undo the force of the statue's location and size. People who drive by will see the statue but may never read the information that "re-contextualizes" it.
2. The statue was erected by a committee (that was probably composed only of white men) operating soon after Macdonald's death. It is unlikely that anyone would seek to create such a monument today, especially in light of our enhanced knowledge of and abhorrence for Macdonald's unfair actions towards Chinese immigrants and genocidal actions towards Indigenous people. It seems unreasonable to argue that civic actions like the erection of a statue, taken over 100 years ago, should trump our ability to decide what and who our contemporary community chooses to celebrate and honour.
3. Macdonald's actions towards Indigenous people cannot be ignored or excused. Some have argued that he was less racist than others of his time, but that is questionable and does not mean we can disregard his actions. Leaving the statue in place, even with contextualizing commentary, implies that his actions, which aimed to eradicate Indigenous peoples as peoples, are not something we really need to worry about.
4. Eliminating the statue does not eliminate Macdonald from history; it merely eliminates a 19th century celebration of him that emerged from a group of citizens who did not see his record in its entirety. We have different eyes today and we, as a city, have a right to have statues that reflect those views. Some may argue that historical perspective is constantly changing and that it is unfair to view those in the past from the perspective of today. Well, the study of history is different from the fact of the statue. The statue's presence says things that we don't necessarily agree with and so we have a right to remove it.

5. Statues to slave traders, Civil War generals, imperialists, and Macdonald himself are being removed in Canada and around the world. The time is right to act, to make a strong statement that Kingston stands for equity, equality and reconciliation. The city's motto is "where the past and innovation thrive". Our future should not be hamstrung by our past and our future should feature fewer public celebrations of Sir John A. Macdonald.
6. After removing the statue, the city could install a photograph of the statue with an explanation about why it was removed.
7. You may feel you don't want to be pushed into a decision, but the pressure is on and the eyes of the community and the world are currently on that statue and its ilk. We can lead, or we can fight a rearguard action until the statue eventually comes down, because it will come down; it is only a matter of when. Macdonald's statue has had a 125 year run and its time has run out.
8. For additional commentary on this issue you may want to read
 - a. Is It Wrong to Topple Statues & Rename Schools? Joanna Burch-Brown, *Journal of Political Theory and Philosophy*, Vol. 1, 2017 <https://philpapers.org/rec/BURIIW>
 - b. The Duty to Remove Statues of Wrongdoers, Helen Frowe, Stockholm University, *Journal of Practical Ethics*, Volume 7, Issue 3, 2019 <https://philarchive.org/archive/FROTDI>
 - c. Matthew A. Sears, "Monuments aren't museums, and history suffers when we forget that", *Maclean's*, August 10, 2018 <https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/monuments-arent-museums-and-history-suffers-when-we-forget-that/>
 - d. Eric Andrew-Gee, "In Kingston, an agonizing question: What to do about Sir John A. Macdonald?" *The Globe and Mail*, September 29, 2019, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-in-kingston-an-agonizing-question-what-to-do-about-sir-john-a/>

Next Steps:

I am suggesting a motion in support of removing the statue

Whereas Sir John A. Macdonald's legacy is severely compromised by his racist actions towards Indigenous peoples and Chinese immigrants,

And whereas the Residential School system established by Sir John A. Macdonald constituted "cultural genocide" according to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and continues to impact Indigenous peoples in Kingston and Canada profoundly and negatively,

And whereas the City of Kingston is currently reviewing the status of the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park with the understanding that each generation of Kingstonsians has a right to define its city anew,

And whereas the City of Kingston recognizes the importance of balancing the preservation of heritage and the promotion of Reconciliation as a means to build an informed and equitable community,

The City of Kingston recommends removing the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park and replacing it with photographs and text explaining why the statue was removed.

From: [Karen Dubinsky](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); RobHutchison@cityofkingston.ca
Subject: Macdonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:44:59 AM

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To all concerned:

Please don't let Kingston be the last community in Ontario clinging on to a weak defence of a genocidal Canadian politician. Wherever he was born, whatever the colonial attitudes of the time, Macdonald's policies were indefensible. Period. Please remove the statue. Bring it inside as a museum relic to teach about Canada's past, that would be a fine idea. Put it in the back yard of his house/museum. But remove it as a public memorial/tribute because it celebrates something that is simply wrong.

best wishes

Karen Dubinsky
Professor
Global Development Studies/History
Queen's

PS I expect many of you have seen this op ed but I was struck with how well Professor Celeste Pedri Spade explained the issue when it came to removing Macdonald's name from the Queen's Law School.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-removing-sir-john-a-macdonald-isnt-cancel-culture-its-a-sign-of/>

From: [Susan Deuchars](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); [Hutchison,Rob](#)
Date: June 14, 2021 10:20:27 AM

Hello,

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Regards,
SusanDeuchars

From: [Kelli Siegart](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Date: June 14, 2021 11:20:59 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Mayor Patterson et al,

My Name is Kelli Siegart.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

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Sincerely,

Kelli Siegart

--

Registered Midwife, Community Midwives of Kingston

Kingston ON

Situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory

Pronouns: she/her

From: [Kathryn Palaic](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Petition to remove statue of Sir John A McDonald in City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 10:44:36 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kathryn Palaic.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

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Sincerely,

Kathryn Palaic

From: [G M](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: please remove the statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:37:59 AM

Hi,
My Name is Gillian Mangotich,
It's time for Kingston to become a progressive city.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

-GM.

From: [Sayyida Jaffer](#)
To: [Hutchison,Rob](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Please take the statue down
Date: June 14, 2021 10:37:06 AM

Good morning Councillor Hutchison, Mayor Paterson, and the Our Histories Project

I am writing to ask that council take down the statue of Sir John A Macdonald as per the demands by the Revolution of the Heart group that is currently hosting and maintaining a sacred fire near the statue.

We can no longer put a man on a pedestal when we collectively are aware of the harm his actions and leadership caused to countless Indigenous communities and people, of which the legacies of intergenerational trauma and other negative impacts live on today.

Removing the statue is not erasing history - it is actually a step towards being more honest about our history and taking appropriate action so that Indigenous community members can feel valued and a respected part of our community. How would you feel if you had to walk or drive by a monument of a person who played a critical role in the genocide of some of your ancestors? Would you feel safe, secure, a sense of belonging? Would you feel able to heal from the past?

I understand this is a contentious issue because change is not only hard, it can even feel threatening when it challenges our understanding of the world.

Please do the right thing and take the statue down. I want Kingston to look back at this moment and reflect that we were on the right side of history. And we can live up to our motto of "where history and innovation thrive" by ending the glorification of a man who caused so much harm and demonstrate leadership and innovation by being one of the early cities to take his statue down.

I hope that you are receiving many similar letters from non-Indigenous residents like me. If you are getting many messages asking you to keep the statue up, please keep in mind that democracies need to protect and defend minority rights. So even if most of Kingston is against this statue coming down, council has an obligation to respect and protect the dignity of local Indigenous residents by committing to removing the statue and honouring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system. It is the right thing to do, the ethical thing to do.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,
Sayyida Jaffer
Rideau Street

From: [Aric McBay](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Please vote to remove the statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:49:55 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Greetings.

My name is Aric McBay. I'm an author, and my books focus on social movements and social change. I've lived in the Kingston area for 17 years.

I'm writing to strongly encourage the City of Kingston to listen to the Indigenous community at the sacred fire and remove the statue of John A Macdonald at City Park. Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members have asked that the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims. I support them fully.

The previous terms of reference for the statue's future, limiting all changes to the plaque, were insufficient. It's inappropriate for genocide to be a literal footnote on the base of a tourist attraction.

The only way for Kingston to move forward is to remove the statue promptly, and to engage in dialogue with Indigenous peoples on an equal footing. Good faith dialogue is impossible as long as the statue remains standing.

John A Macdonald embodies genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

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This is an opportunity for the City of Kingston to show respect and leadership, and to act in a timely fashion to meet the precedent set by Halifax, Prince Edward County, and many other places in Canada which have removed harmful statues of John A Macdonald.

Thank you,
Aric McBay

From: [Hugh Black](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Proposed removal Of Sir John A Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:08:24 AM

As a Kingston resident, I don't support any proposal to remove the statue of Sir John A Macdonald from City Park.

By doing so we are focusing the relationship with our First Nations on one person, which is a symbolic gesture.

The man has been dead for 130 years and legions of politicians have come and gone without concerning themselves with or addressing past controversies. Our current Federal government has made many promises to our First Nations, like provision of clean drinking water to reserves and they have not delivered. Yet, I see no clamour to remove the Prime Minister or statues of other past politicians.

Removal of this statue, in my opinion, will not assist with the process of reconciliation.

Hugh Black

Reddendale

From: [Jeremy Milloy](#)
Cc: [ourhistories](#); [City Clerk](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Sir John A Macdonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:48:34 AM
Attachments: [hostagesfinal.doc](#)

Dear Council and staff,

Thank you for listening to the actions of local people and publicly considering this important matter. I am writing as a Kingston resident, a descendent of Europeans, and as a historian of Canada. My father was a historian before me, and in his book *A National Crime*, he devastatingly outlines the genocidal logic of the residential school system and its utter barbarity. In his forthcoming article, a copy of which I am sharing with you on his behalf (please do not circulate), he demonstrates that the intent of this system was not education, but to advance the occupation and pacification of territory by the Canadian government. Children at school were to be hostages, their control by the Crown and the churches a guarantor their parents would behave at home.

Statues aren't history. They're ideology. History is how we collectively choose to understand, discuss, honour, and learn from the past. What we are doing as a city, this week, is history.

Removing the statue now, and continuing the community discussion you've been facilitating about the future of the site, will do more about advancing historical knowledge about the history of these lands and the people that live here than 1000 more years of silent complicity ever could. More than anything, history is about time. It's time to do what's right.

Sincerely,

Jeremy

Jeremy Milloy, PhD
Lead, Integrity of Creation and Climate Change
JPIC Office
Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sir John A's "Hostages:" state formation and residential education for First Nations' children.

“It must be remembered that boarding and industrial schools were not established for the purpose of carrying out the terms of the treaty [such as education] or complying with any provision of the law, but were, above all else, instituted in the public interest, so that there should not grow up upon reserves an uneducated and barbarous class.”[bib757/6,7]Cliford Sifton date ...

After the opening of a number of residential schools in the United Canadas, beginning in the late 1840s, the development of what would become a nationwide residential school system slowed and not until after the negotiations of the seven western treaties [1870-1877] was the subject of state sponsored Indian education taken up again. While it is evident that the major church denominations had played, and would continue to play, a significant role in Indian education – opening pre-Confederation schools with grants from the Imperial Indian department and local bands, supporting the demands of First Nations' treaty negotiators in the West for the provision of schools and effectively pressuring politicians to rapidly expand the educational system in the late 19th

century¹ – neither the churches or even the humanitarian virtues that were the hallmark of Victorian empire-wide indigenous policy rhetoric explain Macdonald’s decision to initiate federally sponsored residential schools in 1883. The decision to do so, and to do so in that particular year, emanated, in the main, from less sublime considerations: from secular concerns of the day rooted in the challenge of realizing the economic opportunities of Canada’s vast northwestern empire, establishing peace, order and good government in the region and laying down the vital artery of national economic policy – the railroad.

Such considerations were not limited, however, to that time or to the northwestern region; they became a regular part of Canada’s thinking about the process of national expansion, region by region, the formation of new economies and the role in them of education for indigenous communities. Finally, such a line of analysis lays some groundwork for understanding the government’s eventual neglect of the schools and First Nation communities, in general, when Canadian control of its “sea to sea to sea” geography was essentially complete in the early 20th century.

¹ See for example the memorandum by Duncan Campbell Scott describing the leading role that Churches played in the spread of residential schools in the north. Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs to the Minister, The Hon. Charles Stewart, 31 October, 1927. RG10, Vol.7185 File 1/25-1-7-1.

The successive creation of regional colonies across time and Canadian space after 1867 – the work of politicians, policemen, Indian service bureaucrats, land surveyors, railroad engineers and settlers – gave new life and purpose to the residential school system by giving it what it had not had in pre-Confederation Canada – a central role in state development. And thus even churchmen, some quite enthusiastically, and the schools they administered, became an element of a broader, secular national project that facilitated the marginalization of First Nations’ communities clearing the way for capitalist development.

As with other imperial powers, Canada’s national project required the persistent and progressive dispossession of indigenous communities² In the West, treaties and education went hand in hand – at once moving First Nations aside, breaking their cultures’ connections to the land, and transforming what had been a vast commons into private property, the seed bed of capitalism. And then, at the level of rhetoric at least, education was to re-purpose hunters into labour for a new agricultural and resource extraction economy. No doubt, all cultures’ educational systems, formal or not, indigenous or not, have had the normalization of individuals and skill training as their foundational goal.

² See, for example, the history of Treaty 3 from the initial negotiations in 1873 to the Keewatin decision in DATE

Indian residential schools were no exception; but as they were to operate cross-culturally at the edge of a yet unsecured empire, they were also meant to be active outposts of pacification.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, such an educational strategy by way of the integration of schools in a wider state development strategy, was brought forward by a number of formative circumstances: Sir John A. Macdonald's return to power in 1878, the activities of a cadre of on-site Canadian agents in the west and a process, subsequently, of challenge and response to an increasingly troubled situation in the region which threatened Macdonald's National Policy agenda. As well, recommendations by a senior NWMP official for Indian policy initiatives beyond treaties, including residential schools, and a consensus, on both sides of the U.S./Canada border, on the utility of education as a regulatory instrument in frontier regions, highlighted concerns about regional security that over-shadowed missionary prayers in determining Indian policy generally and the move, on both sides of the border, not just to education, but to residential education.

When Macdonald began his second term as Prime Minister, in 1878, Confederation's trans-continental project was well underway. Indian acts, western treaties, local institutions of

government and law and order in Manitoba and the Northwest territories set out the framework of western integration. But there was then yet considerable work to be done before the region was firmly anchored to the nation and equipped to play the economic role expected of it. Indeed, the project seemed to teeter on the edge of disintegration. A depression, persistent since the early 1860s, had undercut the possibility of rapid western settlement; and on a number of occasions, the most critical element of the project, the railroad, had come near to bankruptcy. As the rail connection seemed to recede ever farther into the future British Columbians were increasingly restive³ But even more relevant to the residential school narrative, there was, at the heart of western empire, growing unrest amongst the indigenous population – Metis and First Nations.

The second half of the 19th century marked the final decades of classic plains culture and ushered in a period of progressive instability in the region. The most fundamental dynamics of that era were the diminution of the buffalo herds - a growing reality apparent as early as 1850 - and the fact that other food sources could not bear the burden of the indigenous population increasingly concentrated on the south western

³ See a curious reference to moves towards succession and annexation to the United States in E. Dewdney to J.A. Mara, M.P. 3 April, 1879, MG26A, Vol. 80, C-1515.

plains.⁴ And as the region was transferred to Canada, smallpox devastated First Nations communities and soon there were traces of the next plague – the white plague, tuberculosis,⁵ which would continue the downward track of community vitality for much of the next century.

In this atmosphere of crisis, Canada’s treaty agents worked their way across the region pressing on the nervous anxiety of plains people while magnifying the benevolence of their Great Mother who promised them a life of health, prosperity and security, through, as Alexander Morris, the lead negotiator, assured them, the Queen’s “blessings.”⁶

Unfortunately, the post-treaty experience of western First Nations bore no resemblance to that promise. Beyond pestilence and famine, unsympathetic and increasingly aggressive federal policies marked the grip of Canadian colonialism. That post-treaty reality began with Macdonald’s

⁴ For a description of this process, see the Annual Report of the NWMP for 1876 in *Opening Up the West*, Coles Publishing Company, 1973, page 23.

⁵ The last great smallpox epidemic, 1870-71, is described in J.S. Milloy, *The Plains Cree*, University of Manitoba Press, 1988, page 116. For comments on the extent of tuberculosis see the report of G.F. Kennedy M.B. Surgeon, Fort McLeod, in the Annual Report of the NWMP for 1879, in *Opening Up the West*, page 34.

⁶ See the speech of Alexander Morris, at the Treaty 4 negotiations, September 1874 in *Treaties of Canada with the Indians*, Prospero Books, 2000, page 95.

appointment in May, 1879, of Edgar Dewdney as Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the North-West territories with a mandate of “re-organizing the system of administering Indian affairs,”⁷ inducing bands to move onto reserves and take up agriculture. Dewdney took a stern line; in meetings with First Nations’ leaders, he “told them if they would only make up their minds to settle down I was sure that in two or three years they would be independent, and have plenty to live on, without begging from the Government.”⁸ Indian agents were ordered to issue rations with an eye to holding down costs and, as far as possible, “work should be exacted in return.”⁹ On their part, Chiefs referenced the pestilence and famine clause of Treaty 6 which promised “assistance ... to relieve the Indians from the calamity that shall have befallen them.”¹⁰ Dewdney would not be moved. In what was likely the first of a number of serious violations of treaty terms in the Macdonald era, NWMP Commissioner J. Macleod, who accompanied Dewdney and likely spoke with his approval, informed the chiefs that “they must not misinterpret that

⁷ Report by E. Dewdney on Conditions in the NWT, 1880 in RG10, Vol. 3704, File 17858.

⁸ Report by E. Dewdney on Conditions in the NWT, 1880 in RG10, Vol. 3704, File 17858.

⁹ B. Titley, “Hayter Reed and Indian Administration in the West,” in R.C. Mcleod ed., *Swords and Ploughshares: War and Agriculture in Western Canada*, Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1993, page 111.

¹⁰ Treaties at Fort Carlton and Pitt [Treaty 6] in *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians*, page 354.

clause in the Treaty ... that every time they were hungry they must not think they were starving”¹¹

Two Treaty 4 historians, John Skeboss and Chief Richard Poorman, have provided insight into the First Nation’s side of things. They described those days as the government replaced buffalo at the centre of life and their communities became trapped in treaty texts frozen in time and interpreted unilaterally by Canada. Any idea that First Nations’ understandings of the treaties were valid was rejected and pleas for re-negotiations, to amend treaties to meet evolving western circumstances, were ignored. Skeboss put his finger on what became the harsh reality of First Nations/Canada relations.

Well, they had more power in other words it came pretty rough towards the Indians even [though] they promised the Indians they would be in peace all the time after they signed treaty but soon they established these Indian agencies and placed rough men [the agents] in there. The government made the Indian agent, Indian agency,

¹¹ Report by E. Dewdney on Conditions in the NWT, 1880 in RG10, Vol. 3704, File 17858.

Micro no.

Indian affairs, and so on. Since that time, they didn't live up to the treaty.

Chief Poorman's narrative is much the same. It was the view of tribal negotiators, Poorman asserted, that the treaties were to be amended regularly to keep pace with changing needs; it was in that sense to be a "living treaty." Thus for example, "every four or five years they will count their people, how much they have and based on that they should get more land." But then "... the Indian agent took his course two years after [the treaty]. The Indian agent was put in place [they] totally destroyed our Treaty. There was no more treaty talks after that" and thus we were unable to "talk about what was needed for us to farm continuously."¹²

Famine, the activities of "rough men" and no doubt the disappointment of First Nations leaders reflected in the Skeboss and Poorman commentaries, pushed the region ever

¹² The two oral histories referenced here, that of Chief Richard Poorman and John Skeebos, are part of a collection of tapes/transcripts created by researchers of the Kawacatoose First Nation in Saskatchewan who interviewed elders or are tapes/transcripts that they have collected from other repositories. These are now stored at Kawacatoose at the Asiniw-Kisik Education Campus. Copies were made available to the author and he himself interviewed Chief Poorman and others. For a full treatment of the negotiations of Treaty Four see: J.S. Milloy, "Tipahamatoowin or Treaty 4? : Speculations on Alternative Texts" in J.R. Miller ed. *The Native Studies Review*, 18 (1) 2009.

closer to the crisis that would come in 1885. Only a year after the last treaty was signed, reports of discontent appeared. The missionary Father Constantine Scollen, cautioned the Assistant Commissioner of the NWMP, A.G. Irvine, that the Blackfoot were “in utter dejection, and from a state of dejection if they continue to suffer, I have no doubt there will be a transition to a state of desperation.”¹³ And NWMP reports charted the fraying of civil order and the eventual rupture of relations with some First Nations. In 1880, Irvine, warned the government that though the police’s “satisfactory relations in the past is most certainly a matter of the utmost congratulations” and would “I trust, be the means of furthering the chances of lasting and permanent peace...” still “...it must not be lost sight of, that all the intricacies and dangers of the Indian question are not over.”¹⁴ In a number of incidents Canada’s authority was tested: threats were made, a government storehouse was broken into and then a few months later an “ominous event” – “the first Mounted Police constable was murdered by unknown Indians”¹⁵

¹³ As quoted in bib 724 page `136.

¹⁴ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1880, in *Opening Up the West*, page 6.

¹⁵ See references in a number of sources: G.F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1975, page 225, Annual Reports of the NWMP, 1879 and 1881, in *Opening Up the West*, pages 21 and 25 respectively.

These reports went eastward to Macdonald, himself, who, indicating the importance of getting Canada's western expansion right, had placed himself at the apex of affairs, the instruments of control in his hands. He was not only Prime Minister with an ambitious transcontinental economic vision, but also the Minister of the Interior and as such the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. Additionally, his Interior Ministry officials managed the North West Mounted Police.¹⁶

The connection between the condition of potential, widespread violence and residential schools was first drawn to Macdonald's attention by the NWMP. The root of this lay in the fact that the Force was not only a law enforcement agency but, for over a century after its formation, it was the nation's security service conducting surveillance, gathering intelligence and taking steps to combat perceived threats to the state posed by radical groups: suffragettes, socialists, Reds, labour leaders, Metis and First Nations activists.¹⁷ In

¹⁶ Macdonald was Superintendent of Indian Affairs from October 1878 to September 1887 and acting SGIA from May to September 1888. His place was then taken by E. Dewdney who had been the Indian Commissioner appointed by Macdonald. Macdonald was Minister of the Interior from October 1888 to October 1883???? NOT THE CORRECT DATE. E. Dewdney was Minister of Interior from 1888 to 1891. Macdonald died in June 1891.

¹⁷ The Mounties employed agents [spies?] to work among the Metis and Indians See for example W.E. Beahan and S. Horrall, *Red Coates on the Prairies*, Centax Books, Regina, 1998, page 60 and Annual Report of the NWMP, 1876, in *Opening Up the West*, pages 25 and 26.

that vein, its Annual Report to Parliament of 1877-78 relayed “extravagant rumours” of a “grand confederation of all the Indians” (including the Sioux, Nez Perce and Blackfoot), “hostile to the Whites, every one of whom was to be massacred as the first act of confederation.” While the report’s author, Commissioner Macleod, discounted the accuracy of the “rumours,” the atmosphere of potential trouble led to immediate preventive measures – “the concentration of as large a force [of NWMP] as possible at Fort Walsh, the post nearest to where they [the “confederation”] would be concentrating.”¹⁸

Beyond such immediate action, Macleod took a longer and more constructive view advising Ottawa to adopt measures to ensure peaceful relations with treaty tribes over the longer term. The treaties, he suggested, were only a preface to achieving regional stability; they were “very good as far as they go but fall far short of what is required.”¹⁹ What was “required,” was further determined action to fulfil the treaties’ goals – First Nations’ pacification enabling white settlement and development. The most critical goal, he continued - “settling down of the Indians to agricultural and pastoral pursuits” - would “I am afraid, be too slow, and the danger I

¹⁸ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1878, in *Opening Up the West*, Appendix D Extract from Commissioner’s Report 1877, page 21.

¹⁹ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1878, in *Opening Up the West*, Appendix D, page 22.

have pointed out will be upon us, as it is now in some sections of the country, before the provisions of the treaties can be carried out, and the Indian made self-supporting.” In order “to accelerate the process” making “the treaty stipulations of ... service ... to the Indian [and] the Government” the “appointment of practical farmers as teachers to the different bands” was “absolutely necessary.”²⁰ Time was of the essence. “The best authorities on the North-West are of opinion that the buffalo as a means of support ... will not last for more than three years.” And, sharpening the point - “Hungry men are dangerous whether they be Indians or Whites.”²¹

Macleod brought forward one final recommendation, another absolute necessity in his view. And again, in line with the Force’s broader security remit

I would recommend most strongly the establishment of Industrial Schools at different points for both Indians and Half-Breeds. In dealing with this question the Half-Breed

²⁰ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1878, in *Opening Up the West*, Appendix D, page 22. This recommendation for the appointment of farm instructors was acted on quickly – in the fall of 1879. See B. Titley, *The Frontier World of Edgar Dewdney*, UBC Press, Vancouver, 1999, page 44.

²¹ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1878, in *Opening Up the West*, Appendix D, pages 22 and 23.

element must not be overlooked. He is as much dependent on the supply of buffalo as is the Indian and he has claims that have already been brought under the consideration of the Government by the North-West Council.²²

With Macleod's education recommendation in hand, Macdonald appointed Nicholas Flood Davin²³ to conduct an inquiry into the "advisability of establishing" "Industrial Schools" on the American model in "the North-West Territories of the Dominion." In light of Davin's subsequent meetings with Bishop Tache and James Mackay, which connected him to two of the most extensive information networks in the west - Catholic missionaries and Hudson's Bay Company employees²⁴ - and his meetings with American officials struggling with their own troubled frontier, his report, submitted on 14 March, 1879, was marked, not surprisingly perhaps, by Macleod-like sentiments. And, thus, Davin worried that the time for effective government action was limited and that the situation demanded the "serious

²² Annual Report of the NWMP, 1878, in *Opening Up the West*, Appendix D, pages 22 and 23.

²³ For biographical information consult C.B. Koester, *Mr. Davin, M.P. Saskatoon*, Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980.

²⁴ There is no evidence that he met members of the other major network - the NWMP.

consideration of the [Indian] Department.”²⁵ Despite the suggestion of urgency, “consideration” by Macdonald’s government would not come for four years and then only as it became apparent that that time for effective action might soon run out.

Beyond the immediacy of western conditions, there were two additional elements that influenced this recommendation reinforcing the strategic utility of residential schools. First there was a larger context - early Victorian theories of cultural evolution, which set out the sequential development of human societies across time and provided a framework for understanding a common colonial reality - the often-deleterious effect of “superior” European culture on “primitive” indigenous cultures and thereby the potential threat to imperial construction. These ideas were ubiquitous throughout the empire and were well known in the Department. They were, for example, the lens by which J.A. Macrae, the Department’s school inspector, pictured the worrying condition of the Indians in the region.

The circumstances of Indian existence prevents him from following the course of evolution which has

²⁵ Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds, 14 March 1879 – hereinafter the Davin Report, in MG26A Sir John A Macdonald Papers, Vol. 91.

produced from the barbarian of the past the civilized man of today. It is not possible for him to be allowed slowly to pass through successive stages, from pastoral to an agricultural life and from an agricultural one, to one of manufacturing, commerce or trade as we have done. He has been called upon suddenly and without warning to enter upon a new existence.²⁶

This position was set out by Davin: “No race of men,” he warned Macdonald, “[could] be suddenly turned from one set of pursuits to another set of a wholly different nature without great attendant distress.” Indeed, “There is now barely time to inaugurate a system of education.” Such a “large statesmanlike policy ... bearing on immediate and remote issues cannot be entered on too early or too soon.” Indian distress and the danger posed by it would be neutralized as children, rescued from the deleterious “influence of the wigwam,” from their families and communities, would be under the white guidance in the halls and classrooms of residential schools, “prepared to meet the necessities of the not too distant future; to welcome and facilitate ... the settlement of the country; and to render its government easy and not expensive.”²⁷

²⁶ RG10, Vol. 3647, File 8128, C 10113, J.A. Macrae to Indian Commissioner, Regina, 18 December, 1886.

²⁷ The Davin Report, page 10.

And again Macrae reflected Davin's analysis asserting that an educational process that provided students the industrial skills needed to survive "in the new mode of life that awaits him" and a "complete metamorphosis" of the children's culture and character imbuing them with the animating values of a capitalist future, especially the idea that labour is "manly and essential to existence," would produce "an intelligent, self-supporting citizen" and, more critically with respect to the pacifying role of the classroom, one who would be "a support instead of a burden to the state."²⁸

The second element revealed how schools could be expected to serve the interests of the state even more immediately. A clue to that is found in what is an apparent contradiction in the education recommendation. Given that there was "barely time" to intervene, Industrial schools did not seem to have, on the surface at least, the immediate efficacy that was ascribed to them. Schools would take a considerable amount of time to re-socialize children in numbers and imbue them with western ways of being, including loyalty to the state, thereby marginalizing a threat from "Hungry Men." That would be the work of years. But there was more to this than what

²⁸ RG10, Vol. 3647, File 8128, C 10113, J.A. Macrae to Indian Commissioner, Regina, 18 December, 1886.

appeared on the pages of the report. Over the course of his American visit, Davin likely became familiar with a darker, more cynical utility not of the educational but of the residential part of the American Industrial school model – one which, unlike popular cultural theory, was not a part of, and perhaps could not have been any part, of the public discourse about what was supposed to be the laudable discharge of Canada’s duty - its “large statesmanlike policy.”

Davin would have discovered this covert purpose for residential schools in his conversations with Carl Schurtz, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, and Ezra Hayt, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. They were especially useful contacts for Davin as they were then supervising Major Richard Henry Pratt’s work setting up the Carlisle school - the flagship of the American system.²⁹ In his autobiography, Pratt revealed one of their more significant directives. Pratt, formerly an active duty cavalry officer, was about to leave on his first student recruiting tour in the west. He intended visiting “the Indians whom I knew and who knew me – the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Kiowa and others...” But Hayt ordered him to concentrate on acquiring children from, as Pratt observed, the “discontented branches of the Sioux Indians ... then in a hostile attitude toward the Government” and the

²⁹ The American residential school system grew out of President U.S. Grant’s Indian policy of “aggressive civilization” launched in 1869.

country's most persistent and effective adversary. Hayt "was insistent that I must go to Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, because the children would be hostages for the good behavior of their people."³⁰

It would have been odd, considering the high sounding tone of Davin's report, had a mention of prospective students as "hostages" been included. In general, this purpose existed as a coded element only in his writing and in much of the continuing discourse on residential schools, thereafter. However, at times, in the privacy of Departmental correspondence, the idea was openly discussed. The majority of such references came from the west. Indeed, when the proposal to fund schools came before Parliament in 1883, Macdonald noted the lead taken by westerners. The reason given by him for bringing forward the idea was that "The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West [Dewdney] has sent a memorandum upon this question, in which it is stated that in order to educate the Indian children it is necessary to have these schools."³¹

It is interesting to speculate on whether Davin played a role in Dewdney's memo, and in others that came later from the west, and whether, if he did, his discussions of the issue included more than

³⁰ R.H. Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom, An Autobiography*, University of Oklahoma Press 2003, page 220. There is no evidence that Davin met with Pratt himself.

³¹ Debates of the House of Commons of Canada, 1st Session, 22 May 1883, page 1376 Much of what Macdonald told Parliament, including the location of the schools and initial budget figure, was set out in a letter from E. Dewdney of 16 April 1883 in RG 10 Vol. 3674, File 11422, C-10118.

advice about education. He certainly was in a position to bring his influence to bear. He settled in Regina and in 1883 began publishing a newspaper, the *Leader*.³² Dewdney and Davin were likely together on numerous occasions given the small political and social circle of the capital of the Territories. They were, moreover, active Conservatives and they would serve together as NWT members in the House of Commons. There may be, as well, a link between Davin's presence in Regina and the petition of the Presbyterian Church, in 1885, for federal funds to support a residential school just outside the city³³ - a petition that rested, considerably, on the hostage concept.

It is, however, the circumstances of Macdonald's implementation of Davin's four-year-old report, in the spring of 1883, that suggest, more than any other factor, that the purported strategic benefit of residential schools played the major role in his decision. The timing of that decision, the location of the first federally created schools and the links to other policy elements, introduced at the same moment, are significant indicators in that direction.

For Macdonald, the decade of the 80's began well; it was, as his biographer, Donald Creighton wrote, "Good Times."³⁴ Progress on the transcontinental railroad was especially

³² C.B. Koester, *Mr. Davin M.P.*, page 54-55. The first issue appeared on 1 March, 1883.

³³ Davin's influence may also been seen in Dewdney's letter of 16 April 1883 where he, Dewdney, gives it as a fact that residential schools had "met with great success" in the United States.

³⁴ Chapter 2, in D.C. Creighton, *John A. Macdonald - The Old Chieftain*, The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1955

positive. In February 1881, Parliament passed the charter for the Canadian Pacific railroad; a new southerly route for the line was selected promising faster completion of the project - perhaps as early as 1886; and progress on that “miracle of construction,”³⁵ was rapid. The line reached Qu’Appelle, just to the north east of Regina, by August 1882. From there it would, in the summer of 1883, enter “The Indian country proper, passing close to the Blackfoot Reserve.”³⁶ – the heart of the troubled region - contributing, itself, to an increasingly perilous situation and exposing the vulnerability of the iron road and the yet fragile nature of Canada’s colonial project. It “should have caused an Indian war”³⁷ asserted the historian, John Jennings. Certainly, the police worried about a powerful rising. While Irvine did “not wish to produce any unnecessary disquiet,” the members of the Blackfoot Confederacy were, he reported “yet perfect savages, able to mount 1000 warriors, exceptionally well armed [sic] and equipped,” and their “mind being very easily influenced, and very suspicious, it may be they will consider their rights encroached upon and their country about to be taken from them.”³⁸

³⁵ D.C. Creighton, John A. Macdonald, page 342.

³⁶ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1882, in *Settlers and Rebels*, page 16.

³⁷ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy, 1874-1896*, PhD Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1979, page 188.

³⁸ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1882, in *Settlers and Rebels*, page 16.

Rumours – for example, the notion that the “fearsome fire wagon,” would “burn up the prairies and drive all the game away”³⁹ - fed the level of anxiety of those who, like the Blackfoot, according to Irvine, “are entirely unused to large bodies of white men, and know nothing of a railway or its use.”⁴⁰ One prominent Plains Cree leader was, however, perfectly capable of conceiving what would be the consequences of the catastrophe that would, indeed, engulf animals and First Nations communities alike. On New Year’s Day, 1882, Poundmaker predicted: “Next summer or at the latest next fall the railway will be close to us, the whites will fill the country and they will dictate to us as they please. It is useless to dream that we can frighten them; that time has passed.”⁴¹

Just how prescient Poundmaker was is to be found in a description by the Rev. James Carmichael, a Montreal holidaymaker on the then trans-continental CPR in 1888, of the transformation of a red to white world.

³⁹ H. Dempsey, “The Fearsome Fire Wagon” in H. Dempsey, Ed. *The CPR West: the iron road and the making of a nation*, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984. Page 57.

⁴⁰ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1882, in *Settlers and Rebels*, page 16.

⁴¹ H. Dempsey, “The Fearsome Fire Wagon”, page 57.

One can easily realize the feeling [of nostalgia for the buffalo days]; but surely one railway whistle – full of prophesy for Church, for State, for Indian and white man – must in the long run atone a thousand fold for the loss of all that herds of buffalo implied. The buffalo, the lord of the prairie, meant this magnificent heritage [was] a wild and useless waste; the whistle means education and religion, and law and order, and best of all, the grass supporting men, women and children, instead of herds of beasts.⁴²

As dramatic as the coming of the railway was, there were no violent incidents between First Nations people and railroad workers. But there were near misses that added to regional anxiety and, significantly, concern in the Prime Minister's office.⁴³ In the winter of 1882-83, Cree, followers of Chiefs Piapot and Foremost Man, ordered railroad woodcutters preparing railway ties out of the Cypress Hills. The workers fled to Maple Creek and only returned when they had a police escort.⁴⁴ Some protests were subtler. One surveyor, Charles

⁴² D.J. Carmichael, *A Holiday Trip, Montreal to Victoria and Return via the Canadian Pacific Railway, Mid Summer, 1888*, A Railway Reprint, Montreal, 1971, page 14.

⁴³ In the spring of 1883, Macdonald recalled for Parliament his worries as the tracks crossed Treaty 4 and approached Treaty 7 territory: "We were rather alarmed with regard to the Blackfeet Indians as we approached the Rocky Mountains as to what they might think of a railway passing through that country. Debates, 7 May 1883, page 1043.

⁴⁴ H. Dempsey, "The Fearsome Fire Wagon," page 58.

Shaw, recorded that “Though they rarely tampered with the survey markers or removed them, they would sometimes express their resentment by defecating upon the top of every available stake, which added nothing to the amenities of the job.”⁴⁵

Another line engineer, J.E.H. Secretan, claimed that work parties were “frequently troubled” by the “poor Indian.” One of a number of incidents he related, again involving Piapot, may well have rattled the government’s chain of command from Dewdney in Regina back to Ottawa and beyond. According to Secretan’s narrative, he asked Piapot, “as a personal favour to keep his ragged rabble away from my line and not use my stakes for firewood.” Apparently, Piapot “promised not to allow his young men and maidens to disturb the little monuments of the future great Transcontinental Railway.” Secretan discovered subsequently, however, that the “lying sons of aborigines had calmly pulled up forty miles of my line to show their contempt for the white brother...” His reaction was as intemperate as was his language - “offering to shoot all Indians on sight in future if necessary to save the Government the expense of feeding them.” If his rather bellicose recounting is to be believed, his letter “produced a decided sensation.” Dewdney passed it on to

⁴⁵ H. Dempsey, “The Fearsome Fire Wagon, page 57.

Macdonald, vacationing in Quebec, and it soon, according to Secretan, carried a marginal comment by “some wiseacre in the Indian Department” – “The threat to murder the Indians if they destroy any wooden pickets is simply atrocious. It is the spirit amongst the white men which has caused the numerous Indian wars in the United States and it must not be allowed to show itself in Canada”⁴⁶

Secretan was a prime example of what, for Jennings, and indeed for members of the Force and for Macdonald, was a most significant element of the transformation of the old west. In the past, Jennings notes, “the Indians had dealt mainly with whites who understood them and were enough in the minority to respect their rights. Now, the railway brought a breed of men who had little understanding of Indians and less respect.”⁴⁷ Cecil Denny of the NWMP had the same sense of the situation and the inherent danger of it, when he warned the government in 1883 that

The interests of the Indians must be closely watched.
They must be encouraged and kindly dealt with, as this

⁴⁶ J.H.E. Secretan, *Canada's Great Highway: From the First Stake to the Last Spike*, John Lane the Bodley Head Ltd. 1924, pages 109-112. Secretan claims he learned about the government's reaction from his superior Van Horne. The letter passed from Dempsey to Macdonald has not been found.

⁴⁷ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy*, Pages 188-89

change has come upon them so suddenly that they scarcely understand it ... when given their choice of territory as reservations it was never contemplated that a great trans-continental railroad would soon be built and be flocking into the country.????? Check this quote????? I must say that so far, the settlers who have come in contact with the Indians have treated them well and kindly, but as they get better acquainted this will likely change and, unless they are well looked after, petty depredations will take place and much trouble result.⁴⁸

And, certainly, there is evidence that Macdonald took these warnings to heart. In answer to a question in the House in May 1883 “Is there any truth ... that there is danger of Indian hostilities - that there is dissatisfaction among the Indians of the plains in consequence of the coming of the ... railway?” Macdonald replied

We have heard of one, and perhaps two, instances in which a navy or person employed on the road, [Secretan?] did not treat the Indians with the consideration which they should have received, but those were the only cases, and they passed without any scalp being taken or any man wounded We cannot, of course, tell as to the future; the Indians are savages, and the

⁴⁸ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy*, Page 189.

imprudence of a single white man might at any moment cause an unexpected catastrophe.”⁴⁹

In May 1883, Macdonald intervened launching in Parliament a trio of initiatives to shore up Canadian control, to forestall any “unexpected catastrophe.” That this was his motive is clear from his remarks when introducing that year’s Indian Department estimates for Manitoba and the North-West. “I call attention to the very large decrease on the whole that there is in this vote. There is a decrease, in every item, except that of supplies for [the] destitute, which is increased by \$60,708.” His justification was couched in a review of what had been, he suggested, a difficult balancing act since the “Buffalo ...their [the Indians’] bread, wine and meat [had] utterly and totally failed.” On one hand “we could not, as Christians and men, allow them to starve” and were obliged “no matter what might be the cost, to furnish them with food.” On the other, in order to clear the region for settlement⁵⁰, it was necessary to distribute rations only on reserves where the Indians “will become more and more self-sustaining” and government costs would eventually disappear. But, Macdonald added, there was more here than budgetary and

⁴⁹ Debates of the House of Commons of Canada, 1st Session, 7 May 1883, page 1043.

⁵⁰ For a full treatment of the history of the rations policy see J.W. Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: disease, politics of starvation, and the loss of Aboriginal Life*, University of Regina Press, 2013.

Christian considerations. Settling the Indians had important strategic value, for “So long as they were nomads, we had no control over them.” And furthermore, “It was,” Macdonald concluded, “better to feed them than to fight them,” as “At any time we were liable to an attack and hungry men will, if necessary help themselves.”⁵¹

The second of Macdonald’s trio was the NWMP, itself. In both official and private correspondence, a case was made to Macdonald that improvement was needed in the force – its size, leadership and equipment – geared to augmenting its ability to cope with the Indians. Perhaps the most influential submission came in private correspondence from Sir F.W. De Winton, (Col. R.A.), the Governor General’s secretary and a Bow River Valley rancher – a man who could form a military appreciation of the situation and one familiar with the area. Again, the coming of the railroad sparked concern. In De Winton’s view, the force required more professional - read here British leadership - and an increase in the number of detachments. “It was thought,” he wrote, “when once the railway was made, the duties of the NWMP would be greatly lessened, but I am now of [the] opinion that there will be a greater call then before ...” The reason being that “There are so many detachments now required at different points of the

⁵¹ Debates, 9 May and 7 May respectively 1883, pages 1102 and 1044.

railway, and other duties to be done that an increase is almost a necessity.”⁵²

But De Winton’s was not the only such opinion. When Macdonald introduced the NWMP estimates, one opposition member, who had recently toured the west, delivered a sharply critical lecture. Mr G.E Casey, the opposition member for Elgin West, pointed out that at Fort Qu’Appelle, the Mounties were armed with “useless Snider rifles” while “the Indians of the Piepot [sic] Band had the Winchester, and it would have been possible for the few Indians there with these arms to have cleaned out the whole force without any trouble.” And as to the force being mounted police, there were, he continued, only 20 horses for 100 men at that post “so that either five men had to mount one horse, or one man had to mount the horse and four men hang on the tail.”⁵³

In response Macdonald laid out a budgetary “supplement” of \$200,000. The largest part of those funds were set aside for rations and another amount “to complete arms, clothing and accoutrements” for “the increased size of the force to 500.”⁵⁴

⁵²Sir F.W. De Winton to Sir John A Macdonald, Sunday 1882. No month given, in MG26A Vol. 83 C-1516.

⁵³ Debates, 7 May 1883, page 1043.

⁵⁴ Debates, 14 May 1883, page 1191.

But there was more to this than just additional men and food; location, where the funds were to be expended, was an indicator of the government's thinking. The extra rations were marked down for distribution along the route of the CPR westward from Qu'Appelle - for "future expenditure under Treaties 7 and 4, for destitute Indians." Finally, in line with De Winton's advice, or as Macdonald explained "owing to the large requirements of the Canadian Pacific Railway survey and constructing party in the North-West ... Small [NWMP] detachments have been placed at convenient points along the line of railway and on various trails by which liquor might be brought into the country via the United States."⁵⁵ The combination of liquor, railroad navvies and Indian bands in distress had been the cause of numerous confrontations and deaths in the American west along railroad lines.

On the 9th of May, Macdonald signalled that the government would soon request funds for a "larger description of schools."⁵⁶ It had been "pressed upon myself, as head of the Indian Department, that the Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that was to put them in central training

⁵⁵ Debates, 14 May 1883, page 1191.

⁵⁶ Debates, 9 May 1883, page 1107.

in Industrial schools.” He added the observation that this “is the system which is largely adopted in the United States.” and “... is the scheme which I will lay before the House rather later in the week.”⁵⁷

As promised by Macdonald, “the scheme” was soon brought forward, not by himself, but by the Minister of Public Works, Hector Langevin, a former Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, who laid before the House a request for \$44,000. “The intention is to establish three Indian residential schools in the North-West.” ??? check this quote ???/ His rationale, echoing Davin and Macdonald, was the necessity of separating children from parents for “if you leave them [children] in the family they may know how to read and write, but they still remain savages.” “Some people may say that this is hard, but if we want to civilize them we must do that.”⁵⁸

Again, however, there was more to this strategy than the underlying civilizing logic. As with the NWMP, location pointed to motive. All the schools were to be constructed at

⁵⁷ Debates, 9 May 1883 page 1108. It is clear from Dewdney’s correspondence that the decision, including the placement of schools and total costs, was finalized by 16 April 1883. See E. Dewdney to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs 16 April, 1883 in RG 10 Vol. 3674, File 11422, C-10118.

⁵⁸ Debates, 22 May 1883, pages 1376-1377. Langevin served as Minister of Public Works from May 1879 to June 1891.

the heart of concern. A Protestant one was to take up the former government buildings at Battleford. And the second, a Catholic school, which became known as the Qu'Appelle IRS, was to be built just to the east of Fort Qu'Appelle in the village of Lebret the site of an historic Catholic mission and a Metis settlement. Symbolic, perhaps, of the conjunction of selfless state duty and the state's self-interest, the school would abut railroad tracks which ran westward to Fort Qu'Appelle. Generations of children would disembark there at the school – a weigh station on the road to civilization. Finally, “a third” school, another Catholic one, would be built at a later date “in another portion of the territory ... in Treaty 6.”⁵⁹ A school was soon approved at High River, St Joseph's Indian Industrial School, with Father Lacombe, the renowned Oblate missionary, in charge.

There was, additionally, what might be termed a fourth part, a codicil, to Macdonald's security thinking in 1883. One that would lead, eventually, to two early residential schools in British Columbia. There again, as in the west, Macdonald's concern was focussed on ensuring peaceful possession in the face of worrisome savagery. While in British Columbia it was not a case of the possible concentration of thousands of mounted warriors, as in the east; nevertheless, there was

⁵⁹ Debates, 22 May 1883 page 1376.

considerable concern owing to a combination of circumstances laid out by Macdonald, himself, when answering an opposition charge that the budget provided funds for an excessive number of Indian agents.

British Columbia, he pointed out

...is an enormously large country, and this expenditure has to be spread over the country down to the boundary line. The Indians are scattered, and from the mountainous nature of the country they are widely scattered. They settle down in the glens, in the valleys or on the coast. Within a very few years ago they were savage; they are now becoming quite peaceable, except in outlying stations...Along the outside coast of Vancouver Island there are a large number of scattered Indians, who are so scattered that they can scarcely be said to live in communities. They are now, I believe, very profitably employed in the canneries and establishments of that kind. Indians are also now employed as miners and they work very well.

However, he continued

... it must be remembered that they are not white men, and civilized, and must be strictly watched. They are very suspicious and easily aroused; the white population is sparse, and the Indians feel yet that they are lords of the country ... and they are much more numerous than the white; the officers [of the Indian Department] are not too numerous and not highly paid, but they are the best preventive [sic] we have.

Trouble was not long in coming .. ????.In two places, the Kootenays note the nwmp go into b.c. .ihave docs re that ..and at the Metlakatla mission settlement give location and years of violence were soon realized.??? Get Friesen's Duncan of Metla and Robin's book on b.C. INFO ON THOSE TWO SCHOOLS TO BE ADDED

With the schools' announcement, it might have appeared that all the bases were covered; that the signatories to Treaties 4, 6 and 7 were safely contained and the agents of western empire were up to the job of handling any "unexpected catastrophe"⁶⁰ In fact, all of Macdonald's efforts were no more than a preface to violence – to the "war" of 1885. **Add from ch1**

⁶⁰ Debates, 7 May 1883, page 1043.

Though that violent passage, leading to the execution of Louis Riel, was cataclysmic on the national level, it did not sweep the western board clean. Irvine's warning of 1880 remained apt; "all the intricacies and dangers of the Indian question"⁶¹ were not resolved. Rumours circulated of continuing Metis agitation and of the probability of the Blackfoot, by far the largest military force in the region, who had remained on the side lines in 1885, coming out. The Indians, Dewdney reported, "declare that if any war takes place it will be worse than the first." He remained vigilant and kept his "good men" [spies] on the road.⁶² And the force, too, was active with the new Commissioner, L.W. Herchmer, stressing the need for "the greatest watchfulness" as the Indians, are still "well armed and horsed" and the increase of white settlement provided them "with enormous chances ... of doing damage at a moment's notice among the numerous herds of cattle that now completely surround their reserves."⁶³

In that troubling context, the grip of colonialism was tightened around First Nations; and, as Jennings remarked, "the early

⁶¹ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1880, in *Opening Up the West*, page 6.

⁶² E. Dewdney to Sir John A Macdonald, 2 November 1885 in MG26A Vol.107, pages 43252 – 43259.

⁶³ Annual Report of the NWMP for 1886, in *Law and Order*, page 17. See also correspondence from the Macleod Gazette dated 12 January 1886 describing "a general feeling of uneasiness" based on intelligence of a possible general rising of Indians in MG26A Vol. 110, c-1525.

emphasis on understanding began to be replaced by one of coercion;”⁶⁴

and that new aggressive “emphasis” would encompass residential schools. THE WAISER ARTICLE?

A memorandum, written by Father Lacombe in the fall of 1885, best illustrates Jennings’s point. Now, Lacombe advised, is the time to act; “if we do not take energetic means, the Indians will become more and more an embarrassment to the Government and an obstruction to immigration.” The government, should “disarm all Indians ... discontinue selling them ammunition” and “purchase Indians’ horses so as to diminish their roaming” which was seen to be a cardinal sin of savagery and an impediment to both agricultural development and moral rectitude – two central pillars of western civilization. Therefore, Lacombe reasoned, Indian movement should be strictly limited; they should not be able “to camp in the vicinity of towns” where they would inevitably come into contact with “mischievous whites ... renegades of Christian civilization” resulting, as evidenced by the Indians “trading their daughters and their wives,” in “disgraceful demoralization, shameful to behold.” They should be allowed,

⁶⁴ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy*, page 273. See also R.C. Macleod, *The NWMP and Law Enforcement, 1873 -1905*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1976, page 144. Writing about the police after 1885, he noted, “Now the relationship was paternal, with the Indian protected and pitied but not respected. There was less emphasis on persuasion ... and more on coercion.”

“to solely come and buy but never sleeping away from their habitation.” Better yet, stores should be opened on the reserves obviating contact with the towns and the government should then “Prohibit all Indians removing away from their reserve without a written permission from their agents.” Isolation, and thereafter surveillance and discipline by the Department, enforcing “with vigour the different regulations ... so as to make them work on their farms,” was a necessary prescription as it must be understood, he asserted: the Indians “in all and everywhere at least for many years [are] real minors. Consequently, they are not at liberty” and are “under the tutelage of the Government.”⁶⁵

Much of this was not unique to Lacombe’s thinking. Indeed, the issues of “liberty” and “tutelage” were ones around which a consensus grew into the most draconian addition to the Department’s continuing attempts to bring about settlement. The idea of mandatory “written permission” to leave their reserves, had been placed before Macdonald as early as 1883 by the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, L.Vankougnet. There were legal⁶⁶ and practical considerations

⁶⁵ E. Dewdney to Sir John A Macdonald, 21 September 1885 with attached memorandum written by Rev. A. Lacombe. MG 26A, Vol.107, C-1524.

⁶⁶ The pass system violated the First Nations treaty right to exploit the resources of ceded territory limited only by the taking-up provision ie the conversion of crown land to private property.

but after the troubles, Macdonald, ever the pragmatist, approved the proposal, in August 1885, having been convinced that now “the pass system could be generally introduced safely.” It was, purposively, a denial of “liberty” in the service of “tutelage,” and a violation of treaty promises and as such illegal.⁶⁷

As well as initiating new and harsher measures to ensure state control, a harder edge was also to be found in the discourse around residential education and the administration of the young school system. Immediately after the fighting subsided, there was a reaffirmation of the strategic importance of such schools, a conviction in official circles, as the historian B. Titley has asserted, that “An intensive course in civilization for all young Indians would prevent the recurrence of the rebellious spirit.”⁶⁸ For some it was the panacea. In the spring of 1886, for example, during a raucous parliamentary debate over what had caused the rebellion, W.E. O’Brien, the Tory member for Muskoka and Parry Sound, who had recently visited the Qu’Appelle school, argued for the extension of residential schools as “I think they are the only

⁶⁷ The history of the introduction of the pass system here follows John Jennings lead. The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy, pages 287 to 292. It was Jennings who first discovered Macdonald’s direct involvement noting his initials in the margins of one of the central documents.

⁶⁸ B Titley. “Indian Industrial Schools in Western Canada” in Schools in the West Essays in Educational History, Detselig, Calgary, 1986, page 138.

hope we have of obtaining in the future anything like a grasp and a hold upon the Indian population.” Therefore, he concluded, “I hope the Indian Department will endeavour to encourage and develop these institutions...”⁶⁹

Others were more blunt referring directly to student hostages. School Inspector Macrae returned to Hayt’s theme when writing to the Indian Commissioner: “It is unlikely that any Tribe or tribes would give trouble of a serious nature to the Government whose members had children completely under Government control.”⁷⁰

And one Church was very much onside. In December, 1885 Dewdney reported that officials of the Presbyterian Church had approached him on the subject of their educational work. Their petition was decidedly calculated and self-serving; they assumed that he was aware of the good work their missionaries had accomplished in developing in their converts “self-reliance” and “bringing them up to the point of self support.” But beyond that, and in the light of the recent troubles, they pointed out “... the service rendered by these missions last spring in preventing the Indians from

⁶⁹ Debates, 7 May 1886, page 1886.

⁷⁰ RG 10, Vol. 3674, File 8128, C 10113, J.A. Macrae to Indian Commissioner, Regina, 18 December 1886.

committing breaches of the peace or joining the rebels. Your Honor is aware that all the Indians connected with our missions were loyal and that several of them offered their services to the Government to suppress the rebellion.” And then moving on to the purpose of the petition:

The Church knowing the influence of Christianity in subduing the evil passions of men and noticing the marked contrast between Pagan and Christian Indians in their attitude towards the Government and settlers last spring is anxious from Christian and patriotic motives to extend its work among the Indians of the North-West to enable it to prosecute the work vigorously and to equip and train Indians to assist in this work an Industrial School is necessary.

It is clear from the petition that officials had met with Dewdney before framing it as they then requested a “site be chosen by Your Honor according to your kind suggestion near Long Lake” just north of the city. This was taken to be a useful site from a number of perspectives including the fact that the school would be in the vicinity of three reserves where, Church officials understood, “Some of the Chiefs have

afforded a good deal of trouble to the department.”⁷¹ And Dewdney, in supporting the petition, noted that the school beyond being “beautifully situated” would be “sufficiently far from the Reserves ... to prevent Indians living about the place or the children going home”⁷²

Finally - and here it could be wondered how far Dewdney, Macrae and perhaps even Davin, helped frame the petition in the direction of crafting their “patriotic motive ” - once the school was erected:

Scholars can be drawn from [those reserves] and their presence will be a [great?] security for peace in the district. The Indians would regard them as hostages given to the whites and would hesitate to commit any hostile acts that might endanger their children’s well being.⁷³

⁷¹ RG 10, Vol. 3926, File 116,836-1, C 10162, E. Dewdney to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 14 December 1885. See attached petition from Rev. James Robertson, Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions, 11 December 1885.

⁷² RG 10, Vol. 3926, File 116,836-1, C 10162, E. Dewdney to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 14 December 1885.

⁷³ RG 10, Vol. 3926, File 116,836-1, C 10162, E. Dewdney to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 14 December 1885. See attached petition from the Rev. James Robertson, Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions, 11 December 1885. There is reason to believe that Davin may have suggested the hostage phrase in the funding request. He was a protestant and while his personal life was quite notorious, he seems to have had an association with the

Macdonald, himself, approved funding for the school in January 1886.⁷⁴

In the post 1885 years, not only was a such a belief in the strategic utility of these schools maintained, but, additionally, owing to concerns that the operation of the schools, to date, had been less than satisfactory, further action was taken to increase both the schools' pacifying efficiency and their power to create a future assimilated, normalized, Indian population. The significance of one of the earliest of these initiatives was considerable as it introduced, for the first time in Canada, the principle of "in loco parentis" – the assertion of the overriding authority of the state against that of parents to ensure "the best interest" of the child. An ordinance of the NWT council (1886), dictated that Indian parental "rights, powers and authority" were suspended while their children

Presbyterian Church in the city. The news of his death in Winnipeg was brought to his wife in Regina by the Rev. J.A. Carmichael of the Knox Presbyterian church who then travelled with her to collect his body. His funeral/internment at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa was conducted by Rev. Dr. Moore of the Bank Street Presbyterian Church. See Chapter 11 in Mr. Davin, M.P. Additionally, Davin's son, Henry Arthur Davin, indicated on his attestation/enlistment papers for the C.E.F. that he, himself, was a Presbyterian. See National Archives of Canada, Service Files of the First World War, H.A. Davin, LT. Regimental No, 26188, RG. 150 Accession 1992-93, Box 2329A-66.

⁷⁴ See Superintendent General of Indian Affairs from L Vankoughnet, 29 December 1885. Note the marginal comment with Macdonald's initials dated 29 January 1886.

were in school.⁷⁵ Subsequent legislation by Parliament gave the Governor in Council the authority to frame regulations “to secure the compulsory attendance of children at school,” including at Industrial schools, wherever established in the country, and “such regulations may provide for the punishment ... of parents and guardians ... who fail, refuse or neglect to cause such children to attend school.”⁷⁶ In 1894, an Order in Council - Regulations relating to the Education of Indian Children – reinforced the declaration of superior federal authority in that a Justice of the Peace satisfied that the child was not being cared for or educated was authorized to issue a warrant to search for and place the child in an industrial or boarding school. In Manitoba and the NWT the warrant could be issued without advance notice being given to the parents.⁷⁷ IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE IN QUOTES?

⁷⁵ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Policy*, page 282

⁷⁶ See, for example, Section 137 and 138 of An Act to amend the Indian Act. S.C. 1894, c.32 (57-58 Vict. and Sections 9 -11 of Indian Act R.S.C. 1906, c.81 and the most fulsome expression in Sections 1-10 in An Act to amend the Indian Act S.C. 1919-20 c,50 (10-11 Geo V.) The Department took the position that no child in the NWT “ shall be admitted to or taken from or allowed to leave any of the institutions without your [the Indian Commissioner’s] express authority having been obtained.” in RG10 To Hayter Reed, from L. Vankoughnet, 13 June 1891. RG 10 Vol. 3674, File 11422-4, C-10118

⁷⁷ Regulations Relating to the Education of Indian Children, Order in Council, 1894. RG10 Vol. 6032, File 150-40A, C-8149.

Again, the Lacombe correspondence provided an opening to these initiatives. His first year at High River was a complete failure. By the spring, the school lost almost all of its twenty-five pupils. With the coming of the good weather, Lacombe reported, the children “began to get more uneasy and uncontrollable and finally left the institution, some by their own will, others taken and forced away by their parents or guardians.” Nothing he or his staff did persuaded the children to stay – their constant “excuse to go,” rooted in the pain of separation, “was and is always the same - We are lonesome.” And, even more worrisome, while in attendance, the children seemed impervious to attempts at cultural reformation; they are too “proud and set in their Indian ways.” Emblematic of that failure was his admission that “We have not succeeded yet to cut their hair.” His results were minimal: some children were kept from their parents, some could not be and none, apparently, had lost important connections to their culture. They had not been rescued from the “influence of the wigwam” and would not therefore lead their communities into an assimilated future. What **were/was** needed, Lacombe advised, were aggressive measures. “It is a great mistake to have no kind of punishment in the Institution ... It is absurd to imagine that such an institution in any country could work properly without some form of coercion to enforce order and obedience.”

Those involved in the administration of the residential school system agreed that the effective separation of parents and

children had to be maintained strictly to achieve the desired goal of education. It was, therefore a mistake to allow parents to camp around the school “because their intercourse and influence demoralizes the pupils very much;” [Resschoolnotes/16] and so, too, “the effect of allowing children to visit their Reserves is bad.” Resnotep.14 In short, Departmental policy “is to keep pupils in these institutions until trained to make their own way in the world. Taking children in for short terms and letting them go again is regarded perhaps as worse than useless.” Resnotes14

But, additionally, “coercion” targeted not only the children in “the Institution” but adults outside it. A regime of discipline and punishment was enforced directed to the physical, psychological and cultural separation of children from their parents - the prerequisite of Davin’s educational strategy - and the separation of the parents from their children - a key strategic reason for the creation of the schools. Children were subjected to prohibitions against speaking their mother tongue, with punishments if they did so, and to a curriculum rooted in a revolutionary ontology – geography, history and religion – and the purposeful shaming of their parents, their beliefs and behaviours.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ See for example the Programme of Studies for Indian schools, 1896 with its 6 standards course in ethics directed to imbuing the pupils with the values of Canadian society. P.35 of the res book

And the Department took steps to discipline reluctant or disruptive parents. As in the campaign to induce reserve settlement, food was used as a lever; rations could be denied to parents who did not want to send their children to school.⁷⁹ It became Departmental practice to give passes to parents going to visit children at school only if they promised not to attempt to bring their child home.⁸⁰ Added to this were restricted and supervised visiting, censored mail and punishments, often severe, for running away.

The pass system, the 1886 NWT ordinance, [????] the even more pervasive Order in Council of 1894, and of long term significance, the Department's power, under Indian Acts, to make regulations "which shall have the force of law" instituted, on the ground, a partnership in the administration of Indian affairs and the school system among local Justices, police constables, Indian agents and missionaries – a partnership which continued throughout the life of the system

⁷⁹ See Dewdney to J.A. Macdonald, 29 December, 1883. MG 26A, Macdonald Papers. Vol. 211 pp. 89991-7. MR C1597. A similar recommendation was made by Lacombe. RG10, Vol.3674, File 11422-2, C-10118, A. Lacombe to Indian Commissioner, 12 June 1885. And certainly this became common practice; see for example, to the Indian Agent, Touchwood Hills, from David Laird, Indian Commissioner, 29 April 1904, RG10 Vol. 6032, File150-40A, C-8149. This letter is found in a file that contains other Departmental regulations.

⁸⁰ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Administration*, page 281.

and, indeed, persisted long after any chance of a general rising that could actually challenge the state had passed.⁸¹ The regulations of 1894 were clearly directed to bolstering the effectiveness of such a partnership; bringing the school, children within the compass of the law and its agents. Thus

⁸¹ From the Ordinance of 1886, - which provided that in the case of a child who left the school without permission, the Principal could contact the police who “shall apprehend such offender and return him from the Institution from, which he escaped to be dealt with according to law,” – forward, references were made to this administrative partnership. Father Lacombe recommended that if a child absconded, the Indian Agent should bring the child back, “willing or unwilling, calling in the aid of police if necessary.” To Indian Commissioner from Father Lacombe, 1 June 1885 in RG10 Vol. 3674 File 11422-2 MR C 10118. Father E. Claude availed himself of that assistance asking the police to find a girl who had not arrived at the school: see To Indian Commissioner from E. Claude, Acting Principal 13 July 1886 in St Joseph Industrial School Fonds, the Glenbow Archives. And from the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs to the Principal of the Qu’Appelle Residential, School, 13 April, 1891 RG10 Vol/3674, File 11422-2 in which the Superintendent declares that if the Principal cannot control visiting parents, the Superintendent “will have to authorize the employment of the Police to keep the visitors off the precincts of the School.” See the Secretary of Indian Affairs from Principal J. Woodsworth 19 August 1914 noting the he had “issued warrants for the arrest of fifteen [runaways] and had the Mounted Police bring them back. I thought that would be the most effective way of dealing with the situation.” And Rev. J. Plourde O.M.I. to the Secretary of the Indian Affairs Branch, 21 October, 1941 with the reply R. Hoey to the Agent, Dr. J. Riopel, 3 November, 1941 in which compulsory attendance is discussed and Hoey reminds them that they can call on the local RCMP as every constable is “a truant officer for the purpose of enforcing the compulsory clauses of the Indian Act.” RG 10, Vol. 6475, File 981-1, C-8791. Not everything expected of the police related to truancy. For example, in the Northwest Territories in 1961, RCMP officers were commissioned to provide financial reports on families to determine if they could afford to keep their children at home to attend day schools or needed to be accepted into a residential school. J Lorne Turner Assistant Chairman, Dominion Lands Board to J. Urquhart, Medical Health Officer, Aklavik, 6 March, 1933, [RG85 Vol.223 File 630/111- 1 \(3\)](#) check this on archives site

It shall be competent for any employee of the Indian Department, or any constable to arrest without a warrant any child found in the act of escaping from any industrial or boarding school, and to convey such child to the school from which it escaped.

Furthermore:

Any person authorized by warrant under these regulations to search for and take any child to an industrial or boarding school may enter (if need be by force) any house, building or other place specified in the warrant and may remove the child therefrom.

These warrants could be “addressed to any policeman or constable or to any truant officer appointed under these regulations, or to the Principal of any Industrial or boarding school, or to any employee of the Department of Indian Affairs.”⁸²

As for the NWMP’s role in this partnership, its law and order mandate was conflated by senior officers with an active advocacy, first enunciated by Macleod in 1877, of Canada’s

⁸² Regulations Relating to the Education of Indian Children, Order in Council, 1894, RG10, Vol. 6032 File 150-40A, C-8149.

colonizing policy – a process of immigration, agriculture and education His successor, A.G. Irvine, made this clear, when considering the “Selection of [a] Future Headquarters of the Force.”[DATE] That decision, he explained, “cannot be looked at merely from a military point of view.” Rather the headquarters should be located in an area of future agricultural development, “where the presence of the police would further the advancement of civilization and at the same time aid materially the Indian Department in the successful adoption and carrying out of the policy of the Government.”⁸³ Material aid to advance civilization, in this case the settlement of the west, and to achieve government’s Indian policy, the pacification of regional tribes, were entwined in police operations and included facilitating the operation of the existing residential schools.

In that vein, the annual reports of Divisional NWMP Superintendents included sections titled “Assistance to Indian Department,” which revealed that police surveillance and intelligence gathering included the schools.⁸⁴ Superintendent J.H. McIllree, commanding E Division, took especial care of

⁸³ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1880 in *Opening Up the West*, page 8.

⁸⁴ NWMP Commissioner, L.W. Herchmer, indicated in December 1886 “all information gathered throughout the country, of any interest to that Department, has at once been reported to the [Indian] Commissioner.” Annual Report of the NWMP, 1886, in *Law and Order*, page 16.

Lacombe's school reporting, in 1888, that a "patrol goes out from here [Calgary] weekly to the Industrial School." and that "on several occasions [he] had to send a party to the Industrial School at the request of Father Claude [Lacombe's successor], to remove Indians who were camping there and making themselves obnoxious by trying to get the Indian children to leave the school."⁸⁵ In the following year a detachment was established at the school "which prevented Indians camping near the school and from taking their children away..."⁸⁶ Such assistance, in the instance of runaways, was also "promptly given" to Father Hugennard, CHECK the founding Principal of the Qu'Appelle School.⁸⁷ At the Red Deer school established in 1889, all three – principal, departmental administrator and police - came together. The Principal reported, a "spirit of insubordination" manifest in a high number of runaways; and subsequently "the ringleader was taken in charge for leaving with clothing belonging to the Indian Department" and spent time in police custody. And as a preventative measure, the Chief [School] Inspector visited the school and addressed the student body. This cooperation

⁸⁵ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888, in *The New West*, page 38. As well, Claude complained to the police that the "School has become a camping place when on their way to Calgary." They would enter the school without permission walking "up in the house from top to bottom" and "were as usual very impudent ... and demand provisions with impudence." See E. Claude to Indian Commissioner 30 November 1886 in St Joseph Industrial School Fonds, Glenbow Archives.

⁸⁶ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1889, in *The New West*, page 26.

⁸⁷ John Jennings, *The North West Mounted Police and Indian Administration*, page 282.

was both appreciated by the principal and was apparently “beneficial, as the conduct of the insubordinates has improved.”⁸⁸

More than any other, the 1888 report of Superintendent A.B. Perry of F Division, an area anchored by Prince Albert, indicates how fully the logic of residential schooling as a critical element of colonial expansion and the maintenance of local law and order had become ingrained in police thinking. “The Indians of this district,” he claimed, “are generally remarkable for the advance they have made towards civilization.” Indeed, this is the “third annual report in which I have been able to speak of the very good conduct of the native population. Not a single crime has been committed amongst them.” Lawfulness produced progress for, he noted, “Intending immigrants need entertain no apprehension whatever [sic], and may feel confident of the safety of their families, and the security of their property.”⁸⁹

Missionary teaching and preaching had had a role in this; children were “learning rapidly” in “good [day] schools” and many adults had “altogether abandoned their superstitious practises and outwardly, at least, adhere to the christian” [sic] religion.” The communities had moved down the road towards civilization and, as to further progress, the “hope of

⁸⁸ To the Indian Commissioner from C. Somerset, DATE ???? RG 10 vol. 3920 File 116818. C 10161

⁸⁹ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, page 94-95.

improvement ... lies in the training of the rising generation” and in that regard, “There seems to be the want of an industrial school which would teach the useful trades and agriculture, as well as perform the ordinary school work.”⁹⁰

While Indian affairs seemed headed in the right direction needing only a residential school capstone, there was yet an additional challenge to the successful development of the region and again a residential school was seen to have a critical role to play. That challenge lay in the economic situation and political temperament of the French Metis scattered along the South Saskatchewan River, where a “large percentage of the people,” who despite inhabiting a “well wooded fertile country,” live “in such an unhappy condition.” Furthermore, given their character and culture - that they were both “unaccustomed to hard work and improvident” and “are ignorant of the persistent and preserving labour required to farm” - their future, he predicted, was “gloomy and uncertain.” Additionally, they had “for a space of four years” relied upon government rations which would neither “promote industry nor encourage independence;” rather “its demoralizing effects” would spread rapidly, and too quickly

⁹⁰ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, page 94-95.

taint those attempting to preserve their independence and self-respect.”⁹¹

Unfortunately, there was more to the situation; worries of unrest were woven into Perry’s text. In his view, a good percentage of the Metis were not only poor and dependent; they were aggrieved - a “great many of the half-breeds believe that they have just claims on the Government.” Clearly, in their minds questions of status and rights had not been settled in 1885; there were renewed demands “being made for scrip” and for “a reconsideration of the Rebellion claims.” Such attitudes kept the region on edge. As recently as “last spring the usual rumors [sic] ... were published throughout the country” and a letter was circulated from an individual who “has styled himself ‘The Chief of the Metis.’ ” It was read at a large meeting at Batoche” and while “it was without direct import or meaning, ... some excitement was created, and exaggerated reports of the contents of the letter and the possible consequences spread amongst the Indians far to the north ...”⁹²

Finally, Perry warned, a tipping point was fast approaching; a rail line would soon connect Prince Albert to the larger

⁹¹ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, pages 95-97.

⁹² Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, pages 95-97.

network to the south. In that event, Perry predicted, the Metis would either be induced to take the civilizing agricultural road or, as “it is to be expected that when the railway reaches here and creates a land market many will sell out, in order to obtain a little ready money, and will move to an unsettled portion of the country.” “The French half-breed ...will thus become diffused over a wide territory” replicating the disturbing pattern of land sales and migration to an open, “unsettled portion” of the territory – a pattern that had been seen nearly two decades before in Manitoba and had led to the violence that shook the nation in 1885.⁹³

Perry’s recommendations, reminiscent of earlier policy, combined work for rations with education: and thus, predictably, “a manual training school, with a model farm should be established among the half-breeds.” It would be “necessary for such a school to teach the very[??? Check this] elements of social economy; to inculcate independence and self reliance [sic] in all ... to train the boys as farmers ... the girls to perform household work.” And finally, in a gesture towards the strategic utility of residential education, the school would be “a determined effort to change the rising generation from the ways of the present,” the ways of their

⁹³ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, pages 95-97.

parents. “In no other way can the young children be brought under a desirable, healthy influence.”⁹⁴

The fact that Perry’s recommendation did not result in the opening of a residential school for the area’s Metis certainly cannot be understood as a sign of any change in the rationale for residential education. In fact, lobbying by church officials in the west to include “halfbreed” children in the schools and Canada’s expansion into another northwest frontier with the signing of Treaty 8 in 1899 led to the clearest declaration of the strategic purpose of the schools. And furthermore, it indicated, that the rationale for the system was not unique to Macdonald’s Conservatives but was shared by Sir Wilfred Laurier’s Liberals – that, in the fullest sense, it was Federal policy.

Notably, it was not just any Metis children that Catholic and Anglican missionaries, petitioned be taken into residential schools. Rather, it was a particular class of children - described meaningfully by one of the petitioners, Father Hugonnard – as those

Related with or under the charge of treaty half-breeds – such children not being treaty half-breeds, or having

⁹⁴ Annual Report of the NWMP, 1888 in *The New West*, pages 95-97.

been wrongly thrown out of the treaty by the fact that their parents left the treaty are growing up uneducated [and] ... although not Indian, [they] still cannot be considered as white people, and in fact remain in a far worse condition than the Indian children who can be educated.

The petition rested on more than considerations of equitable dealing; rather, the security of the state was its primary motivation. Uneducated Metis children would pose “a perpetual danger for educated Indians and the community.”⁹⁵ Bib 757/3&4.

The responses from, senior departmental officials, David Laird, the Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and the Northwest Territories⁹⁶ and Hayter Reed, the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs,⁹⁷ both old western hands, were not positive. Reed replied that the children under discussion not being Indians “are not within its [the Department’s] jurisdiction.” [bib 757/5] And Laird, who had

⁹⁵ The Anglican petition, in the form of a resolution of the Synod of the Diocese of the Saskatchewan, was remarkably similar expressing the “deepest concern and regret” with regard to children who were now “in a worse position than the Indians on the Reserves.” Bib757/1.

⁹⁶ Laird was appointed by the Laurier government on 4 October 1898 and would be the lead negotiator of Treaty 8. He had been Minister of the Interior from 1873 to 1876.

⁹⁷ Hayter Reed had a long career in Indian Affairs ending with his term as Deputy Superintendent General from 1893 to 1897. He was a beneficiary of Tory patrimony and was replaced by Clifford Sifton Laurier’s Superintendent General of Indian Affairs

been involved in the making of treaties 4 and 7, followed suit declaring emphatically “none but treaty children are to be admitted into Indian schools.” [bib 757/6] GET DATES FOR THESE STATEMENTS.

Clifford Sifton,⁹⁸ who served in Wilfred Laurier’s cabinet as Superintendent General of Indian Affairs from 1896 to 1905, taking his cue perhaps from Hugonnard’s warning, over ruled both Reed and Laird. In a memo sent to his Deputy on the 13th of October 1899 concerning the legal status of residential schools, their relationship to the treaties and the admissibility of non-treaty aboriginal children, Sifton asserted that strategic considerations, were both the cause of the initiation of the schools by Macdonald’s government in 1883 and remained thereafter their primary *raison d’etre*. “It must be remembered that boarding and industrial schools were not established for the purpose of carrying out the terms of the treaty [such as education] or complying with any provision of the law, but were, above all else, instituted in the public interest, so that there should not grow up upon reserves an uneducated and barbarous class.”[bib757/6,7] And thus, he concluded, while “I do not consider that the children of the halfbreeds proper ... should be admitted into Indian schools ...

⁹⁸ Sifton was another westerner go to can bio to get a few details

I am decidedly of the opinion that all children, even those of mixed blood, whether legitimate or not, who live upon an Indian reserve, even if they are not annuitants, should be eligible for admission to the schools.bib757/6&7⁹⁹

Sifton's characterization of residential school history may have been rooted in the circumstances he shared with Macdonald as a Minister overseeing the country's move into a new frontier territory. **In his case that circumstance involved the colonization of the vast territory north of the original 7 treaties and, subsequently, the negotiation and signing of Treaty 8 which took place some six months before his directive on the education of half breed children.** A direct connection between the two situations and residential education was personified by School Inspector J.A. Macrae who Sifton appointed a Commissioner in 1900 to tour the Treaty area securing adhesions while investigating Metis claims and, most pertinently, inquiring "closely into the educational requirements of the Indians."bib760/1

As in the southern frontier in the early 1880s, the situation of potential violence in the north which led to Federal intervention and treaty making, was brought on by the

⁹⁹ For many years thereafter such children were taken into the school. See bib757/16....

invasion of whites into the region – most critically would-be miners of the Klondike Gold Rush – producing as a consequence, an increasingly restive attitude among the local First Nations. Mounties were deployed and not surprisingly Macrae’s report, “Re Education in Treaty No. 8,” echoed his earlier comments on the strategic role of residential schools. Given that the “Indians are not evincing, and are not in the near future likely to evince any inclination towards collective settlement ... boarding schools, therefore, must be used if education is to be attempted ...” For Macrae there was no “if”; education was critical and he claimed considerable local support for his opinion.

All persons in the north with whom the matter of Indian education has been discussed agree as to its importance, not only as an economical measure to be demanded for the welfare of the country and the Indians themselves, but in order that crime may not spring up and peaceful conditions be disturbed, as that element which is the forerunner and companion of civilization penetrates the country and comes into closer contact with the natives. That benefit will accrue to both the industrial occupants of the country covered by the Treaty and to the Indians by weaning a number from the chase and inclining them to industrial pursuits is patent to those who see that a

growing need of intelligent labour must occur as development takes place¹⁰⁰ ... bib760.

Other Departmental officials followed Macrae and Sifton indicating that the idea that residential education facilitated regional pacification, and as such was an essential element for the peaceful development of newly ceded territories, was a Departmental commonplace extending at least into the first decade of the 20th century. Indeed, in 1904 and 1905 in official memorandum written by the Department's educational expert, Martin Benson, and then by Duncan Campbell Scott, Departmental Accountant, Sifton's characterization of the schools was quoted verbatim.¹⁰¹ And Scott in 1910, then serving as the Superintendent of Education, added, "without education and with neglect the Indians would produce an undesirable and often dangerous element in society." [res bnook page 33]. And in 1920, Scott, then the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, told Parliament in frank assimilative terms. "I want to get rid of the Indian problem,"[b637/46] therefore "our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been

¹⁰⁰ In the Treaty 8 area, the government did not have to initiate the school as had been the case in 1883. By 1900 5 boarding schools were operating – 4 Catholic and 1 Anglican and more were planned. Bib 760/

¹⁰¹ See Bib757/8 and Bib757/13.

absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question and no Indian Department.” [b651] [b637/46]

Certainly, for the Department, the resolution of the “Indian problem,” characterized so often as carrying the whiteman’s burden of Christian duty was, in fact, countering the perceived threat to state security and social purity, as they and settlers met and interacted on successive frontiers, lay in residential education managed by Church and Departmental officials and other public officials.

Dewdney was Minister of Interior from 1888 to 1891. Macdonald died in June 1891.

From: [Laura Chaignon](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Regarding the Sir John A statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:45:36 AM

Hello,

I am writing today to share that I strongly feel that the Sir John A statue should be removed, and that a memorial/monument to residential school victims and survivors should be put in its place. The Kingston and surrounding areas Indigenous communities should be consulted in all decisions regarding the statue and monument. The fact that the Sir John A statue continues to stand with no mention of his colonial and genocidal legacy shows that Kingston prioritizes being a “historical city” with a romanticized version of the past over the former and current realities of our area’s indigenous communities. Kingston has a lot of work to do to regarding reconciliation and removing a statue of an architect of past atrocities should be an extremely basic first step. The statue should remain covered until it is removed. The sacred fire going on should be allowed to continue unimpeded for as long as the participants would like to stay. I love spending time in City Park, as I am sure many Kingston residents do, but Canada and Kingston are built on stolen land - the very least the city can do is acknowledge this by removing the statue.

Thank you!

Laura Chaignon

From: [Raman Sun](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Removal of MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:53:06 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear History and Legacy of Sir John A. MacDonald Working Group,

I'm a recent migrant to Kingston from the States - Texas to be more specific. In Texas there are many monuments to Confederate soldiers and other government officials who advocated for race based slavery and the kidnapping of peoples from West Africa and indigenous peoples of the Americas - both of whom I'm descended from. Instead of removing these monuments the Texas government chose to leave them in place and put plaques giving surface level descriptions of the horrors and traumas they committed.

Here's a reference: <https://communityimpact.com/austin/central-austin/government/2020/08/05/state-legislators-look-for-removal-of-confederate-monuments-at-texas-capitol/>

I came to Canada expecting a more civilized government yet I see the same white-supremacist ideologies are still present. I'm constantly reminded of the legacy of this horrific ideology that spans both the North and South American continents every time I come across the spattering of memorials to Sir John A. McDonald throughout Kingston.

It's really shameful. I now see why when I tell my Canadian coworkers that I live in Kingston there is a reaction of disgust because of the apparent reputation of backwardness Kingston has even among native Canadians.

Also, I know many Canadians view the US South as a backwards place due to the very visible history of racism there; however as a resident of both Kingston and Texas I can see the common thread of hatred that ties these two places together.

The time to make the right decision on this issue has already passed due to the missed opportunity to remove the statue last year. The Council has already failed to uphold virtue and justice and I'm sure its the continuation of a long string of failures. Yet there is a chance for redemption not only for the living but for the departed thanks to the people holding space for this issue 24/7 in City Park. They've given you all an opportunity to open your heart and receive healing not only for yourselves but also for all of your ancestors.

You're on the right road, but going in the wrong direction. Turn around. Remove the statue of John A MacDonald from City Park.

Be Well, Be Loved

- RJ

From: [Antoinette Thornton](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); [Holland.Mary Rita](#); [Neill.Jim](#); [Doherty.Bridget](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 9:54:44 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning,

My Name is Toni Thornton. I'm a community member, an educator, and a parent. Wearing all these hats, I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. perpetuated genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island. Statues and other commemorations put him on a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving, and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The tally of bodies that are being found at Residential Schools is an atrocious reminder of this legacy - a legacy of that continues into the present - a staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

The argument that we need to keep the statue to continue this conversation is disingenuous. Statues do not educate – they commemorate. The argument that we'll somehow forget the past in removing the statue is nonsensical. The only erasure has been to Indigenous people; colonial history is not at risk of being forgotten. Teachers educate. Parents educate. Communities educate. Statues do not.

All this statue does is stand as a further reminder of the values of this City – values that need remediation in light of the TRC's Calls to Action and the imperative that the City has to seek reconciliation.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic actions. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Toni Thornton, MA, MEd, BA, BEd

From: [Kendall Garton](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:39:08 AM

My Name is Dr. Kendall Garton. I have lived in Kingston since moving here in 2009 for grad school; in 2017 I earned a PhD in Canadian history and along the way I fell in love with the city and decided to raise my family here. I am writing today about a key reason I have hesitation about this city and what it stands for: the Sir John A Macdonald statue in City Park.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A Macdonald statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,
Kendall Garton, PhD

From: [Astrid Hobill](#)
To: [Stroud, Peter](#)
Cc: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:57:49 AM

Hello Councillor Stroud,

My Name is Astrid Hobill. I am a constituent in your ward and live close to City Park, and the Sir John A MacDonald Statue.

I know that you have already been down to the site and helped with power issues. I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Charlottetown has already removed their statue of Sir John A Macdonald. Please help do the same and make our ward, and the city of Kingston, a city leading initiatives of reconciliation.

Kind regards,

Astrid

Astrid Hobill
PhD Candidate, Art History
[REDACTED]
Queen's University, Kingston, ON, [REDACTED]

From: [Emily Hayes](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A. statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:28:49 AM

Hello,

I am writing today to share that I strongly feel that the Sir John A statue needs to be removed, and that a memorial/monument for residential school victims and survivors should be put in its place. The only way to do this meaningfully is with the consultation of Indigenous communities in Kingston and the surrounding areas. Any and all decisions regarding the statue and memorial should be made with Indigenous voices at the forefront.

Sir John A. as he stands today, represents a romanticized version of history, one that refuses to acknowledge the colonial and genocidal legacy that he embodies. Sir John A. was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His horrendous policies still influence Canadian politics to this day. Removing the statue is an extremely basic step towards reconciliation.

This city is filled with beautiful green spaces such as City Park, but Kingston and Canada are built on stolen land. Removing the statue is one basic step towards acknowledging the misinterpretation of history and making meaningful symbolic change in how the truth is represented.

Thank you.

From: [Perna Subramanian](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Remove Sir JAM statue NOW!
Date: June 14, 2021 10:38:32 AM

Hello,

My Name is Perna Subramanian

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonalld Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

In resistance,
Perna

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From: [Danuta Sierhuis](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 11:08:48 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Danuta Sierhuis and I am a concerned resident of the City of Kingston.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Danuta Sierhuis (she/her)

From: [Rohit Revi](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Request to remove of Sir John A Macdonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 10:51:27 AM

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Hello,

I am a graduate student at Queen's University, a guest in this City and in the territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples.

As an uninvited guest, and a part of Kingston community, I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday.

It is evident to all of us that Sir John A. embodies genocidal actions, and his celebration as a monument is a constant and painful reminder that we are far from acknowledging this fact. As settlers continue to recognize and learn the extent of pain suffered and lived by Indigenous peoples, the least our City can do is heed the call made by the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members. As a person of colour living in Kingston, I implore that the City heeds this call.

How do we morally live in a city with a monument to genocide?

As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, **the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.**

Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Warmly,
Rohit Revi
(he/him)

Commemoration of Sir John A MacDonald's Death

Recorded for June 6 on May 25, 2021

Hon. Hugh Segal OC, OOnt, CD

It is a distinct privilege to stand here, adjacent to the remains and official burial site of Canada's first Prime Minister, to reflect on the meaning of his life and political career to Canada.

This is the third time I have had this opportunity and I am honoured to have been asked by the Kingston Historical Society to be here today..

History tells us that, whenever we pay tribute to a great and good politician, no politician, however compelling her or his achievements, is only great and good. There is always another side. Visionaries on one level can be near-sited on another. History

seeks to reflect accurately on historical events and times, and over time history brings new understanding and perceptions to its analysis of the past.

For all of Sir John A's immense leadership, creativity and determination to shape a country out of four colonies, a country that has on balance, been a force for good in the lives of millions, the frame of reference that drove his work was not one that recognized the sense of injustice and lack of obligation that Canadians now understand to be essential to genuine reconciliation and respectful partnership with First Nations. Sir John A did nothing to stop the Residential Schools put in place before he was Prime Minister. That there was hunger and suffering on the part of Indigenous peoples during his time is not something we can or should ever treat lightly.

The nineteenth century was what it was. For all the vision, expansion, growth and progress associated with the Victorian era, that vision did not include any sense of fairness or justice for First Nation residents in Canada or the United States. To say so clearly and forthrightly now is, and will always be, necessary. The Fathers of Confederation took root and succeeded in a nineteenth century where humility, compassion and understanding of our Indigenous people was not part of the political culture. It would be wrong today to ignore that fact or to condone it. Judging the past by the standards of the present is a precarious way to build bridges, together to the future.

Sir John A was known during his political and parliamentary career as "Old Tomorrow". His span of immense political capacity was rooted in the realities of the past and

present, and these formed his vision of what was coming next and what might be required.

As we commemorate the 130th anniversary of his death, and all that his life of service meant for future generations, reflecting on what should come next seems only right. It is what Sir John A would do.

In this, I take my advice from a First Nation leader of great achievement, who has rendered a lifetime of service to First Nations, to the law, to the judiciary, who chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, who was the first Indigenous member of the Judiciary in Manitoba, and who served all of Canada with distinction in the Upper Chamber, the Honourable Murray Sinclair. The newly appointed Chancellor of Queen's University. Chancellor designate Sinclair put his view of how to address the commemoration of Sir John A in these words:

".....there are a lot of Indigenous people who have made a positive contribution to this country, to their people and to the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who have largely been ignored by history and who deserve to be honoured and commemorated just as much (as Sir John A), and we should be talking about what to do about them"

Sir John A was the leading Father of Confederation. However, had the colonies and militias and regular British forces failed to repel the Americans who invaded our territory

in 1812, there would not have been colonies for Sir John A to unite into Confederation to create the Dominion of Canada. Those who repelled the Americans were not alone. Without the First Nations and Metis allies who joined in the fight to repel the Americans, the battle would have been lost. Chiefs like Tecumseh, John Norton, John Brant among others, made all the difference. First Nations including the Mohawk, Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Ojibwa, Iroquois and others played seminal roles in key battles – the Battles of Chrysler Farm, of Ogdensburg, of Lundy's Lane, of Chateauguay, to repel the American invaders. Without their courage, bravery and leadership, it is highly unlikely that Generals Brock or De Salaberry would have been successful in the defence of Canada.

I view those First Nation Chiefs as the Grandfathers of Confederation and it is high time they receive the tribute and commemoration they too deserve. Historical Societies here and elsewhere should lead the campaign for that to happen, as should the Canadian Department of Heritage

It is important, and to the credit of our Kingston Mayor and Council, that local First Nation leadership have been asked for their advice in naming the new Third Crossing, a huge span uniting the south-east and south-west corners of our community across the Cataraqui river. It is the largest capital and construction project in our community and, having it named in tribute to Indigenous history, will be an important building block for the future. Bridges are symbols of working together.

We all need to keep building bridges . Despite Sir John A's effort to afford First Nations the right to vote, a right that only emerged when John Diefenbaker was Prime Minister, his generation did not build bridges with First Nations. Our generation must never fail to do so.

The first Prime Minister to ever apologize to First Nations for the calumny of Residential Schools was the Rt Hon Stephen Harper on June 11, 2008, with First Nations chiefs seated before him in our House of Commons. It was, in my view, his best day as Prime Minister. That the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the multi-billion dollar fund for compensating survivors of those schools ensued, while important facts of history, is not sufficient. Building real bridges that recognize our obligations to First Nations will require continued effort by our entire society and community.

This country must shoulder that debt and obligation, in respectful partnership with our First Nations brothers and sisters. And we must recognize too that Canada would not be here, would not be part our common heritage without the efforts of the politician and former MP for Kingston who lies steps from where we stand.

Commemoration is an important part of using the past, with all its victories and setbacks, to build a better future.

It is an honour to pay tribute to the ultimate Father of Confederation, not because he was perfect, he was not, but because he gave his life in the service of Queen and

country and helped build Canada – a country that, for all its flaws, remains the envy of millions around the world.

Rest in Peace , Sir John. The work you began with such skill and inspiration continues anew.

Thank you.

From: [Marion Rubens](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: "[Marion Rubens](#)"
Subject: Sir J. A. MacDonald; statue and legacy
Date: June 14, 2021 11:59:19 AM

What's going on here?

I along with many others have commented on this subject over a year ago. So after taking into consideration prior injustices and feedback from the public there should be a more balanced viewpoint written into the history of MacDonald and the statue.

What I now see is a blatant attempt to erase all injustice by anyone by simply expunging them from any place of prominence, whether it be a written or physical manifestation.

MacDonald was an important historical figure in the formation of this country. Far beyond his alcoholism, financial problems and stance on indigenous peoples.

I have a feeling that city council are trying to erase MY culture! You do NOT erase my history and millions of others simply because someone tried to do the same. How just is that!

Accept history,....warts and all.

LEAVE THE STATUE ALONE!

P. Rubens

From: [Emma Seip](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:23:57 AM

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Dear Mr. Paterson,

I am writing to express my support for the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members who are calling for the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park. I have been a Kingston resident and student at Queen's University for almost 5 years, and I feel it is important to stand in solidarity with my Indigenous colleagues and neighbours who are working to dismantle the brutal legacies of colonialism in this city.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

In brief, John A Macdonald embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present, as a large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

The "Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard" report prepared by The First Peoples Group contains a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history. Queen's University has already set a precedent for such an action by starting the process of renaming their law school building formerly named after John A. Macdonald. I am calling on the City of Kingston to follow this example and to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

Thank you very much for your time.

Kind regards,

Emma Seip


From: janet.emerson@janet.emerson
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Mac Donald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:15:51 AM

Dear Bryan Patterson, this communication is being sent as I, totally, advocate to keep the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald. As Canadians, I would like to focus our attention to the positive impact he had on building this wonderful country of ours. Sir John A. is our 'Father of Confederation' and is deserving of our honour, respect and appreciation.

The discovery of 215 remains in Kamloops, BC, is absolutely heartbreaking. It is difficult to comprehend exactly what took place during those times. There has been a lot of speculation, accusations, some aggressive action taken without any concrete evidence of what may have occurred. Perhaps we will never know, as much time has past, however, our government has committed to financially support the Indigenous people in their quest to find answers & maybe closure during this difficult time. Most Canadians are concerned & saddened.

Further, this incident prompted me to read through some of the history. So much history, starting with Charles Bagot report, namely, 'Report on the affairs of the Indians in Canada'. It was the foundational document to the federal residential school system.

Sir John A. relied on many reports, educated, knowledgeable people, such Egerton Ryerson, James Bruce (8th Earl of Elgin), Nicholas Davin, as well as, other members of parliament. The 'Davin Report' was submitted to Ottawa March 14, 1879. It provided detail findings based on existing industrial schools in the USA, etc..

Finally, in 1883, Parliament approved \$43,000 for 3 Industrial Schools, by 1900, there were 61 schools in operation.

Please note:

Sir John A. Macdonald died June 6, 1891

Kamloops Indian Industrial School was established in 1893.

Best of luck with the meeting today.

Janet Emerson

Other thoughts: Who knew, back in the day, Christian sects administering residential schools, would have been responsible for such horrendous crimes against children. [REDACTED]

From: [ken ohtake](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald Monument
Date: June 14, 2021 11:59:43 AM

Mayor and Council

I wish to go on record as recommending to the City of Kingston to keep the SJAM monument where it rests in City Park. BUT the monument must also include additional images on the two sides of the plinth that symbolized:

the tragedy of “Indian Residential Schools”



and the racism of the Chinese Head Tax.



The Statue of SJAM is a powerful image of a national founder who was also a Kingston leader. Only other images as powerful would further our education that SJAM was not perfect. The images that I have included are illustrative only.

Ken Ohtake



Kingston

From: [Chancellor Maracle](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:15:38 AM

Hello,

I am writing today to share that I strongly feel that the Sir John A statue should be removed and that a memorial/monument to residential school victims and survivors should be put in its place. The Kingston and surrounding areas Indigenous communities should be consulted in all decisions regarding the statue and monument. The fact that the Sir John A statue continues to stand with no mention of his colonial and genocidal legacy shows that Kingston prioritizes being a "historical city" with a romanticized version of the past over the former and current realities of our area's indigenous communities. Kingston has a lot of work to do regarding reconciliation and removing a statue of an architect of past atrocities should be an extremely basic first step. The statue should remain covered until it is removed. The sacred fire going on should be allowed to continue unimpeded for as long as the participants would like to stay. I love spending time in City Park, as I am sure many Kingston residents do, but Canada and Kingston are built on stolen land - the very least the city can do is acknowledge this by removing the statue.

--

Nyawen
Chancellor Maracle



From: [Elizabeth Carnegie](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:32:08 AM

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Disagree very strongly regarding the removal of Sir John's Statue. Agreed he was a flawed individual, but it was a different time in our history. Sir John A. was responsible for the building of the railway across the country, without which we would not have a country called Canada. While I sympathize with the concerns of the Indigeous people, I do not agree that the removal of the statue and erasing of our Canadian history is the best way to address these issues.

Elizabeth Carnegie

From: [Lydia Johnson](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A. Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:15:47 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing **in FAVOUR of THE REMOVAL** of the Sir John A Macdonald statue in City Park and stand with the Revolution of the Heart Group.

Sincerely,

--

Lydia Johnson (she/her)
Masters of Environmental Studies Student
Queen's University

From: [Chris Fehr](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A.
Date: June 14, 2021 9:41:02 AM

Good Morning, I just wanted to voice my opinion that I think we as a city need to get ahead of this so that removing the statue can be seen as an act of kindness and compassion rather than as someone just today told me "giving up." If you happen to see the Ryerson statue come down on the news it doesn't look good for anyone. It might leave some native people feeling a small victory (I can only assume) but we need cooperation not combat.

I suggest in short order the Sir John A statue be removed and at some later date something new is put in its place. We should all accept that it will be removed so removing it before it's forced would be a much more positive gesture.

Chris Fehr
830

From: [Glen Hyde](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John, eh?
Date: June 14, 2021 11:20:10 AM

Dear Sirs:

I wish to express my opposition to removing Sir John A Macdonald's statue from City Park because I believe that there is no merit in obliterating the past. Sir John made mistakes but we need to learn from those while honouring him for his accomplishments. The wrongs of the residential school system were not just due to him and they were perpetuated by every government since then including Laurier, King, Pearson and Trudeau.

In 2018, I posted a letter to "My Stories" which I have added below and, if you are interested, you can refer to that for further elaboration.

Thank you for your attention.

Glen Hyde

"Please see below for my story.

"Like most Canadians, I spend about .000000001% of my time ever thinking about Sir John A Macdonald. But, when I do, he comes to mind as our country's first prime minister and as a man of vision who worked to create the nation of Canada. According to Google, Canada is one of the best countries of the world to live in and so I salute him for his achievement. Not everybody accepts that – but what political leader was ever accepted by everybody? And, for crying out loud, the guy died over 125 years ago!! How come this controversy is coming up now? I question his role in the residential schools but apologies in Parliament have been made, restitution has been made – maybe we can all move on by accepting that Sir John made some bad calls. We don't honour him for those but we honour him for his accomplish-ments. Unfortunately, some writers continue to see an "us versus them" attitude while actually we should be working together regardless of our background to make Canada an even better and more prosperous country for all Canadians. Some writers disparage "Colonialism"; however, in 21st century Canada, people don't scruple to use a "colonial" internet, drive "colonial" trucks and snowmobiles, live in "colonial" housing or accept "colonial" money. So let's all move on.

"My own story is that three of my grandparents came to Canada from England in the early years of the last century. (My maternal grandmother was born on a farm near Peterborough.) My father's parents invested everything they had in a corner store in downtown Toronto. Family legend says that they had one knife, a fork and a spoon between them and they sat on orange crates for furniture. But the store prospered and my dad took it over when he married my mom in 1939. My mother was a very smart woman – always in the top 2 or 3 in her school class. But she was the eldest (of 6) and she had to leave school at the age of 16 when her dad deserted the family and disappeared at the height of the Great Depression. Times were tough. She worked as a servant for a wealthy family but went to business school at night to learn typing and shorthand. She landed a job at Eaton's in the typing pool and worked her way up to become secretary to one of the vice-presidents. Unfortunately, my dad had problems which led to his death in 1955 from self-inflicted injuries, leaving mom with 4 kids. We were an early single-parent family. We all turned out all right. My elder sister became a high school teacher, my elder brother (before being killed by a bus) became an economist and MA in linguistics, I am a CPA (chartered accountant) and my younger sister is a pastor and evangelist. Bad things don't only happen to Indigenous people; but you can either be a victim or a victor. So I believe that there should be a statue to my mother, and to all the

people groups (eg: Irish, Italians, Africans; Chinese as well as Indigenous) who look for a better life and a brighter future in Canada."

From: [Claire B](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Special Council Meeting: Removal of Sir John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:50:15 AM

Dear City Council,

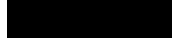
I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. Given the recent events and discoveries, I strongly believe the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims. Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space.

I am pleased to hear that there will be an Indigenous housing support centre opening across from City Park and I believe the removal of the Sir John A. statue would be timely in order to remove a symbol of genocide from the close proximity of the housing centre.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system. In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

I hope that you will take the appropriate measures in making Kingston a more welcoming place.

Sincerely,
Claire Brackenbury



Kingston, ON



From: [Miles Brackenbury](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Special Council Meeting: Removal of Sir John A Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:28:25 AM

Honourable City Council,

My Name is Miles Brackenbury, a member of the Kingston and Queen's community who writes to you as a student, varsity athlete, and community member.

I am emailing to urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday.

As you are aware, Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island. The polarization regarding the removal of this statue stems from a lack of education, which is in itself the very reason why the statue ought to be removed in the interest of rewriting the narrative of our history.

It is impossible to fathom the pain inflicted upon Indigenous Peoples across turtle island. All in all, the removal of this statue is the bare minimum the City of Kingston can do in order to respect and support Indigenous Peoples during the ongoing trauma. It is not the City's job to write history, but it is the duty of the City to make sure all Kingstonians feel safe and welcome. Removing this statue does not erase history, but it does create a safer space wherein all people can come together.

This is a pivotal moment for our city. In order to be on the right side of history, we must make a decision based on solidarity and respect.

History may be in the past, but our relations remain in the present.

I thank you for including my message in your Special Council meeting, and for your commitment to our community.

Best regards,

Miles Brackenbury

Queen's University
Political Studies,
Concurrent Education,
Cross Country and Track

Tuum Est

From: [Tom & Rae Brackenbury](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Special Council Meeting: Removal of the Sir John A. MacDonald monument
Date: June 14, 2021 11:48:41 AM

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Dear City Council,


I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. Given the recent events I strongly believe the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

I am pleased that the city of Kingston is creating an Indigenous Housing Supporting Centre. This new housing complex will face City Park and therefore a monument of Sir John A. MacDonald would be disrespectful.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you for your dedication and consideration.

Sincerely,
Rae Brackenbury

Kingston, ONT

From: [Kari Knowles](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Statue at City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 11:47:40 AM

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Hello,

I fully support removing or relocating the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald at City Park.

The main argument I've seen from those who want the statue left alone is that we shouldn't erase history. On the contrary, removing the statue would be a first step in acknowledging that we have been ignoring our history. Moving the statue to Belleville House would give the statue appropriate context and visitors would actually learn something from it.

We commemorate SJAM all over Kingston. We have a school and street named after him. We have a museum and numerous plaques all over the city. He is taking up way too much public space. Where are the plaques and statues commemorating other historic figures and Indigenous peoples?

Relocating or removing the statue would be a great first step for Kingston in admitting that we have been celebrating a man all over the city without acknowledging the atrocities that he committed. That statue is just another painful reminder that we have yet to teach people the good and bad of our history.

Thank you.
Kari Knowles

From: [Susan Anderson Steele](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Cc: [ourhistories](#); [City Clerk](#); [Hutchison,Rob](#)
Subject: Statue of Sir John A. MacDonald
Date: June 14, 2021 11:40:34 AM

Mayor Paterson and City Officials,

I am adding my voice to those calling for the immediate removal of the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald from its prominent location in the park. This is the first step in recognizing the suffering caused by our earlier actions as a new country. What to do with the statue and whether something should replace it are questions that might need more time to consider. In the meantime REMOVE the statue.

I believe we are becoming a better country than when we first started. The indigenous communities have been extraordinarily patient as they wait for Canada to demonstrate willingness to move toward Reconciliation, the first step being Truth. This is Kingston's opportunity to demonstrate our capacity to thoughtfully acknowledge our past and to take actions that propel us toward an honourable future. Please take it.

Susan Anderson
[REDACTED]
Kingston, ON

From: [Aimee Berard](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Support for the Removal of statue of Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 14, 2021 10:32:38 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to express my support for removing the statue of Sir John A Macdonald and urge this committee to listen to the voices of the Indigenous community members calling for it's removal.

There is no denying the incredible and ever lasting damage that the residential schools have had on Indigenous peoples. Sir John A Macdonald is a symbol of that pain and oppression as a key architect of the residential school system and it's racist policies. Keeping him up on a pedestal in a visible public space further harms our Indigenous friends and community members. Taking him down is an easy step in the process of reconciliation and righting the wrongs of our past and transforming our future together.

Please take this opportunity to stand up to those who may seek to maintain the status quo, and make meaningful symbolic change to how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you,
Aimee Berard

From: [Elizabeth Turner](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: TAKE DOWN JAM
Date: June 14, 2021 11:39:11 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To whom it may concern,

My Name is Elizabeth Turner, a long time Kingston resident.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Please avoid further embarrassment for this city. Do the right thing and take the statue down!
Sincerely,
Elizabeth

From: [Matt Silburn](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Take down John A.
Date: June 14, 2021 11:36:17 AM

I have lived in the Inner Harbour, king's town district since 1998. The statue of John A Macdonald is an embarrassing blight on this city.

I urge you to take it down. Remaining in place, it represents a celebration of genocide. Supporters of it remaining are on the wrong side of history. They will be remembered like John A himself; white supremacists.

It truly belongs at the bottom of Lake Ontario. A compromise solution would be in a private museum, where people have to pay to see it. No one should be subjected to his hurtful legacy without free, prior and informed consent.

Matt Silburn

From: [Curtis](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Take the statue down
Date: June 14, 2021 11:46:42 AM

To Whom it may concern,

I am in favour of the removal of the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald.

Curtis Rapley

From: [Pamela Cornell](#)
To: ourhistories@cityofkingston.ca
Subject: That controversial statue
Date: June 14, 2021 11:33:14 AM

Hello,

Nobody belongs on a pedestal, least of all, someone who was directly involved in what has been determined to have been genocide. Canada continues to reap the consequences of what was inflicted on the indigenous peoples who lived here at the time of colonization.

Cultural values evolve. It has been a very long time since we've had spittoons, and smoking in public places is no longer permitted. That's because we have come to understand that tobacco kills. Now we have indisputable evidence that the policies of Canada's first Prime Minister resulted in the deaths of innocent people — many of them children. Surely you agree that statues to this man deserve to go the way of the spittoon.

Sincerely,
Pamela Cornell

From: [Geoff Chown](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: The Future of the Sir John A MacDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:17:14 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I am a direct descendant of Michael Grass, captain of the UEL colony that first settled the Kingston area. I also have flat narrow feet indicating some First Nations heritage, though I don't know from where.

As you surely have heard, more child mass graves have been found at residential school sites in Brandon and Victoria. They are going to be reported as fast as ground-penetrating radar equipment can be used at the sites. I believe it is the responsibility of the city to protect the statue itself as a matter of history, but also to respect the deeply troubled emotions of the affected First Nations peoples and Canadians alike.

To that end, I highly recommend removing and securing the statue immediately, so that after the enormity of the residential school revelations play out, a permanent location can be determined for where it should reside. For now, it should essentially be arrested pending trial, just like anyone accused of involvement in such atrocities would be, in part for their own protection. As the first capital of Canada and the statue being of the first prime minister, the federal government and possibly the Supreme Court should have some say in what should become of the statue. That will obviously take considerable time to happen.

As for where I think the statue should initially be moved to, if it were up to me, I would secure it in Kingston Penitentiary while awaiting a federal decision, like pre-trial confinement. It would show respect to First Nations and send a message to all Canadians that the severity of the atrocities demands a complete fundamental re-evaluation of our history. It would also put appropriate pressure upon the federal government to bring about judgement and a rightful reconciliation in a timely manner, in part to end the embarrassment of the spectacle of its founding Prime Minister in prison.

Kingston is perceived to some degree to be capitalizing upon the false legendary status of Sir John A MacDonald. This would set a new tone, that Kingston is genuinely championing the strife for truth and justice, no matter how disparaging it may be. Meanwhile, nobody is actually hurt by placing an historical monument into a perfectly suited historical setting, literally just down the road. I do not think there is a surer way to come out of this on the right side of history.

Victoria has cancelled their municipal Canada Day celebrations. I highly recommend taking immediate action to change Kingston's plans for July 1st, to at least represent how Canada's greatness came at such a horrible price.

Sincerely,

Geoff Chown

From: [Christopher Letke](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [ourhistories](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: The Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 9:59:12 AM

Hello Mr. Paterson and others,

I am Dr. Christopher Letke of Kingston.

I hope that you will give credence to growing calls and protests regarding the removal and replacement of the City Park John A. MacDonald statue. I am sure you can agree that there are better ways for Canadians to be taught the history of their nation, and better points of Canadian pride to be celebrated, than having a centerpiece statue to the architect of Canada's worst shame. You and I would not tolerate it if it was a statue of Pinochet in Chile, or Goebbels in Germany -- we should not tolerate it here either. I agree with recent calls that the statue instead be replaced with a monument to the survivors and victims of Canada's residential school system. We owe it to our indigenous brothers and sisters to tell history like it was, and save celebration and memorialization for Canada's highest heroes, rather than its moral dark ages.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Letke, MD



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14 June 2021

Dear councillors

Please accept this email as my submission for your consideration at Monday's meeting to discuss the future of the Statue of Sir John A MacDonald.

My wish is that you leave the statue in its current location in its current configuration. You may wish to make additions to the historical plaques around it which add more nuanced appreciation of the activities of the first prime minister of this country.

It is regrettable that someone can graduate with so few credits in Canadian history from Ontario high schools, because they cannot become good citizens unless they know what Society was in the past. This lack of understanding is probably very convenient for certain politicians to achieve whatever they wish because too few citizens are prepared to challenge them on a subject of which they know so little. I fear that a small group of very sincere activists whose opinions do not reflect those of the majority of the electorate are trying to mislead you.

Rather than listen to the small group of activists who seem to be driving this issue I suggest you conduct a **plebiscite** and get the opinion of all of Kingston's citizens and hear the wishes of all of your electorate rather than a few out-of-step zealots.

The councillors will no doubt be careful not to be manipulated by an historical perspective that is not based in reality. Some people will always be offended at the statue of Sir John A MacDonald in Kingston, just as others are offended by other things the council does. However, it is not the job of the councillors to ensure that no person is made uncomfortable by every other aspect of the city of Kingston! Somehow the statue has managed to survive a hundred years without offending people to a great extent.

I urge you to leave the statue as it is and add, if necessary, some information plaques that describe in better detail the strengths and weaknesses of Sir John MacDonald.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email as my written submission.

Many thanks,

Robert Hutchings

From: [patricia Cruickshank](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: What to do With the Statue of Sir John A. MacDonald
Date: June 14, 2021 10:20:42 AM

Treatment of indigenous people in Canada is a tragedy. Treaties were made for lands, that were not honoured. People were starved, children were taken from families, abused and allowed to die. The families were not permitted recourse under law to fight for the return of their children.

Horrific treatment has happened to different cultures through history. In 1746 Great Britain, The Act of Proscription came into effect in Scotland as part of a series of efforts to assimilate the Scottish Highlands, ending their ability to revolt and crush the Clan system. This act made the wearing of the Highland Dress, including the kilt illegal. The first offence was subject to six months in prison, a second subject to transport to any of his Majesty's plantations for seven years. This was after the Battle of Culloden which saw 1,500-2,000 Scottish Jacobites die. More were killed as retribution for the battle.

Much has been written about the Irish famines in 1845, 1847, 1879. During these famines, millions of Irish men, women and children starved to death. So many lost their lives, that people were dying at the side of the road in ditches. Even today, the role of the British government in the potato famine and its aftermath is still debated. Was it inaction and inadequate response, incompetence or a deliberate way to control the Irish people.

Between 1992 and 1995 the Bosnian war raged in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over 101,000 people died, mostly Bosniaks. This war was deemed the first genocide in Europe since WW11.

My point of mentioning these atrocities is that groups of humanity have treated anyone not from their tribe or who did not share their values, in a manner to control or wipe them out. Cultures have advanced on the principle of survival of the fittest.

I watched a show on APTN last week about the real history of the west and Indigenous chiefs told stories and celebrated people who had made an impact on their culture and history. One story was about a warrior who had done much for his people. He had a vision and to gain strength, he stabbed his wife in the back and killed her. The chief telling the story said you may think this is wrong, but *"that is the way things were in those days."*

Like most people who attended Canadian schools, (I am a second generation born Canadian) I did not learn about the treatment of indigenous people in residential schools. I have attended lectures by Senator Murray Sinclair and others, read the Indian Act to learn more about the treatment of Canada's first peoples, to understand why Canada treats its indigenous people

so inhumanly and to try to understand why this has not stopped.

So, what does all this have to do with what should be done with Sir John A. MacDonald's statue in City Park. Reports I read about Sir John, say that he drank too much, skipped out on paying rent and basically was not the kind of person many people would want to bring home for dinner. However, his contribution to history is that he was able to pull together many diverse opinions, demands, personal agendas and needs to form the country I call home. It is not perfect, there are things we could and should do better. I do believe that we have more people in this country that want to see the years of mistreatment of indigenous people stopped and a new future begun, than want to perpetuate the past wrongs.

Sir John is a product of his time and norms. I vote to keep the statue but update the real story. Include a statue or an appropriate recognition of indigenous people. One example could be recognition of Molly Brant who lies in a Kingston cemetery. She is identified as an "Iroquois ally to Great Britain in the American Revolution and later a founder of Kingston". (Source: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-Brant>.) Why not recognize her contribution to Kingston in a significant way? Or if not Molly Brant, another indigenous person.

Tearing down statues, defacing artifacts does not change history. It does continue keeping the wounds fresh and raw and continues the rage. These reactions are warranted after so many wrongs. But eventually there comes a time to move forward and take control. The city should work with indigenous people to find ways to recognize their history and their relationships with people who came to this continent, looking for a better life because of oppression they suffered. Unfortunately, the people who came to the "new world" were human, and brought with them the patterns of oppression they were escaping and imposed that on indigenous people they encountered.

We cannot change the past, but we can move forward and continue to strive for a safe and humane society for all. Unfortunately, there will always be trigger points for people that have suffered trauma. If people don't go out of their way to visit the statue in the park, it will avoid one trigger. Not everyone can avoid triggers in their lives. My first encounter with indigenous people was as a small child when I was molested by an indigenous man, living in my parents house. I don't have an option of not visiting a statue, social media is constantly discussing indigenous issues and that raises a trigger for me. I just have to deal with it.

There are no easy answers. But erasing history paves the path for repeating our mistakes instead of learning.

Patricia Cruickshank

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

CANADA in the 19th CENTURY

There are no easy answers to the issue of voting in the 19th century. The excerpt attached from the *Contested Origins of Canadian Democracy* shows some of the complexity and confusion in our democratic politics over voting. There was no universal franchise and the right to vote was slowly widened as education levels increased. Against much opposition in Parliament, John A. Macdonald extended the vote to Indigenous men in eastern Canada in 1885 and the property qualification still held for them as well. Many opposed this move, including some Indigenous leaders.

Canada was very much a work in progress in the 19th century. We were a poor country with a small, mostly rural population, widely scattered across an enormous geography.

Government revenue came mostly from import duties and fell when economic recessions hit, as in the 1870's and in the 1880's, and cutbacks followed. We lost over 1 million people to the U.S. from 1881 to 1891 due to recession and better land opportunities. By 1891 our total population was still less than 5 million and the U.S. close to 63 million.

Macdonald referred to "this experiment we are trying." There was no guarantee that it would work, with many internal divisions and squabbling provinces and fear of our aggressive powerful neighbour. Britain pulled all their remaining soldiers out of Canada in 1871 leaving us very vulnerable to aggression.

By the 1880's Macdonald and his small cabinet of thirteen were greatly overworked and supported by a very small civil service facing many challenging issues all at once. There was threatening talk in the U.S. Congress and newspapers about annexation. American annexationists were at work in Winnipeg seeking support.

The Metis rebellion of 1885, led by Louis Riel, threatened to tear apart this rather fragile eighteen year-old country. Macdonald feared the kind of violence the U.S. had experienced in the West, with over twenty years of warfare with Indigenous peoples. This stirred up huge passion among the Orange Order in Ontario and in Quebec Riel was used by politicians, like Honore Mercier, for their own political purposes.

The Americans had offered to buy British Columbia and had already bought Alaska from Russia in 1867. It was an enormous cost, but essential, to get the CPR built to tie this country together before the West was absorbed into the U.S and all trade moved north-south and not east-west. They already had two transcontinental railroads and were building north to the border.

There was constant frustration trying to get a trade deal with the U.S. after they unilaterally ended the limited free trade deal of 1866 and in the 1880's threatened our trade with the McKinley Tariff on our goods. On the east coast they kept interfering in our fisheries.

In all of this the Indigenous issues got lower priority and got left to lower level officials, often with less understanding and sympathy to their problems.

There is a determined effort to demonize Macdonald and make him the scapegoat for all the problems faced by Canada, as it struggled to find its way as a new nation in the world. It could all have fallen apart, allowing the Americans to claim their "manifest destiny" to control the continent.

Democracies are fragile. Canada could yet be torn apart. The mobs in the U.S capital on January 6, 2021 offer us all a lesson.

Indigenous issues need to be resolved. There are no easy answers for all the complex issues. In his time John A. Macdonald believed in the importance of compromise and moderation in building a strong country. Still important advice today.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE on June 10th 2021

Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action

We understand that Katarokwi-Kingston sits within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Algonquin and Mississauga. Indigenous People have lived and traversed this area since time immemorial and have enduring relationships to the land. Prompted by the recent unveiling of the mass grave of 215 Indigenous children at the former location of the Kamloops Indian Residential School, we have decided to hold space for our community and relations to come together for mourning, healing, and reclamation.

Indigenous community members and non-Indigenous community members will be holding a sacred fire and land-based ceremony at City Park that will commence on Thursday, June 10th, at 6:00 pm. We demand the John A. Macdonald statue be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims that better represents and honours the truth of the colonial violence Indigenous peoples have suffered and continue to suffer. We invite the community to join us in holding this space for all our relations. All are welcome.

Abenaki Wliwini, a local Indigenous resident says, "Reconciliation is an act that comprises of acknowledgement, accountability and reparations. We will never begin to heal without those components. Reconciliation requires healing and mutual respect". Susan, an Indigenous participant, says, "Macdonald must come down. He was not a builder. He was a destroyer. Your Canada was built on our backs. We want a statue that reflects this man's genocidal actions".

Kingston is haunted by the legacy and ongoing reality of settler colonialism. It is unkind and cruel to celebrate a genocidal historical figure or to mock the painful legacy and impacts of colonization on Indigenous people that continues in our present moment. We live in a world built on the brutality of the past and that replicates this violence in new and different ways. We have only to turn on the News to see this reality. We need to ask ourselves if we want to continue celebrating mass murderers and, yes, even figures of the past. We don't need a statue of John A. Macdonald in the middle of a city park to remember he was instrumental in starving thousands of Indigenous people and creating Indian Residential Schools. No longer celebrating his legacy, which is tainted by the death and blood of Indigenous people, and others who have been dispossessed and disenfranchised by the state, is not about erasing history. We remember exactly what he did. With or without a statue. If we want a more ethical, just community then we need to re-envision how we relate to each other. This is not about rewriting the past but about recognizing the real brutality of the past and present and imagining a collective future

that honours dignity and pays respect to Indigenous peoples, Black folks, people of colour, poor people and all other oppressed communities.

Concerned locals call on the community and City of Kingston to remove the John A Macdonald statue out of respect for the unmarked graves of Indigenous children all over Canada in former Indian Residential School sites. We invite our community to re-imagine what a just collective future for Katarokwi-Kingston can be. One first step in this work is removing the John A Macdonald statue and replacing it with a monument to genocide on these lands.

- 30 -

Media contacts:

Mance Granberg: 343 333 4832

Dionne Nolan (Zoogipon Ikwe): 613-453-1455, or odemincollective@gmail.com

Natasha Stirrett: (613-929-5429), Natashastirrett@cunet.carleton.ca

From: [Peter Burpee](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: About Sir John A Macdonald
Date: June 14, 2021 4:05:30 PM

Could we not expect the local indigenous people to respect the politician whose effort, experience and ability to persuade and network with others led eventually to the creation of the country we know today. There were others such as Sir Leonard Tilley in New Brunswick, but Sir John Macdonald was the man who became our first Prime Minister.

I am truly appalled at the call to rewrite our history to suit present-day activists, those who would distort the memory of our country's creation and diminish our debt to Sir John A Macdonald and his place in Kingston.

We were colonists. No apology needed. As pioneers in New France and later British Canada, we came and changed the landscape. So in their time, did the indigenous peoples who came before us.

Think again.

Peter Burpee, Kingston

Canoes in a Fog, Lake Superior, 1969, Frances Anne Hopkins.
Glenbow Museum, Calgary.



From: [Carley Hoja](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Call to action to remove J.A.M. statue!
Date: June 14, 2021 5:37:58 PM

Dear Councilor Neill and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Carley Hoja, I am a constituent in the Williamsville district of Kingston/Katorokwi and a white settler.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Carley Hoja

From: [Michael Capon](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Mayor & Council](#)
Subject: Compassion
Date: June 14, 2021 1:00:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Compassionate living is an ideal we should all aspire to, as individuals and as a society. Author Karen Armstrong's "Charter for Compassion" states that "compassion impels us to...dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there." For too long, those of colonial descent have enthroned themselves at the expense of the Indigenous population. The statue of John A. Macdonald is a vivid symbol of that enthronement.

To be truly compassionate, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world, we must remove stumbling blocks to reconciliation with our Indigenous neighbours. In this case, that means letting go of a statue -- not a hard thing to do. Given recent events, acts of compassion, even symbolic ones, are more important than ever.

Attitudes change but statues don't. It's no longer relevant or compassionate to have John A Macdonald on a pedestal. If we're going to elevate him, let's do so in the curriculum and museums, where his complex legacy can be explored in a more balanced and thorough way. Bellevue House (without the pedestal) would be an ideal location for the statue.

If you haven't seen it already, this article is a great examination of statues in general:

<https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?>

[a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.theguardian.com%2fartanddesign%2f2021%2fjun%2f01%2fgary-young-why-every-single-statue-should-come-down-rhodes-colston&c=E,1,UDNquPFG0wj-dIZ7FiEZrnXg8J7Khga-4boP7OzocjdLGO3iN9NcwG-EGPlim0cN7NihO48emc2cBDxwFWIMAvSsFE8AQR040bT6h1oEuSJO5mrj66g,&typo=1](https://www.theguardian.com/fartanddesign/2021/jun/14/gary-young-why-every-single-statue-should-come-down-rhodes-colston&c=E,1,UDNquPFG0wj-dIZ7FiEZrnXg8J7Khga-4boP7OzocjdLGO3iN9NcwG-EGPlim0cN7NihO48emc2cBDxwFWIMAvSsFE8AQR040bT6h1oEuSJO5mrj66g,&typo=1)

Thanks,
Michael Capon
[REDACTED]
Kingston
[REDACTED]

From: [Holland, Mary Rita](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FW:
Date: June 14, 2021 5:24:33 PM

From: MiChael Deasy [REDACTED]
Sent: June 11, 2021 7:22 PM
To: Holland, Mary Rita <mrholland@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject:

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Counsellor Holland,

We respectfully insist that the statue of Sir John A. remain in City Park.

Kingston is a site of Confederation, and whatever deeds may seem abhorrent from the modern perspective, they were in keeping with the times and should be viewed as such through the lens of history. He is a man to be remembered and studied and approached academically and yes honoured in his own way for what service he did render, and not solely with the perspective of the current passions of those with perceived ancient grievance.

Held to standards of today, no man, even the current Prime Minister, may stand. It is a fool's errand and people are tired of it. The removal of his statue is once again bowing to a tiny, yet energetic mob of anonymous ideologues on the Internet. Most of whom are not even local and very few of whom will vote. I would welcome the opportunity to walk the area north of Princess and conduct an informal survey on the matter.

To those afraid to take a stand in the council, in your cowardice to defend your history, I defy you to put it to a plebiscite before the local population. Weak though it is, it's better than a acquiescence to the online clamour. I am well aware of the tiredness of the current mood in the media and public discourse, and I would expect nothing less than a total repudiation of this current climate if it were put before the populace at the ballot box.

If you take the cowardly action of bowing to the minority, there will almost certainly be retaliatory campaigns against whatever hollow gesture you make in substitution.

Stand up, vote with your head and reason, and not for fear of being labelled by a small group of non-voters online.

Sincerely
Michael Deasy

From: [Holland, Mary Rita](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FW:
Date: June 14, 2021 5:37:16 PM

From: Amanda Wilson [REDACTED]
Sent: June 13, 2021 11:31 PM
To: Holland, Mary Rita <mrholland@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Councilor Holland,

My Name is Amanda Wilson. I am a Canadian born woman of European , African, Algonquin and Haudenosaunee decent. My colourful background is a true example of Canadas diversity but it also reflects the dark past and trauma of this land. Due to the treatment of indentured servants, Black slavery and the continuous genocide of Indigenous Peoples, my family history contains more tragedy than celebration.

Current generations are becoming more aware of the unforgivable behaviors done to others in the past and how that reflects in today's society through privilege. With recent discovery of over 500 bodies found in unmarked graves across Canada, we can no longer ignore the requests of the indigenous community on the basis of pride. The government can no longer hide what it has done by excuses of the past or actions of the church when we currently celebrate those who are directly responsible such as John MacDonald.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing

the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you for your time.

Amanda Wilson

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: FW: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park
Date: June 14, 2021 12:47:17 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

For acknowledgement / tabling and distribution / agenda.



John Bolognone

City Clerk
City Clerk's Department
City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613 546 4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca



From: Elizabeth Howes [REDACTED]
Sent: June 14, 2021 12:36 PM
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello City of Kingston,

My Name is Elizabeth and I live in Kingscourt. I am writing to strongly urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honouring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Let's be on the right side of it.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Howes

From: [Holland, Mary Rita](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FW: Statue of Macdonald
Date: June 14, 2021 5:34:10 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Kristen Spring [REDACTED]
Sent: June 12, 2021 2:03 PM
To: Holland, Mary Rita <mrholland@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Statue of Macdonald

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I am very aware that there are citizens of Kingston who feel strongly about the statue of our first Prime Minister John A. Macdonald. I also understand that John A. Macdonald did many good things for and on behalf of Canada. HOWEVER, I also think that unless you are Aboriginal and unless you experienced some event or are fully related to the existence of residential schools in Canada you cannot fully understand the impact this has had upon Aboriginal people and their families for many generations.

I can only speak for myself here, but I certainly “get” and understand in as much as I can understand why many Aboriginal people want the statue of John A. Macdonald removed in Kingston (and in fact wherever one exists). Yes, of course John A. Macdonald did things that were good for Canada and helpful, HOWEVER, the idea of residential schools and what they in turn did to Aboriginal families was not just mean, disrespectful, completely wrong, but abusive and criminal. How would any of us feel having to see a statue honouring someone who’s ideas and actions not only horribly hurt emotionally and physically so many Aboriginal children and their families but literally killed children for who they were. How would any of us feel having to walk past or trying to avoid walking past a statue that would be a constant reminder of the pain that ripped apart so many families, tried to take away their culture and languages, forcing them to believe they were “less than” and even evil. No one should ever be forced to relive pain or be reminded of loss by the statue of someone who should never have had a place of honour. John A. did some things, (of course) as our first Prime Minister, that were good; but the fact that it took Canadians a long time to actually realize and do something to acknowledge what Canada did to Aboriginal people doesn’t really help.....(AND of course some people still don’t understand and maybe never will).

As a survivor of childhood abuse I know well that it is hard enough living with the many triggers that occur in everyday life. All of us likely have something that occurred in our lives that comes up, and slams us in the face from time to time that is a reminder of something from our past that caused pain that we have to find ways to deal with. Knowing that a city park or a particular place in cities all over Canada could or might exhibit in a place of honour a statue of John A Macdonald seems extremely unfair because it tends to give the message that what he did by setting up residential schools for Aboriginal children wasn’t all that bad and or that the other things he did erases the harm or pain of residential schools. We cannot ever forget the harm and the pain and leaving a statue up supposedly to honour John A. Macdonald is as far as I am concerned cruel and inhumane. Statues are usually put up to honour someone. Setting up the residential school system in Canada is definitely nothing that anyone should ever be awarded or honoured for. History can depict the good and honourable things that our first Prime Minister did but we sure don’t need a statue in constant view that would just cause pain as a constant reminder to anyone who is Aboriginal or anyone who cares and has compassion for the pain and complete lack of care the residential school system inflicted upon Aboriginal families.

Kristen Spring

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Kingston, ON

Sent from my iPad

From: [Bolognone,John](#)
To: [Barrett,Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes,Janet](#); [Hurdle,Lanie](#); [Agnew,Paige](#); [Campbell,Jennifer](#)
Subject: Fwd: In the name of healing
Date: June 14, 2021 12:24:25 PM

For acknowledgment / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thnx.

John Bolognone, City Clerk
City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613-546-4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

Begin forwarded message:

From: Deborah Hudson [REDACTED]
Date: June 14, 2021 at 12:07:42 PM EDT
To: "McLaren,Jeff" <jmclaren@cityofkingston.ca>, Mayor of Kingston
<mayor@cityofkingston.ca>, City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Cc: Dawn Downey [REDACTED]
Subject: In the name of healing

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I am contacting you to express my total support for the removal of the Sir John A. MacDonald statue in city park. While I anticipate there are many views on this issue, in the name of healing, the path forward is clear in terms of the statue - take it down. Indigenous people continue to suffer from and swallow our racist and traumatic actions and non-actions. Given the history of Sir John A's part in the residential schools and all of the ensuing trauma experienced by Indigenous children and youth, to leave his pedestaled statue erect, is flaunting a triggering symbol of stigma and hate and devaluing of Indigenous people. We have turned a blind eye. This is an opportunity to clearly remove the symbolism that perpetuates shameful beliefs and hopefully will move us in the direction of healing.

Other communities across Canada have already taken right and decisive action by removing statues. Why is Kingston lagging? How can we justify this non-action cloaked in the guise of consultation and the need for time?

Kingston is a symbolic thread to the "celebration" of Sir John A. and as such we have a potent opportunity here to send an important message to Canada. And more importantly, an important message to Indigenous people - that everyone matters.

Respectfully and hopefully submitted,

Deborah Hudson and Dawn Downey

From: [Ashley](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FWD: Sir John A MacDonald statue protest
Date: June 14, 2021 3:10:46 PM

The following request has been submitted to the City of Kingston.

Please respond directly to the customer with a BCC to cssrteam@cityofkingston.ca within 3 business days. Remember to include the SR reference number in the body of the email.

Service Request Reference #: 210614-000340
Service Request Type: General concern
Date Created: 06/14/2021 03:09 PM
Disposition: Forwarded to non-CRM department
Severity: Standard

Internal Comments:

Good afternoon,

Please see service request submitted on behalf of the customer regarding their thoughts after driving past the SJAM statue protest this afternoon.

Regards,
Ashley

Customer Comments:

Customer Name: SANDRA TOMALTY

Customer Contact: No Value

Customer Address: [REDACTED], KINGSTON, Ontario, [REDACTED]

Mobile Phone: [REDACTED]

Home Phone: No Value

Office Phone: No Value - Ext.

Subject:

Sir John A MacDonald statue protest

Customer By Phone (Ashley) (06/14/2021 03:09 PM)

Customer called to let City know they were driving past City Park and saw a group of people protesting at the SJAM statue today, customer stated they had a large red blanket over the statue. Customer hopes it can be removed, as customer stated it is disrespectful to our elders, that Canadians do not want this and that history can not be changed.

Incident Address: [REDACTED] KINGSTON, Ontario [REDACTED]

Escalated: No

From: [Ashley](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: FWD: Sir John A. MacDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 4:18:06 PM

The following request has been submitted to the City of Kingston.

Please respond directly to the customer with a BCC to cssrteam@cityofkingston.ca within 3 business days. Remember to include the SR reference number in the body of the email.

Service Request Reference #: 210614-000491
Service Request Type: General concern
Date Created: 06/14/2021 04:17 PM
Disposition: Forwarded to non-CRM department
Severity: Standard

Internal Comments:

Good afternoon,

Please see feedback from concerned citizen regarding the removal of the SJAM statue.

Regards,
Ashley

Customer Comments:

Customer Name: Concerned Citizen

Customer Contact: concernedcitizen@cityofkingston.ca

Customer Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario,

Mobile Phone: No Value

Home Phone: No Value

Office Phone: No Value - Ext.

Subject:

Sir John A. MacDonald statue

Customer By Phone (Ashley) (06/14/2021 04:17 PM)

Customer called to report that if the City of Kingston removes the SJAM statue they will stop paying their property taxes.

Incident Address: Kingston, Kingston, Ontario

Escalated: No

From: [Email Admin](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Email Admin](#)
Subject: Input on Sir John A. Macdonald legacy -- June 14, 2021
Date: June 14, 2021 3:03:54 PM

Monday, June 14, 2021.

To: Jennifer Campbell, City of Kingston Cultural Manager
From: Frank Dixon, Kingston resident
Ref: Input on Sir John A. Macdonald legacy

Hello Jennifer,

I hope you are doing well.

To start, I believe it is vitally important that the City of Kingston, and the multi-faceted Kingston community, take up this challenging question now.

The recent discovery of 215 bodies of young Indigenous children near Kamloops has shocked Canada and the world.

Among Canadian cities and districts, Kingston has arguably the strongest connection to former Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, who arrived in 1820 at age five, and represented the city in Parliament for nearly 50 years, including for most of his years as PM. He also served on Kingston City Council, and took leadership roles in the founding of Queen's University and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Macdonald has been portrayed by history as one of the greatest Canadian leaders, and, to be sure, he did make many very important accomplishments, such as leading the process which led to Confederation. and being the main champion on the building of the transcontinental railway.

Richard Gwyn, in his recent highly acclaimed two-volume biography of Macdonald, summed up his contributions thus: "No Macdonald, no Canada." I agree.

But, as we have been discovering for quite a few years now, Macdonald's legacy is much more complex than what the history books claim. His flaws in action and judgement are never more apparent than in his barbarous treatment of Indigenous people, whose lands were essentially appropriated for Europeans under very questionable circumstances, and whose culture and way of life were essentially annihilated in the process. This is genocide, plain and simple.

In the otherwise seemingly excellent treatment of Canadian history which I studied as a youth, nowhere was the devastating legacy of Indigenous peoples in what became Canada even mentioned, nor covered in anything resembling balanced and accurate portrayal. Students of my generation never knew -- until recent years, when, as adults, we have been painfully

learning the truth.

I have some central questions around accountability on this situation:

1) Did the proprietors of residential schools report to the Canadian government, on deaths and illnesses of Indigenous children under their care? This seems not to have been the case.

2) What should the accountability profile have been for these matters?

3) Were the churches which operated these schools funded by governments for this purpose?

4) When will the churches come forward with a clear and responsible explanation of their actions?

5) Could there be more discoveries?

My idea for the City Park statue of Macdonald is:

Leave the statue in place, but it must be joined by a balancing artwork of comparable size, which will explain the situation around Indigenous legacy connected to Macdonald. Until this companion work is created, by a thorough consultative process, the statue should remain shrouded, with an explanation of what is to take place.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Dixon

Williamsville district resident

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A Macdonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 3:35:52 PM

It is a travesty that the statue of John A Macdonald has remained in the City of Kingston as long as it has. Kingston is on traditional Indigenous land and the statue is an abhorrent reminder of Indigenous children being stolen from their families, abused, killed and buried and many never heard from again. Kingston needs to demonstrate they are actively combatting racism of Indigenous and racialized people and removing the statue of the person responsible for introducing residential schools and starving Indigenous peoples is just a start!

Sophia Harrison

Sent from my iPhone

Thoughts on Sir John A. Macdonald and his statue.

As with every human being ever born, Sir John A. Macdonald was neither perfect nor one-dimensional. He was a product of his contemporary environment and a man of, and in some respects, ahead of his time. He was instrumental in the creation of Canada. He was by no scale an inherently evil man nor was he a malign arch-proponent of wilful genocide; to claim that he was is both baseless in fact and wantonly counterproductive to the causes of truth and of reconciliation.

Seeking to employ Sir John - his name, his memory and his very effigy – as the singular focus for the virtual totality of all fault, responsibility, blame and grievances relating to a residential schools policy begun in New France in the 1600s and upheld and maintained by successive governments through to the late 1990s is evidently wrong. There is no disputing that Sir John had a role in many aspects of Canada's initial, varied and by today's standards often unacceptable policies relating to the Indigenous people living here. He did. He also had many more aspects to his politics, his character, his world-view and to his essential, central role in the creation of the country in which we all now live. Like all people everywhere, he was not merely one thing.

I do not seek to downplay or dismiss Sir John's numerous faults and errors – that serves no one. It is, however, a fool's errand to seek to judge individuals in history by the values of today. Historical context must play a critical role. To quote L.P. Hartley, the past is a different country; they do things differently there. Assimilation is a hated word today; in his day it was seen as the enlightened way of avoiding the otherwise inevitable, slow starvation and death of not only Indigenous culture but of the entire population.

It should go without saying, but let it be said nonetheless, that the abominable horrors suffered by far too many of those Indigenous children in the residential school system was and is an unjustifiable wrong. There are absolutely no mitigating factors then or now to excuse, explain or in any way justify years of physical, sexual and mental abuse. At the same time, there is no indication that the infliction of abuse was ever the intent, explicit or implicit, in the conception of the residential school system – either in the first instances in New France of the 1600s or in the later incarnations from the 1880s to the 1990s. The intent, clearly stated, was to assimilate Indigenous children into the European-Canadian dominant culture of the day. To seek to accomplish such a thing today – or even as recently as 1996 – is entirely unacceptable by today's standards, and this is a good thing for all concerned. In the context of the day, 150 years ago, assimilation was not the universally recognised taboo it is today. In his day, Sir John

was the beneficiary of a culture that viewed the world through the merits of empiricism and practicality and held high the values of improvement, virtue, and practical benefit of the individual and society as a whole. He envisaged the future of society in what is now Canada as comprising the best bits of what he believed to be the very best of civilisation in Europe. Grounded in the context of his day, he saw the circumstances into which Indigenous people were cornered, often literally, with traditional lands reduced to unsustainable reserves, isolated physically, culturally, linguistically, debarred from practicing their centuries-old ways of life by the realities of a burgeoning new pattern of “modern” society. To a mind educated in the tenets of the Enlightenment, it would be infinitely better to seek to bring the Indigenous People into the expanding Canadian project through assimilation and integration than it would have been to follow the only perceived alternative of doing nothing while unsustainable, unsupportable, isolated communities literally withered away under the combined burdens of starvation, disease and exclusion.

The 635 First Nations bands often portrayed today as a united, coherent super-community spanning the continent were, pre-European contact, spanned a broad range of diverse, peri-Iron Age cultures engaged in the full spectrum of interaction from benign indifference through intricate trade networks – including extensive human slavery - to actual genocide. History happened – the good, the bad and the ugly. Note that this is not in any way an attempt to engage in moral relativism. This is not “standpoint history”; this is chronological fact. Just as is the arrival in and colonisation of North America by Europeans and other non-Indigenous peoples since first contact. The modern country that is Canada today is also an historical fact. No amount of aspirational philosophising and longing for what “ought” to have happened if no one new entered into any of this continent’s lands over the last 15,000 years can be in any way useful to those living in the present day. It butters no parsnips and it affords no clean drinking water. All 38 million of us now living in Canada will, if we are to be able to find true reconciliation, need to learn about our shared past – *all of it* - and together find a path forward together.

There is a special kind of hubris at work in the demands to remove from sight anything and everything that may not be agreeable to someone. Erasure from history is a consistent tool of totalitarianism. This is the polar opposite of universal education – comprehensive, multi-faceted, nuanced education; addressing fully our shared history and often very different experiences thereof – for all of us, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians – must be a fundamental aspect of any path to truth and reconciliation. In the modern era, there is very little that can be “hidden” from an active, enquiring education system; we will all benefit immensely from coming to understand our complex, complicated, anything-but-simple history. We have too often failed as a

country to learn from individual and collective mistakes largely because *we have failed to learn our own history.*

Sir John was a human being and like all human beings can be expected to be answerable and responsible for his actions and inactions. He was many things. It is all but inarguable that he was indispensably vital in the founding of Canada. The question today, 130 years after his death, must be: how is he to be remembered? Will his memory be cast down on the sole basis of his certain involvement in a government policy that was subsequently maintained by successive Canadian governments right up to 1996 with egregious results perpetrated by generations of politicians, administrators, religious orders, school staff and others? Or will reason and reality carry the day, openly admitting that he had responsibility for all of the policies he enacted, that he was of his time, and that he also accomplished great and unprecedented things in bringing about the formation of this country we all now live in.

Sir John A Macdonald was a salient figure in the history of Canada. His accomplishments are many and varied. Among those must be counted his roles in the residential school system and in the other governmental policies having a bearing on the Indigenous Peoples of his day. He was not alone in these formal efforts to assimilate and integrate, but he was the Prime Minister and he must certainly bear some of the responsibility for his actions. That said, it is no less important that he be recognised for *all* of his accomplishments and that they be seen, taught and understood in context. Sir John was instrumental – vital – to the creation of Canada as a country; without him Canada as we know it would simply not exist. (This is not to suggest, for revisionist purposes, that everyone of European ancestry would otherwise have left the continent). Any number of alternative outcomes may be imagined but speculative history is best left to the fiction shelves. Canada, like all things created by humans, is certainly imperfect; we are and will remain a work in progress. There is no merit in incessant, relentless radical deconstructionism: Canada exists – it is up to all of us to ensure that we make it better. Removing a statue to the individual who bears the most responsibility for the founding of this country – the latest iteration of society on this continent - does no service to improving the lives of all who live in this great and wondrous land.

Stuart MacAulay

Kingston

From: [Marc S](#)
To: [Campbell, Jennifer](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 6:38:25 PM

This is a very strange moment in Canadian history. Emotions are running high and changes are being demanded for questionable reasons and with uncertain results. Here in Kingston, the Macdonald statue commemorates a local son who rose to great heights nationally. Kingston is right to commemorate someone who had such a significant impact on the country - indeed, who was the leading force in “making” the country. People and politicians are complex and few of us could stand up to the harsh light of public scrutiny, particular in a social media-driven world, in every single aspect of our characters and actions. And so with Macdonald. Clearly his policies towards the indigenous peoples of the country, although they were very much of his time and likely shared by most people, both then and for decades and decades after his death, are now viewed as a blot on his record and on Canadian history. Everyone today, First Nations and otherwise, wants a vastly improved relationship going forward and for the First Nations to experience the prosperity, health and happiness which has largely eluded them.

Locally, there have been many suggestions on how to move forward - to my mind, the best solution is to re-interpret the 1892 statue (very much a product of its time) with additional statuary or plaque reflecting a more complete history. This is an excellent opportunity to use the 19th century memorial as a teachable moment to incorporate what we now know to be a mixed legacy. I believe this has been done in the displays at Bellevue House. But the current emotional climate is calling for nothing less than the statue’s (and presumably, other city memorials to Macdonald and others (schools, roads and more) removal. The feelings that are running so high at the moment have been exacerbated by the horrific news coming out of Kamloops. But the removal of this statue would do nothing for this, and in fact would harm the discussion by removing something which might have helped to further discussion and reconciliation.

Add to history; don’t hide it.

Thank you,

Marc Shaw

From: [sharon.way](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); [Mayor+Council@cityofkingston.ca](#)
Subject: Please remove the Sir John A statue
Date: June 14, 2021 12:24:32 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mayor Paterson and City Council,

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Sharon Way-Brackenbury

From: [Mike Hipson](#)
To: [McLaren, Jeff](#); [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Subject: Please support removal of statue of John A. Macdonald
Date: June 14, 2021 2:00:37 PM

Dear Councillor Jeff McLaren and Mayor Brian Patterson,

My name is Mike Hipson and I live in the Strathcona Area. I am writing to urge that you please support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

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In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thanks, and I look forward to your reply,

Mike Hipson

From: [Joyce Dillon](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Re: Sir John A. Macdonald, etc..
Date: June 14, 2021 2:09:51 PM


Ms. Campbell:

I was told by email that I may express my thoughts on the issue of things related to Sir John A. and the First Nations.

- I believe any statues, buildings, streets, parks, etc. that have used the name Sir John A. Macdonald should not be changed. They are part of our history and to remove them or rename them will only deny our history but in the end it will not wipe it out. We must examine the situation and the decisions made at the time. You cannot look at these happenings through the eyes of today.
- Much has been discussed about the fact that Sir John A. speaking on behalf of Parliament stated that the First Nations would end up starving if the federal government did not support them. Certainly in what was the NWT - the Prairies - the Indians were largely nomadic largely dependent upon the buffalo to survive but the buffalo were close to extermination, the Indians were placed on reservations of land of their choosing on the assumption that they would become farmers. One has to remember that in the period that these treaties were being made, over 80% of Canadians were classified as living in rural areas. Most Canadians were making their living from farming. The ideal was that Indians would learn to farm. I think Macdonald and others realized that was going to be an immense and difficult shift for those who had been nomads and had little concept of private ownership.
- The current issue relates to the attempt to "educate the First Nations" so they could earn a living in what one would call the trades. It is my understanding that most First Nations did not have a written language and a written language would be necessary to help them merge into the rest of the Canadian community. Simply put I believe that it was the intent of the Canadian government to expect that the First Nations would learn either French or English and like all other immigrants that were coming to Canada, would make an effort to "fit in" with the community either as farmers or as workers in the growing urban community. Unfortunately, failures in the education system created havoc in the loss of culture and a high death rate among children in some of the residential schools. I wonder if anyone has done a study to determine what the death rate among First Nations children living in isolated communities would have been if these children had never been taken away?
- I believe that Canadians have a tendency to criticize ourselves too harshly. We need to look at what other countries have done in similar situations. We may not be perfect but I am quite sure that the way other countries have treated their subject peoples have been far worse than what we have done.

George Dillon

Former secondary school History teacher



From: [Stephanie Bringeland](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Removal of the Sir John A. Macdonald Statue
Date: June 14, 2021 4:25:48 PM

Hello,

I am a member of the Sydenham district in Kingston [REDACTED] I am quite literally looking at the statue of Sir John A from my bedroom window as I write this email. As a non-Indigenous community member, I do not have the emotional proximity to the issue as many of the Indigenous community members, but the genocidal formation of Canada is something that should not require personal experience to identify it as destructive and murderous. The recent discovery of hundreds of graves of children near residential schools has catalyzed many across the country to question the historical figures they have idolized and, quite literally, put on pedestals.

Every day that goes by is a missed opportunity to take action to remove the statue of a someone who perpetuated atrocities against the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Every day that goes by with the statue remaining is a message to the Indigenous community members that their voices do not matter, the government of Kingston does not value their pain and suffering, and the idea of truth and reconciliation is an empty promise.

I urge you to please support the removal of the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald. Make Kingston an example of inclusivity and true reconciliation.

Thank you,
Stephanie Bringeland

From: [Niki Kaloudas](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Remove SJA McDonald Statue from City Park Immediately
Date: June 14, 2021 12:27:43 PM

Dear esteemed City of Kingston administrator,

Please make it an urgent priority that the SJA McDonald statue in City Park be removed as soon as possible and replaced with a memorial to the children that were murdered in the Residential School System.

You may feel differently about this statue if it was a family member of yours who died of neglect in the Residential School system and was buried in an unmarked grave.

Please stop creating bureaucratic barriers to this removal and be on the right side of history. Mobilize your administration as soon as possible to have it removed.

I look forward to hearing back from you s soon as possible with a decision.

Niki Kaloudas



Niki Kaloudas (she/her/hers)

MA Candidate
Cultural Studies
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Telephone [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

Web www.queensu.ca/culturalstudies/home

[Land Acknowledgement](#) Queen's University is situated on the territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek.

Ne Queen's University e'tho nonwe nikanónhsote tsi nonwe ne Haudenosaunee tánon Anishinaabek tehatihsnónhsahere ne óhontsa.

Gimaakwe Gchi-gkinoomaagegamig atemagad Naadowe miinwaa Anishinaabe aking.

From: [Meg Gibson](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Revolution of the Heart: A Ceremonial Action
Date: June 14, 2021 9:54:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Mayor and City Officials,

My Name is Meg.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a monument to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Meg Gibson

From: [Pam Psutka](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A MacDonald statue
Date: June 14, 2021 10:11:45 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

My opinion. These are troubling times in Canada. The tearing down of statues and renaming of buildings must be addressed individually.

We in 2021 believe that all those who preceded the current generation must be judged by the current sensitivities and beliefs we have in 2021 not in the times in which they viewed the world. It was the time European & British dominance spread throughout the world. Rightly or wrongly. The British boarding school system was the model for education. Those who believed that education was way of future growth, did not plan that christian educators & care givers would be so harsh & abusive to children.

For all past figures in Canadian history, we must remember the great works they did to develop this country, We must also educate people about the methods that were used by victors & discuss how today they seem dated & brutal in their undertaking. To discard it all is not providing any clarity or thoughtful discussion.

No person in history is without flaws. So a primal need to strip away, cut down and destroy physical buildings/ statues fills an emotional or perhaps a mob mentality.

Does removing a statue meet true reconciliation? perhaps for some. Others may wish a more longlasting and true response. I disagree with removing the statue . It is a part of Canada worts & all. It sets a precedence...how far does this go back?. Really the royal family was built upon centuries of cruel power struggles.Religions of all failths have waged wars and much inhumanity to their fellow mankind. Indian practices involved torture & slavery to captives whether european or conflicting tribes. So what do we destroy , what do we keep. There is always a vocal component which would destroy it all.

Pam Psutka [REDACTED] Kingston

From: [Luke Kroeker](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John statue comment
Date: June 14, 2021 12:20:42 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To whom it may concern,

I strongly suggest at the very least removing the statue from its pedestal and putting it back to ground level surrounded by indigenous art or statues as they deem appropriate. Simply editing a plaque is NOT enough.

Thank you.
Luke Kroeker

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir john statue
Date: June 14, 2021 5:06:54 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi, I'm sorry to add to your inbox. This is my opinion about the sir john statue in city park; i feel that with the recent discovery of even more unmarked children's graves (and no doubt there will be more), it is setting a standard that genocide and deception are how we do things here in canada and we will continue to honour lies, racism, colonialism and genocide by letting this giant statue continue to stand where it is. It would be respectful to move the statue to the museum dedicated to prime minister Macdonald and change the park statue to a more accurate representation of Kingston's history. The location in city park could explain the genocide committed by settler leaders and how the prime minister choose to allow or direct these things to happen. Maybe this can be an opportunity to promote possible future positivity rather than focus on the negativity of the past. Acknowledgement of the negative as well as the positive should be in the museum. The park should be a positive place for everyone to enjoy. Get that terrible reminder of a horrible history out of the park. Thanks for listening to my rant ☺

Andrea

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John's statue
Date: June 14, 2021 4:58:12 PM

I am hoping for a respectful solution, whatever it is. I also like what my son said: 'why do we need statues of people anyway?' - good point. - Since we're all equal, perhaps we can stop making and erecting statues. I don't mind animals and other representations of nature though. Everyone seems to love the Gaskin lion, as well as so many other animal sculptures (the Wawa goose, etc.). Perhaps we could let our Indigenous people here choose a sculpture to replace Sir John A. if he is carefully brought down from his pedestal.

Gisele Pharand



Scanned by [McAfee](#) and confirmed virus-free.

From: [Georgiana Stewart](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: time for Sir John A to step down
Date: June 14, 2021 12:22:17 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Statues are erected to force people into looking up to someone. If we didn't already have a statue of Sir John A. MacDonald, would we put one up now? Probably not. We now know better, so let's do better and take it down.

Sincerely,

Rev. Georgiana Stewart+
Priest-in-charge
St. Paul's Anglican Church, Sydenham, Ontario

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

~Edmund Everett Hale

From: [Audrey Helmstaedt](#)
To: [Woodland, Heather](#)
Subject: An opinion for Special Council meeting
Date: June 15, 2021 11:38:51 AM

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Here are some thoughts for the meeting tomorrow evening.

A submission for the Special Council meeting Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Kudos to the City and the members of the working group considering the question of how to revise the plaques on the statue of Sir John A Macdonald and the Pride of Sir John A train locomotive. The recent discovery of 215 unmarked graves at a Residential School in Kamloops, B.C. has demanded attention to the question, “ What to do with the statue? I do feel that its presence is like a thorn in the side of every indigenous person, a reminder of the horrible injustice inflicted on them and wide disrespect of their culture. I think we can rewrite history by telling the truth. It is “Truth and Reconciliation” that we are seeking with our First Nations people so lets remove Sir John A’s statue, find a suitable respectful place for him and install accurate plaques that tell the story of our early beginnings as a country. I do not feel it is necessary to remove the name of our Father of Confederation from every building, street or avenue etc. We cannot remove him from our past, but we can take his statue out of the present.

Thank you for the opportunity of speaking to this issue.

Audrey Helmstaedt

From: [Thomas Wright](#)
To: [Hutchison,Rob](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: City Park John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 15, 2021 11:33:15 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Councilor Hutchison and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Thomas Wright

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thomas Wright

From: [Shraddha Timalsina](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Council Meeting regarding Sir John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 15, 2021 9:23:23 AM

To whom it may concern

My name is Shraddha Timalsina. I am writing this email to urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Thank you
Shraddha Timalsina

From: [Paige Brackenbury](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Do Better
Date: June 15, 2021 9:24:12 AM

Hello Councillor X and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Paige Brackenbury.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

In Unity,

Paige

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: FW: Currently not a proud Canadian
Date: June 15, 2021 10:48:45 AM

For acknowledgment / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thank you.

John Bolognone
City Clerk
City Clerk's Department

City of Kingston
City Hall
216 Ontario Street, Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613 546 4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

-----Original Message-----

From: Desiree Simpson [REDACTED]
Sent: June 15, 2021 9:25 AM
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Currently not a proud Canadian

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello City clerk

My Name is Desiree Simpson

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely not a proud Canadian at the moment.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Fwd: Do not move Sir John A
Date: June 15, 2021 9:50:17 AM

For acknowledgment / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thank you.

John Bolognone, City Clerk
City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613-546-4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lubomyr Luciuk [REDACTED]
Date: June 15, 2021 at 9:15:13 AM EDT
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>
Cc: Mayor of Kingston <mayor@cityofkingston.ca>, mayorandcouncil@cityofkingston.ca
Subject: Do not move Sir John A

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

15 June 2021

Dear Clerk - City of Kingston:

I am against the removal of the Sir John A Macdonald statue from its current location. As a taxpayer and Kingstonian, born and raised, I want to make it clear that I find the behaviour of those who have self-appointed themselves to be the arbitrators of 'historical truth' to be offensive, unrepresentative, and disruptive. City Council should not be stampeded into catering to this minority of 'activists.'

Please convey my views to the members of the City Council.

Thank you.

Yours,

Lubomyr Luciuk, PhD

[REDACTED]
Kingston, Ontario, [REDACTED]



From: [Morgan Oddie](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Fwd: SJAM Statue
Date: June 15, 2021 11:26:35 AM

My Name is Morgan Oddie. I moved to the city in 2008 to attend Queen's University and have called it my home ever since. However, I am an uninvited guest on these territories.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

In Solidarity,

Morgan Oddie, MIR, PhD
Pronouns: she/they

Kingston/Katarokwi is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory.

From: [sarah b wiseman](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [City Clerk](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Subject: Honouring Indigenous Histories
Date: June 15, 2021 9:26:41 AM

Dear Mayor Paterson,

My name is Sarah Wiseman. I am writing to ask that you take a stand and support a decision to remove the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park as soon as possible. The discovery of the unmarked graves of 215 indigenous children at a Canadian Residential School has made it clear to me and I hope you, that now is the time!

Kingston can join other cities and institutions across the country who are stepping up to the challenging task of facing the hard truths about their history. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims. Sir John A, held to great esteem by so many, is the architect of the damaging residential school system. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day which continue to impact indigenous children negatively.

Removing the statue will be a meaningful statement and a way for Kingston/Katarokwi to honour the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

Thank you in advance.

-Sarah Wiseman

From: [Yasmine Djerbal](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [Neill Jim](#)
Subject: J.A. Macdonald statue to be removed and replaced
Date: June 15, 2021 9:16:46 AM

Hello Councillor Neil and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Yasmine Djerbal, and I am a resident of your district.

I trust that you will support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the *Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action* and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

From: [William Hughes](#)
To: [Hutchison,Rob](#)
Cc: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: John A MacDonald Statue: Now
Date: June 15, 2021 8:03:58 AM

Mr Hutchison

I am relieved and encouraged to learn of the Working Group's recommendation to remove the statue.

It is now up to you and the rest of City Council to do the right thing — vote to remove the statue.

Voting to remove the statue is not a vote to deny, remove, ignore or erase history.

Voting to remove the statue is a vote for the future. It is vote to acknowledge history. A vote to symbolize that you value **everyone** in this community.

Please vote for the future of our community — vote to remove the statue.

Thank you

Bill Hughes

Settler and Resident of District 11, King's Town

On traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory, Kingston

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **William Hughes** [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Jun 14, 2021 at 8:01 AM
Subject: John A MacDonald Statue Must Go
To: <ourhistories@cityofkingston.ca>
CC: <mayor@cityofkingston.ca>, <rhutchison@cityofkingston.ca>

Taking down a statue does not erase, deny or otherwise alter history. This statement misses the point.

A statue is a symbol for a community to unite around -- an idea, belief, understanding or experience. Often, statues are of people. These people are selected because the community feels they are a representative symbol.

Core to the idea of a statue is that they are costly to erect and therefore only done with important symbols. They are often based in some history but their purpose is not truly to teach history but to inform the future. They are about what we want our future to be.

The statue of John A MacDonald in City Park is not representative of what I want for the future of this Community.

The City of Kingston's stated Mission:

To enhance the quality of life for present and future generations by providing progressive, professional services and leadership that reflects the needs of all those who work, live, visit, or play in the City of Kingston.

This status is not progressive and it does not reflect the needs of all in Kingston.

John A MacDonald was an architect of the residential school system and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous peoples.

This does not symbolize or reflect the future I want for our Community.

The history of John A MacDonald's deeds will not be erased by removing the statue. The removal of the statue will symbolize a future in which we as a community value all members of our community.

The statue needs to be removed.

Bill Hughes
Settler and Resident of District 11, King's Town
Kingston

From: [Charles Last](#)
To: [Neill, Jim](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: On Sir JAM
Date: June 15, 2021 9:26:31 AM

Hello Mr. Jim Neill, Mayor Patterson, and others,

This is not a template email. I'm writing with my own thoughts and words on the subject and I would appreciate if you took a moment to really read them and take them in.

I'm writing with concerns about the Sir John A Macdonald statue in City Park.

As you know, there are a number of caring folks and wonderful people keeping a fire at the base of this statue these past few days. And as you know, the already difficult history of Sir John A has been further explicated as we uncover the bodies of many children at the residential schools he helped to create.

We know Sir John A had a vision for this country, and we know that it was a racist vision. We know he accomplished many things we are currently grateful for in his position as well. No history is uncomplicated and I know there were efforts in place to keep the statue and bring a more complicated vision to it with an additional plaque.

I think we can all agree that we are not apt to forget this man and his nuances. And I think it's time to find new things, new visions, new heroes to celebrate. Removing Sir John A from his revered pedestal is the first step in seeing ourselves and our future more completely and more honestly.

I grew up a Canadian Army brat. I saw a lot of this great landscape in my childhood, and even more of it tree planting and working as a young adult. It is a land that has been torn asunder by many of the ideas and values we white settlers have centred for generations. But amongst the wreckage are so many beautiful, talented, hard-working individuals who have a different vision. One of diversity, care, inclusion, and accountability to our land and to each other.

There are so many heroes who deserve a chance to be on a pedestal. Put Ole Sir John away in a museum, where we can remember him with all the complexity he and his victims deserve.

Please support the removal of the Sir John A Macdonald statue from City Park.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

charles last

From: [Sasha](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Subject: On the subject of Sir John A MacDonald,
Date: June 15, 2021 9:45:04 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello city council members and the Mayor of Kingston.

My Name is Alexandria Hill,

I urge for the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday.

This man is our first Prime Minister of Canada but with this title comes a dark shadow. To create a more holistic and inclusive history we must first acknowledge this shadow or dark chapter as our current Prime Minister calls it. This chapter will recur if we cannot face the entire truth of how this country was founded.

There are two sides to view history. He was the first Prime Minister of the place we call home, and he did act in reprehensible ways. We need to hold space for both.

In the time it takes for the decision of where to place him permanently I believe it is the right decision to remove him from his pedestal and move him to storage. And continue the conversation of a permanent solution with Indigenous Communities and leaders.

As an indigenous woman it is a reminder of how this country treated my ancestors. How this country was built on their starving, killing, and stealing of culture.


I don't want to see a man who instilled and perpetuated these old beliefs on a modern day pedestal. His monument had it's time, and now it's time for us to look forward.

I have also included an image of a small painting I did on the subject. I hope it can speak louder than what I've written.



Many thanks to all of you for what you do for our city,

-Alexandria

From: 
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Please remove statue
Date: June 15, 2021 10:06:37 AM

Hello,

Please remove statue immediately and put into storage.

Not only is it the right thing to do, but it would show a tremendous amount of respect for the grieving Indigenous people in this area and beyond who are mourning the loss of children in Residential Schools; of which John A Macdonald was an architect.

We need to do better.

Thank you,

Kathryn

From: [Alise Hansen](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [Osanic.Lisa](#)
Subject: Removal of Sir John A statue
Date: June 15, 2021 11:36:44 AM

Hello,

My name is Alise Hansen and I am writing you to urge that you vote in favour of removal of the Sir John A Macdonald statue at the special meeting this Wednesday.

Indigenous members and settler allies of this community have demonstrated the desire to remove this statue for years, and in light of recent events concerning the discovery of hundreds of children at the residential schools Sir John A is responsible for it seems like the only acceptable decision from the city to signify you care about reconciliation efforts.

We should be putting on display the real history of Canada, instead of glorifying a person responsible for genocide, which is why I also urge you to replace it with an Indigenous made representation of the legacy of trauma that resulted from residential schools.

Thank you for your time.

From: [Jessie Mundell](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Remove Sir John A Immediately
Date: June 15, 2021 9:55:36 AM

Hello Mayor Bryan Paterson,

My Name is Jessie Mundell.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space.

Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic.

Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Looking forward to your swift action.

Jessie Mundell (she/her)
Owner, JMG Fitness Consulting
Website: jessiemundell.com
Professional Kinesiologist and Perinatal Fitness Coach



From: [Jane Kirby](#)
To: [Neill, Jim](#); [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Respect Indigenous peoples, remove the statue
Date: June 15, 2021 8:19:59 AM

Hello Councillor Neill and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Jane Kirby, and I'm writing to ask for the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

I have a two-year-old, whom I am trying to teach ethics and the difference between right and wrong. When I walk by the statue in City Park with him, on our way to the splash pad, I often wonder how I am going to explain to him that someone who did so much wrong -- someone who laid the foundation for colonial genocide in this country, someone who starved Indigenous people, someone who was the architect of the residential school system that caused the deaths of hundreds if not thousands of children -- is honoured with a statue, street names, and signs. I wonder how I am going to explain to him that so many people are resisting removing these monuments, despite the requests of Indigenous community members that they do so.

Some people argue that removing the statue amounts to erasing history. Apart from the fact that this is patently false, and that the statue itself is erasing the violent history of Sir John A and his policies, I think it is important to say that I am more concerned about moving forward towards reconciliation, and, ultimately, decolonization, than I am about preserving a violent colonial history. These monuments speak volumes to the younger generation about what kinds of people, and actions, are valued in society. I'd like to teach my son a different lesson -- one of respect for Indigenous peoples past and present, one of accountability, and one of good relationship with the people with whom we share this land.

Please support the local Indigenous community's call to remove this monument, and to replace it with a memorial for the survivors and victims of residential schools. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Jane Kirby

██████████. Kingston ON, ██████████

--

Jane Kirby
she/her/hers
BAH, MA
██████████

From: [Kaitlyn Patterson](#)
To: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A MacDonald Statue Removal
Date: June 15, 2021 10:40:13 AM

Boozhoo Mayor Brian Patterson,

My name is Kaitlyn Patterson and I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the city to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Chi miigwetch,

S. Kaitlyn Patterson, PhD(c), RD
Teaching Fellow & PhD Candidate in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
Research Assistant in the School of Rehabilitation Therapy
Queen's University, Kingston, ON

Queen's University is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples.

From: [Erin Foley](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [ourhistories](#)
Subject: Sir John A MacDonald Statue
Date: June 15, 2021 10:25:57 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

My Name is Erin Foley.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system. In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Erin Foley

From: [Phillip Brown](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Cc: [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Robert A. Wood](#); [REDACTED]; [Osanic, Lisa](#); [Neill, Jim](#); [Holland, Mary Rita](#); [Stroud, Peter](#); [McLaren, Jeff](#); [Chapelle, Simon](#); [Hill, Wayne](#); [Oosterhof, Gary](#); [Doherty, Bridget](#); [Kiley, Robert](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#)
Subject: SJA Statue
Date: June 15, 2021 10:08:59 AM

I wanted to share some thoughts on a very delicate but important decision we will make as a community.

My concerns about the worst of our history run deep within me for fear that we will fail to look our ugly past in the eye to be reminded and learn from it.

As we often celebrate Canada's greatness we must also be accountable, feel shame, mourn our darkest moments and avoid repeating them.

I am reminded of an outdoor exhibition in Boston where one literally walks through an immersive war exhibit. It is powerful, painful, challenging and illuminating all at once.

I think that statue of SJA should stay and act as a centre piece in City Park to begin the creation of educational installments which tell our Canadian story in all its glory and ugliness.

The statue could remain covered as a symbol of our grief and until the first educational installation is placed.

Let's face the truth, learn from it ourselves and teach our young people about the mistakes we made. It is that story that makes us who we are as a Country and allows us to plan a path forward deeply imbedded with the knowledge of where we went so wrong and how we can do better.

As Canada's first capital we are in an ideal position to tell the entire Canadian story, bad and good, and hope to heal so many deep wounds we have caused since our country began.

Phillip Brown

From: [Marianne Clipsham](#)
To: [Holland, Mary Rita](#); [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Special Council Meeting and Working Group regarding the Sir John A MacDonald
Date: June 15, 2021 9:33:28 AM

Hello Councillor Holland and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Marianne Clipsham.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

Sir John A. embodies the genocide against Indigenous people here in Kingston and across Turtle Island when he is put upon a pedestal in a visible public space. Macdonald was the architect of the country's residential school system, and supported policies aimed towards displacing, starving and eradicating Indigenous nations. His brutal policies loom and influence current Canadian politics to this day. The legacy of Residential Schools continues into the present. A staggeringly large number of Indigenous children are still being stolen from their families and put into a system of badly regulated foster and group homes.

We are calling on the City to respect Indigenous community members by committing to removing the statue and honoring the lives of children and families impacted by the residential school system.

In the Your Stories Our Histories: What We Heard report prepared by The First Peoples Group there was a call for three kinds of action: Symbolic, Substantive and Systemic. Let the removal of the Sir John A. statue serve as an opportunity to make meaningful Symbolic change in how Kingston/Katorokwi represents its history.

Sincerely,

Marianne Clipsham

From: [Nancy Jones](#)
To: [ourhistories](#)
Subject: statue
Date: June 15, 2021 9:11:13 AM

Please add my name to those asking the city to take it down. It's just too painful.

Nancy Jones

[REDACTED]
Kingston ON [REDACTED]

From: [Sadiqa Khan](#)
To: [ourhistories](#); [Mayor of Kingston](#); [Hutchison,Rob](#)
Subject: support of Revolution of the Heart
Date: June 15, 2021 11:54:35 AM

Hello Councillor Hutchison and Mayor Paterson,

My Name is Sadiqa Khan.

I urge you to support the removal of the Sir John A MacDonald Statue from City Park in the upcoming special city council meeting on Wednesday. As per the demands of the Revolution of the Heart Ceremonial Action and Indigenous community members, the statue should be removed and replaced with a memorial to residential school survivors and victims.

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dr. Sadiqa Khan

From: [Bolognone, John](#)
To: [Barrett, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Jaynes, Janet](#); [Hurdle, Lanie](#); [Agnew, Paige](#); [Campbell, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Fwd: Removal of the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald
Date: June 15, 2021 1:21:16 PM

For acknowledgment / tabling and distribution / agenda. Thanks.

John Bolognone, City Clerk
City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3
613-546-4291 ext. 1247
jbolognone@cityofkingston.ca

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: June 15, 2021 at 10:59:10 AM EDT
To: mayorandcouncil@cityofkingston.ca
Cc: Mayor of Kingston <mayor@cityofkingston.ca>, City Clerk <CityClerk@cityofkingston.ca>, "Boehme, Ryan N." <rboehme@cityofkingston.ca>
Subject: Removal of the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Sirs and Madams:

I understand that Kingston City Council will shortly be voting on whether to remove the statue of Sir John A. MacDonald from its current position.

I strongly encourage you to leave the statue where it is and learn to be proud of a successful man who fought overwhelming odds to make Canada a country.

Sir John A. built Canada at a critical time, when Quebec was a fractious state, when BC was trying to decide whether to join the United States, when Catholic and Protestant politics was threatening to tear the new country apart and when Canada desperately needed a strong leader. As far as charges of racism are concerned, I note that the US underground railroad ended in Canada, with escaped slaves offered full rights when they arrived. Sir John A. was Prime Minister during much of this time. He seems to have welcomed black immigrants.

We are not a Republic as is the US largely because of MacDonald's dedication to English common law and the Westminster Parliament system. We don't have the foolishness that we have seen south of us thanks to Sir John.

I am not aware of aboriginal leaders contributing in the same way. Not to denigrate their society, but they do not have the right to tell the rest of the country how we

should have built Canada. If they wish to be part of our future, they should do so in a positive way. Not by attacking those who someone managed to pull the deeply troubled parts of this vast land together and to ensure that it stayed that way throughout multiple decades.

Be proud that you are part of Kingston. Be proud of our heritage.

If History and Innovation really do co-exist here, then please acknowledge history. Do not be swayed by those who have no understanding of it.

Ian Baines



Kingston



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com

From the fire

Some say it was 1997 when the last residential school's doors closed in Canada

And here we are today

Who within that time deserves to be put upon a pedestal or stuck within a frame

What are we trying to prove or hide putting Sir John A. away

The horrors and the good he did

The path obscured by pain

Unless we lived it, we do not know

The depths of sorrow's reigns

Remember not to forget

the truth, no greed the pain.

A higher standard some set themselves

And yet reality remains

followers enact the deeds

with no justice to proclaim.

From water we are broken

The air will take us there

Mother Earth with open arms is showing her despair

Trying to succeed in life

Vainglory could ensue

Arise my fellow humans

We have a lot to do.

Yours truly,

Wendy Erickson-Gray

Kingston, ON