



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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### **There is No Reconciliation Without Truth: MKO Disappointed by New Minister of Reconciliation and Northern Relations**

**Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) was disappointed to witness the first public event in which Dr. Alan Lagimodiere was announced as the Minister of Reconciliation and Indigenous Relations for Manitoba. During this morning's media event, Mr. Lagimodiere made unacceptable remarks about the intentions about residential schools in Canada.

"I find it appalling and reprehensible for the new Minister of Reconciliation and Northern Relations to misrepresent the intent of residential schools. It has been proven beyond a shadow of a doubt by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that the intent of the institutions was that of 'cultural genocide' and to 'kill the Indian in the child,'" shared **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**.

The *TRC's Summary of the Final Report* said:

*"Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children was an education system in name only for much of its existence. These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture—the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society... Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one. Virtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered."*  
(*TRC Summary of the Final Report, 2015, v-vi*)

"It is shameful the comments from this new Minister and the Premier serve to make light of the deaths of the thousands of children that have resulted from these institutions and are now just being discovered," stated Grand Chief Settee. "The ignorant views and comments being shared by these elected officials only harm efforts at reconciliation in Manitoba. Any progress at reconciliation has been set back and may be impossible while this government is in power. This is truly unfortunate as we continue to hear from many non-Indigenous people that they stand with us as we deal with the ongoing news of unmarked graves being uncovered at residential schools throughout the country."

"Minister Lagimodiere suggested reporters need to find the truth about residential schools. In

fact, it is our view that both the Minister and the Premier need much more education on residential schools to fully comprehend the documented proof of the genocidal intent of these institutions,” said Grand Chief Settee. “These schools are not something that happened long ago in the distant past and their effects continue to reverberate into our present and future generations. We can only truly begin to address these issues together by understanding the truth of what happened to generations of Indigenous people throughout Canada due to the deadly residential school system.”

“It is incomprehensible that a Minister and the Premier of Manitoba are denying what has been acknowledged by our own national government, the Government of Canada, through a formal apology,” stated Grand Chief Settee. “The sudden resignation and departure of Eileen Clarke, one of the most respected Ministers in Manitoba’s government, should send a strong message to both this government and the public that they are not on the path to achieving reconciliation. The first step to reconciliation is truth—and it’s essential that the Premier and his Ministers first acknowledge the truth of the genocidal intent of residential schools in Canada.”

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