

The B.C. government believes that a rich multicultural society helps nurture acceptance, understanding and mutual respect.

Cultural diversity, increased participation and engagement by all cultures are vitally important to create a strong and vibrant social and economic future for British Columbia.

 Teresa Wat - Minister of International Trade and Minister Responsible for the for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism ----- Teresa Wat -

**ADDRESS by Nagwa Yel Wa ~ Michael F. Harris,
 of The Gitxsan Nation.**

**To the : The Government of British Columbia, consultation process to
 discuss the wording for a formal apology to B.C.'s Chinese
 Community for historical wrongs.**

Simgegyat, Sigi dim Hanaack, ganhl, Guba wilsa tuu

My Spirit Name is ~~ Nagwa yel wa ~ He Who Walks Far
 I am of The **Gitxsan Nation.**

**I give thanks to the Coast Salish Peoples, The Semiahmoo,
 The Tsawwassen, The Musqueam, The Squamish, and any other Nation
 I have possibly missed.....**

**For the permission to do work here on their territory ...
 I Raise Hands To Them**

**I have come here today, at the Invitation of Mr. Bill Chu,
 Chair person of the Canadians for Reconciliation Society
 to speak on the:**

**The Government of British Columbia, consultation process to
 discuss the wording for a formal apology to
 B.C.'s Chinese Community for historical wrongs.**

Questions that first came to mind include the following ..

I believe they need to be addressed sufficiently, to satisfy all
 Chinese Community Members, any and all Government Personnel,
 and finally The Mainstream Peoples.

They include but are not limited to:

**#1) I have not heard about the government consulting the
 Non-Chinese Public, with respect to its intention
 to apologize to the Chinese community**

Question ? Where did they get the mandate to apologize?

#2) I have not heard about the government educating the Non-Chinese public, Regarding the specific reasons why the government is offering such !
i.e. the history of BC government discriminatory legislations against Chinese.

Question ? A) So how come they wait till January 7 before posting a more detailed history on an obscure website?

and

B) Do they expect public to even know the existence of that website?

#3) The Indigenous Population who suffered an even worse discriminatory treatment in BC is not made aware of this apology.

Question ? A) Why are the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation not informing us?

B) Why are many Non-Chinese hearing about this only through Mr. Bill Chu?

#4) From My Perspective, the uselessness of an Apology towards The First Nations People,
(e.g. even with the TRC),
it is business as usual
as to how Indigenous People are exploited and dispossessed in BC.
Question ? So what is the difference in the sincerity of the government in this case?

#5) To be constructive, I suggest the Government,
A) follow our example in communicating history to all people,
B) by taking hundreds of People, to study tours,
C) by speaking to high school students,
D) by being sincere, open, honest
and dedicate proper and all resources at it's disposal,
to properly effectively share all that has taken place
from the beginning of First Contact to the current time.
E) Open advertisement, in all avenues of News Agencies and Business', as to the business at hand,
of preparing, a Proper, honest, open, Meaningful Apology
and Following Support Programs of Healing,
to all of The Chinese Community
and the Mainstream for a complete melding of
Healing on all sides,
for the Reconciliation to be sucessful and complete.

(PAUSE) Look around room !

We live in a time of great change... a time which appears and reappears in the prophecies of many Aboriginal cultures from all over the world.

The world is in decay, the systems man has built and valued for so long are falling apart...

this is the time of the **7th Fire**.

"It is at this time that the Light Skinned race will be given a choice between two roads.

If they choose the right road,

then the Seventh Fire will light the **Eighth and final Fire**, an eternal Fire of peace, love, brotherhood & sisterhood.

This Prophecy reveals a metaphysical truth

which has been waiting since the beginning of time for humankind, to evolve the wisdom to see

and embrace it as a way of life.

Wise ones from all nations, have tried to share this knowledge, but until now we were not ready.

I believe it has begun, we have past a tipping point,

with each subsequent generation we are destine to become, Warriors of the Rainbow.

And ultimately the 8th Fire will reign down on the land with love, brotherhood and healing.

Compassion over greed ... choosing love over fear.

We must be the change, we want to see in the world,

if we are to become the **Warriors of the Rainbow**.

(Pause) Look around the room

As I gave thought to the past and all the injustices to the Chinese and The First Nations within British Columbia and Canada,

I imagined the pleading faces of a Two races of People

who would never get justice for those crimes,

although the evidence of their spilled blood is passed down by stories and even in official documents at the time.

Today, there are many site's that are unmarked !

Many if not Most,

British Columbians and Canadians, are blind to the crimes that occurred through out the land,

Do you know the ground you walk on?

Would we treat the massacre site of any other people this way?

Would we forget so easily ?

First Nations peoples mourn the loss of land, of their children,
of their wages, of their remains.

They mourn the loss of control over their own future.

The Non- Indigenous People may want us to "get over it",
to stop being so "sensitive".

But this is not practical or achievable..

Much as it is NOT ! to the Chinese Community !

until proper RECONCILIATION TAKES PLACE.

For both sides equally.

I am reminded that many countries around the world
have attempted to close painful chapters of history,
with such commissions and with apologies.

Since the Native Apology, much has been said
and written about that apology:

Did it go far enough? Too little too late? What's next?

**That is something, I am afraid only educated,
wealthy white men in positions of power can decide.**

While much has happened in the name of the Apology over that time,
there remains deep frustration that the lives and the prospects,
for participation of most Aboriginal People, have not improved.

**Much remains to be done to fulfill the obligations,
implied in the Prime Minister's speech.**

We must begin the healing now.

We must live as flesh, ruled by spirit, choosing completeness.

Idle No More, is not a threat to our way of life,
it is our best hope for the future.

When Natives are finally given an equal place, at the negotiating table,

The Government will be ready to learn, what We have to teach.

The Government will finally listen to the wisdom from Our past,
and create from that,

the balanced future we need.

Honestly ! There are no words that can be said,

to justify what the governments has done
to our Chinese and Native People's.
There is no amount of money !
That Government can give us
that will make this all right !
Forgiveness cannot be bought !
What has happened in residential schools has affected many,
for generations through to today.
I pray that God gives the Governments the justice
and insight they deserve,
so that we all may move forward.

Reconciliation is: **Giving the Land back to the rightful owners,
allowing First Nation People to govern ourselves.
Reconciliation is having faith in Aboriginal people,
to sustain ourselves in our own traditional ways.**

"I **pray** that the government would open Reconciliation Healing Centers,
and fully fund giving the people the material's to bring the
Heartbeats, Regalia, Sweatlodge's and many more Sacred Ceremonies,
back to All First Nations,
on Reservations and in the Urban First Nations centres.

These healing centers should focus on empowering them
to being a society of support and love within all the communities

Help those who are institutionalized and bring back our rich heritage,
with hands on learning centers for trades to better our economy and motherearth. ..

Reconcile the people who are in foster care, to learn their culture and worth ..
This is OUR prayer....." Amen.

To continue.....

To heal, many issues must be addressed.
This is important, to draw out truth,
and then real reconciliation can begin to happen.
A slow and painful process,
but in time the healing does take place,
and we can move forward.
All this is real to those who lived it

and it is wrong to tell them to get over it.
We have to get on it,
in order to prevent this happening to our grandchildren and their children.
Both for the Chinese and Native People's

I have been told by Mainstream people the following:
**Reconciliation to me (a non-First Nations) means firstly,
the government telling the TRUTH about our history,
including the tragedy of residential schools, colonization,
and including this (real) history in the education system.
Let History be told by those who lived it!
Truth and Education will end stereotypes
and racism and allow us to move forward in unity.**

The Chinese Community was served by the First Nations
when The Chinese were being improperly fed, housed, healed,
paid and positively embraced,
by the Canadian Business' and Governments through out
Canadian History.

There was a typical response by First Nations
to those that needed help to survive in Canada.

This included The Chinese, English, French, Hawaiian, Russian, Scottish,
Irish, Dutch and many more People of far away places.

The Chinese and First Nations have continued the support of each other
in the past through to current times, in so many various ways.

We have marched together in Chinese Parades, In First Nation Parades,
we have gathered foods for the Chinese,
as The Chinese Have recently gathered foods for First Nation Communities
these past few years , as the Fish have been depleted
and the First Nation People are in dire straits.

Even with Government knowing this,
the First Nations were and are starving.

The Chinese and First Nations share information to support each other ,
when dealing with Government and Common Enterprise.

**Both Communities ask for the Truth of The Historical Actions
by Governments, Churches, and Business'.**

These atrocities have been white washed !

**They are not shared with the Mainstream People,
which perpetuates the Racism AND lack of support,
for Proper Healing, Stabilization of Chinese and First Nations Communities ,
which by extention, effects the negativity in all aspects
of Canadian Government the Business Communities**

and the General Population.

-----**(PAUSE) LOOK AT THE PEOPLE**-----

I know that mere words can not undo the past !

We can't ! Thats the whole point !

So one way or the other,

we have to learn to be honest with ourselves

and our words,

in giving apologies.

I hope that the real people who speak for others,

on both sides are honest and sincere.

~~~ **But I don't think they are at times** ~~~~.

I just know I am truly sorry, for all that has taken place

for both The Chinese and The First Nations Communities....

and if I had been born during the most difficult times,

I would have been one of the people

who would have stood up

for basic human rights, of another,

as I do at this time of my life

and as I always have...

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In closing, I say,

Ha'a m'ii yaa for listening to my words.

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