

Forum Summary Apology for Historical Wrongs Against Chinese British Columbians Consultation Forum Vancouver, BC

Sunday, January 12, 2014

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver
50 E Pender St., Vancouver, BC V6A 3V6



Lead: Honourable Teresa Wat, Minister of International Trade
and Minister Responsible for the Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

MC's: Jun Ing, vice-president, Vancouver Chinese Benevolent Association and
Fanny Zhou, board member, Vancouver Chinese Benevolent Association

Facilitator: Wei Shao, Denton

Attendance: Approximately 550 people

Agenda

1. Jun Ing and Fanny Zhou – Welcome and Opening Remarks
2. Minister Teresa Wat – Opening Remarks
3. Jun Ing and Fanny Zhou - Forum procedures
4. Wei Shao and Emily Yun – Facilitation Process
5. Comments from community members
6. Jun Ing – Closing Remarks
7. Minister Teresa Wat – Closing Remarks

Jun Ing Opening Remarks

Everyone was welcomed and attendees were thanked for attending the first forum of 2014, the 3rd in the series.

Mr. Ing noted that it was fitting that the forum was hosted by the Chinese Benevolent Society which was founded in 1906 and has a mandate to support the Chinese community and play a leadership role advocating against discrimination. The Society is against many discriminatory acts including the Exclusion Act that denied Chinese people the right to vote, and excluded them from employment and land ownership.

On October 29, 2013, the BC government announced the consultation process and how British Columbians could use these consultation forms as an opportunity to share their thoughts on what the apology should say, how it should be said, and to whom it should be delivered. The input received from the 7 community forums will guide the format and content of the apology. The consultation process is being led by Minister Teresa Watt of the Ministry of International Trade and Multiculturalism who was appointed to Cabinet on June 10, 2013.

Mr. Ing introduced Minister Wat and invited her to the podium.

Fanny Zhou ~ Opening Remarks (repeated in Chinese)

Minister Wat thanked Mr. Ing and Ms. Zhou for their kind introductions; acknowledged the hard work of the Chinese Cultural Center and CBA to arrange this, as well as the many volunteers from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. She expressed gratitude to colleagues from the Legislature for their attendance and support: Richard Lee, Doug Horne, Jenny Kwan, and Bruce Ralston.

The forum was noted as the continued effort of consultation with the people of British Columbia to determine appropriate wording to apologize properly for all wrongdoings committed against Chinese Canadians through unjust and discriminatory legislation in the past by the provincial government. She noted that this was not just about the Head Tax, but for all historical wrongs.

The Minister stated that the province of B.C. was built by immigrants and is the most diverse populated province in Canada with a thriving strong cultural history. She then briefly shared key points of Vancouver's Chinatown history and how it is a prime example of a Chinese community being built despite discriminatory legislation.

Minister Teresa Wat Opening Remarks

**Minister
Teresa Wat
Opening Remarks
(continued)**

Minister Wat specified that she had come to the forum to engage with community members in a meaningful way and asked attendees to consider the wording and delivery of the apology. She explained that the first forum was held in Victoria, followed by Kamloops, and that four more forums would be held in Kelowna, Burnaby, Prince George and Richmond. She encouraged all British Columbians to participate or comment through www.Embracebc.ca, a website that also contains a comprehensive chronology of Chinese history in B.C. and Canada.

The minister referred to binders which contained records of historical wrongs in B.C. from 1872-1948; the binders serve as a constant reminder of the past wrongs and the need for a formal apology. She expressed a need to get the apology right; that it must be sincere and relevant to Chinese communities; that it requires input from all British Columbians if it is to have currency and be meaningful; it must include various organizations and all parties in the legislature; and be non-partisan.

Minister Wat concluded by stating that while we can't undo the past, we can leave a legacy, reflect and move forward.

**Wei Shao
and Emily Yun
Forum Facilitation
Instructions**

Jun Ing and Fanny Zhou ~ forum process instructions and introduction of facilitators

The facilitators reminded speakers to focus on the three central issues:

- How the apology should be delivered;
- What the wording or content of the apology should be; and
- What legacy efforts should be made.

**Community
Members**

**James Chu
President of the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA)**

Mr. Chu shared some historical points: how the 19th and 20th Centuries were a "white age"; that the Whites bullied Chinese violently and hit the Chinese randomly; that the BC government made three Acts in 1881 forbidding Chinese immigration; at 14 years old, Chinese youth had to pay 10 dollars in order to stay, as part of the Head Tax policy; the Acts forbade Chinese voting, and land ownership.

CBA safeguards Chinese and has existed for 100 years. Mr. Chu declared that he represents the CBA, and presented their four positions:

- The BC government must submit all exclusion legislation from 1858-1972; including all acts of discrimination: not allowing Chinese to vote, to buy land, hold office, or make business contracts.
- The BC government at the legislative level should issue a formal apology to address the hurts and suffering of the Chinese who were

Community Members (continued)

subject to these discriminatory acts.

- The BC government should acknowledge the contribution, and economic contribution, of the Chinese migrant workers past and present.
- The BC government needs to educate the public, advising of the acts, and the prejudice of BC society of that time.

Mr. Chu concluded by saying that by creating an apology and entering it into the record and official government archived, it will provide harmony amongst ethnic groups.

Larry Yip

Vice-chair, Chinese Cultural Center

Mr. Yip stated that the Chinese Cultural Center has prepared a letter that will be delivered directly to the government. To summarize the letter:

- In the history of the BC province, many laws have been passed to discriminate against Chinese people in a legal fashion. Must admit the mistakes to right the wrong.
- Apology to include acknowledgement of Chinese community for their contributions to building of this province.
- Points 1 and 2 are to be included in mainstream high school history text books in order to educate the youth of these wrongdoings in the past, so that they will never happen again.

Mr. Yip concluded by stating that racial discrimination is illegal; it is NOT an option.

Willie Chan

Chinese Merchants Association

The Chinese Merchants Association is looking for an official apology for the past wrongdoings that acknowledges the Chinese contributions in the building of Canada and the efforts of the Chinese with the Canadian military. They would like these points to be made in textbooks and history books, and that the Legislature should erect a monument with a plaque at the Chinese memorial square in China town.

Queenie Choo

CEO of S.U.C.C.E.S.S

Since 1973, S.U.C.C.E.S.S has been serving immigrants. S.U.C.C.E.S.S started with support for the Chinese community, and currently supports 130,000 immigrants per year.

In regards to past Immigration policy, Ms. Choo noted that Chinese immigrants were denied entry; however, moving forward she sees a need to develop a structure, such as an impartial organization or an ombudsman, for checks and balances on immigration policy being set today and in the future so that it does not happen again. S.U.C.C.E.S.S can play a role in this to assist the government.

Facts are important and setting it right for both the Chinese and the public. A robust communication plan is needed to incorporate into text books and educate all of the public, youth and the public at large will be informed, so people can know what the government has done. It is vitally important to know what immigrant requirements are. The BC Government will have the opportunity to show future immigrants that there is no discrimination towards any ethnic community, including the Chinese community.

Fred Kwok

Grand Master, Chinese Freemasons Vancouver

Mr. Kwok stated that we should embrace the idea of making an apology. The apology should be made in simple language that can be easily understood by everyone. The apology will only be useful if it becomes part of the education platform. It should be part of history lessons or social studies. This will make it more meaningful, so that it never happens again.

Gary Jang

Shon Yee Benevolent Association of Canada

Mr. Jang stated that the Shon Yee Benevolent Association of Canada was founded 100 years ago. Shon Yee and CBA have had discussion, and agree that the BC government needs to make a formal apology for all the past wrongs.

Howe Lee

Founder, Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society

Mr. Lee stated that the government should take the time to focus on the apology. He asked, "What is an apology?" "Did you do something wrong?" "What did you do wrong?"

He posited that "historical wrongs" is too general, and there is a need for the wording to be more specific, and not just about the Chinese. He asked, "What is being legislated as illegal?"

Mr. Lee shared several historical examples of acts that have discriminated against the Chinese in BC and Canada. He declared that he will give the Minister a handout that will summarize the acts and amendments to acts that were discriminatory.

King Wan

Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society

Mr. Wan stated that the Chinese have been in BC since the 1800's. They came for the gold rush in 1855. There was a systematically discriminating concerted effort by the government to marginalize them.

Mr. Wan was pleased to be consulted. He recognized that the Head Tax was federal government legislation and has been dealt with by the Federal Government. He stated that the past cannot be undone, but a legacy can be built for future generations, and that the following steps should be undertaken:

Community Members (continued)

- All legislation should be at the provincial level.
- Important for citizens to learn and grow together to share in knowledge. The government must recognize this by updating elementary and high school level education materials.
- The government should provide funding to support organizations to help associations to update information and to accurately record this wrong doing.

He stated that an “apology is just words, there needs to be more” and urged the government to keep this as a legacy and to continue with this process to help citizens.

Sid Chow Tan **Head Tax Family Society of Canada**

Mr. Chow began by acknowledging the First Nations Coast Salish. He then stated that the power of an apology lies with the receiver. He is proudly Canadian and a 40 year resident of Vancouver. He welcomed the BC government efforts to address the racist past, and with more effort this can bring closure to the head tax issue, they need to imagine the conclusion.

He continued that ideas of justice and honour married to words of an apology need to be manifested in action. It was a made-in-BC head tax and exclusion. Seniors must be a priority for the BC government.

He stated that there should be a refund of money to the families of those affected by the Head Tax. The BC treasury received over 9 million dollars from the government of Canada. Without financial compensation, the apology is just an empty gesture of words, but not action. The 9 million dollars collected in unjust tax and it needs to be returned to these families. They need to give the dollars back. They need to close the file. Mr. Chow concluded by asking, “If you take money from me, then say sorry but do not give the money back. Is that just?”

David Choi **Chair, National Congress of Chinese Canadian, Pacific Region**

Mr. Choi stated that the NCCC, which was formed in 1992 with branches all across Canada, seeks Canada’s acknowledgement of historical wrongdoings. The Federal apology took until 2006 to happen, they hope that the BC apology is completed this year and does not take a long time.

Mr. Choi made the following four points:

- Apology should take place in the legislature through proper legislative motion representing all MLA’s and voted on by all MLA’s and voters of BC.
- British Columbians all alike must understand why the apology is being made. They need to understand the history, and markers throughout BC where Chinese have settled should be made.
- Education - a thick book was started in 1872 that identifies 160 discriminatory legislative acts. The number in itself is not important,

but the fact that there are so many is important. Such a numerous discriminatory history should be acknowledged and brought into the education system. A compilation of the discriminatory history and educational materials must be prepared.

- Cannot be just Chinese community forums; the process must be comprehensive and include all people. Going forward should include Chinese and non-Chinese community in a nonpartisan way.

Mr. Choi concluded by emphasizing that the head tax is not the ONLY issue and it should not lead and overshadow the entire process.

Yi Fu Su

Chair, Yue Shan Society

The Yue Shan Society is made up of members who come from the Guangzhou region of China. The Society has over 4,000 registered members with most located in Vancouver.

The Yue Shan Society welcomes these forums and supports the 4 points proposed by the CBA.

Koman Chow

Chair, Chee Dack Gen Tong Society

The Chee Dack Gen Tong Society, which has a 114 year history, met with the CBA and other associations, and are in support of the four points raised by the CBA, especially the point regarding education as future generations need to know about these issues. They are happy the provincial government is handling these issues positively.

Chuck Chang

Chair, Chinese Freemasons, National Headquarters

Mr. Chang shared the Chinese Freemasons support of the four points raised by the CBA. He continued by stating that, for the Head tax payers, the BC government should step up and say what they should have said a long time ago; better late than never. He appreciates what they are doing.

Faye Leung

Faye Leung Health and Education Foundation

Ms. Leung shared her personal story. She is third generation born and raised. Her grandfather arrived in 1881 and was one of the first merchants. Her grandmother was one of the first ladies. They went through much discrimination including the 1929 academic tax. Her mother never set foot outside of Canada. She was second generation and not allowed to enter into the Canadian school system, so her grandfather built a school for the Chinese. This is one of many sufferings. Today with [the BC Government's] recognition, she wondered how it would have helped them. She was one of the first to graduate from accounting, but couldn't get a job because she is Chinese. She was not Canadian as her birth certificate was Chinese, not Canadian. She was subject to deportation, although third generation born

in Canada. She stated that they fought it, and with integrity and hard work proved to Canadian society that they were Canadian. She hopes that the Apology will be the first step made to recognize this.

Jenny Kwan

MLA, Vancouver - Mt. Pleasant

Ms. Kwan acknowledged the First Nations and Coast Salish land. She stated that for her reconciliation is not just an apology; it does not begin and end with apology. For Chinese community it is their history and experience. She asked what it meant, the level of discrimination to them needs to be understood.

Ms. Kwan was proud to see the Chinese community engage, and to collectively own the history that everyone needs to know, not just the Chinese community. The process needs to be expanded to educate all, for all to understand. The different points of view need to be heard, and restricting input to three minutes is not enough time. She recognized that people offer many suggestions regarding history and preservation, and here in BC the artifacts are saved and the stories are told to visitors and tourists. She stated that she was there to listen, that even though it was absolutely about education, the before and after ongoing dialogue needed to continue. Ms. Kwan concluded by stating that future actions should be guided by the community, to let that be the truth of reconciliation.

Jimmy Yee

Vice-chair, Yee Fong Toy Society of Canada

The Yee Fong Toy Society continues to provide services that started in Victoria in 1904, and they support the points addressed by the CBA. He stated that we are the most western part of Canada and opportunities exist with the emerging economies of the Asian pacific. BC led our country in perpetrating historical wrongs. BC brought in Chinese people to build and work the railway. After the railway was built the BC legislature lobbied to exclude and discriminate against the Chinese Canadians and can claim credit for the Chinese Exclusion Act passed by the Federal Government. We have the opportunity to do better than the Federal Government regarding the Head Tax issue. He proposed that this facts need to be included in the public school curriculum.

Peter Chan

Vice-chair, Chin Wing Chun Wing Chun Tong Society

Mr. Chan suggested that a historical recreation cartoon or movie be made and circulated to public libraries, school libraries, museums and cultural organizations. He also suggested hanging a banner or bronze statue as an apology marker in the lobbies of city halls, public spaces, government buildings, and public libraries as a constant reminder. Additionally, he proposed a partnership with the Remembrance Day Parade to keep the memory alive every year.

Community Members (continued)

William Ma **Chair, Mah Society of Canada**

Mr. Mah stated that the Mah Society has over 3000 members in their Vancouver branch. Speaking on behalf of the society, he said that the Head tax refund is not the major issue at this time, and that the government of BC should recognize and acknowledge the contribution of Chinese communities in the past and present. He strongly urged the government of BC to issue a formal apology, to improve communications with Chinese communities in future, and an official change should be made to history textbooks to upgrade and improve our school programs.

Siu Wah Chan **Chair of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association**

Mr. Chan thanked all the previous speakers and acknowledged that there were so many good suggestions being made, and that he hoped the government would make them all happen.

He would like to see funding being given to young Chinese Canadians, such as athletes and musicians who are not able to reach high levels of achievement due to the lack of funding. He proposes that a special foundation be set up that would allocate funds to young people. He states that this would be good for the Chinese community and bring glory to Canada.

Steve Woo **Secretary of Hoy Ping Benevolent Association of Canada**

Speaking on behalf of the Association, they agree with the 4 points made by the CBA, especially a focus on the government taking a strong stance on the education point. Mr. Woo stated that he would like to be able to speak to his children about this issue in the future. The apology would help to educate and to further explain where the terms "chink" or "china man" came from and why they are discriminatory.

Charles Chan **Canada Asia Pacific World Trade Association**

Mr. Chan expressed how happy he was to be there. He stated that though the past government made wrongs, today's government is very responsible to hear the community voices. He felt that these issues should be reported to the United Nations.

Mr. Chan would like to see past Chinese contributions acknowledged and put into textbooks for future generations. He feels that the education component is the most critical, to set an example. He also believes that the Canadian government should work together with different ethnic groups, so they can exist harmoniously and make Canada the best country to immigrate to.

Fred Mah

Chinese Society Heritage Building Association

Mr. Mah stated that most of the Chinese societies were formed at the beginning of the last century. Their members are descendants of people who lived during the time of the Head Tax and discriminatory acts. He believed that if he mentioned his family's history, everyone would know what the problems were. His grandfather immigrated to Canada to build the railway, and he paid a head tax. Because of the discriminatory laws, his mother and he did not come over until 1949. He shared how his family suffered in China. They saw starvation, and saw the savagery of the Japanese during World War II.

Resolution on January 7, 2014 of the Board of Directors of the China Town Society Heritage Building Association requests that the Government of BC apologize, establish a trust fund and an educational program to assure all people will be protected in future. Mr. Mah reiterated that he said "ALL people" – must be careful that it includes other ethnic groups.

Zi-Fu Zhang

Global Seniors Promotion Association

Mr. Zhang expressed that he was happy to have the opportunity to participate in the apology forum. He stated how his organization advocates and promotes seniors' health and welfare. He agreed with MLA Jenny Kwan's comments, that they were broad and comprehensive. His organization supports Ms. Kwan's comments and welcome an apology.

Sui-Chun Suen

Chair, Head Tax Family Society of Canada

Ms. Suen asked that the wording of the apology be just and fair. She stated that there are many issues left by history, such as the Head Tax, and that she believes most problems stem from the Head Tax. She feels the Head Tax must be refunded by the BC government because they collected 40%. She has written letters to Minister Wat and other ministers with no results. She clarified that she is not yelling at today's government as those who are responsible are dead, but the government exist forever.

Caroline Wong

Grand-daughter of Sui-Chun Suen, UBC student

Ms. Wong shared her great-grandfather's story. He paid \$500 head tax and worked all over the west coast at jobs that no one else wanted to do. He could not sponsor his family. Her grandmother's father had already died by the time she was able to finally come to Canada.

Ms. Wong feels that the apology is the first step; that action speaks louder than words. She stated how nine million dollars was paid to the BC Government - paid not just with money but with blood and hard work. The money refunded to Head Tax families should be the same amount in current dollars. Ms. Wong expressed how she is glad that Minister Wat is considering

legacy pieces. Due to discrimination, she still feels like she needs to do eight times better than others. She learned more from her grandmother than from grade 10 social studies. She believes more education, museums, and inter-cultural understanding are needed to create a vibrant society for BC.

3:50 p.m. break till 4:05 p.m.

Grace Eiko Thompson

Head Tax Family Society of Canada, former president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians

Ms. Eiko-Thompson acknowledged Coast Salish land. She recalled the 1942 expulsion of over 20,000 Japanese-Canadians. In 1988, there was a recognition of the injustice with the signed acknowledgement of grievances and wrong-doings, and a just and honourable settlement was achieved. The Japanese group challenged how to have an abuse-free future without acknowledging past wrongs. It was a principled campaign that resonated with Canadians - not through quick fixes or political solutions. An imposed solution is paternalism at its worst.

Ms. Eiko-Thompson urged the government to listen and ensure a just and honourable settlement of the unjust collection of 9 million by the BC treasury for its share of the head tax.

Erin Shum

Entrepreneur

Ms. Shum is a small business owner, and great-grandchild of a head tax immigrant. Her grandmother told her stories of her father's hardships. She also taught her forgiveness. Ms. Shum asked how we can learn forgiveness, to which she replied, "By education; we need text books. The best way is forgiveness and education to be aware of past."

She urged the government to supply textbooks and social media, films, and tv shows to reach out and engage that generation to learn about past and future.

Linda Ching

TRU-Youths United

Ms. Ching expressed that she is looking forward to an apology. She stated that the matter concerning wrongdoings against Chinese people needs to be addressed. As a 17 year old student, she believes it is necessary for students to be better educated about history. She would like to see stories of discrimination and experiences of what Chinese ancestors went through in text books and in school curriculum. She feels that is the only way to promote a harmonious community in future.

Rick Craig
Justice Education Society

Mr. Craig stated how in 1977, the first workshops on racial discrimination took place and some school districts boycotted them because talking about racial discrimination was not seen as a good thing. In reality, he believes there is a real need to talk about it – the reality is that discrimination exists in Canada too. The education of citizens, understanding our history and how it happened, recognizing it was done through laws that institutionalized racial discrimination, is important and needs to be addressed. It is the future responsibility of all BC people to keep working for equality.

Amy Huang
North American Association for Investment in China

Ms. Huang's organization supports the four points made by the CBA, particularly education and possibly a museum to educate the next generation. She feels the government needs more comments from more Chinese communities.

Alnoor Gova
Access Community Tel

Mr. Gova stated that he represents community organizations and community broadcasters who are concerned with marginalized communities. He feels the BC Government's suggested apology is a political move, and that they are not really willing to give back the 9 million dollars. He stated that the redress must not be just a political policy, the wording must contain all injustices, and the money needs to be returned, otherwise, it will send the message that BC profits from racism.

Anushka Nagji
Access Community Television Associate

Ms. Nagji offered her historical perspective that Canada's colonization by European powers was exploitative; not a source of pride; and is a history largely unacknowledged. Ms. Nagji offered her opinion that the Apology process was characterized as a shameless political exercise of privilege, power and publicity which is not truly an Apology. Legislative records indicate that at least 89 discriminatory laws and 49 discriminatory resolutions between 1870 and 1930 were designed in pursuit of a white man's Province, including head tax laws. Ms. Nagji claimed to be in solidarity with the Head Tax Families Society of Canada, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens Association Human Rights Committee and the South Asian Komagata Maru community in demanding real redress, and a refund of the \$9 million of head tax collected by the BC Treasury for the BC Government. These taxes collected are considered unjust enrichment. Ms. Nagji concluded by asking: If this consultation process will be taken seriously? If justice will be heard? If it will be just an example of provincial political posturing?

Community Members (continued)

Michael Xue **Vancouver Library**

Mr. Xue stated that he is interested in how younger Canadians will learn about and interpret the apology. He commented that many speakers had mentioned the need for textbooks in order to educate youth, but Mr. Xue noted that there are textbooks that contain historical content regarding early Chinese immigration to Canada, and that the current education system does teach about this issue. But Mr. Xue feels there needs to be changes in terms of curriculum and how the topic is taught because the students are NOT interested, even those of Chinese ancestry. Perhaps field trips, role play, visual aids, and NOT just relying on a textbook.

Historical events reach the public and especially the youth via media, in order to reach the youth, there needs to be more updated and modern means of dispersing this information, such as a film (along the lines of *Schindler's List*), and Mr. Xue suggests funding to the CRTC to create an epic film.

Allan Guo **Quanzhou Friendship Society of Canada**

Mr. Guo praised the government's efforts for initiating this process. He stated that though we can't change history, we can move forward. He sees it as ironic that a Chinese minister is going to carry the process forward.

Mr. Guo also feels the government should set aside a fund for education, such as textbooks for youth, and set up a plaque or memorial in a large park.

Xia-Ru Wu **Ing Suey Sun Tong Association**

Mr. Wu stated that the Association is 100 years old this year, and was originally established because of government discrimination. Back then, there were many hardships. It was hard to find good employment, living conditions were hard, and so only young males lived in the building which is still preserved today. Over 2,000 of our members paid Head Tax, but only one person was ever compensated.

Mr. Wu believes it's important to preserve the artifacts of the community and its history.

David Wong **Citizen**

Mr. Wong is a descendent of at least 12 head tax survivors. He believes that an apology is important to his family and him, but it is also important to the Japanese and Aboriginal people. He commented on how people have been talking about education and doing the right thing, which he notes is good start, but he feels it is important that the families of head tax payers should be involved in the process.

Community Members (continued)

He stated that a new Chinese Canadian citizen cannot speak for a head tax survivor but as a family member, he can. He feels it is about respect and dignity; his ancestors built the railroad and went to war. There needs to be meaningful development of education that includes the participation of the descendants of head tax payers.

Elsie Jang **Citizen**

Ms. Jang started by stating that the meeting space was a poor choice. The Chinese Cultural Society is not inclusive of the larger community. The Chinese community did not exist in isolation.

Regarding the legislation for which the government wishes to apologize, there is a need to reconcile two time periods, the context and the mood of the time. The head tax was enacted because the Anglos were fearful of losing their jobs and demanded Ottawa do something. Fear also precluded Chinese from owning land and practicing certain occupations. Back then the mood at that time made those actions acceptable, applauded.

Ms. Jang pointed out that still today, we are not accepting and to look at the treatment of the First Nations, and the shocking and shameful conditions of migrant foreign workers.

In summary, Ms. Jang asked why the larger community was not present. And quoted Minister Wat, "We need to include all parties to make this meaningful."

Ms. Jang feels that the time and money of the government could have been better spent on education. She also commented that many speakers had stated about the pain and hardship and loss of family connections in the past. The loss is still present.

Ms. Jang's final point was to ask what has been learned from these past wrongs because in the past these wrongs were acceptable, and she posits what the government will be apologizing for in 50 years.

George Lee **Citizen**

Mr. Lee stated that we are all aware of the discriminatory policies, but are gathered not only due to unfair past, but more importantly to remember history. He affirmed that while we pave our past with the future, we need to do the following to ensure it doesn't happen again:

- A collective apology is required;
- Historical archives need to be created and maintained, funded by the BC Government;
- Archived materials and historical information should be implemented into books, films, novels, etc.; and
- A Provincial day of remembrance and acknowledgement should be created.

Community Members (continued)

Fei Guan Pan Citizen

Mr. Pan would like to see government prepare a sincere apology that is forwarded to all media outlets. The apology needs to recognize the contribution of Chinese pioneers in the construction of the province. Additionally, funding should not just be for education, but also for setting up a memorial set and running programs for youth.

Joe Nan Zhou Citizen

Mr. Zhou is happy that this Liberal government is doing something for the past government, but he feels it's too late. The Conservatives of the Federal Government have already apologized.

He supports the idea of a sincere written apology in Chinese and English to be published in newspapers both Chinese and English. He also suggests a plaque, memorial, park or landmark, so that we can always remember.

Todd Wong Citizen

Mr. Wong acknowledged Coast Salish land. He detailed how his ancestors have been in Canada for many generations, but they were not Chinese railway workers, they were business men. He feels this is very important to be included in history books, that not all Chinese immigrants were railway workers, so that when youth read history books, the Chinese people who built this community, should not be stereotyped.

When an apology has been finalized, he stated that it will be important to integrate it. He commented that people outside say no redress, no head tax, get over it. However, if the government moves straight to an apology without education, there will be a lot of angry white people.

Mr. Wong declared that a head tax apology will not be enough. There is a need to give money to the Head Tax payers' descendants. Families have carried the certificates with them for generations. There is a need to respect and honour that.

Zhou Xin Jiang Citizen

Mr. Zhou expressed that he is happy the government is going in the right direction, because people need to learn from history. He suggests that the government provides an apology issued in writing and thru media outlets. He also wants a statue to be erected, and a day in the calendar to commemorate the wrong doings.

Community Members (continued)

Philip Chu Citizen

Mr. Chu stated that if there is no monetary compensation, then don't bother with an apology. He feels that would be like the Conservative party which doles out money to their friends and the Liberals calling their friends to dole out money. He stated that BC is built on racism and that the 2010 Olympics opening and closing ceremony was a good example of this. He continued that BC is still a racist society. He suggested that the Minister return to Victoria to fix systemic racism and to not bother with an apology.

Dan Seto Chinese Canadian Historical Society

Mr. Si-To states that his goal was to make sure that Chinese history is preserved. He agreed that they want an apology, but most importantly to make sure that history is recorded. He shared that his family in Canada goes back to the 1800's and they had established societies. His organization wants to keep their building as a connection to their past.

He suggested that the Chinese Community needs to get more than just an apology, they need to have their history documented more extensively. He commented that the records about this issue are more extensive and better maintained than the public historical records here in Canada.

Yun Chun Woo Student

Mr. Woo stated that Canada has previously issued apologies and should be made to show how a government admits what it has done wrong, so that today's families won't suffer in the future. Mr. Woo suggests that the government admits what it has done wrong and acknowledges Chinese communities and individuals who contributed to the building of this country. He also feels that the government should provide a special letter to surviving victims. He stated that history can repeat itself and education is important to teach the younger generation – they are the future.

William Lim Citizen

Mr. Lim quoted Wolfgang Faust, suggesting that when you solve a problem half-heartedly, the remaining problem will return at twice the strength. He can see these kind of things happening in Canada again, e.g., First Nations, the Idle No More movement, etc.

Mr. Lim would like Minister Wat to convey this message back to the government, to learn how to deal with First Nations responsibly, and don't repeat the same mistake that was made with the Chinese Community.

Community Members (continued)

Jane Lou Citizen

Ms. Lou stated that her great grandfather paid the head tax and she wants the government to refund his money to her. She doesn't want just an apology, the families of Head Tax payers want the full payment too.

Foon Chang Citizen

Ms. Chang stated that she represents her family member who paid \$500 Head Tax. She shared how her husband and in-laws suffered a lot, but they have passed away now. For 30 years, they have been waiting for a response. She doesn't know what to tell her children.

Jun Ing Closing Remarks

Minister Teresa Wat Closing Remarks