



Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver Statement of Opinion on the Matter of the BC Government Apologizing to Chinese Canadians for Past Discrimination.

History cannot be rewritten, and past mistakes must not be repeated. Both the Federal Government of Canada and the Provincial Government of British Columbia have recognized their historical mistakes in the treatment of Chinese Canadians, and even opposition parties have unanimously agreed on the need to apologize for past mistakes. The reasons for an apology and the purpose of an apology should determine the wording of an apology and its subsequent measures. The need for an apology arises from the exclusion of Chinese based on racial discrimination, the irrational imposition of taxes, occupational restrictions, deprivation of civil rights and prevention of family reunification -- in the light of today's civilised society these were evil laws that were unconstitutional and illegal violations of human rights. They arose not only from the governments in power at the time, but also from the attitudes of many in the general public. Rather than say that the purpose of an apology is to prevent similar occurrences from happening in future, better to say that it is to fundamentally eradicate the very mindset of racial superiority. Because Canada is a progressive country in terms of politics and civilization, it has closed the door forever to the various measures that violate human rights, but racial prejudice, either disguised or open, still exists in the minds of some people (including some of us Chinese Canadians), and under certain conditions may be released to poison our civilization.

The wording of an apology should express condemnation of past mistakes, but more importantly should express profound regret for the actions of predecessors, truly representing governmental apology to the victims of discriminatory policies in those days. But most importantly, we must look to the future, using our apology to educate future generations. By including these episodes in school curricula and letting every student know about this aspect our history, acknowledging the mistakes that occurred, and having courageously and justly dealt with the mistakes, we will have brought that sad episode to a close and achieved ethnic reconciliation.

To create a clear legacy of such a historical event, we call upon the British Columbia government to mandate a change in the educational curriculum to adequately reflect the historical treatment and achievements of our province's visible minorities.

Reconciliation is two-way, and those who have been victimized must accept that the mistakes happened at a particular stage of human history. Those individuals who were actually responsible have long since passed away, and what needs to be done now is an unraveling of history for a new era, working together to build a harmonious, highly civilised and affluent Canada. Excessive haggling and monetary demands may only increase tensions between ethnicities, resulting in the opposite of intended effects.

The Chinese Cultural Centre always has and always will work hard to promote Sino-Western cultural exchange and friendly interaction for inter-ethnic understanding, learning from each other, and influencing each other to build the most harmonious of societies.

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“历史无法改写, 错误不容再犯!”---大温哥华中华文化中心致省政府的公开信

历史无法改写, 错误不容再犯。加拿大联邦政府及卑诗省府都已认识过往对华裔犯下的历史错误, 即使是反对党, 对需要为过往犯下的错误道歉, 也是一致同意。

为甚么而道歉, 道歉的目的何在, 决定了道歉的措词和道歉之后的措施。

要道歉的是出于种族歧视的对华人的排斥, 不合理税项的征收, 从事职业的限制, 公民权利的剥夺, 家庭团聚的阻止.....在文明的今天看来都是违宪、违法、违反人权的恶法。这些恶法不但出自当日的当权者, 也是那年代不少民众的倾向。

道歉的目的与其说是防止同类事件再次发生, 不如说是要从根源消除任何种族优越自大的心态。因为加国在政治和文明上的进步, 已经对所有这些违反人权的措施永远地关上大门。反而是种族偏见仍或隐或显的存在一些人(包括我们华裔)心中, 在某个时刻会向我们文明的社会放毒。

道歉的措词需要对过去的错误提出谴责, 更重要的是对前人所做表示深深的遗憾, 真诚地代表政府向当日的受害者致歉。而最重要的还是向前看, 让道歉教育下一代, 把事件编进学校课程, 使每一个学童知道有这一段历史, 而我们已认识了其中的错误, 勇敢地公正地处理了这个错误, 结束了一段悲情, 达致了种族的和解。

和解是双向的, 受害的一方也要接受这是人类历史阶段性的错误, 要负实际责任的均已亡去, 如今要做的是新的一代为历史解结, 共同为建设一个和谐文明富足的加拿大努力。过分的斤斤计较, 金钱上的需索, 恐怕只会增添族裔间的矛盾, 效果适得其反。

为了树立一个清晰的历史性里程碑,

我们吁请卑诗省府下达指令修改现有之课程大纲, 使其能充分反映本省少数族裔在过往历史上作出的贡献和所受对待。

大温哥华中华文化中心过去是, 今后也定会通过中西文化的交流和融和, 促进族裔间的了解, 互相学习, 互相影响, 为创造最和谐的人类社会而努力。

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