



# Truth and Reconciliation

## Commission of Canada

### A message from TRC Chair, Justice Murray Sinclair



Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild, Justice Murray Sinclair, and Commissioner Marie Wilson.

On behalf of my fellow Commissioners Marie Wilson and Chief Wilton Littlechild, I welcome you to our new Winnipeg office and thank you for your continued interest in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

We have all been witness to your interest and your enthusiasm in our work. We've been from one coast to the other; we've been to the North and as many points in between as we can manage. We've heard your concerns,

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## Message from Justice Sinclair (continued)

we've shared your pain, and your successes. Our work is sacred work, and we are reminded of that each and every time we go to your communities. We see great optimism that as a country and as Aboriginal people, we're about to turn a corner.

We have much to do in our short time and we take this opportunity to bring you up to date on some of the things we have been doing. Our offices in Winnipeg have just opened, and we are especially proud of our Survivors room. It is a place where former students can visit, relax, and find some peace. We hope you can find some time to drop by and visit us.

### National Event

Our first National Event is just weeks away, as are ongoing community events. We look forward to meeting many of you at those events.

A cornerstone for the National Event will be a forum for statement gathering from anyone who has been impacted by residential schools. The work of gathering statements is perhaps the most important task underway anywhere in Canada. It is an opportunity for all of us to share our histories with the rest of the world, and in doing so, change history.



The entranceway to the Survivors' Lounge in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Winnipeg head office.

But we need to hear your voice. The National Event, in our view, will be the largest oral history project by Aboriginal people in our entire history. It's an opportunity that is unlikely to ever come again, and through it, we can affect the course of our society. The power of education cannot be overstated, and it will be your voices, your experiences that will provide that education. I encourage everyone to come and be part of our events.

In addition to our newsletter updates here, we will have some significant announcements shortly on how you can become involved with us. Our website is about to undergo some changes that will make it easier for you to stay on top of what we're doing. We'll have updates on some of the exciting initiatives that are taking place in communities across the country. We value your interest and feedback, please stay in touch with us, we look forward to hearing from you.

## The Winnipeg National Event: June 16 – 19, 2010

**T**he TRC's first National Event will take place on Wednesday June 16 to Saturday June 19 on the grounds of Festival Park at the Forks in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The National Event is an important milestone in the history of Indian Residential Schools. This will mark the first of seven opportunities for individuals to provide a statement of their experiences from Indian Residential School, directly to the TRC.

The event is important to all Canadians, and we encourage everyone to attend, to learn about this important chapter of Canadian history.

It will be a time of learning, healing, and reconciliation.

Participants and visitors will have an opportunity to tour the National Event grounds throughout the four days and take part in a number of learning, cultural, and entertainment activities. The TRC will have a detailed program available in the coming weeks.

Please note that there is no charge to participate in any or all of the National Event activities. The TRC regrets that it is not able to provide travel or accommodation assistance to anyone participating at the National Event. More information on the National Event will be available on the TRC website ([www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)) soon.

## Missing Children and Unmarked Graves

**L**arge numbers of the children who were sent to residential schools never returned to their home communities. In a disturbing number of cases, their parents were never informed of their fates and were left to wonder what had happened to their children.

No one knows exactly how many of these children died at school, but the death rates for many schools, particularly during times of epidemic or disease, were of tragic proportions. The students who did not return have come to be known as the Missing Children and are the focus of a special Truth and Reconciliation Commission research project.

The Missing Children's research project will produce as complete as possible a list of children who died at school and the cause of their deaths. It will also document those children who never returned to their home communities. The Project will also locate school burial sites and cemeteries where it is likely that many of these children were buried.



The Forks: Site of the TRC's June National Event in Winnipeg.  
Photo: Juncutta International

## Statement Taking Overview

**T**he work of teaching the history of Indian Residential Schools is a daunting one. The story of IRS is best told by those who's lives were impacted by that experience. To do this, the Commission will gather statements from former students, staff, their families, and anyone else who has an experience to share.

The TRC is committed to:

- Telling Canadians what happened in the Indian Residential Schools;
- Honouring the lives of former students and their families; and
- Creating a record of what happened in the Indian Residential Schools.

The statements will be used by the Commission to write a report about the residential school system and experience. Researchers will use the statements to find out what happened in the schools and how individuals and communities were affected. Some statements, in whole or in part, might be published through books,

articles, reports, films, videos, websites, radio and television (etc.) to educate the public and raise awareness about residential schools. All statements will be subject to applicable privacy laws.

The Commission will also create a national research centre. Within it, each and every statement collected by the Commission will be archived so that people from all over the world, and for generations to come, will be able to learn more about the history of residential schools.

Commissioners, authorized staff, and the national research centre use the statements for their work. People who visit the national research centre may also see the statements, but without information that might identify you or others in your statement.

Personal information can include a person's name, contact information and visual image. Your personal information will be kept confidential for up to 110 years after your date of birth (or twenty years after your death), unless you give the Commission permission to release it.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

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## Congratulations Don Worme!



Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada  
Counsel Don Worme

**The most important endeavor for him has been the ability to balance the rigors of a formal justice system, while maintaining his strong beliefs in his culture, traditions and spirituality.**

**T**he TRC is proud to congratulate one of its own, for receiving one of this country's highest accolades. Commission counsel Donald E. Worme QC, IPC, was honoured with a National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Law and Justice on March 26 in Regina, Saskatchewan, his home province.

Donald was raised on the Kawacatoose First Nation, in Treaty Four Territory, under the guidance of his grandfather, the late Edward Worme, Sr. His early education included invaluable teachings of Cree philosophies, traditions and spirituality from his grandfather. He has not forgotten those lessons and builds them into his everyday work as a lawyer.

Since being called to the Saskatchewan Bar in 1986, Don quickly established his expertise in the legal status of Treaty Indians and the legal issues that confront First Nations people. His unwavering focus is his personal and professional goal to making things better for First Nations people.

His legal work has included Aboriginal Law, Criminal Law, Child and Family Law, Corporate and Commercial Law, and Labour Law. He is a founding member of the Indigenous Bar Association of Canada, a national advocacy group comprised of Aboriginal lawyers. Mr. Worme was counsel for the Stonechild family during the judicial inquiry that examined the freezing death of Neil Stonechild in Saskatoon.

The most important endeavor for him has been the ability to balance the rigors of a formal justice system, while maintaining his strong beliefs in his culture, traditions and spirituality.

The TRC Chair, Commissioners, and staff, congratulate Donald on his award. We are proud to have him as part of the TRC team.