

Dear NCC Board Members,

On September 30, 2022, Algonquin Spiritual Advisor and Elder Albert Dumont led an “Acknowledge the Truth” Walk to raise awareness about the truth of John A. Macdonald’s involvement in the creation of the residential school system and the ongoing pain that has resulted from his actions, and to ask the National Capital Commission (NCC) to rename the Sir John A. Macdonald (SJAM) Parkway.

As Albert Dumont said, ““There are thousands of children that died who would have lived if John A. Macdonald had never come to this country. SJAM set out to commit genocide against Indigenous peoples who had done no harm to him nor to his loved ones. He believed that by erasing the culture and spiritual purpose of this resource-rich country’s original inhabitants, he would forevermore be regarded as a hero to Canada’s future generations of white-skinned citizens. Members of the public joining this Walk and Campaign call for the government to Acknowledge the Truth and change the name of the Parkway”.

My students and I have signed these postcards to show our support for renaming the SJAM Parkway. We hope that you take the time to read these cards and hold the words inside your heart as you work towards selecting a new name for the Parkway.

Please see the attached backgrounder for more information about SJAM and his role.

Sincerely,

## **Background information**

### Quotes from Sir John A Macdonald

“When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with its parents, who are savages, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training mode of thought are still Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly impressed upon myself, as head of the department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.” (Macdonald, House of Commons 1883)

“I have reason to believe that the agents (ed - Indian Agents who were white, military men) as a whole ... are doing all they can, by refusing food until the Indians are on the verge of starvation, to reduce the expense.” (Macdonald to the House of Commons 1882) Macdonald’s Indian agents explicitly withheld food in order to drive bands onto reserve and out of the way of the railroad under development. A Liberal MP at the time even called it “a policy of submission shaped by a policy of starvation.”

“The great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the other inhabitants of the Dominion as speedily as they are fit to change.” (Macdonald 1887)

### Other facts about Macdonald’s genocidal efforts

Sir John A Macdonald enacted and enforced policies that allowed the RCMP to forcibly remove children from their homes. If parents refused, they could be imprisoned.

Macdonald authorized the \*pass system\* which required First Nations to obtain permission from their (white) Indian agent to leave their reserve. He also criminalized powwows and potlatches. These bans were finally lifted in 1951.

### Macdonald’s racism impacted other peoples than Indigenous people

Macdonald’s worldview was shaped by white supremacy and racial exclusion. He claimed that “the Aryan races will not wholesomely amalgamate with the Africans or the Asiatics” and that “the cross of those races, like the cross of the dog and the fox, is not successful; it cannot be, and never will be.”

While Prime Minister, he successfully fought to exclude “Chinamen” from the right to vote, arguing that if they were allowed to come “in great numbers and settled on the Pacific coast they might control the vote of that whole Province, and they would send Chinese representative to sit here, who would represent Chinese eccentricities, Chinese immorality, Asiatic principles altogether opposite to our wishes... which are abhorrent to the Aryan race and Aryan principles.”

Macdonald also claimed that Black people should be excluded from Canadian society, arguing that the presence of “Negroes, of whom we have too many” was dangerous because they were “very prone to felonious assaults on white women.”