

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing today to share my thoughts regarding the John A. Macdonald statue as I will be unavailable to share my thoughts directly with the City Council on March 31, 2021.

To be clear, I am of the belief that the statue needs to be removed.

Although John A. Macdonald's legacy is complicated, and many feel the need to celebrate the positive notes of his time as the leader of Canada, historical research and honesty has brought to light the necessity to reframe our understanding of this leader. As well as, acknowledging the widespread harm and destruction that he and his colleagues'(of all political affiliations) created. While I have no doubts that the Council may know about his legacies, I am asking and hoping that you understand the impact of his decisions and the consequences of his actions upon millions of people to this very day. That you would take careful and cautious time to explore, ask questions, and challenge your thinking in this matter. Finally, I ask that you revisit the education you received on this topic during your time in educational facilities. I can confidently say I did not learn this history in my formative years of education and while this may be anecdotal, I know the impact this lack of education has had on my treatment of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, in my communities. Thanks to continuing education later on, I was able to further my knowledge and begin the long journey to doing better. Mine and many others' journeys are not over and they may never be.

Some thoughts that I feel should be noted:

(1) As a high school social studies teacher, I have never once felt the need or urge to have a statue facilitate learning. I can appreciate their place and role, including plaques and monuments (The Holodomor monument in Wascana park comes to mind) but their existence does not necessarily assist in learning. On the topic of John A. Macdonald, there already exist a plethora of information, artifacts, and evidence to explore his role on the Canadian Landscape.

(2) If I was a direct descendant of a family member that had been harmed during Mr. Macdonald's tenure, and had endured the multi-generational consequences of those actions, I would find it incredibly difficult and traumatizing to see such a human be celebrated. The statue and its continued presence are, and would be, doing just that. While this may be deemed as hyperbolic, would anyone care to see their abusers and bullies celebrated in such a way?

(3) Reconciliation is the way forward to creating a healthy and holistic society and Canada has begun that journey. Yet it has much to do in the way of making reparations. Further, both the provinces and municipalities also have their role in implementing this process. I am asking that city council take these actions seriously, and continue the work that has been started. I can confidently say that it is not nearly enough and that I too take responsibility in making that happen. I hope that this is one step forward.

Thank-you for taking the time to read this and consider appropriate actions moving forward.

Kind Regards,

Christopher Holcomb
Regina, SK.