



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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100 Back Street, Unit 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN LOOKS TO ONTARIO AFTER MANITOBA'S APOLOGY FOR 'SIXTIES SCOOP'

THUNDER BAY: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic is encouraged by Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger's apology Thursday to thousands of victims of the Sixties Scoop, the first provincial apology for the forced adoption and relocation of Aboriginal children.

"The formal apology by the Government of Manitoba was a positive step to addressing the injustice inflicted upon thousands of First Nation children across Canada and abroad who were stripped of their sense of identity while taken from their homes and communities during the Sixties Scoop," said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic. "It is encouraging that Premier Selinger has formally apologised and called on all Canadians to recognize this injustice and we look to the Government of Ontario to do the same."

Between 1965 and 1985 an estimated 16,000 Aboriginal children in Ontario, including members of NAN First Nations, were removed from their homes and placed in other (mostly non-native) communities. An entire generation lost its Aboriginal identity and culture through what is known as the 'Sixties Scoop'.

In Ontario, Marcia Brown Martel (now Chief of Beaverhouse First Nation) and Robert Commanda launched a lawsuit in February 2009 against the Attorney General of Canada under the Class Proceedings Act. After years of litigation, a December 2014 ruling by the Ontario Superior Court has allowed this landmark case on the deprivation of cultural identity to proceed as a class action lawsuit.

The Sixties Scoop class action lawsuit is the first case in the Western world to plead the term "genocide" to describe the experiences of children taken from their families, and the first case to question whether the loss of a cultural identity is an actionable legal wrong.

A meeting with the Class Proceedings Case Management Motions Judge is scheduled for a June 26, 2015.

For more information please contact: Roxann Shapwaykeesic, Communications Officer – Nishnawbe Aski Nation (807) 625-4906 or cell (807) 251-6876 or by email rshapwaykeesic@nan.on.ca