



265 Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Phone: (306) 787-7388

Fax: (306) 787-6247

Email: leader@ndpcaucus.sk.ca

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To All Sixties Scoop Survivors:

I want to take this opportunity to join the Premier and add our words of apology, those of us on the Opposition side, to those present and to all whose lives were harmed by the Sixties Scoop.

That policy, which took its most severe form here in Saskatchewan through the Adopt Indian and Métis program, or AIM, was a race-based policy that separated untold numbers of children from their parents and adopted them out. Out of their families, out of their culture, out of their communities, even out of the province. And in the process, these children had their culture stolen from them, their identity stolen from them. Lost the connection to the reserves and home communities. It has been rightfully described as an act of cultural genocide.

This was a policy of successive governments, including, I'm ashamed to say, New Democratic governments. Here in the People's House, on behalf of the Official Opposition, the New Democratic Party and all of Saskatchewan, I wish to add our voice to the government's apology. We are truly sorry.

And we ask, of those who have suffered and of the creator who made us all, for forgiveness, for healing, and for change.

Forgiveness for the harm done to children, for the pain caused to their parents, and for the damage to communities. Families were not respected, the strength of aunties and uncles, kookums and moshums, was overlooked, and tremendous trauma was inflicted. And some of these wounds, the wounds of children who died, who lost and were lost to their families, who experienced abuse or who simply cannot replace the lost years, some of these wounds will not heal.

And yet, we ask for healing. That wherever possible, people can reconnect with their families, their culture, their home communities, with the parts of themselves that have been lost. And that these apologies and commitments to change can assist in that healing.

Lastly, we ask for change. Still today, there are far too many broken families, struggling with addictions and poverty. Still today there are far too many children who suffer abuse. Still today, there are far too many children separated from their families. Our commitment must be to them, to work toward changes in child welfare, yes, but not only in child welfare, in every aspect of our province's life to ensure families receive the support they need so that every child has a chance to live their best life.

I ask all members to join me in these words of apology, and in welcoming these brave leaders to their Legislature and offering our commitment to do better, for them and for generations to come.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R Meili".

Ryan Meili
Leader of the Official Opposition