

Changing history

EDITORIAL

We consider it troubling that political correctness has so seeped into our thinking that it becomes okay to take down any statue of John A. Macdonald, not only our first prime minister but Canada's foremost founding father.

No one reading this today was around when the residential school system was put into play with Macdonald one of its architects, and with its stated goal to 'kill the Indian in the child' because our First Nations brothers and sisters were considered at the time by colonialists to be savages.

It is a good example of the road to hell being paved with good intentions, not that it changes history although it does go a long way towards explaining it.

Removing Macdonald's statue, as was recently done in Victoria, B.C., is nothing but a knee-jerk reaction from progressives who have no idea of the times in which Macdonald lived but nonetheless want to deliver harsh justice.

But the bigger question to ask is who was complicit in the failed residential school experiment, because the last residential school didn't close until 1996.

So, every prime minister between Macdonald and Jean Chretien share the culpability of this disaster.

The residential school system could have been stopped at any point along the way between the 1870s and the mid-1990s, but it wasn't.

And this is why it continues to fester, and why frustrated but uneducated social manipulators think knocking Macdonald off his pedestal is the right course of action.

But it proves nothing but our collective ignorance.

Updating history may be more difficult than revising it, but dismissing Macdonald as a racist by 21st century values is as wrong as wrong can be.

It was his vision and his promise to include British Columbia in Confederation by building a connecting railroad are reasons why Canada exists today as one vast nation.

The United States had just bought Alaska from Russia, and it looked as if British Columbia was about to join that union until Macdonald sealed his own deal.

By today's standards, Macdonald was indeed a racist.

By the standards of his time, however, he just an ordinary man, but a man with a spectacular vision of the future.

Revising history gets us nowhere.

Updating history, however, gets us educated.