

Reconciliation

EDITORIAL

Here in our neck of the woods, we are not blind to the fact that we are surrounded by Indigenous Canadians.

They are a part of our communities.

They contribute more than they are given credit.

When Trudeau was running for prime minister, one of his leading promises was healing the rift with our aboriginal brothers and sisters by fixing the sources of their complaints and bring their input into the decision-making process.

He has now blown it all with the appointment of his private-island-travelling friend, Seamus O'Regan, as Minister of Indigenous Services.

He was a disaster in veteran affairs, and he will be a disaster in this equally-sensitive portfolio.

O'Regan, once again, is in way over his head.

It could not have started out better for Trudeau. He named the extra-capable Jody Wilson-Raybould as the first indigenous woman to become Justice Minister. And he placed indigenous affairs under the solid governance of Jane Philpott, an understated but among the most respected in cabinet.

Then the wheels came off.

In his recent cabinet shuffled, instigated by the resignation of Treasury Board President Scott Brison, Trudeau took B.C. MP Wilson-Raybould out of justice, possibly to save her from being the lightning rod in her province when the Trans Mountain pipeline and indigenous protest reach their suspected fever pitch, and replaced her with the dim bulb that is Seamus O'Regan.

For the first time, and despite all the peace-pipe prelude touted by the Liberals, our First Nations leaders finally saw where they stood in the eyes of Trudeau.

And they weren't very high on his list.

Veterans should be pleased with Wilson-Raybould as their minister, their hope being she will finally treat them right and quickly get over her demotion to Veterans Affairs, an afterthought in previous governments.

Our vets need our support, so let's hope Wilson-Raybould serves them as well as they served us.

There is no much upside, however, when it comes to Seamus O'Regan, his sole claim to fame in being sued for libel by veterans' advocate, Sean Bruyea.

O'Regan should not be in cabinet at all, let alone serving as Minister of Indigenous Services.

The safest place for him is in the back benches.

Way, way in the back where his raised hand is never seen.