

Kenda Gee

Contributed by Lachlan
Sunday, 22 July 2007

THE CANADIAN CASE FOR COMPENSATION

Kenda Gee - comments on the Australian view

The author misses the point concerning redress, entirely.

Redress is a process involving individuals who were harmed. And it holds government accountable, particularly as it continues to re-invent mistakes from the past.

On those notes - money isn't important. Yet, it is.

If 99% of the claimants chose to donate their individual compensation back to the community, then that would be *their* decision. But they must be allowed to decide for themselves. The individual compensation is a way to allow them to reclaim their history and to be empowered, as a result. But it is *their* choice and no one else's.

Secondly, what seems to escape the author is that government and our generation are the beneficiaries of those past injustices. Just as we expect citizens to pay their taxes on time, and should they fail to do, have government collect from them or their estates when they are dead and long gone, so too should we make sure that government is not unjustly enriched as a result of wrong actions. That is why I say, money is not the issue, yet it

is.
If the author believes we have come a long way, then he ought to consider that shortly after Ottawa tried to renege on their promise to redress our Chinese in Canada, they introduced a \$975 "right of landing fee" that would apply to all arrivals, including refugees. This was summarily denounced by the U.N. because whether or not a refugee is allowed entry should not be based on whether he or she can pay \$975. In fact, the Liberal government's party did not support the ROLF at their national convention in Ottawa.

A few months after this, New Zealand's government tried to introduce a similar fee.

Does any of this sound familiar to you as a New Zealander and member of the Commonwealth? I would hope so.

The fact that the author believes that we should be concerned with a potential "backlash" just goes to show you how little we have progressed. If "Chinese" are indeed "equal" in Australia, New Zealand, or Canada, is there a reason why he should dare to hold these kind of "old-time" fears?

During the closing of the Sydney Olympics, Australia's Prime Minister claimed that his country was the most open and welcoming in the world.

I beg to differ. They have a huge way to overcome their White Supremacy thinking which was the precursor to copy-cats in New Zealand and Canada.

What a shame.
Howard's rationalization is pretty lame.

If Ottawa apologizes to Chinese Canadians, it will do so *with* compensation for a very good reason. The compensation will act as a negotiated 'ceiling' to any future claims.

It is easy for Howard to claim that the poor old flood gates will burst open, but it's easy to feign poverty when you (as the government) haven't offered a dime.

This is one of a few reasons why I do have questions re. NZ's official apology. In Ottawa, it would be rare to offer a formal acknowledgement without a settlement in money. How does the NZ government plan to defend future (arbitrary) claims if it has acknowledged guilt?

In the Speech from Helen Clark, she says that it is the first step.
First step to what?

This is an example of the potential short-coming of trying to put the cart before the horse. It would not happen in Canada, since our group (HTEA) and the groups we work with (CCNC) have ever claimed to speak for the 'entire' Chinese community. We represent only those who have legitimate claims as registered HT payers and have indicated that they will not accept anything less than 3 conditions of settlement (apology, individual compensation, and collective redress). <<>>

KENDA GEE

22 February 2002

Canadian Head Tax and Exclusion Act Committee: Now: Check the progress in Canada

Edited by Steven Young