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Neoliberal Multiculturalism and the Canadian Age of Apologies

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Abstract

Political scientists have recently noted that we live in an "age of apologies", in which certain governments apologize for certain kinds of historical wrongs. This has been markedly true in Canada, with at least 10 major apologies since the late 1980s. The first of these, and one to which I give particular attention in the paper, is the apology to Japanese Canadians, for their internment during World War II, but there have also been apologies for the legacy of residential schools in Indigenous communities, for the forced relocation of Inuit to the High Arctic, for the head tax leveled on Chinese immigrants to Canada, for the razing of Africville, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Nova Scotia, and more. While these apologies are often considered separately, and in political terms, as movements towards national inclusion (for racialized or ethnic groups) or national sovereignty (for indigenous ones)), in this paper I argue that it is important to consider them together. To do so helps illuminate some of the political economic dynamics shaping the rise in apologies and why and how this rise in apologies is co-extensive with significant neoliberal transformations in the Canadian state, and of Canadian ways of understanding diversity.

Keywords

apologies, Canada, neoliberalism, multiculturalism, Japanese, Canadians

Introduction

In *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* (2004), professor, poet and activist Roy Miki offers a detailed insider's account of the Japanese Canadian campaign for recognition and compensation for harms done to Japanese Canadians during World War II and immediately afterwards in Canada. The key elements of the redress agreement announced in 1998 offered \$21,000 to individuals of Japanese ancestry who had been subjected to internment, deportation, relocation, loss of property, or fundamental freedoms and rights, a \$12 million fund to the Japanese Canadian community to undertake educational, social and cultural activities promoting well-being and human rights, \$12 million for the creation of a Canadian Race Relations Foundation that would work on activities meant to foster racial harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and offered Canadian citizenship to those who had been deported or had their citizenship revoked.¹

Speaking from a perspective 16 years after the agreement, and at a moment when other calls for redress remained unanswered by the Canadian government, Miki wonders if this agreement was one of the last gasps of liberalism and of Canadian nationalism before an era of free-trade liberalization. He notes that both the Japanese Canadian redress agreement and the Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. (later expanded into the North American Free Trade Agreement) were ratified in the same year. He argues this seemed to mark the end of a period of preoccupation with Canadian identity, marked by the Languages Act (1969), a multiculturalism policy (1971), a repatriated Canadian constitution (1981), the development of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and an Official Multiculturalism Act (1988), the first in the world. This focus on Canada lost its urgency as “cultural nationalism was superseded by the power of transnational corporations and global markets” (Miki 2004:10; see also 324). Nonetheless, since the Japanese Redress Agreement,

¹ This redress agreement had some similarities to the redress offered to Japanese Americans. However, Japanese Americans were offered \$20,000 for each individual and Japanese Canadians received \$21,000. The slightly higher amount was meant to mark that the treatment of Japanese Canadians was in some respects harsher than that of Japanese Americans, in that Japanese Canadians' properties and belongings were liquidated without owners' consent, those incarcerated had to pay for the expenses of their own incarceration, they were prevented from returning to the coast well after 1945 and more (see Miki 2004:42) for a detailed account.

and since Miki's book, Canada has seen the proliferation of apologies and other forms of redress. Since 1985, Canada has seen about ten major apologies, which I'll describe in more detail below. Often, these apologies are called for by discrete community groups, rather than broad coalitions, and are studied separately, but in this paper I'm interested (as is a recent book, *Reconciling Canada* (Henderson and Wakeham 2013)) in analyzing all of these apologies together, and thinking about what they rise in redress movements of this kinds might say about changing ways of understanding diversity by various levels of Canadian government, as well as the way that government itself is changing.. Henderson and Wakeham (2013:6) note that redress movements sometimes bolstered one another, but sometimes led to relativistic claims, and this deserves further attention. This proliferation suggests that apologies and forms of redress, in addition to being complex strategies for liberal inclusion, might also be precisely the form that neoliberal multiculturalism takes. In that case, we might see the Japanese Canadian redress agreement not as the last gasp of liberalism and cultural nationalism, but the harbinger of a new range of forms of neoliberal politics.

In this paper I'll begin by offering some further historical context on multiculturalism in Canada and the rise of apologies world-wide, and offer a brief overview on the Canadian apologies. I'll note the way similar overviews have been incorporated into the course for RESPECT students on "Multiculturalism and its Critics" at the University of Toronto in 2014 and 2015. I'll then return to this question of what apologies mean and do at moments of neoliberal transformation. It's important to emphasize that not all aspects of apologies are neoliberal; however, some aspects are, and these have not previously received the kind of attention that other aspects of apologies have.² Finally, I'll conclude with some comments on the implications of apology for changing notions of diversity in Canada, and compare this with the range of ways kyosei can be taken up.

1. Multiculturalism in Canada

² Discussions of these apologies was part of the curriculum of the 2014 and 2015 RESPECT intensive seminars on multiculturalism and its critics at the University of Toronto.

Canada is often celebrated as the first country in the world to implement an official state multiculturalism policy and as a site where multiculturalism continues to enjoy support even as other countries (Australia, the Netherlands) retreat from earlier versions of their own multiculturalism policies. I will provide a brief history of Canadian multicultural policy here, drawing on a more detailed, but still concise, history of Canadian multicultural policy in Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2011).³ During the RESPECT summer schools in Toronto, Canada, in August of 2014 and May 2015, students are introduced to the history of multiculturalism in Canada, as well as some critiques of it. They also visit organizations or sites which illustrate key aspects of on-going discussions.

The territory that Canada now occupies was originally occupied by hundreds of indigenous nations. There were two key colonizing groups in the territory that came to be called Canada, from the U.K. and France. Wars between these groups led to British victories, and Anglo dominance, until the 1960s when French-Canadian nationalism surged, in complex conversations with a number of other civil rights and decolonization movements. The government originally convened a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, but quickly faced critique for the exclusion of other non-aboriginal Canadians. The result was a formation of multilingualism within a bilingual framework in the early 1970s (Haque 2012). This policy was framed within, as Abu-Laban and Gabriel note, within the mandate of a Keynesian welfare state (108), and included four main aspects—state funding to ethnocultural groups for cultural maintenance, removal of cultural barriers to participation in Canadian society, cultural interchange, and official language training for immigrants (108). The focus on culture was critiqued by many who saw the policy as symbolic and ineffectual in transforming power relations and addressing racism, as well as ignoring class and gender relations within communities, and in the ways communities were articulated with the Canadian state. While multiculturalism was rapidly embraced by political parties and the leaders of ethnic minority associations, French Canadians (especially those in Quebec) tended to see it as weakening their claims on the

³ For other histories and critiques of multiculturalism in Canada, see, Chazan, Helps, Stanley, and Thakkar (2011), Haque (2012), and Thobani (2007).

state, and Aboriginal people saw it as a tool for continuing colonization, especially when they were treated as “just another ethnic group” in ways which ignored their distinct national status, and existing or on-going treaty negotiations. Students in the 2015 RESPECT program undertook a bus tour of Toronto sponsored by the Native Canadian Centre that told the history of Toronto from a First Nations perspective. This tour is accompanied by the development of an app (The First Story app), which people can download to learn these alternative histories; they also did fieldwork in Kensington Market, a neighborhood which has experienced multiple waves of migration.

An emergent focus on race relations in the early 1980s was also criticized as inadequate, hampered by scarce resources and tools to make substantive institutional interventions. In the 1980s, the Canadian government also repatriated its constitution from Britain, and the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms explicitly incorporated the need to recognize Canada’s multicultural heritage. By 1988, the federal government passed a Multiculturalism Act (the first such act in the world), which mandated that the policy of the government would “recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage”. In 1991 a separate Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship was established. While it still received little financial support, this underlined the symbolic importance of multiculturalism.

In the 1980s, also, multiculturalism first became linked with business, rather than or in addition to civic, interests. Multiculturalism was increasingly framed as enhancing Canada’s global competitiveness. A conference was held in Toronto in 1986 with the theme “Multiculturalism means Business” and school curricular were developed with similar themes (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2011:110). Prime Minister Brian Mulroney argued that “our multicultural nature gives us an edge in selling to the world” (cited in Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2011:111). In 2014 students in the RESPECT program visited TRIEC, the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council, an organization which focuses on finding appropriate employment for immigrants, and understands diversity largely in

economic terms. Multicultural policy was reformulated, in some ways that will be further detailed below. During this same period the first of what later became clear was a series of apologies started to emerge.

Clearly, the Canadian state does not simply ignore anti-racist and anti-colonial critiques; instead, it selectively reacts to them. One reaction within the past 30 years has been a new Canadian politics of apology. Where apologies are studied, however, they have often been studied separately, and with particular attention to the forms of community mobilization which led to them, government reactions or resistance, and the ultimate form of the apology. The consideration of separate histories does not allow for a consideration of how the movements might have shaped one another, or the changing politics of racialization in Canada. Research on racialization and colonialism in Canada often focuses on or Canadian-born/immigrant relations (especially where these are understood as white-non-white) or white/indigenous relations, but rarely fully takes into account the ways that the position of each is elaborated with respect to all the others. This has been called by some the Aboriginal-immigrant parallax gap (Bauder 2011, Byrd 2011). In part, this separation has been because of the concern on the part of indigenous groups that they not be simply considered yet another domestic ethnic minority in a Canadian multicultural mosaic (a move that perpetuates colonialism, and the power of the Canadian state, rather than challenging it) but be recognized as separate nations, with which the federal government has international treaty relationships. Nonetheless, there is an increasing recognition that fully understanding the ways racialization and colonialism work "requires the highlighting of the complex racial hierarchy developed by colonizing powers that introduced and sustained force relations not only among settlers and Aboriginal peoples but also among the other racialized groups ranked in the Canadian hierarchy as lower than whites but higher than Aboriginal peoples" (Thobani 2007:17). Dene activist Georges Erasmus (2011) argues, in the preface to a recent volume entitled *Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Cultural Diversity*, that the Aboriginal Healing Foundation felt that there needed to be a volume focused on the perspectives of new Canadians and those outside the traditional settler communities of British and French

“[b]ecause Canada is a nation of diverse cultures, its people drawn from every region of the world, any discussion of reconciliation must include the perspectives of those who have arrived in more recent days and those who trace their family histories beyond western European colonial states” (vii). He notes, too, that those who have arrived in Canada from places of colonization, war, genocide and devastation will likely have valuable insights into historical trauma.

This paper, then, by examining these apologies together contributes to a new body of literature which tries to integrate the concerns of various racialized groups and indigenous nations, in ways attentive to the concerns of each. This paper does not conduct original archival research, but rather draws and synthesizes existing analyses of individual apologies. This integration allows us to think about why apologies are happening now, and what kind of work apologies do for nation states. When and where do apologies arise? What circuits do "apology discourse" follow? Which other apologies shape, or don't shape, subsequent apologies? What kinds of actions are not apologized for? What work do apologies do—and not do? Where and how (if ever) is reconciliation linked to restitution, resurgence and redress?

This paper also offers a sample of the kind of curriculum that RESPECT students encounter in Toronto. We are interested in developing comparative perspectives on understandings of diversity, encoded in such notions as *multiculturalism* and *kyosei*, to better understand how and when different approaches to understanding diversity arise, and also to carefully consider their strengths, but also the ways they might be inadequate (the paper by Satsuka, in this issue, explore this question more fully). In 2014, students read about apologies, and we considered these questions together in class. Focusing on entwined histories, and shared points of concern (i.e. what do apologies mean and when should they be offered) as with the question of redress for Japanese Canadians, is one especially fruitful approach.⁴

⁴ Students asked to meet with community organizers who worked on the Japanese Canadian redress movement. This is a request we are still working on, for future years!

2. The Age of Apologies?

Political scientists have recently noted that we live in an "age of apologies", in which certain governments apologize for certain kinds of historical wrongs (Howard-Hassman and Gibney 2008, Nobles 2008). A recent novel, *Eating Crow*, even provides a spoof on the role of the international apologies expert (Rayner 2004). In her book *The Politics of Official Apologies*, political scientist Melissa Nobles lists seventy-two 'apologies' from heads of state, governments, religious institutions since 1965, most of which—sixty-six—have occurred since the mid-1980s between states (2008:155). Her list does not include apologies from public individuals like Tiger Woods or Bill Clinton for adultery—a significant political genre in the U.S.A.—or corporate apologies (for example, the apology by Akio Toyoda, the president of Toyota, in 2010 for deaths related to acceleration problems, and associated safety recalls). These kinds of apologies have all proliferated and a fuller understanding of the moment will require analyzing all of these together. Nobles (2008) lists apologies ranging from West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's apology while visiting the Warsaw Ghetto to Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone's apology to British Prime Minister John Major for harm caused during WWII to the British, especially to prisoners of war, from South African President FW De Klerk's apology for apartheid to Nelson Mandela's apology for African National Congress atrocities against suspected enemies. Apologies have not only been made between nation-states, but also within them—see for instance Bill Clinton's apology to survivors of the 48 year Tuskegee syphilis experiment which denied treatment to African American subjects, to Hawaii for its annexation and various US state governors' apologies for forced sterilizations through the 1980s in their states. The notion of "apology" I invoke here is admittedly broad; it ranges widely, across expressions of regret or remorse, admission of wrong-doing, "acknowledgements", etc. These differences are significant since they are points of negotiation and contention as discussions and settlements proceed. They partly, but not wholly, account for why some apologies are more controversial than others, and are less likely to be accepted by those apologized too. For instance, in discussions of the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement, there were various discussions from community activists and

government officials, about whether to use the term apology, expression of regret, or acknowledgement. Miki (2004:185) notes that while at points the government proposed “an expression of regret” (317), this was seen as tepid by community members, who nonetheless were also suspicious of the language of apologies. They saw apologies as an overly easy gesture, a form of cheap talk, reproducing a position for Japanese Canadians as victims on the receiving end of a political gesture to release the state from further accountability (265, 270).⁵ They preferred an “acknowledgement.”⁶

3. Apologies in Canada

The Japanese Canadian Redress agreement was the earliest public apology in Canada, but there have now been many others. Since 1985, Canada has seen about 10 major apologies, or quasi-apologies or “statements of reconciliation”.⁷ The apologies fall into several major groups. There are several apologies to indigenous people for forms of relocation or incarceration in the course of Canadian settlement (residential school settlement and High Arctic relocation). There are apologies (or requested apologies) for people of Ukrainian, Italian and Japanese descent (including Canadian citizens) who were incarcerated or relocated during World War I or, especially, World War II because they were seen as possible national threats. During World War I, 5000 Ukrainian There are apologies for barriers placed in the way of migration or admission to Canada of groups that are now

⁵ The Canadian prime minister did, however, use the word “apology” in the final statement. The apology, in full, was this: “I know that I speak for Members on all sides of the House today in offering to Japanese Canadians the formal and sincere apology of this Parliament for those past injustices against them, against their families, and against their heritage, and our solemn commitment and undertaking to Canadians of every origin that such violations will never again in this country be countenanced or repeated.” Prime Minister Brian Mulroney’s remarks to the House of Commons, Sept. 22, 1988. For clip of Mulroney offering the apology, see: <http://asia-canada.ca/new-attitudes/fairness-and-tolerance/apology>. This apology is 64 words. Apologies since this one have become much longer, and tend to include complex historical accounts, some of which are seen as exculpating Canada in complex ways, and repeated statements of apology. For instance, the apology for Chinese Head Tax is 859 words and the Apology to former students of Residential Schools is 863 words. Texts for these are in Henderson and Wakeham (2013). Analyses of these long texts are available in Cho (2013) and Mackey (2013).

⁶ I will not take up the definition of apologies here, but see Batisella (2014), Fraser (1981), Holmes (1989), Lakoff (2003), and Smith (2008).

⁷ Only two of these are listed in Nobles (2008) book—the apology for Japanese internment and the 1998 apology to Aboriginal people for residential schools.

significant political forces (Chinese, South Asian). And there are apologies for other forms of removal that are now seen as wrongful (British expulsion of francophones from the provinces now known as Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island), the removal of Black Canadians in Halifax). The form that redress initially took in some of these cases was seen as inadequate, and sometimes a further apology, or attempt at redress has been made (cf. High Arctic Relocation, Chinese head tax, residential schools, and apology for the Komagata Maru incident). The need to revise apologies and forms of redress, rather than suggesting the possibility of their imperfectibility, suggests precisely the ways in which these forms of redress will always be inadequate, a point to which I will return in the conclusion (*Appendix A* contains a brief summary of the apologies, listing the groups apologized to and whether or not they were accompanied by forms of redress).

These range widely in length, in venue, and in whether or not they are linked with other forms of redress. Strikingly, the earliest of these, in 1988, was the acknowledgement/apology to Japanese Canadians for internment during World War II. This timing is striking in part because it wasn't the earliest harm, nor the harm which affected the largest group of people, but it did affect those tied to a country and perhaps a political constituency with significant political clout. Although the response was framed as a one-time apology for a discrete action, it nonetheless set off a wave of other such requests, which have taken a variety of forms, some seen as more acceptable than others.

Political scientist Matt James (2008) considers what apologies do over and against other kinds of state actions. For minoritized, racialized or indigenous groups, apologies may help change meanings of national membership, or history. They are different from *monuments* or *pronouncement* in that they judge, assign responsibility, and acknowledge history. They are reactions to failures of formal equality and requests for full national inclusion—if one is discussing racialized groups that are not indigenous. For indigenous groups, they are requests for recognition of national sovereignty. James notes that apologies are also different from *trials/legal cases*: apologies are not legally binding, and they are open to public debates. They assign collective (not necessarily individual) guilt; they can be a way to try to head off a legal case, or individual assignments of responsibility (certainly a

key theme in some literature on mediation and malpractice is the role that apologies can play in preventing extended litigation and in defusing situations to lessen the cost of settlements (Bartels 2000, Cohen 1999, Pavlick 2002, Robbenolt 2005, Todres 2006) . Apologies thus recognize the past's bearing on present. They can't alter history, but they can account for it. They can't undo damage or erase the past, but they can change the present. Apologies, critically, incorporate an affective component—a point to which we'll return below. For all these reasons, apologies are often necessary, if not sufficient, for reconciliation. The ways in which they aren't sufficient is something I'll consider below. Phil Fontaine, then National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, in calling for a formal apology from the Canadian government for the internment and abuse of Native children in residential schools (an experience he had had himself), an apology that was perceived as slow in coming, wrote an open letter in 2008 that described what such an apology should include, and concluded that, "The power of a sincere apology is in the satisfaction of a basic human need. It can heal wounds of those who have been hurt. It can help establish trust. It can restore human dignity and self-respect. It can take the first step toward reconciliation. A sincere and honest apology given can add to the sum of justice in the world" (cited in Henderson and Wakeham 2013:334).

James (2008:139) has written about features which distinguish interpersonal from political apologies. He establishes a set of seven criteria which are linked to meaningful apologies, and assesses how each of the Canadian apologies offered at the time of his publication measures up on these dimensions.⁸ His criteria are less prescriptive than descriptive and heuristic; he uses them to assess the robustness of different apologies and the consistency of Canada's record, as well as which are more likely to be seen as sincere . The question his work raises is how to understand the relationship between the speech act and other forms of redress noting that redress without apology (e.g. as in Arctic Relocation)

⁸ These criteria are: Is the apology recorded officially in writing? Does the apology name the wrongs in question? Does the apology include an acceptance of responsibility? Does the apology include a statement of regret? Does the apology promise the act will not be repeated? Does the apology demand forgiveness? Is the apology hypocritical or arbitrary? Does the apology engages those who are wronged in dignified and serious ways that assure the wronged group the apology is sincere? Does it engage them in (1) publicity, (2) apology ceremonies, (3) and by offering concrete reparation?

is a forced reconciliation while apologies without significant redress (e.g. Chinese Head Tax) may simply ring hollow. Indigenous activists note that any form of redress which attempts to incorporate First Nations is a form of containment, rather than an act of decolonization (cf. Alfred 2009, Coulthard 2011, Henderson and Wakeham 2013, Kelly 2011, Llewellyn 2011, Mathur et al 2011; Million 2014, Rice and Snyder 2011); some argue, instead, for focusing on indigenous resurgence rather than reconciliation, recognition and redress.

Nonetheless, the failure to offer an apology can deepen a rift, and make it fester, as situations in which apologies have been requested and are denied show; indeed, this has been a key theme in recent debates about Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's understandings of Japanese war-time actions. While some (Howard-Hassmann and Gibney 2008) optimistically see apologies as potentially representing a new international order, others see them as fleeting, insignificant, inadequate, even a tool for cover-up. Some see them as a tool for remembering, others as a tool for forgetting (Miyagawa 2011:358). For some, reparations are a more effective way to address past wrongs, because they cannot simply be seen as "cheap talk" in the way that an apology alone might be (Nobles 2008). However, Nobles argues that reparations without apologies are often seen as unsatisfactory as well. She argues that reparations don't address claims about political membership while apologies do. Both reparations and apologies seek to alter the future. Reparations suggest that a debt has been settled. Sometimes apologies do too. But they may also be about what happens next. But accounts of apologies that try to assess what they do or don't do miss a key point about apologies—they don't adequately account for why they are happening now. Why are apologies occurring at this moment in late capitalism, at a moment when there are also strong neoliberal trends?

4. Historical Explanations for Apologies: Commemoration and Decolonization

Nobles (2008) observes in her global review that a number of recent apologies are linked to actions taken during World War II. A number of the apologies that occurred in Canada (that

requested for Ukrainian Canadians, that given to Japanese Canadians, Jewish Canadians and (in a less official fashion) to Italian Canadians) are also linked to war-time actions in World War I and II which treated certain ethnic/racialized citizens as less than full citizens. These actions exalted certain subjects (see Thobani 2007), notably those who are white and Western European, especially French and Anglo-Saxon as the presumptive and privileged citizens of Canada. Such citizens are likely also presumptively Christian in key ways—thus the emphasis on sin, confession, forgiveness in this idiom (see also Howard-Hassman and Gibson 2008). The apologies occur around the 50th anniversary of actions taken while at least some of those adversely affected survive. Strikingly the request for an apology to Ukrainian Canadians for negative treatment during WWI was withdrawn after all directly affected had died. This focus on war-time actions allows the state to suggest that such exclusions are unusual and limited (and also suggests other kinds of harms do not fall within the category of those requiring apologies; see Henderson and Wakeham 2013).

Nobles (2008:7) argues that many apologies or the more tepid expressions of remorse are also linked to the end of colonial rule, or key moments commemorating the end of colonial rule, as for instance Japanese Foreign Minister's Shiina Etsusaburo's 1965 expression of regret for an unfortunate period between the two countries, the ambassador of Germany's expression of deep regret for massacres in the early 20th century in what is now Namibia, or the Belgian government's expression of regrets and apologies for its role in the assassination of the first prime minister of its former colony of Congo. One might also understand the apologies linked to the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa in this way.

However, settler colonialism continues in Canada. While all of these apologies might be understood as attempts to include racialized groups more fully in the nation, this is most controversial for indigenous nations, who are precisely challenging attempts to include them, and asserting their own sovereignty. The three apologies to indigenous people in Canada (apologies to indigenous groups in Australia work in a similar way) try to preemptively declare colonialism as over, or as something that happened in the past, and are contested, precisely, for attempting to make such claims. Australian scholar Patrick Wolfe

has noted that settler colonialism is “a structure not an event” (2006:388), by which he means that settler colonialism is not something that happened only at the moment of contact between European settler nations and indigenous people, but is a series of on-going policies and practices (in Canada and Australia, these include land appropriation, removal of children from their parents, legislation restricting who can be seen as indigenous, conversion and more) which continue to perpetuate settler colonialism. Apologies, by contrast, treat settler colonialism as an act, or acts, in the past, and don’t address these structural concerns.

Both of Nobles’ explanations of why apologies are occurring now are framed in political terms. As such, these accounts tend to explain apologies largely in ways that align with what an apology is supposed to do—i.e. express remorse and create reconciliation and national inclusion. However, there are other kinds of explanations available, which look at politics in a different frame. It is striking that both the Liberal and Conservative parties had refused apologies, but the conservatives swung away from refusing such apologies to considering them in the middle of a tight election where Asian-Canadians were seen as pivotal to electoral success (Henderson and Wakeham 2013). While one way of assessing the chronology of apologies is dating them from World War II, and processes of decolonization after, another could note that the apologies begin in the mid-1980s, at precisely the moment associated by many (eg David Harvey 2005) with the inception of the onset of neoliberal economic restructuring in many of the affected countries. How are apologies entwined with neoliberal transformations?

5. Neoliberal Multiculturalism: Another Kind of Historical Explanation

In this section, I want to consider the way of authors who are investigating the way that understandings of multiculturalism, and diversity more broadly, are changing in Canada in the context of neoliberal economic and political transformations. These authors look at changes in the ways that structures of government and funding are changing, changes in why and when diversity is valued, and why managing emotion and emotional reactions is particularly central to recent discussions.

Political scientist Matt James (2013) is interested in the question of state restructuring and funding. He argues that state restructuring under neoliberal policies tries to remake the conditions under which organized groups communicate with government and society. He calls this *neoliberal heritage redress*. It is not accidental then that apologies occur at the same moment as policies of trade liberalization, economic deregulation and state retrenchment in the 1980s and early 1990s. Rather than redress being part of the last gasp of liberalism, it aligns with the early signs of neoliberalism. James argues that *neoliberal multiculturalism* is the state's way of distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate forms of diversity, and thus also legitimate and illegitimate claims on the state by anti-racist and anti-colonial activists by focusing on the business or trade advantages of diversity, or counting up diversity's assets. He contrasts this with *social movement multiculturalism* which he sees as calling attention to injustices and strengthening activist networks linking specific ethnic groups to labour, anti-racist and other progressive groups. He argues that the changes seen in Canadian multicultural policies since the 1990s—moving it from a free-standing ministry to a minor unit in the Dept. of Canadian Heritage, and then to the Dept. of Citizenship and Immigration, making groups compete for one-time grants that financially weakened the groups and made them dependent on state support—were part of a process of defanging earlier initiatives focused on social inequality and anti-racism.

Instead, the focus now is on Canadian heritage (rather than ethnic heritage) and social cohesion (like the integration discourses one now sees in Europe and Australia). For instance, in 2005 a new program—the Acknowledgement, Commemoration and Education (ACE) program was established within the multicultural directorate of the Department of Canadian Heritage. It was replaced in 2006 by the Community Historical Recognition Program (linked to changes in political parties—though the function is the same). Both use conditional project funding as a disciplinary tool to shape the forms of advocacy grassroots groups take on. The funded initiatives need to be consistent with cohesion, Canadian identity, and cross-cultural understanding. However, apologies help sustain a Canadian brand (one that some like Henderson and Wakeham (2013) have described as increasingly

worn out), that is distinguished from the American superpower on its southern border, by associating the country with benevolent aid, peacekeeping and multiculturalism. The establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission after the apology for residential schools allowed Canada to claim the title of the first “established democracy” and the first G8 nation to initiate a TRC.

Wakisaka’s discussion (in this issue) of the different ways *kyosei* can be understood makes a distinction which parallels this distinction between neoliberal and social movement multiculturalism. He notes that early understandings of *kyosei* and *kyotou* arose in the 1980s in community-based activism, to redress inequalities that minorities were experiencing in Japan. This was followed much later by government interest in *kyosei*. This government interest may also be linked to an attempt to redress harm, but it is also linked to economic and trade interests, which may not always fully align with these same goals. It is striking to see, as Wakisaka points out, that has been particular interest in people of Japanese descent migrating from Latin America, because of the role they play as workers in the Japanese economy. This is likely also true because of the key role people of Japanese descent play in building relationships with burgeoning economies in Latin America. Agricultural land in Brazil is seen as key to securing Japanese food sovereignty, and Brazil is seen as key to building a bridge to the parts of Africa which are Portuguese-speaking; Africa is also of concern for reasons of food security, but to counter the growing influence of China in many countries there. Motobayashi (2015) describes these issues in her discussion of the training of Japanese volunteers for various development, including language instruction, programs in Brazil, and the changing notions of Japanese heritage and citizenship linked to this political and economic moment.

The ways that an interest in diversity in domestic settings dynamics is linked to global economic and political dynamics is a key theme of the book *Selling Diversity* (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2011). In this book, two political scientists look at changing views on diversity within Canada since the 1980s. They argue that in three key areas of Canadian public policy—employment equity, immigration, and multiculturalism—one sees an increasing emphasis forward placed on rationales that are linked to business, especially

markets, efficiency, competitiveness and individualism rather than, say, community or responsibility (20). The cost is that commitments to justice and respect are, though not entirely abandoned, muted (12). They note that in the 1980s, as multiculturalism was increasingly seen as a business advantage, certain aspects of multiculturalism were critiqued for focusing on group rights rather than individual freedoms. The short-lived department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship had its functions folded into a Department of Canadian Heritage, a change linked to a move from support for cultural maintenance (funding for ethnocultural organizations became scarcer and more competitive) to fostering attachment to Canada. Funding for multicultural initiatives markedly declined, from a (modest!) high of \$27 million/year in the early 1990s to \$18.7 million by 1996-7 (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2011:115). Though many apologies have been accompanied by modest forms of financial compensation, it is here that we might see them as “cheap talk”—the forms of compensation still cost the state less than the regular funding of on-going initiatives. Instead, as Abu-Laban and Gabriel document, the focus has been on something the Australian government calls “productive diversity,” i.e. fostering linkages between business, trade and multiculturalism/diversity. These have included a directory of ethnocultural and business contacts, establishing an ethnocultural business community network, funding research on how valuing diversity is of economic benefit, exploring how to enhance Canada’s trade links with the Pacific rim, and conferences exploring how to handle human resources, diversity and global competitiveness (2011:116-7). The Canadian expertise in multiculturalism has been increasingly marketed and in Europe, Africa and of course Asia. As Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2011:122) note the Japanese ambassador to Canada has proclaimed an interest in Canadian experiences in dealing with diversity, as a strategy for improving the Japanese economy in the context of globalization. The on-going collaboration between the University of Toronto and the RESPECT program on critical approaches to multiculturalism can be seen as complexly intertwined with these developments. Our goal in teaching the course on multiculturalism and its critics to RESPECT students has been to offer an overview of Canadian multiculturalism, but not to sell it as a solution, in the way the Canadian government is doing. Nonetheless, we have

noticed that our graduate students, who are themselves versed in the problems of multiculturalism, might nonetheless see Canada as a particularly good site for learning how to critique multiculturalism! The government funding that supports the RESPECT program arises out of some of these complex international and domestic imperatives in Japan. Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2011) argue that the new linkages being forged between domestic multicultural policy and international political and economic agendas often moves away from a focus on national inclusion and belonging, and occludes attention to gender and class inequities, as they are complexly intertwined with ethnicity and racialization. One challenge, then, is to think about how to ensure these questions of inclusion, and national transformation, are not lost at this moment.

Seeing this changing approach to multiculturalism as selling diversity (or, harnessing diversity to economic goals) helps to explain a particular puzzle linked to the acknowledgement of Japanese Canadian internment, the fact that the first acknowledgement/apology was not made in Canada, but in Japan, in 1976 by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau—twelve years before the redress agreement in Canada (Miki 2004: 184). At the time, Robert Nixon had just made it more difficult to send Canadian products to the U.S., by raising duties. Trudeau outlined a “third way”, which would lessen the economic and cultural influence of the U.S. by focusing instead on stronger economic ties with Europe and Japan (Langdon 1983). Japan was touted as Canada’s “New West.” Miki rightly critiques this initiative for offering an apology first to the Japanese government instead of to Japanese Canadians, and for the ways in which it failed to recognize those of Japanese descent as Canadians (311-2). While it does serve to thrust Japanese Canadians out of the normative notion of Canadian, it also shows the new and changing meanings of citizenship, from nationally to transnationally defined. Trudeau, in praising the skills and aptitudes of Japanese Canadians, is indirectly praising Japan for the same skills. It is also significant that the apology occurred during a free trade mission, in the process of trying to negotiate a Framework for Economic Cooperation, in ways that suggest the Canadian government was beginning to recognize how the management of internal “diversity” could have economic and political ramifications in a globalizing moment.

Apologies thus recognize diversity in neoliberal terms, and not simply liberal ones. Henderson and Wakeham argue that a politics of redress and historical reckoning “seems to promote a dialectical transcendence of precisely those troubling contents of multicultural ‘diversity’ and difference’ that are not amenable to folklorization or commodification” (14). They also help circumscribe what, in the state’s view, counts as harms, since only certain actions receive apologies. In Canada, the acts that can seek redress are carefully defined—e.g. war time measures that are seen as extraordinary acts in extraordinary times, but not ordinary forms of immigration, or state surveillance, or incarceration, or labor policies. What counts as acceptable can, of course, change. For instance, immigration legislation which permitted hiring live-in caregivers (an overwhelming number of whom were from the Caribbean, and then from the Philippines) has been labelled by many activists as an extreme form of labour exploitation, in which women from Third World countries often experience involuntary incarceration, economic and sexual exploitation. Students in the 2014 RESPECT program visited the Philippine Women’s Centre, which engages in activism on behalf of such caregivers, most of whom are Filipino.⁹ If, for instance, the Philippines becomes a more powerful trade partner and economic force, would government framings of this form of labour change (there are already some internal changes to the legislation governing this form of work)? Would there, will there, be apologies for a kind of labour exploitation that almost exclusively was experienced by Filipinas?

Henderson (2013) notes that it is striking how the reparations for Aboriginal residential schooling and Ukrainian Canadian internment (the former which is for aging adult survivors, the latter largely affecting adult men) became focused on the *involuntary incarceration of children*. During World War I, 5000 Ukrainian Canadians (largely men) were interred in labour camps as former citizens of the Austro-Hungarian empire. In the case of Ukrainian Canadian interment, there were other harms—disenfranchisement from

⁹ Students overwhelmingly voted this the most interesting field trip in 2014, in part because many of them had come wanting to explore ideas of whether such a program could be feasible in Japan, and came away with a sense of some of its injustices. One student said, “I realized I was asking the wrong questions.” They also found it compelling because it was one of the first community organizations visited where there was a critique of multiculturalism, something which had seemed academic to them up until that point. Also, the PWC does not accept funding from agencies that might constrain its political mandate. They raise money through such activities as catering. They catered a wonderful lunch for RESPECT students.

voting, depotation, economic exploitation, harassment of labor organizers for communist/socialist sympathies (66). Residential schooling was mandated by the Canadian government for Aboriginal children from the late nineteenth through the late 20th century (the last school closed in 1996), in order to enforce the assimilation of children into Canadian society. At least 150,000 children were taken from their homes, often forcibly; many were sexually or physically abused (for more details see the Appendix). For Aboriginal groups, there are on-going claims about land, resources, sovereignty, and the regulation of Indian status (67). The apology for internment in residential schools rapidly led to discourses about “appropriate” education for entrepreneurship and fiscal accountability, and on self-reliance that doesn’t require government support. Henderson argues that this is a different kind of diversity discourse—one not linked to “anti-discrimination so much as the *indiscrimination* of capital in the face of commodifiable difference” (2012:73).

Henderson and Wakeham (2013) in a recent collection that looks at a broad set of themes—settler culture, citizenship and nationhood, testimony and truth-telling, grieving and mourning, and redress and transnationalism—linked to apologies in Canada nonetheless note their awareness of certain harms which are not seen as terrains for apologies (for instance, labour exploitation, or certain kinds of medical interventions now seen as inappropriate). These are not just sites where apologies have been refused, but where apologies are not even seen as a thinkable response. They ask what kinds of harms are not seen as amenable to the culture of redress (12). They also note the ways that the apologies are largely linked to racialized forms of difference, and ask how this flattens out internal differences in communities. Further, in a Canadian submission to the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance” redress claims for past racial wrongs were sharply separated from those “unrelated to race”; they are interested in how such boundaries are drawn, and what is intelligible as a “race-related” form of harm (10-11). They consider how certain forms of redress (for instance, the construction of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation as part of the Japanese Canadian redress agreement) may solidify notions of race, rather than questioning them.

And they consider what such understandings of race may do in the current movement. They note that in state-appropriated forms of reconciliation, “the stress is now on the relationship of tiles of the mosaic to their own painful pasts, with a view to healing any remaining wounds that work to divide or distance the constituency from a full identification with the national projects of constant improvement and innovation geared towards global competitiveness” (Henderson and Wakeham 2013:13). Dian Million (2013) argues that the neoliberal ethos is trauma. Instead of silencing victims, trauma’s logic supposes a violence that overwhelms, which needs to be discharged through a politics of reconciliation. Its focus is affective, rather than political. This focus on managing the affect of indigenous people is part of what she calls the “neoliberal multicultural biopolitics” that replaces disciplinary colonialism and welfare state caring (8). For a Japanese example, in relation to *kyōsei*, see Wakisaka, this issue.

The focus on affect—and, often, on the intimate politics of gender, sex and domesticity—is part of the drive towards political, social, economic and affective personal management in the name of “human development” or “human capital” or “capacity building” (11). For indigenous groups, she notes there is a complicated intertwining of state projects of emotional and psychological self-care informed by trauma vs self-determination (6). Indigenous nations are often interested in self-governance, as a way of asserting their sovereignty and national status, and as a way of challenging the damaging influence of the settler colonial state on their economy, education and health. However, the indigenous movements towards self-determination are not necessarily incompatible with neoliberal forms of devolution, with their focus on state savings, self-management and self-sufficiency (3). Various levels of Canadian government are also interested in off-loading certain expenses, especially those linked to functions of the welfare state.

Million’s (2013) work unpacks the significance of theories of indigenous trauma in neoliberal times. Her work is richly in dialogue with Rose (1999), a genealogy of emotion in Western states comparable with Foucault’s genealogy of sexuality, which asks how emotions came to be constituted in their current form as physiological forces, located within individuals, and granting access to an inner truth about the self and which also asks

why preoccupations with sexuality and emotion are among the defining features of late capitalism in the west. Rose notes that in many western nations, “citizenship is primarily realized through acts of free but responsibilized choice in a variety of private, corporate, and quasi-public practices from working to shopping” (1999, p. xxiii). Such a view of citizenship leads, simultaneously, to a celebration of choice and self-realization through consumption, as well as to a focus on diseases of the will, or failures of self-control (see McElhinny 2010 for a review of theories of affect). Trauma, here, may be understood as an impediment to this kind of full realization of a neoliberal self.

6. Apologies, Again

Apologies are often necessary for addressing historical wrongs, but they are not sufficient. Apologies without additional steps are often seen as a way of sanitizing official memory, making it safe, TAMING the past’s potentially disruptive potential. The concerns about apologies, when used in this way, are similar to the concerns that Wakisaka (this issue) voices about certain uses of *kyosei*, namely that they are used to ask for peaceful co-existence, and assimilation, in ways which do not fully address inequities, and which perhaps have not fully taken into account historical harms. Apologies are often necessary—they are about dignity, empathy (Henderson 2013); they require honesty, generosity, humility, commitment and courage, as Phil Fontaine eloquently outlined above. But they are not sufficient. Apologies, without more, are ways of reinscribing racist wrong-doing as signposts on the way to national progress. Apologies will be seen as cheap talk in neoliberal times—if history is not widely rewritten, if adequate reparations are not received, and if changes are not made in similar policies. And, sometimes, even when they are. As I noted above, a number of apologies and redress agreements (cf. High Arctic Relocation, Chinese head tax, residential schools, and apology for the Komagata Maru incident) were initially or continue to be seen as inadequate. The need to revise apologies and forms of redress, rather than suggesting the possibility of their imperfectibility, suggests precisely the ways in which these forms of redress, while necessary, will always require more, in part

because state commitments to ensure that the same or similar harms are not repeated, or on-going problems are not be monitored and acted upon.

However, there is one striking and recent development. The claims which were meant to relativize harm have helped to unite various groups, as they now begin, slowly, to think about what all of these apologies mean, together, and what the next steps for progressive movements should thus be. It's striking, for instance, that the legal advisor for the National Association of Japanese Canadians had extensive background in Native land claims (Miki 2004: 232). One of the three volumes published by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (Mathur et al 2011) focuses precisely on intertwined experiences of racism and colonialism for indigenous people in Canada and people of colour. The new on-line journal at the University of Toronto, *Decolonization*, does the same.

International interactions, of the kind the RESPECT program has fostered between Osaka and Toronto, Japan and Canada also are a critical tool for social justice. These exchanges allow us to get new ideas for how to proceed. They allow us to work together to think about how social justice work can be hijacked, or muted, by on-going and changing forms of colonialism and capitalism. They also allow us to pull in international perspectives, and pressure, in certain situations where this can be particularly effective. When the RESPECT program sponsored a visit to key sites in Osaka in June 2015 for some of the University of Toronto instructors, the speakers at the Human Rights Centre at which some students had done placements noted the importance of drawing attention to their on-going work on anti-racism and indigeneity in international circles. Some of the key changes in Canada (for instance, the end to gender discrimination against indigenous women, by not recognizing their status as indigenous—cf. Lawrence 2003) has happened because of international pressure, in alliance with local social movements. All of these complexly intertwined histories deserve further attention; the movements they produce will demand it

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Appendix A: Detailed Timeline Some Apologies, Quasi-Apologies, and Statements of Reconciliation in Canada (see James 2008, Henderson and Wakeham 2013 for more details)

1985-1994 *Call for apology for Ukrainian Canadian internment during WWI.*

Overview: 5000 Ukrainian Canadians were interred during WWI, as former citizens of Austro-Hungarian empire, in labour camps. Some seizure of cash and valuables. Also interred were some 5000 Bulgarians, Romanians, Poles (all survivors are now deceased).

Apology: Request for apology withdrawn, as all affected are now deceased.

Redress: Erection of historical plaques in Banff National Park (calls for similar panels in other 23 sites).

1988 *Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement.*

Overview: All people of Japanese descent (approximately 20,880 people) were removed from coastal British Columbia from 1942-5 (either to interior, or deported). Houses, properties, businesses were seized without compensation, to pay for interment.

Apology: Prime Minister Mulroney offered formal apology in House of Commons. Japanese Canadians were explicitly instructed to remain silent in the public galleries (though as Miki 2004 reports, they did not).

Redress: payments of \$21,000 to 18,000 survivors; \$12 million community development fund; \$24 million for establishment of Canadian Race Relations Foundation; certificate of acknowledgement of past injustices sent to each Japanese-Canadian affected.

1990 *Apology to Italian Canadians interned during WW II*

Overview: 700 Italian Canadians (1% of Italian Canadian population at the time) were interred for leadership roles in Fascist organization. Bank accounts frozen; some properties seized.

Apology: Prime Minister Mulroney offered apology at luncheon for Canadian Italian Business Professional Association/National Council of Italian Canadians. Recorded in press release.

Redress: Mulroney signaled there would be reparations; none forthcoming. Seen as controversial laundering of history, by some.

1996 *High Arctic Relocation Reconciliation Agreement*

Overview: Forced relocation of 90 Inuit from northern Quebec 1800 miles northward for "rehabilitation" into subsistence lifestyle, and to stake claims on sparsely populated Canadian north. During 1950s, lasting until 1988.

Forced reconciliation: No apology in 1996. Instead, there was a Poorly publicized signing ceremony in Iqaluit; Agreement is in appendix to press release. Later, 2010 apology from Minister of Indian Affairs, redressing what was seen as attempt to preempt further claims through non-apology. Seen as inadequate by many, given that it was not Prime Minister in House of Commons.

Redress: Beneficiaries were required to acknowledge that government officials acted with honourable intentions in best interests of the Inuit, as understood at the time. \$10 million trust fund for relocated individuals and families established in 1996.

1998 *Statement of Reconciliation to Aboriginal Peoples*

Overview: Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Jane Stewart offered words of regret for Canada's colonial past at a luncheon in government meeting room. Recognizes wide range of colonial injuries including, but not limited to residential schools.

Redress: Words of regret were linked to 1996 report from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. One result of the report was \$350 million for the establishment of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, designed to promote healing initiatives in Aboriginal communities.

2003 *Royal Proclamation of 2003 (on the Great Acadian Upheaval)*

Overview: Britain expelled of French-speaking Acadians from maritime areas in what is now Canada, beginning in 1755. Approximately 11,500 of 14,000 Acadians were expelled, to 13 U.S. colonies, Britain, France, New Orleans,

No Apology. Queen Elizabeth issued The Royal Proclamation of 2003, formally known as Proclamation Designating 28 July of Every Year as "A Day of Commemoration of the Great Upheaval", to acknowledge the expulsion.

Redress: Designation of Day of Commemoration

2006 *Apology for Chinese Head Tax Redress*

Overview. Migrants from China were charged a prohibitive fee for migration (called the head tax (\$50 from 1885-190, \$100 from 1900-1903,

\$500 from 1902-1923). From 1923- until late 1960s Chinese migration was effectively banned to.

Apology: Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized in House of Commons.

Redress: Living head tax payers and spouses received \$20,000. Seen as symbolic since there were 2000 survivors when campaign began in 1984, but only 20 survived by time of redress. Descendents of others continue to request redress.

2008

Apology for Canadian Government Involvement in Forced Removal of Aboriginal Children from Families for Internment in Residential Schools

Overview: Residential, or boarding, schooling was mandated by the Canadian government for Aboriginal children from the late nineteenth through the late 20th century (the last school closed in 1996), in order to enforce the assimilation of children into Canadian society. The schools were often run by religious organizations. At least 150,000 children were taken from their homes, often forcibly; many were sexually or physically abused. Inadequate health care and poor nutrition meant many also died. Because the policy of many such schools was to “save the child by destroying the Indian”, students also experienced extreme violence against their cultural traditions—being beaten for using their languages, or native names, or socializing with their siblings.

Apologies: Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized in House of Commons. Note that various religious groups (the United Church, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church) had issued statements of contrition, confessions, or apologies starting in the mid-1980s before the government statements for their

involvement in residential schoolings. The Roman Catholic Church's "expression of sorrow" came more belatedly, in 2009. (Henderson and Wakeham 2013:321). Indigenous leaders were given the opportunity to respond (unlike previous apologies).

Redress: The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), a settlement package negotiated between the Government of Canada, the churches, lawyers representing Survivors, and the Assembly of First Nations. Includes: Common Experience Payment (CEP) to be paid to all eligible former students; Independent Assessment Process (IAP), for the resolution of claims of sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and other wrongful acts suffered at Indian Residential Schools; Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), mandated to hold seven national events, support community events, create a public historical record and promote awareness about the Residential Schools system and its impacts; Commemoration, a \$20 million initiative which supports local, regional and national activities that honour, educate, remember, memorialize and/or pay tribute to former Indian Residential School students, their families and their communities; and measures to support healing such as the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program. The Report of the TRC was issued in spring 2015.

2008

Apology for Komagata Maru Case

Overview: In 1914 a ship, the Komagata Maru, carrying 376 passengers from India was prevented from landing in Vancouver. Federal government invoked "continuous journey" legislation passed in 1908 which required all immigrants to come directly from their country of origin; this legislation meant to restrict immigration from India. Passengers noted they were British citizens and had the right to visit any part of the empire. When ship

ultimately had to return to India, many prisoners were imprisoned and some were shot, putatively for instigating revolt against the British Raj.

Apologies. Offered by British Columbia Legislative Assembly and by Canadian House of Commons. Also, in same year, an apology by Prime Minister at a community gathering (rejected by community groups as unofficial; request for apology in House of Commons has not been forthcoming).

Redress: No form of redress linked with apology, though federal apology mentions the possibility of considering a commemorative monument or museum.

2010

Apology for Africville.

Overview: Residents of Africville were evicted from their community from 1964-1967; Africville was a long-standing Black community in Halifax, first established by Black Loyalists promised land during war of 1812.

Apology: Offered by Mayor of Halifax

Redress: Halifax and Government of Canada establish a \$250,000 heritage trust for museum and replica for community church. \$4.5 million compensation funds. Restore Africville name to site that had been renamed as Seaview Park.