June 11, 2016 |

Statements

BCFED marks National Day of Reconciliation

Vancouver – June 11 is the National Day of Reconciliation, marking the federal government's apology in 2008 to the indigenous people harmed by the residential school system.

The following is a statement from Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Federation of Labour:

"June 11 is an important date - it marks the day in 2008 when the Prime Minister apologized on behalf of the Government of Canada to the survivors of the residential school system.

That apology was an important step in beginning the long process of healing our nation. The apology combined with the Truth and Reconciliation Report, released in June 2015, means that more and more Canadians are learning about a disturbing part of our history.

It is a history that is must not be ignored.

Reconciliation is an opportunity to educate people about the history of our country. It is a chance to learn about the devastating impacts of residential schools and the cultural genocide of indigenous people and families.

It is an opportunity to open a dialogue between indigenous and non-indigenous people and create empathy and trust.

It is an occasion for all of us to honour the strength and tenacity of the Aboriginal, Inuit and Metis.

The National Day of Reconciliation was created by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to generate awareness of indigenous history and to celebrate the diversity of our country.

On this day, the AFN invites all churches to toll their bells at 11:00 am in honour of the National Day of Reconciliation and to show their solidarity and support.

The BC Federation of Labour honours the relationship is has created with indigenous and First Nations organizations and communities. The National Day of Reconciliation is a day to show solidarity and to stand together in the fight for equality and justice.

We continue to demand that all the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Report be implemented and we support the calls for actions for public awareness in workplaces and communities.

I encourage you to join events in your community to celebrate the National Day of Reconciliation, and to keep learning and living the principles of reconciliation in our daily lives.

In solidarity and reconciliation.”