

**WILL NICHOLLS**

*the Nation*

Will Nicholls' editorial is a powerful indictment of the Harper government's refusal to hold a public enquiry into the disappearance of Aboriginal women across the country. Using both hard facts and the stories of real people, Nicholls doesn't pull any punches and calls out all those groups who fail to protect Aboriginal women.

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editorial

**Murdered but not missed**

by Will Nicholls

A renewed cry for a national inquiry into the missing and murdered Aboriginal women came after the discovery of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine's body in a bag beside Winnipeg's Red River. Unfazed, Prime Minister Stephen Harper again

relation to the society that produced them. In other words, their sociological causes. Inquiries are not to solve specific crimes but to understand them in order to prevent others.

But prevention seems to hit the back burner where Aboriginal women are concerned. The RCMP won't disclose information about where they are most likely to be attacked. Explained RCMP Supt. Tyler Bates, Director of National Aboriginal Policing and Crime Prevention Services, said, "We certainly wouldn't want to cause offence to anyone residing or leadership within those communities."

Yet police will tell parents where their children may be in danger from predators without worrying about community response. Transparency doesn't seem to apply to Aboriginal women.

We need to understand why roughly 1300 Native women have disappeared from our communities and our families since the 1980s. To that number, we should add the girls in residential schools who never came home. We need to train police forces near First Nations communities on how to deal with what is happening. More aboriginal officers need to be recruited to those agencies.

But, in the end, we need a national inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women because without an effort to understand this tragedy we accept that their lives are worth less than those of other communities in Canada. In this day and age that is not acceptable. It requires a

**EDITORIAL**

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**The duty of witness**

*Forgetting evil is a dangerous corrosive*

As we approach Holocaust Remembrance Day this coming Sunday night, and the commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising that follows soon thereafter, there is a moral duty to take a hard look at the world around us. What we see must compel us to the responsibility of memory and witness. Particularly as, seemingly all around us, there is a desire to forget.

Stories flood us from around the world - the western world - of school after school, education ministry after education ministry, reducing or eliminating Holocaust education so as not to "offend" or "disturb" certain groups. In a time when so many, particularly young people, are informed by nothing more than sixty second sound bites and 140 character tweets, how can we hope to have the informed citizenry so necessary to the success and survival of free societies without an understanding of history? Where we have come from and what mankind is capable of is essential if we are to guard against repetition of horrors that we still see today.

Here in Quebec, world history is an elective, and only in Sec V. How are young people supposed to gauge the character of man if the Holocaust brought the world into what can rightly be called the 20th century? Mankind's fleeting encounters with progress red

World War II was not simply about military conflict between men and women. It was about the capacity for the human race to descend into the hell of bloodlust. All civilizations are a lesson for today. A lesson we must vigilantly disseminate. Inelegance, inelegant self-absorption and ungracious avarice, which smiling images of electronic advertising reflect reality. History pass judgment someday again with the terror

Tailoring the passing on of knowledge, or indeed as not to disturb sensibilities, is a betrayal not only to the memory of those Canadians who paid the ultimate price in fighting for a more just Canada, but to the multi-cultural sensibilities or potential of the public trust and a retreat from the search for truth. Social "peace" is not the ultimate goal. Justice is. And that includes the study of inconvenient history - the necessity - the urgency - of speaking the truth.

Chris McGovern, a former education advisor to the Prime Minister, once wrote that, "History is not a vehicle for propaganda." Fear of facts is today as prevalent among the young as it is among the old. In either case, whether as deceit or self-interest, it is corrosive.

Free societies - liberal pluralistic civilizations - must adapt to the less free and the less liberal. For what is the point where the teaching of democracy itself is being replaced by those who reject the responsibility of liberty?

The hard truth is this: if we choose to live free and in a fidelity to its teaching, can we give future generations the ability to stand the evil that men do.

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**BERYL WAJSMAN**

*The Suburban City Edition*

Beryl Wajzman's piece on the reduction of Holocaust education within schools around the world reminds the reader that history isn't always pretty, but is vital to know to prevent future tragedies. The editorial effectively demolishes all cited reasons for not teaching about the Holocaust without relying on an appeal to the reader's emotions.

editorial

**PKP and the PQ**

by Lyle Stewart

Even before he announced he would be a Parti Québécois candidate in the April 7 provincial election, this campaign was already all about Pierre Karl Péladeau and his Quebecor media empire.

As the owner of almost half of all media in Quebec - in print, radio and television - PKP has over the past few years engineered the bizarre cultural panic here over religious minorities and the so-called accommodations they allegedly demand of the white-bread majority in the province.

The fact that a first-generation immigrant may have greeted customers at his tiny Montreal dépanneur in English merited lurid headlines on the front page of his tabloid *Journal de Montréal* and would lead the news broadcast of his TVA network over the last few years. His media threw massive resources into tracking down and denouncing anything or anybody that didn't narrowly conform to the dominant culture of white unilingual francophones.

That campaign set the stage for the PQ's horrific Charter of Secularism, the central issue of this election, and which would chase anyone with visible signs of minority religious faith out of public life. It's a drastic betrayal of the values of PQ founder René Lévesque, and the attempt to create a civic nationalism not based on race or faith.

So, while many commentators and opposition parties concentrate on Péladeau's power to affect news coverage as a future member of the Quebec government, the fact is that the damage is already done. His media have been campaigning and intentionally shaping political attitudes for years.

That explains why Péladeau repeatedly lied over the past year, even up to the eve of the election, about his political intentions. He needed to maintain the myth of media independence until forced to at least create the illusion of being hands off once he formally entered the election race.

As one of the richest, and most powerful, businesspeople in Quebec, no one

should be under any illusion about his motivation to get his hands on the levers of political power here. Even as he busts unions and advocates devastating cutbacks to public services, Péladeau's business empire exists as a gift from taxpayers.

After inheriting Quebecor from his legendary father, Pierre Péladeau, Pierre Karl ran the multinational Quebecor World printing division into bankruptcy. But when the cable giant Vidéotron came up for sale, the PQ government of then-premier Bernard Landry forced the Quebec's pension fund Caisse de dépôt et placement to spend \$3.2 billion to help Quebecor buy Vidéotron. Our investment is now only worth \$1.7 billion, but for Péladeau, the cable company is a license to print money.

Now, of course, taxpayers are building a \$400 million arena in Quebec City to give to Péladeau in his quest for an NHL team. Entrepreneurship? Not quite. This is crony capitalism at its worst. It's hard to imagine someone with a greater sense of entitlement.

Péladeau's influence has already led to dumping a PQ promise to update the labour code to forbid the kind of scab replacement labour he used to ride out the brutal two-year lockout imposed on workers at the *Journal de Montréal* in 2009. The PQ had pledged to stop this kind of labour abuse, but no longer. Also gone are last year's PQ promises to protect the environment, enlarge the public daycare system, raise mining royalty rates and to restore public faith in our democratic process. Not a coincidence.

As ludicrous as it may appear, in university Péladeau changed the first letter in his second name to honour his then-idol, Karl Marx. Now, of course, socialism - and, one could argue, the social good - is Pierre Karl's avowed enemy. If for no other reason, Pierre Karl Péladeau's poisonous influence on public life in Quebec should make electors hesitate before voting for the Parti Québécois on April 7.

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**LYLE STEWART**

*the Nation*

Lyle Stewart effectively makes the case for how Pierre Karl Peladeau has not only enflamed the province's cultural debates but how his influence has allowed him and his businesses to flourish all the while nudging the Parti Québécois well to the right of its traditional ideological home. Taking on such a powerful figure takes courage.