



A Knock on the Door
The Essential History of Residential Schools
from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
 Foreword by Phil Fontaine

“It can start with a knock on the door one morning. It is the local Indian agent, or the parish priest, or, perhaps, a Mounted Police officer.” So began the school experience of many Indigenous children in Canada for more than a hundred years, and so begins the history of residential schools prepared by the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).

Between 2008 and 2015, the TRC provided opportunities for individuals, families, and communities to share their experiences of residential schools and released several reports based on 7,000 survivor statements and five million documents from government, churches, and schools, as well as a solid grounding in secondary sources.

A Knock on the Door, published in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation, gathers material from the several reports the TRC has produced to present the essential history and legacy of residential schools in a concise and accessible package that includes new materials to help inform and contextualize the journey to reconciliation that Canadians are now embarked upon.

Phil Fontaine is a former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and has been credited by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada with placing the Indian Residential schools on the national agenda when he spoke publicly, in 1990, of the abuse he and fellow students experienced at the Ft. Alexander School.

Aimée Craft is the Director of Research at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and an associate professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba. She is the award-winning author of *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty*.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established in 2008 and led by the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair (Chair), Dr Marie Wilson, and Chief Wilson Littlechild.

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“There are good and bad things in our society, successes and failures. **But there is only one fundamental reality that remains unaddressed. That is the situation of indigenous peoples.** This is the single most important issue before us, whether we are recently arrived in Canada or have been here for centuries. This is the prime issue on which we should be judging governments and potential governments.”

—John Raulston Saul in *The Globe and Mail*.

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