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Let's acknowledge that although no level of anti-Semitism is acceptable in Canada or anywhere else, the psychological abuse, physical abuse, disappearance, and even murder of aboriginal women poses a much greater problem (at least in this country), much to the indifference of many Canadians.

It was the Haudenosaunee (also known as the Iroquois) who developed the first representational democracy in the world, who were the first to give women the vote, and whose form of government inspired the American Constitution. Those ideas, in turn, crossed the Atlantic from west to east, and inspired the French Revolution. The French trans-

lated them into three famous words: *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.

Fraternité, in the French sense of the word, means brotherhood, from the Latin root *frater*. And whereas Canada is now one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world, historical relations between Canada and its Aboriginal Peoples were hardly the example of *fraternité*.

Under the paternalistic Indian Act, aboriginal Canadians suffered, and continue to suffer, the effects of land and resource expropriation, forced assimilation, economic isolation, and cultural genocide. This has resulted in intergenerational traumas and pathology that is only now being addressed on a national level.

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg is unlike any other museum in the country. The real artifacts you will find there are not the pieces of yellow cloth, cut in the shape of a Jewish star, but the idea that forcing people of Jewish ancestry to wear yellow stars was somehow acceptable.

Similarly, Canada's residential schools and the apprehension of First Nations children from their families that took place in the 1960s are not the real artifacts of history. It is the idea that all of this would lead to the betterment of aboriginal Canadians that is the true artifact of misguided paternalistic thinking.

In a country that five centuries on is only now beginning to digest and

internalize the aboriginal version of the story of colonialism, it's time that we had a sacred national space where true reconciliation and healing between Aboriginal Canadians and newcomers can occur. My greatest hope for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is that it will become such a space. ■

Michael Dan, a former neurosurgeon, has worked in partnership with First Nations as president and CEO of Gemini Power Corp. to help develop sustainable economies on aboriginal reserves. His donation of more than \$1 million helped make the ceremonial terrace in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' Indigenous Perspectives gallery a reality.



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